RE-SIGNIFYING THE SUBJECT POSITIONS OF THE OBSERVERS. THE NARRATED EXPERIENCES OF ELT CLASS OBSERVERS IN COLOMBIA

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Abstract

This doctoral thesis demonstrates a careful analysis of the observers' positions in English language classes. The topic focuses on the observations of in-service English classes, mainly from the Positions of the Observers who supervise, evaluate, and give feedback to English language teachers.

In the ELT (English Language Teaching) field, it is common that teachers are periodically observed during classes for their performance of instruction. In fact, some of them do not agree with the class observation process. Others argue that the observation process is not necessary nor important. Some even do not pay attention to the person who observes the class and only keep in mind the rubrics used to observe. This study identifies some positions of the observers that are overlooked or are invisible in the educational community.

The topic of this thesis is about class observers and class observations. In this thesis, there are scholars mentioned who have researched the observations of English classes. For example, Merç (2015) defines classroom observation as an operative device of learning on how instructional methods are implemented, how teaching spaces are structured, and how learners react to the classroom setting (p. 194). Another author proposes that the observation "needs to be followed through properly, not something is done once and leading nowhere" (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2011. p. 459). And likewise, classroom observations have been identified as a relevant device for educational supervision (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010), a component of a staff appraisal mechanism (Lam, 2001), and a tool for self-monitoring (Wichadee, 2011). These short passages of classroom observations show the importance of exploring the topic in the ELT field.

Throughout this thesis, the positions of the observers are illustrated and discussed. The positions (in this case, the observers' ones) are dynamic; but also, these positions can shift within social settings (Harré and Moghaddam, 2003a). A person within the position deals with situations in context, places, and actions. Thus, the positioning theory also thrives on the connection among subjects in a social environment. "Social representations provide both the meanings related to an object as well as the positions towards that object that are available for people; meanings and positions are the two components of social identities" (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990, p. 14.3).

In this same sense, this thesis illustrates that the class observers deal with rubrics and guidelines, which are sets of rules, statements, and understandings, that define what is true or real at any given time in the Class Observation (CO). These rubrics and guidelines of the observation permeate the positions of the observers and interfere with their roles.

This study also highlights that the use of narratives represents a wide panorama of the observers' voices, feelings, and reflections. Martínez (2020) said that narratives might be used as a mode of inquiry in qualitative research. The narrative stories of four class observers are introduced in the methodological part of the thesis. The purpose of the observers' narratives is to notice the ignored and invisible aspects of class observations and analyze hidden subjectivities. The analysis of these narratives exposes what is not written in the rubrics which can possibly help in the field of ELT.

In the body of the thesis, the study reveals evidence concerning the feelings, struggles, achievements, and failures that observers have in their positions. It was possible to identify some sensations through the biographical/autobiographical narratives that are not found in previous research papers. The path of methodology focuses on the study of our being(s) as class observers. Through the autobiographical narratives, authenticity and

reflections emerge from the experiences as observers. The “turn to biographical methods” is explained as a reflective contemporary interest in dealing with biographies as a way of constructing meaning and authenticity from people’s experiences of a rapidly changing modern world (Bron et al., 2000, p.12). The reader is able to identify the narratives of the four trained EFL observers who have worked as observers for several years in the Ministry of Education MoE / Secretariat of Education SoE in Colombia and worldwide.

The last section of the thesis presents relevant aspects of the positions of the observers through the analysis of the narratives. The emotional, contextualized, and other positions of the observer are brought to light as by their autobiographical narratives. All of these narratives emphasize that the observer’s subject position requires a skilled and trained eye to perceive, understand, and benefit from observing the proceedings of learning and teaching. The subject position of the observer is produced by the power of experts (Foucault, 1982).

Finally, this thesis contributes not only to the ELT field but to education as a whole. The development of this thesis represents an unconventional way to build up facts (and other aspects) that realizes innovation and relevant learnings, answering the initial questions and connecting the objectives presented.

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Finally, I would like to thank all the people who took part in the development of this thesis, especially my wife and my daughter. They were essential contributors to my doctoral studies; they are my support and my light. Thank you very much.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis:

To the ELT observers who do their job in the best way and struggle in their practices.

To my wife and my daughter for always being that unconditional support and their patience.

To *Sonia †*, who was always present... this is for you.

Luciana and Yannyd, we did it!



When I started my doctoral studies, I always wondered how I could write my thesis. Even at this time, doubts still arise about how, why, and especially how captivating it would be for me, the reader, and others. This text you will read is part of my academic life as a student, teacher, researcher, class observer, and co-worker; therefore, I consider it an opportunity to grow and learn from the experiences lived along this journey. As I said before, there are doubts that come to the fore. However, I have been rethought repeatedly to re-signify the positions of the observers of English classes in Colombia. This thesis expresses a personal attribute: to believe in oneself, the school, and the academy ... life!

Content table

1. Introduction 13

1.1. Who am I to observe an English Language class? 18

1.2. A relevant problematization in the ELT field 22

1.2.1. Problem statements by ELT observers 25

1.3. Research Questions and Objectives 34

References chapter 1 36

2. The Beginning of the Class Observations Journey - An Inspection of Class Observations / The ELT Observer- 38

2.1. On Class Observations and the ELT Observers 39

References chapter 2 (Including data set in the Profiling) 67

3. Theoretical Framework Voice 71

3.1. Observation as a social dynamic 72

3.1.1. Observation in the educational areas 76

3.1.2. The Observation in the specific area of knowledge (ELT field) 78

3.2. Subject position 80

3.3. The observer in the Class Observations (CO) 85

3.4. Subject from the decolonial project 88

3.5. The forms/rubrics of observation and the ELT observer immersed on them. ... 91

3.5.1. Checklist scales on observation rubrics 92

3.5.2. Descriptions and comments in the observation rubrics 98

3.5.3. The observation rubric for EFL classes 102

References chapter 3 112

References on forms/rubrics of observation and the ELT observer 115

5. Doings, Means, and Ways in the ELT Observers' positions 118

5.1. The ontological is before the epistemological (Vasilachis, 1992) 119

5.2. Participants as teammates 122

5.3. Horizontal Provocation 128

5.4. Research Paradigm 130

5.5. Narrative Study Route 132

5.6. How I enacted the means of this thesis 139

5.7. Narrative Construction Path 140

5.8. Data collection means 140

5.9. Ways of moving along 141

References chapter 5 152

6. A close look at Observers' Narratives 155

6.1. Data Analysis insights 157

6.2. Analytical RoadMap 159

6.3. Discoveries and analysis on the ELT Observers 161

6.3.1. Tania's Narrative 163

6.3.2. Wilson's Narrative 186

6.3.3. Alex's Narrative 202

6.3.4. Miguel's Narrative 216

References chapter 6 245

7. Relevance and discussion in the ELT Observers' Positions 246

7.1. The Knower ELT Observer 247

7.2. Contextualized ELT Observer 251

7.3. The Emotional ELT Observer 255

7.4. The Fellow ELT Observer 258

7.5. Last discussion 261

References chapter 7 264

8. Contribution of Knowledge 265

8.1. Reflections on the ELT observer's positions 265

8.2. Unconventional way to build up facts. 268

8.2.1. Horizontality when researching 268

8.2.2. Substantial Narratives 269

8.2.3. Unseen issues in life stories 271

8.3. The next step 272

8.4. Concluding notes 273

References chapter 8 277

List of References, Tables, Figures, and Appendices

**Every chapter has their references, tables, figures, and appendices inside / at the end of them.*

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BNP: Bilingualism National Plan

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference

CO: Class Observation(s)

COP: Class Observation Practices

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ELTEP: English Language Teacher Education Program

ELTEPs: English Language Teacher Education Programs

ELPTs: English Language Preservice Teachers

MoE: Ministry of Education / MEN (Ministry of Education- Colombia)

SoE: Secretary of Education

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Note to the Reader

Before progressing further into reading this document, it is important to mention that you will find passages of events in the author's daily life with his friends, teachers, and school administrators in several places such as schools, universities, and other ones. Also, you will be able to identify conversations and experiences related to the thesis topic and biographical situations in which you can reflect, analyze, and even envision yourself within them.

Also, this thesis deals with autobiographical passages that distance the objective view with personal stories from observers – (including my own) to bring subjectivity to the academy. It is a reflective, introspective, and challenging narrative, which has brought up tensions and satisfactions both for the author and for the ELT community in Colombia. The process of being a subjective subject within a strictly objective panorama (class observations), allows us to see diverse perspectives, think about different options, and inquire about what lies beyond the observations of English classes and the subjects interacting in class.

I invite you to read this narrative about the wishes, struggles, gratitude, happiness, uncertainties, subjects, and observations of English classes in Colombia. The class observer is not just a subject who evaluates, criticizes, and judges but holds a role, or a position, that is being re-signified day by day.

1. Introduction

> Much has been said about observing English classes ... but what about the people who observe? their feelings, their experiences, the different positions they have? It is time to bring it to light...
>
> Dialogue between the author of this thesis and his advisor. Nov. 2018

This thesis explores the unseen, silencing, and effective invisibilization views of the observers' subject positions in the process of classroom observation practices in Colombian contexts. I also focused on the idea that practices carried out by observers are not simply normalized (e.g., the use of forms, rubrics, and data), but represent more than a process of instrumentalization. Classroom observation practices as part of a social and educational practice deal with power issues. The observers are involved in asymmetrical power-relation situations where an expert reasoning system in the school contexts is merged with reflection and criticism.

It is relevant to mention that this research is based on the observers' subject positions. "Subject position" adopts some implications and is not linear as it is constantly changing. Sometimes the positions of the subjects are forced to follow a structure and codes that fix the canon or a certain canonical practice. However, subjects can change the structure of the rights and the several positions that this repertoire involves.

There is a lot of literature about classroom observations, but little has been said about the observers' subject positions during this practice. The observer is the person who analyzes, judges, criticizes, offers feedback, and supports English language teachers in a

strategy of Classroom Observation (gathering information, assessment, or quality processes in Education programs).

For a long time, the practice of Classroom Observation (CO) has been considered by scholars, teachers, and administrative people in education as an improvement and action of help for educational processes at a general level and in the field of ELT (English Language Teaching) (Alshehri, E. 2019).

This thesis also is framed by lines of thought which emerged from the decolonial turn in education, such as the subject in decolonial perspectives and classroom observation as a practice that invisibilizes the “other” observers’ subject positions. The purpose of stating “other" has to do with different, unseen, and misunderstood observers’ subject positions. Some critical elements come from Harré & Moghaddam (2013) / Foucault (1982) as well as some educational theorists such as Lasagabaster (2011), Jordao (2016), and Wajnryb (1992), whose main contributions are part of the art of this study. The observers’ subject positions were identified in this thesis as part of an inquiry agenda to reflect upon with the team participants of this research.

The observation practice has been standardized not by force execution, but by the validation of knowledge with a claim to objectivity that has been systematic, refined, parameterized, and easy to implement. In the theoretical framework, I will sustain this with authors and scholars who have been researching it.

However, this practice has been standardized and it is presented in a normalized way to the community. It has been explored from the review of literature during the last years that the position of the observer is not seen and is rarely explored in the field. The observer is placed in a comfortable and static zone. These subjects have the importance of being an eye that is given to them giving them the power to give constructive feedback.

However, their power is limited by not having the flexibility to change the format of the observation. The observer holds the place as a reasoning system of observation as the eye that sees and evaluates but is not there as a subject that feels, reflects, and acts.

This is one of the reasons why this study represents situations that have not been dealt with before. The situations discussed in this study facilitate the observers' subject positions understanding of the dynamics of the practice of CO, sometimes seen as a colonial mechanism of control (Bruns, Costa & Cunha, 2018) and other times, as a judgment and helpful procedure (Li, 2009). The analysis of the four observers' narratives will unveil negotiations, feelings, and struggles that appear in the practice of observation. The autobiographical narratives offer a more detailed view of what happens in CO and an understanding of the character and positions of the ELT class observers. Autobiographies and their analysis will be more detailed in the chapter six of this dissertation text.

Likewise, in this research, the autobiographical narratives of Tania, Wilson, Alex, and I are brought to light. We realize a need to negotiate our subject positions (as observers) during the development of this work due to the different positions, subjects, and contexts we find. It is important to delve deeper into the observers' feelings and practices in order to uncover their occluded narratives and develop a clearer perspective on how they have negotiated the class observation procedures with observed teachers.

The English class observer is the topic of this thesis. However, other lines of thought emerge in this document apart from the observation of English classes, such as the evaluation systems in a strategic plan for bilingualism, and epistemological/ontological ways of analyzing international and local perspectives.

This research has helped me to know more about Criticality and Decoloniality. It is suitable to state the importance at times of questioning the traditional/structural practices

through observation; as well as resisting global coloniality of power, ontologies, and epistemologies from the position(s) of the observer in the ELT field. This thesis provides an invitation to read and learn about the perspectives, practices, and positions of “others” within the ELT observers.

The experience of carrying out this thesis with four observers confronted us with power positions, privileges, and egos. Principles of the decolonial perspective emerged to break out/decrease the power between the researcher and participants by having a horizontal relationship in this process.

This study is also about four observers who have been observing English Language classes for a long time. These observers, including myself, create a team of four. We researched and reflected conjointly to be able to speak about our realities. In the methodological part of this research, precise details of the moments in which we worked together are explained. We had undergone training to be the "ideal observer" and faced several challenges when we were observing English classes.

In this same sense, it is important to mention that this thesis is located within the observation dynamics that have been carried out in Colombia, South America. The four observers have gone through classroom observation training in entities such as the British Council/Ministry of Education and it focuses on the policies of the National Government, which is that the strategy of observing English teachers feeds the data on what is needed in the classroom. This is the relevance of saying that the entities hire observers, train them to follow specific guidelines and then the observers come inside the public schools (with all the scripts/rubrics) to follow the procedure that is proposed from the initial agenda. This is how the class observation processes have been immersed in Colombia.

At the same time, it is important to mention that the COVID-19 pandemic has generated difficulties in being able to communicate between observers. The document will attest to these difficult times of communication and interaction as a team, as well as the realities that arise during the narrative-autobiographical process.

The procedures here were aimed at reflecting upon the feelings, and insights of the team participants when they observe classes. Techniques and activities among the team participants helped us to unveil unseen, silencing, and effective invisibilization within the observers' subject positions in the process of CO in Colombia. In terms of the account of this research, I reviewed several different points of view and meshed the information obtained from the analysis of reflections that emerged from the team participants' meetings. Through the analysis of autobiographical narratives, I emphasized the stories, experiences, and subjectivities of the observers.

It is gratifying to say that this thesis aims to highlight and expose what is hidden in ELT observers' subject positions, what is unexplored in the data reported about COs, and what is behind the eyes of the ELT observers, including their situations in the observation. All of these, once exposed, will provide insights to improve the ELT community in Colombia.

The following part is related to my locus of enunciation in the thesis. There are particular reflections and situations that cross paths on class observations.

1.1. Who am I to observe an English Language class?

"The Observer and the Mirror Effect"

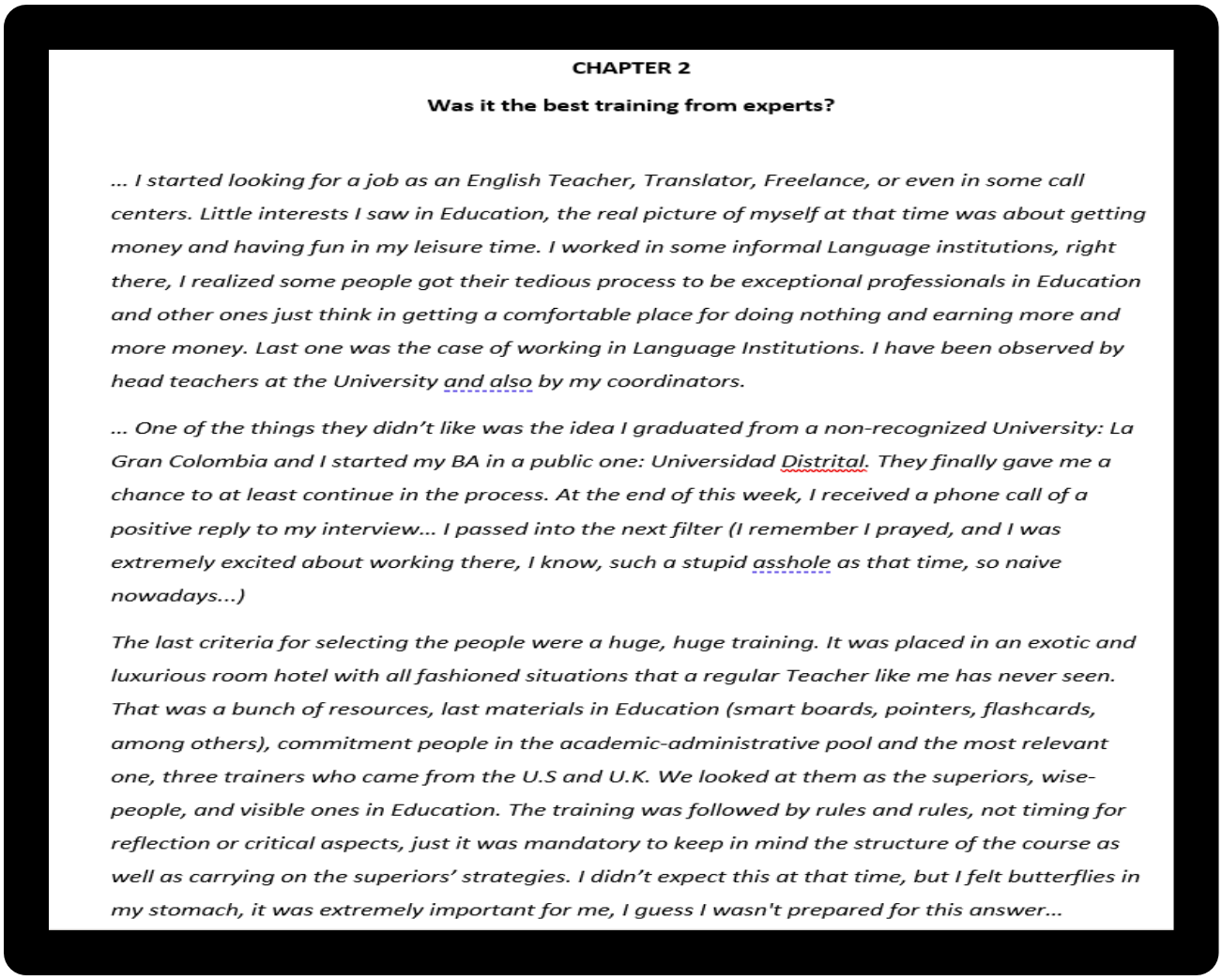


When I look at myself in a mirror, I can see sympathy, pain, joy, commitment, and other things. That is what I see, and many times I hope that no one else can see that too. The mirror effect, for me, has to do with what class observers see or want to see, such as a friendly, cheerful, and committed teacher. However, as a teacher myself, I observe other teachers and again, I wonder... Am I looking at myself? Is a class observation a mirror effect? What observers' potions will we find through the mirror?

Observer's reflection- Miguel's presentation passage (International Congress, May 2020)

I have had the opportunity to investigate the purpose of carrying out an autobiographical process, and I understand this as a permanent probe for events in the past, which happen in the present and that may be repeated in the future. The autobiography alternative has allowed me to know more about the positions of the class observers and to know the context where the observed teachers, the trainers, the students, and especially the ELT observers work.

Below is a passage of an autobiographical narrative (This narrative was written at the beginning of my doctoral studies; during the problematization, since it represented my role/position in the observation's practices, the moments when performed as observer). In the narrative some aspects of my enunciation are visible. (Later, by chapter 6 of this thesis the full autobiographical narrative can be read).



CHAPTER 2

Was it the best training from experts?

... I started looking for a job as an English Teacher, Translator, Freelance, or even in some call centers. Little interests I saw in Education, the real picture of myself at that time was about getting money and having fun in my leisure time. I worked in some informal Language institutions, right there, I realized some people got their tedious process to be exceptional professionals in Education and other ones just think in getting a comfortable place for doing nothing and earning more and more money. Last one was the case of working in Language Institutions. I have been observed by head teachers at the University and also by my coordinators.

... One of the things they didn't like was the idea I graduated from a non-recognized University: La Gran Colombia and I started my BA in a public one: Universidad Distrital. They finally gave me a chance to at least continue in the process. At the end of this week, I received a phone call of a positive reply to my interview... I passed into the next filter (I remember I prayed, and I was extremely excited about working there, I know, such a stupid asshole as that time, so naive nowadays...)

The last criteria for selecting the people were a huge, huge training. It was placed in an exotic and luxurious room hotel with all fashioned situations that a regular Teacher like me has never seen. That was a bunch of resources, last materials in Education (smart boards, pointers, flashcards, among others), commitment people in the academic-administrative pool and the most relevant one, three trainers who came from the U.S and U.K. We looked at them as the superiors, wise-people, and visible ones in Education. The training was followed by rules and rules, not timing for reflection or critical aspects, just it was mandatory to keep in mind the structure of the course as well as carrying on the superiors' strategies. I didn't expect this at that time, but I felt butterflies in my stomach, it was extremely important for me, I guess I wasn't prepared for this answer...

I am the father of a daughter who has taught me a lot about the meaning of life. The process of pursuing a doctorate is a personal decision that I enjoy, but it affects familial matters. For example, the pursuit of the doctorate requires has been quite time consuming taking away from the quality time that I usually get to spend with my loved ones. However, my wife and daughter have always helped me and supported me throughout this time of my studies. Their support has felt so great to me.

As a graduate subject of an English Teaching B.A program, I was observed formally on many occasions including in my pre-service moment, during classes, and even outside the classroom as part of the protocol that most universities execute. I had good and bad

experiences during class both in the position as an observer and during my time being observed as a student.

I have been a teacher in both private and public schools, English Language institutions, and universities. In all these places I have been observed by academic coordinators, leaders, and colleagues. Honestly, at first, when I was observed I did not feel well since my space was seen and controlled. I also did not want to be judged. Nowadays, I am more open to being observed. I consider the observation as a fruitful practice since it represents a chance to reflect and learn from another person (the observer). As a freelance professional (mentor, pedagogical advisor, trainer, etc.), I remember I have received various trainings to observe teachers and I constantly had a person (trainer) evaluating at my workshops when I was working in several places in Colombia. I intend to show later (Chapter 6- Miguel's Narratives) these situations of when I underwent training to observe classes and reflect upon the opportunities, unseen and ignored revelations the observers face when working with English Language teachers.

I have also worked for years as an observer of in-service English teachers in Colombia. I had the chance to be part of strategies executed by institutions that support the Bilingualism National Plan (BNP) in Colombia. I was a mentor, pedagogical advisor, consultant, and ELT leader, working in public schools in Colombia with English Language teachers. Some of the many of the responsibilities the BNP delegated included leading workshops to public school teachers related to "good practices" in teaching English, guiding teachers in ELT class management, exploring ICT tools in English classes, and bringing "meaningful" evaluation processes in ELT and observe classes. This last process defines my own declaration as an "English class observer" or "ELT observer".

I remember that my thesis advisor during my doctoral studies constantly asked me about these events that round into class observations. For example, what is the observation process like? Why is it observed? What is the main purpose of observing? Who observes?

I realized I am part of my research, and my experience in class observation gives me tools to reflect upon to venture further. I am directly involved in the issues and uncertainties of observations because I have had my doubts about this practice of observations and the person who observes the classes. When I started living the observation dynamics, I realized there were some unexplored aspects and I constantly asked myself the steps taken when observing classes. Here is an excerpt of something that I wrote some time ago as an introspective exercise in autobiographical narrative representing the beginning of the problematization of this research.

Chapter 4

... I observed English classes for a long time; however, I did not understand the roles that the observer had, I never sat down to think about it. I am like a "machine", which was only directed to observe, evaluate, and provide feedback... but the observer? what was that subject thinking? How does the other observer see me? I did not find information about the events that the observers live day by day. Something must be done.

I personally struggle with "good practices" when observing English classes. I feel comfortable observing teachers, learning from teachers, and observing their natural/real practices in English classes in Colombia. However, some ELT observers enjoy criticizing and evaluating during the observation, which some may consider to be a “good practice.” This leads us to have different subjectivities in this research.

Even though we four observers who received the same training, the same observation rubrics, and even the same forms, we are still different, and we have posed “other” observer positions. Those positions are needed to be re-signified in the ELT field.

The following part of this thesis regards the statements that express problems within the ELT field.

1.2. A relevant problematization in the ELT field



“It has happened to me that a person who does not know my context observes me, the observers do not have an idea about the students at school, nor have they passed through a school! some observers think they are experts, but they do not know the reality that an English teacher in Colombia is going through…”

Conversation with an English Language Teacher, Bogotá. July 2019.

Observing English classes has been a normalized practice in the ELT field. There are many situations and contexts where the observation is evident. For example, when a student starts to study an ELTEP (English Language Teacher Education Program), they are

asked to make observations of in-service English Teachers while also being observed by university professors.

The observation seeks to detail a "good" English class. That is to say, the teacher follows some traditional established guidelines (PPP- Presentation, Practice and Production method, Task-Based, Warm-up, among others) so that the class provides an efficient and effective method of learning for the students. In fact, these structural guidelines are part of the class observation rubric, the teacher must carry out each of these and the observer gives a “tick” (✓) or a “cross” (✗) depending on whether or not the teacher observed succeeded to do so. This clearly shows a canonical practice of how to make an English class and of course the observation as a canonical event in the ELT field, as well as understanding the approach that is made through observation on a class delivery.

At the same time, when an unexperienced English teacher is doing his/her job, the coordinators, leaders, or principals continuously observe their classes to monitor his/her delivery of instruction and classroom management, since the teacher is newer in the field. Observation is rounded in workplaces such as schools, universities, and English institutes.

Moreover, the observation is also considered in the government's education plans. The Bilingualism National Plan (BNP’s) as a national plan, implements a purpose of observing in-service English teachers and then, implements areas to improve the English language classes in public schools. The goals are to obtain data to understand the weaknesses and strengths of the English Language teachers, and other necessities of the English classes within the public and private schools in Colombia.

I applied to be an observer for the institution that administered the BNP. Although I have had several chances to observe classes in the past as a pre-service English teacher and as a coordinator in some institutions, it was challenging to observe a teacher dealing with a

top-down practice. Sometimes I put into practice reflection and providing feedback when observing, but it still assumes a very hierarchical position between the observer and the observed teacher. I will discuss this matter later in the Chapter 7.

The point here is that I obtained "special" training to observe in-service English teachers from a well-recognized/external institution. The external institution is hired by the National Government, then this entity trained observers to observe the classroom dynamics within schools. This is based on a BNP strategy, in which observation plays an important role in obtaining data on English teachers and their practices in the classroom. I needed this, and I wanted to have a great job; however, I was required to observe some colleagues; therefore, as an observer under the certain restrictions, I did not have the power to execute the observation as would have liked. During that specific time, there were doubts and thoughts that arose in terms of the observation process which led me to set up the problematization of this thesis.

I remember in my training as an observer, the trainer told us this practice should be efficient and meaningful since the observation also is rounded into the evaluation system. Teachers were (and still are) evaluated through an observation rubric – *the trainer mentioned* offers a method for supervisors to assess the teachers' "styles", classroom management, and other skills which elude other forms of evaluation, (Murphy, 2013).

In addition, CO allows teachers to get meaningful feedback on their techniques to further improve. According to the previous statements, I wrote the following part in a book's chapter *(2021),* called *Problematizing the Subject Position of the Observers in the ELT Field:*

> CO is one of the most common ways of analyzing pedagogical practices (Farrell, 2011) and serves as an alternative assessment of their performance (Campbell & Duncan, 2007), is an

> important staff appraisal mechanism (Lam, 2001), a tool for self-monitoring (Wichadee, 2011) and unique device for supervision (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010). These aspects are also mentioned by Merc, related to the dynamics of observing teachers in English classes, (2015). It means that observation is centered on the teacher. The observed teachers are sometimes told about the procedures beforehand. To further develop this point, several authors such as Waijnryb (1992), and Williams (1989) have proposed that CO should get some stages (pre-while and post). P. 32.

It is evident that observation is seen as an important practice in the ELT field. It is a highly valid event that has been in place for years. It is also important to note the "classroom" observation has really been a *teacher* observation. Because of this, this thesis is based on the observers and their relationships with the practice of observation. The following items attest to problematic statements based on the life experiences of the English class observers and what circulates when implementing these observation processes.

1.2.1. Problem statements by ELT observers

As a trained observer, I must admit that it is not easy to criticize or judge the performance of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers during the practice of class observations. The observer position forces one to critically analyze class sections to see and assess many items, including, teachers' performance, attitudes, pedagogical strategies, goals/aims of the session, materials/resources used during the classes' development, classroom environment/ students' behavior, and assessment/feedback processes, among others. The observers play a relevant role in the ELT field because this person is responsible for following a specific rubric at the time of engaging in this practice,

evaluating a class performance, and keeping with the standards of quality of the observation as described by the leader of the observers (pre-observation, while observation, feedback, and assessment). This is one of the common step-by-step processes followed in the practice of observation. Despite this, little has been said about the observers' subject positions and their role in the education plans or bilingualism programs, viewing the observer as an ELT educator, the observer as a mentor, the observer as a learner, and in some other positions.

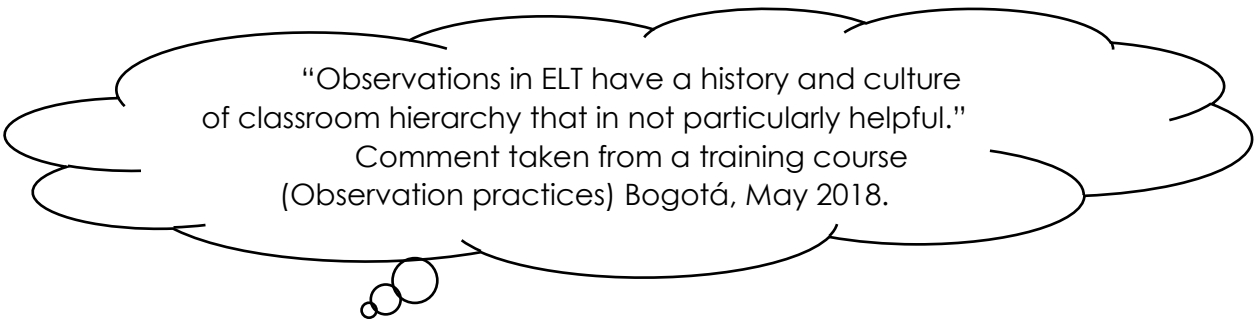
In this scenario, I want to problematize the observers' perceptions toward their position as observers and the ways they think of themselves as regards the COP (Classroom Observation Practices) in consideration of the Bilingualism National Program (BNP). It is also important to analyze how we as observers relate to the obedience to the observation system's rules; if we resist or accommodate some of these demands. During the development of this research, I also explored our positions (observers) inside the classroom, and the role observation guidelines/rubrics play in the processes of bilingualism/language strengthening programs.

This thesis reviews the positions of the observers (the four of us[1]) in terms of effectiveness, which will make us realize the exacerbation of the instrumentalization of bodies, objects, and events in the COP. Seeking objectivity, the COP is based on the effectiveness of forms, rubrics, and patterns that have been identified by an expert system of reasoning (British Council, Ministry of Education and Secretariat of Education) to fulfill the requirements of an effective class.

[1] We are four ELT observers who are wondering, analyzing, and inquiring about the positions we constantly face. We are the narrator of this thesis; every one of us tries to faithfully capture all the events. The four observers will be presented in the chapter 6 in this document.

The observer administers these guidelines /rubrics to control his or her observation. We not only think as observers but also as teachers, students, and researchers. We also have been observed and now have a chance to explore different educational contexts during practices as well as multifaceted positions.

Consequently, the problem statement of this research deals with the observers' subject positions. Subject-position constructions are most of time built from discourses by subjects, who objectify themselves to a position from which they can make the most sense of the discourse (Hall, 1997, p. 56). In this case, the subject positions of observers reflected experiences of being, negotiating, becoming, and power. It is a need to analyze the subject positions of others that have been ignored by the canonical way to conceive the CO. This canonical way to conceive COP has spawned the idea of the objective observer: someone that borrows his or her eyes to obey a format to verify if an English class follows the idealized procedures or patterns. In this specific part of the problematization, I briefly discuss some concerns/problematic statements.



First, this research deals with the idea of the *Normalization of the observer's subject position as a canonical practice in ELT*.

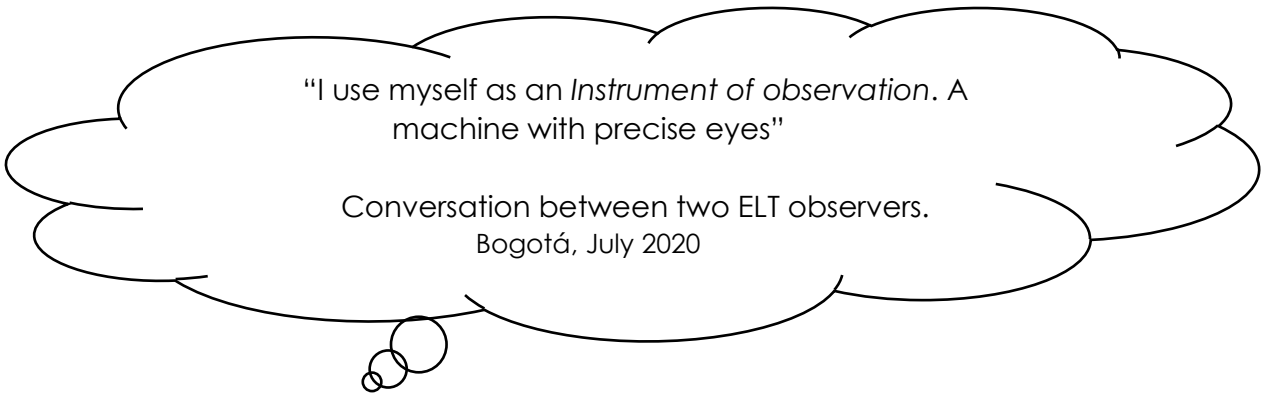
The practice of observing a teacher has been accepted in society as necessary and serves many purposes, including an opportunity to assess teachers' "styles," classroom

management skills, and various aspects of teaching that are hard to discern through other forms of evaluation. Some authors, scholars, and researchers (Lasagabaster, 2011, Wajnryb 1992, Bruns, Costa & Cunha, 2018, Li, 2009) from all around parts of the world agree on Classroom Observation as a practice that allows teachers to receive constructive feedback on their teaching techniques and methods with hopes to improve those aspects further. The role of the observer position is considered as pivotal to guaranteeing objectivity and trustworthiness. People usually validate the function of observing a class for several purposes. It seems that the observers go on engaging in this practice every day and their positions are not questioned during the implementation of a CO.

As identified earlier, the practice of CO is and has been a canonical practice, a series of actions placed into effect used to identify, judge, and/or evaluate processes within the classroom over a long time in education, particularly in the ELT field. This normalization is also connected to the idea of a "good practice" in schools that need to be verified by the view of the observer. Also, the observer uses rubrics for this evaluation process in a step-by-step procedure that must be followed. In this respect, the observer with his or her eyes on objectivity must provide feedback that reifies this normalized way of carrying out an effective English class in a hierarchical way.

From my experience as an observer of English language classes and talking with other ELT observers, I have identified this standardized and regulated practice by the ELT community (due to its history and culture). When a COP is stated, standard quality criteria are established for products (bilingualism plans, language strengthening strategies, among others) and procedures (follow-up of English language classes, teacher assessment, planning/management classes, and more) which have been consolidated as a necessity in most of the current ELT societies.

Several times when I have made visits to a school to observe English classes, the school's directors agree to carry out the observation. The school's directors often use the required criteria from the national government and their own institutional standards as the guidelines to observe teachers. Many teachers know that they need to be observed and even the students are calm when an observer enters their classes to do their job. The observer develops authorized opinions, criticisms, praises, and suggestions in their position. Unquestionably, the ELT observer does not refute, criticize, or judge their positions regarding the observation. While the observer often stands firm in their positions and their authority, their voice may be lost to some extent due to the regulations placed by higher ups. Therefore, their personal sentiments may be hidden making them feel less important.



The second part of the problematization is the conception of *Dehumanization of the observers in the ELT classroom practices*.

I can see the subject positions of the observer are unseen or ignored. The observers are not perceived in the data of the CO analysis, during the bilingualism plans, and in the documents about the practices of English Language teachers. Their feelings, emotions, and points of view have not been stated while this practice is being implemented. The

observers' attitudes and values are not expressed in the rubrics, forms, or data at the time of giving a result. This means little information about the observers' perceptions has been provided.

The dehumanization of the ELT observers in the COP also deals with the primacy of the observers' eyes. Some people think an observer is a machine that needs to observe everything or a simple device to catch all the information present about the place (an instrument of observation). CO has been labeled as a mechanism of control. However, this mechanism also exercises control upon observers. For this reason, it is necessary to unveil the observers' subject positions ("others"), their wonders, expectations, and voices.

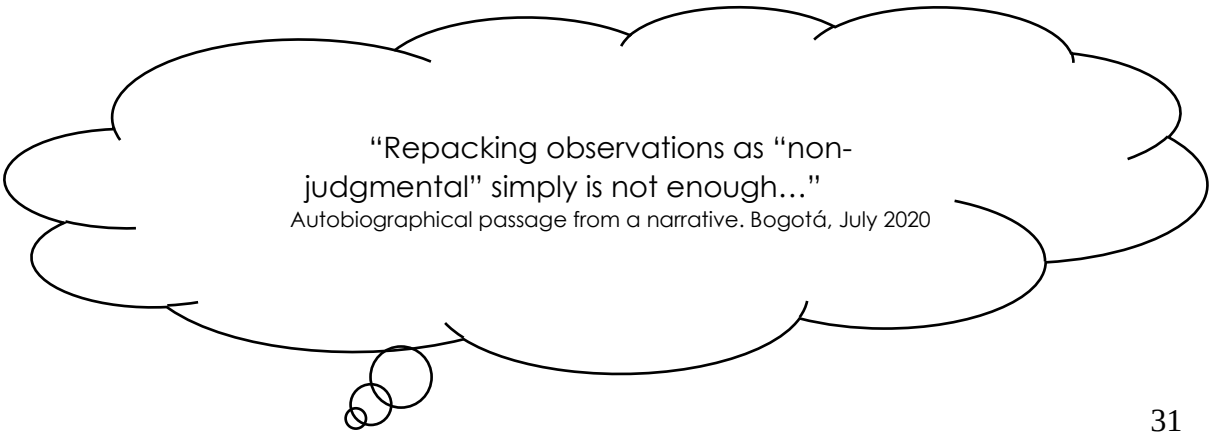
By dehumanization, I reflected upon the depth of no-voice, anguish, ignore, and observers' suffering associated with the class observation guidelines that colonial systems employ when an educational project/strategy is carried on. The observer must fit into the imaginations, laws, and ideologies of the observation practices without paying attention to their opinions, beliefs, and performance.

When I have been in training sessions on "ideal observation practices", some ELT observers' colleagues have told me that they do this work for money or recognition while others do this job to fulfill learning expectations and have more pedagogical experiences. These two reasons commonly happen as daily routines of observers, which help me to realize the importance of exploring the feelings and personal interests of observers I respect this; however, many ELT observers consider that their reflections and experiences in CO will not be important in government plans. It is a shame that the observers are handled as objective data-gathering machines that solely reach the objectives proposed by the system.

Here, it is important to pinpoint there is a national program, called "Colombia Very Well- 2015- 2025". Its objective is to strengthen the communicative skills of Colombians

who speak English since this language "*empowers citizens and allows the country to enter into global cultural dynamics and the knowledge economy*." (p.13). One of the methods for improvement is the peer observations. The strategy has been set by the local government as well as the data offered by the observation rubrics. This process deals with class observations carried out by observers hired by the local government; and school visits to observe the dynamics of the classes in order to obtain data that allow strengthening strategies in specific areas of English teaching. Despite this, in the Colombian Very Well program the facts about the role/position of the observer are limited, and sometimes the observer's practices are ignored or simply invisible in the ELT field. The Colombia Very Well program, local educational plans and the Ministry of Education have as their primary function the training of English teachers; However, as part of the diagnosis of this project, it is important to make classroom observations to obtain study data and to be able to act on the needs that are identified within the classroom.

The observers' subject positions have been neglected, as well as their subjectivities in a normalized, structured, and aligned practice that still governs the visible canon of a hegemonic thought.



Third and last, *the Invisible practices of power in the observers' subject positions* are presented.

Relations of power are exerted during observations in some senses. At the institutional level, observation and supervision are part of a schema in a Bilingualism National Plan and become the disciplinary technologies of the program's success. Disciplinary technology plays as instrument used to control, organize, and amplify the power of the class observations; it trains the observers to work for a specific purpose and to be a productive component in a large multiplicity. This structural way to follow the traditional observations is the aspect that makes discipline in the community. As Foucault says, power relations invest in the body, they "*mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, and to emit signs*" (1975, p. 25)

There is also an issue of power during the CO. The observers should report to the entity (i.e., Ministry of Education- MoE or Secretary of Education SoE, External Institution) what is observed including the characteristics of the teachers' classes. In turn, results must be shown in the classroom observations (what is something to improve in class, the good aspects, assessment procedure, the feedback, and the interactions among students, among others) and a report must be provided with all the insights that happen in a CO. A vision of the English Language and its teaching is immersed in training and rubrics to observers.

The CO rubric exercises power when the observer assesses a lesson or the teacher; this observation rubric represents a fact to carefully follow. The observer being aware of the dynamics of observation resists the dominant discourses (CO practices, assessment, and procedures). Also, the interaction between the observer and observed evidence of relations

of power at the institutional level. There is no doubt that many times the observer stands superior in front of the observed teacher. There is a vertical force at that precise moment since the observer (supposedly) has the experience, the studies, and a higher role than another one. It is an exercise of power in which most of the time the observer tends to win. ELT observers have experienced this daily, but this is not said when the information is picked during an observation practice.

Another aspect of invisible issues of power is when ELT observers do not feel well at the time of observing a class; To be honest, that is not common, but I have noticed that some ELT observers do not want to judge a teacher with an observation rubric. There are also unidentified struggles in the observers' subject positions. The struggles could be transformed into practices of power when the observer negotiates some positions which are not seen by the teachers, directors, trainers, and among the same observers.

I perceive some controversies in the observers' positions at the time of doing this practice. For example, some observers told me that they do not feel comfortable observing with a rubric while others do not like to feel that they are at the top of a hierarchy when they go to a classroom since the treatment of the observers receive in a school is "privileged". But in the CO, some aspects are not seen and, probably, these struggles are invisible to the system or simply ignored. During this observation process, the power relations can be depicted in the interaction between the observer and observed teacher, where the observer asks, inquires, looks for information, and gives an analysis of the activities s/he observed. The observer plays the role of "expert" where he or she experiences power because of her/his credentials and professional recognition. Behind these technologies, there is also a need to research the issues of power that the observer's subject position has manifested in the ELT field.

This problematization concerns power relations, modernity discourses, subjectivity facts, and decolonial thinking as an option in the ELT field about observers' subject positions ("others") in COP. The purpose is also to reflect upon some practices in the observers' positions which are seen as mechanisms of control and power. The observer has been immersed in the EFL Colombian Teachers' practices and contexts, and this subject sometimes plays a role more as a vigilant, evaluator and trainer. But there are events that have not explored the whole panorama of their subject positions.

1.3. Research Questions and Objectives

At a glance, this thesis probes the positions of ELT observers and implies the study of CO and the contexts of English language classes. From introspection as an ELT observer, researcher, student, EFL teacher, Luciana's father, and man, there are deep reflections that sometimes hurt, transform, and achieve realization of significant practices and experiences. Through a collaborative process with my thesis-research director, the four ELT observers of this thesis, friends, and teachers of the program, I allow myself to present the question and the objectives. I propose the following research question and objectives:

Research Question

What observers' subject positions have been neglected by the canonical way to observe in the ELT field?

Objectives

- To understand the observers' subject positions in the narrated experiences within four ELT class observers in Colombia.

- To unveil the power relations that observers have with the academic community in the class observation practices.

- To identify the class observer's negotiations among their different subject positions through autobiographical narratives.

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2. The Beginning of the Class Observations Journey - An Inspection of Class Observations / The ELT Observer-

This thesis focuses on the literature about the dynamics of observations of English classes, as well as the need to research the positions of ELT observers when they execute their work within observed classes including the perspectives of training, negotiations, and evaluation practices. The research seeks to identify emancipating behaviors within a broader colonizing system in the narratives of those who observe English language classes. Through the investigations that will be explained and analyzed throughout the thesis, I will expose the true feelings and perspectives of the observers which all play a part in the process of emancipation from the colonial standards traditionally held in the system.

This chapter explores the literature collected surrounding the topic of observations. The literary analysis includes antecedents and precedents of the topic, and reflections on articles, books, magazines, newspaper sections, and other literary sources on English classes observations and the ELT observers. Through the literary analysis of this chapter, I seek to demonstrate the norms, I allowed myself to develop an exhaustive inspection (profiling) of the analyzed literature (including the antecedents); identified and characterized tendencies and created arguments (reflections) about the observer positions.

This profiling is about what has been researched around the class observations, the class observer, and trends emerged. The way in which this study is related to those trends, and the gaps that will contribute to the ELT field. I also included a geographical overview about the class observations/ELT Observers in the ELT field as well as antecedents on the topic. Furthermore, this part of the thesis shows a bibliometric analysis to bring light upon

some tendencies found in the bibliography concerning the observer and the class observation. Finally, the reader will be able to notice where (globally and locally) this research has been located in relation to Class Observation practices.

2.1. On Class Observations and the ELT Observers

Research Profiling

This part of the thesis is framed into a research profiling in which the previous studies are more concerned about discovering patterns in the literature considering patterned bodies of class observations and the positions of the observers. In that sense, these studies do not simply only take in the topic but also potentially related areas (Castañeda H, 2012). Research profiling implies answering questions related to the topic researched in a specific field.

It is known that research profiling is done with a certain number of database resources, journals, articles, web portals, and registers. It also seems paramount to consider methodological issues to come to grips with what could be named literature review research and/or academic profiling research. Reeve mentions that doing a profiling data involves reviewing and analyzing the actual data potentially to be included in an extract to further understand the format and content. Profiling should be performed when potential data for an extract has been identified through high-level requirements gathering (p.16). At the same time, the literature review and profiling can be combined for the purposes of organizing theme review research as this thesis is being proposed.

When I was in my second year of my doctoral studies, I had the chance to develop an approach to profiling. This strategy was basically used to identify patterns and views of

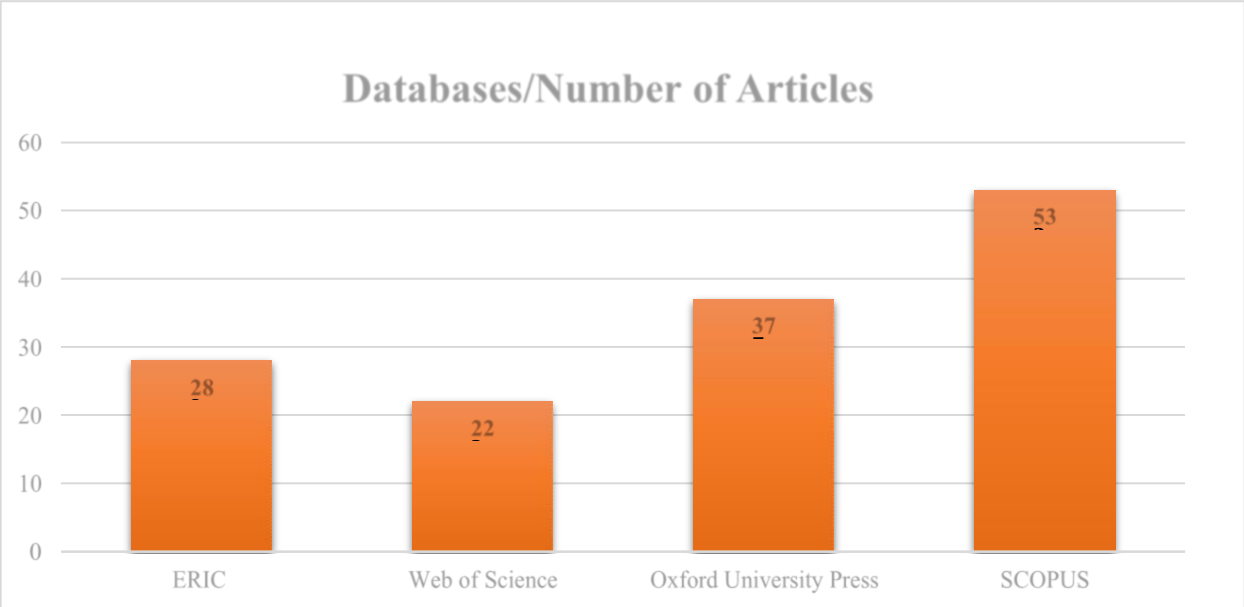
class observations not only in Colombia but in several other countries as a process of taking antecedents. As a result of this study, there was a publication in a local journal. Some parts of this section are taken from that article Martínez, M. (2021). My intention is to underline these characteristics raised to give a path into the literature of this study.

This profiling of the class observation and the class observer is presented in two steps of the robustness of the acquired information.

Profiling Step 1

I traced four databases with 140 research articles found on classroom observations and class observers. I chose the databases based on the most-used purpose in the educational field. The databases were Oxford University Press, ERIC (Institute of Education Sciences), Web of Science, and SCOPUS. Typical inclusion criteria of the databases included demographic, recognition, variety, and geographic characteristics.

The distribution of the research articles found on my interest research topic of classroom observation can be seen in Graph 1.

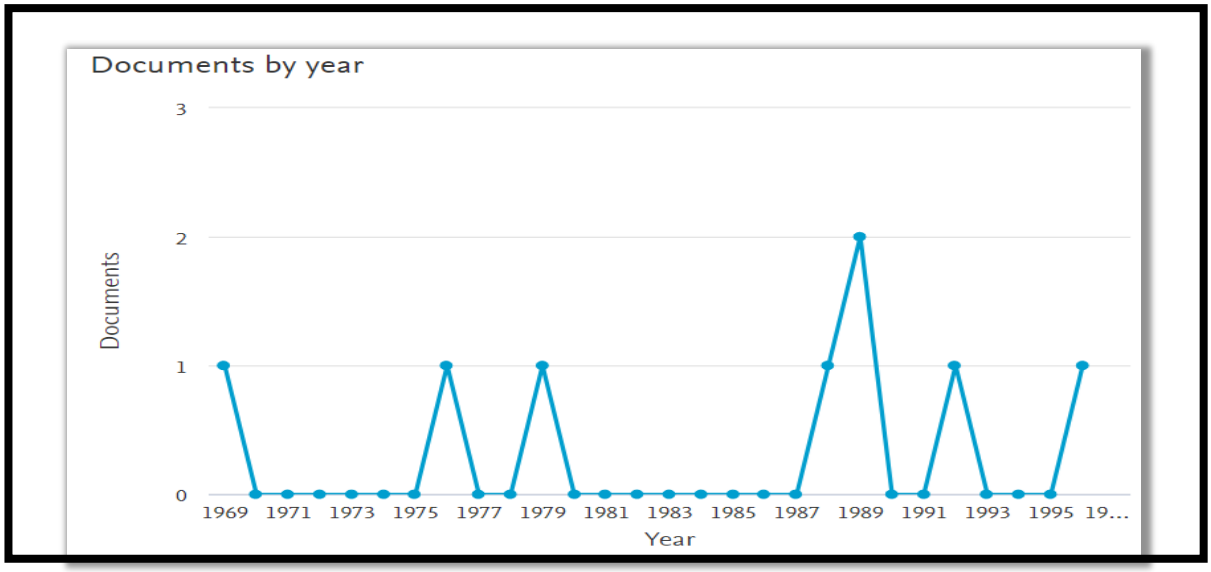


Profiling step 1. Graph 1. ***140 Research articles from 4 different databases. Classroom Observations under the Expert Reasoning System***

It is seen that a high number of articles were taken from the SCOPUS database. This revision of the registers is found in the four databases. It is shown that the SCOPUS database offers important information about the theme revised; therefore, I decided to continue this specific one to deepen the topic of classroom observation.

In turn, it is necessary to mention the starting point of the classroom observation review talking about the years of publication. For this, of the 53 articles in the SCOPUS database, 8 of these are written before 1996. The main purpose plays on showing the periods of time on class observations research.

The mentioned articles are taken from the year 1969 to 1996. They can be seen in Graph 2.

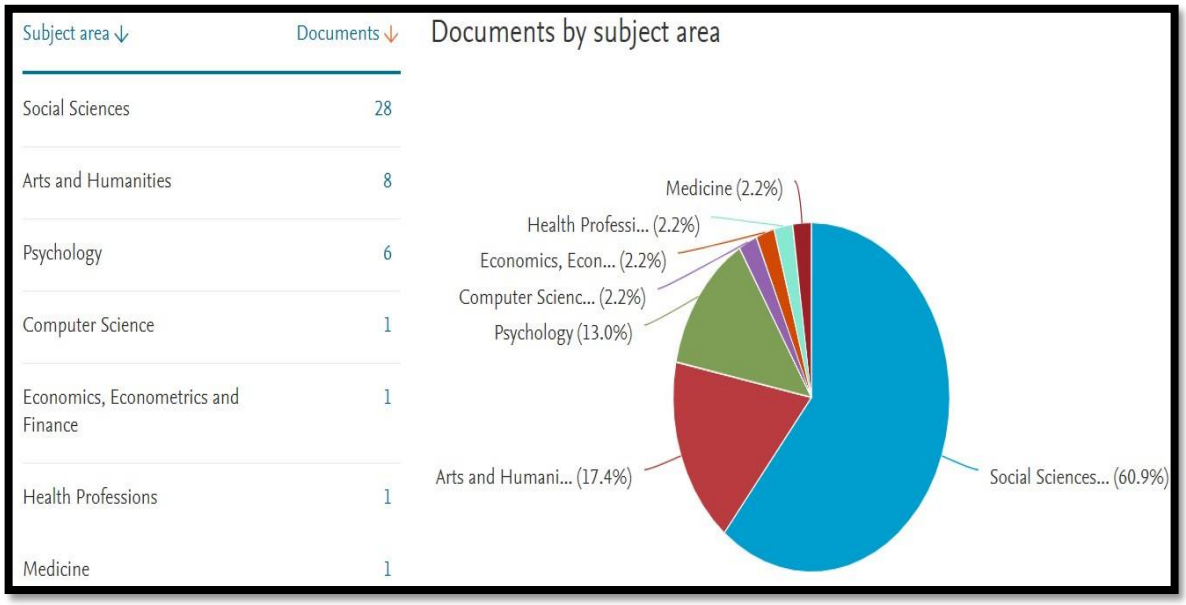


Profiling step 1. Graph 2. ***Research articles about Classroom Observation from 1969 until 1996. SCOPUS database. Classroom Observations under the Expert Reasoning System***

These articles (Graph 2) are from Journals of different fields, such as ELT, Educational Psychology, Teacher Education, and Research Education. The oldest found article is called *Effect of the observer in the classroom* (Masling, J., Stern, G, 1969) and is related to the effect of classroom behavior by comparing early units of observation with later observations.

In the ELT field, for instance, there are two articles that stood out to me. The first one is called, "*Classroom observation: Training the observers*" (Sheal P, 1989). This article grasped my attention because it describes a series of three workshops designed to train classroom observers and overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of using observations for staff-development purposes. It also raises some important questions about the role of supervisors of teachers and discusses their need for training in supervisory skills. Another article is, "*A developmental view of classroom observations*" (Williams, 1989). This article is important because it demonstrates a scheme of developmental classroom

visits (observations) currently in use in an in-service teacher-training program for primary teachers in Singapore. It is relevant to look at years ago for information about class observation, so then, understand the dynamics that happen currently about this practice throughout history. In this following part, the documents were organized by subject areas (from the tracing I made of the SCOPUS database). It can be seen in Graph 3 that the areas which have more relation with the topic are Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, and Psychology. However, other areas such as Health and Medicine also deal with observations (not in classrooms) as an important component of processes and/or diagnosis.



Profiling step 1. Graph 3. Subject areas about Classroom Observation. Classroom Observations under the Expert Reasoning System. SCOPUS image. Author's own data analysis.

Classroom observations are part of a social practice where behavior, ethical, and knowledge components are treated and analyzed. Regarding the field that I have researched (ELT), it connects with the previous graph of the area of humanities. This area (ELT)

represents an opportunity to explore the virtues of the humanities because it allows us to inquire about dynamics that are of great importance in the educational/human context.

Profiling Step 2

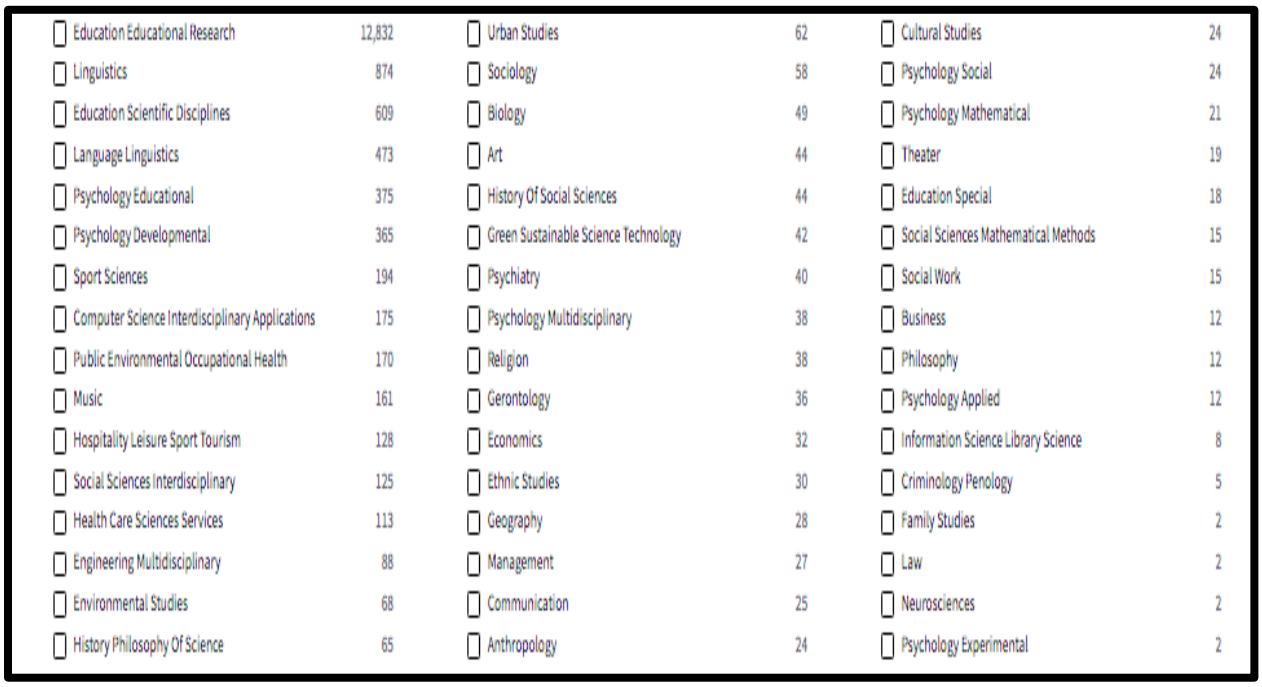
This part of the profiling is characterized by using bibliometric software that condenses the information about the class observations and the variables that are identified in this research. The literary search includes books, magazines, journals, book chapters, undergraduate and postgraduate research, and articles in national and international magazines, where scholars and people from outside the field wrote about English classroom observations and class observers. I handled the inclusion and the exclusion of the aspects of the profiling. The inclusion one was everything that the bibliography should have to be included. The exclusion criteria played on the factors that would make this study ineligible to be included. During doing this profiling, I carefully selected articles and research papers that demonstrated.

The software that I used for showing the patterns and bibliographical data is VOSViewer. This is a software tool for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks. These networks may for instance include journals, research, or individual publications, and they can be constructed based on citation, bibliographic coupling, co-citation, or co-authorship relations. (VOSViewer Web page- description of the software).

So then, I eventually traced some topics that come out of class observations and the class observer using this free software. The following techniques were used while obtaining the information:

- Web of Science (WOS) was used for this exercise. WOS is the world's most trusted publisher-independent global citation database according to the description of the Clarivate (most trusted publisher-independent global citation database, 2022, updated). Co-authorship networks, citation-based networks, and co-occurrence networks were created based on data downloaded from WOS. Co-authorship networks and co-occurrence networks were also created.
- From the visualization, I took screenshots. Screenshots of bibliometric network visualizations were taken and shown as graphical file formats, both bitmap and vector formats.
- As a technique, I set up bibliometric networks**.** Some advanced features are seen for creating bibliometric networks (e.g., co-authorship, bibliographic coupling, and co-citation networks). For instance, I tried to unpack the influence of publications with many authors, many citations, or many references.

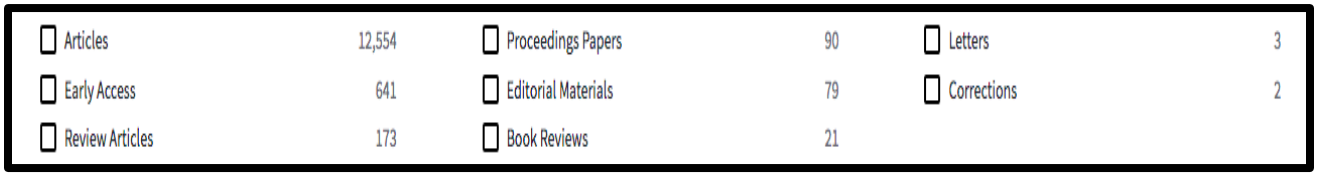
In this profiling, I started looking for the field where the topic observation is the most evident. When applying filters, I selected some categories When doing a search in WOS with the code “Observation (topic)”, I obtained more than 15.000 results, in various fields. These were the ones that appeared in the procedure (Image A):



Education Educational Research	12,832	Urban Studies	62	Cultural Studies	24
Linguistics	874	Sociology	58	Psychology Social	24
Education Scientific Disciplines	609	Biology	49	Psychology Mathematical	21
Language Linguistics	473	Art	44	Theater	19
Psychology Educational	375	History Of Social Sciences	44	Education Special	18
Psychology Developmental	365	Green Sustainable Science Technology	42	Social Sciences Mathematical Methods	15
Sport Sciences	194	Psychiatry	40	Social Work	15
Computer Science Interdisciplinary Applications	175	Psychology Multidisciplinary	38	Business	12
Public Environmental Occupational Health	170	Religion	38	Philosophy	12
Music	161	Gerontology	36	Psychology Applied	12
Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism	128	Economics	32	Information Science Library Science	8
Social Sciences Interdisciplinary	125	Ethnic Studies	30	Criminology Penology	5
Health Care Sciences Services	113	Geography	28	Family Studies	2
Engineering Multidisciplinary	88	Management	27	Law	2
Environmental Studies	68	Communication	25	Neurosciences	2
History Philosophy Of Science	65	Anthropology	24	Psychology Experimental	2

Image A. (Profiling step 2). WOS Education research data. Observation in different fields.

When doing a search in WOS (specifically related to Education research), with the code “Observation (topic)”, the following 12,832 results were obtained:



Articles	12,554	Proceedings Papers	90	Letters	3
Early Access	641	Editorial Materials	79	Corrections	2
Review Articles	173	Book Reviews	21		

Image B. (Profiling step 2). VOS Education research data. Observation topic.

Despite the large quantity of different sources, the most prominent sources were articles. These articles represent well-known material to discover the required information. The articles build trust, give more insights into the topic, and are popular in the academic field.

By continuing to route in this profiling, it is key to identify the universities worldwide where the subject of observations is most studied. In a further profiling topic, I will reveal some local and national universities. The top 5 universities publishing results on these topics are:



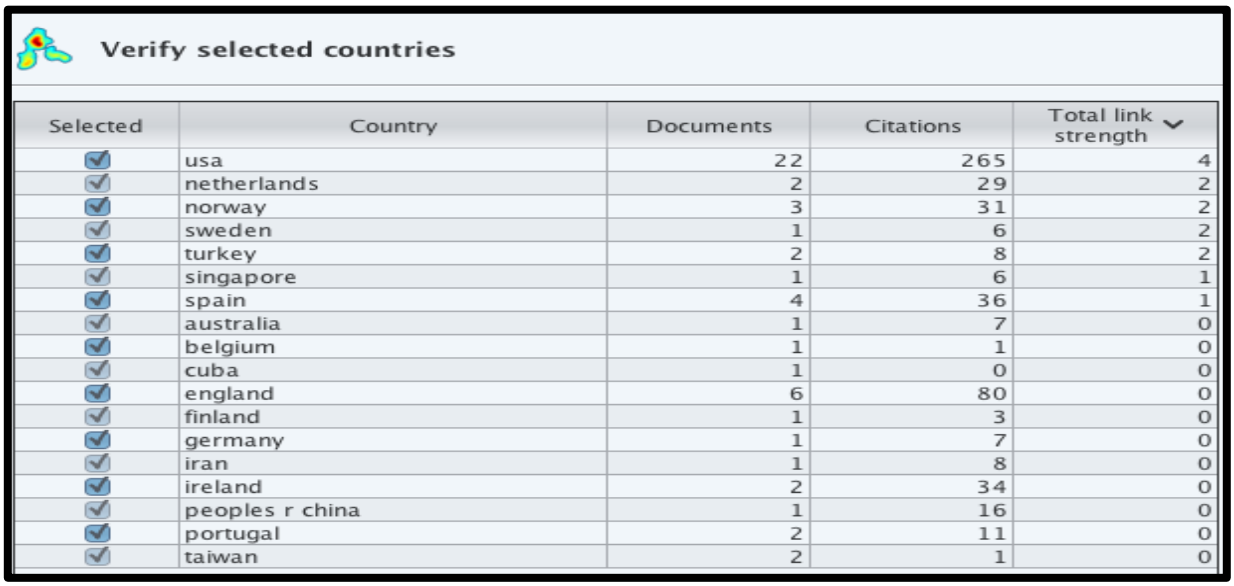
Image C. (Profiling step 2). WOS Education research data. Top 5 Universities that published about the Observation topic.

The University of California has 249 articles in which observation is the main topic. As an example, an article called, "*Understanding Khmer: Sociological-Cultural Observations,"* was done as an exploration of the social conditions presented in classrooms using observations. This article represents importance in my thesis since it focuses mainly on the outside players (observed students) and the inner players (observers) interactions. This article also attempts to respond to the interests of political solutions through observation practices. For instance, the study focuses on the educational policies changes in a local level as well as implementing plans/strategies to strengthening the languages policies. Exactly 148 articles about Observation that were identified came from the University of Georgia. In fact, the article titled, "T*he journal at the University of Georgia: Reflections on the past and observations of the present*," reflects the past actions of students

at that university and their consequences when finishing their university careers. The author explored the issues behind the students' perspectives for a long-time using observation as a technique for carrying out the research.

Clusters and detailed co-occurrences

After making the analysis of the results, I wanted to observe co-occurrences through the VOS viewer software. This tool allows for the detection of clusters (grouping similar results) about keywords in this research interest. The first try was a relation between the topic **"Observation" and "Country"**. The following image shows the number of countries where the topic observation is studied, plus, the interconnection with other countries.



Verify selected countries

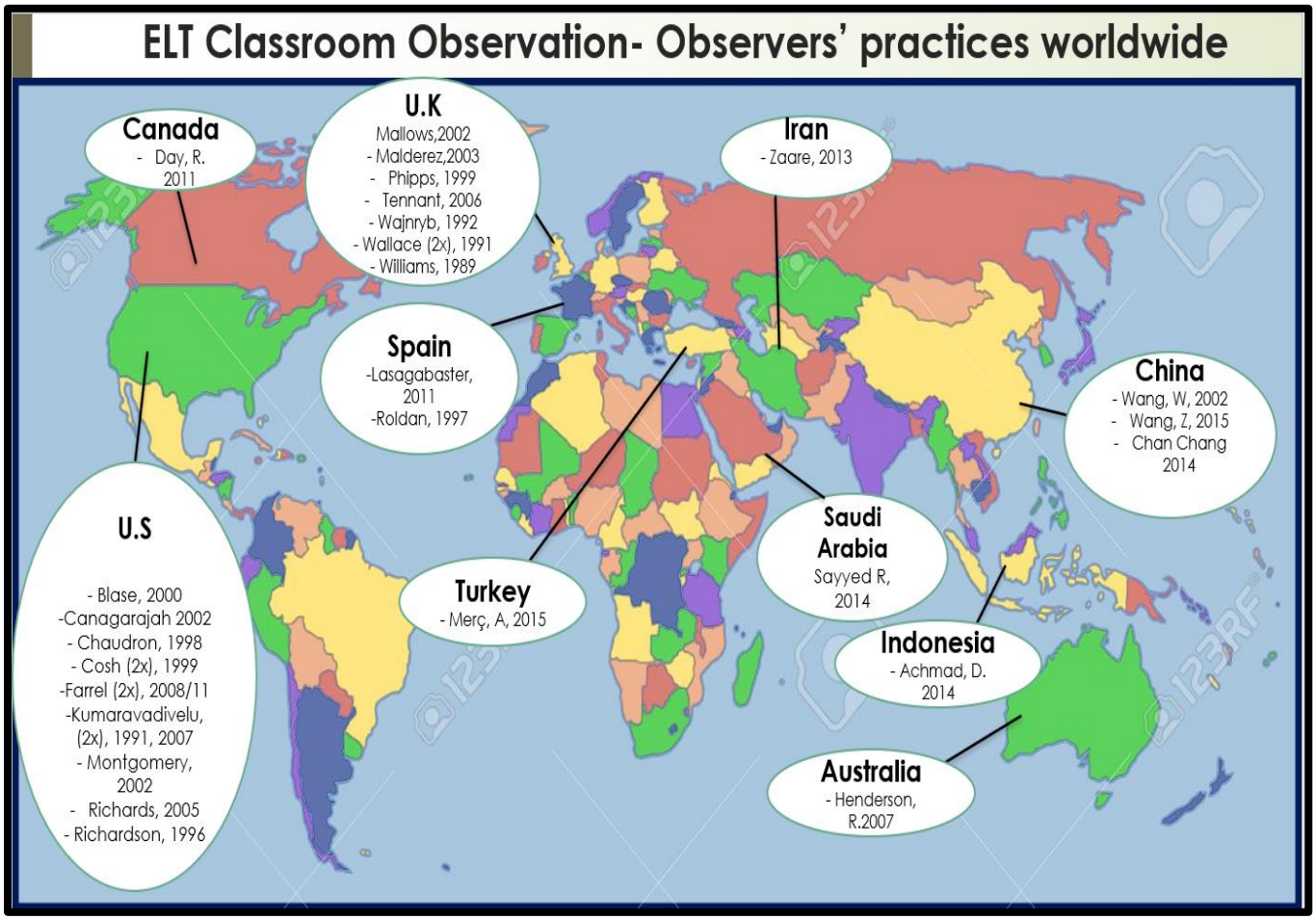
Selected	Country	Documents	Citations	Total link strength
☑	usa	22	265	4
☑	netherlands	2	29	2
☑	norway	3	31	2
☑	sweden	1	6	2
☑	turkey	2	8	2
☑	singapore	1	6	1
☑	spain	4	36	1
☑	australia	1	7	0
☑	belgium	1	1	0
☑	cuba	1	0	0
☑	england	6	80	0
☑	finland	1	3	0
☑	germany	1	7	0
☑	iran	1	8	0
☑	ireland	2	34	0
☑	peoples r china	1	16	0
☑	portugal	2	11	0
☑	taiwan	2	1	0

Image D. (Profiling step 2). WOS Education research data. Co-relation between observation and country

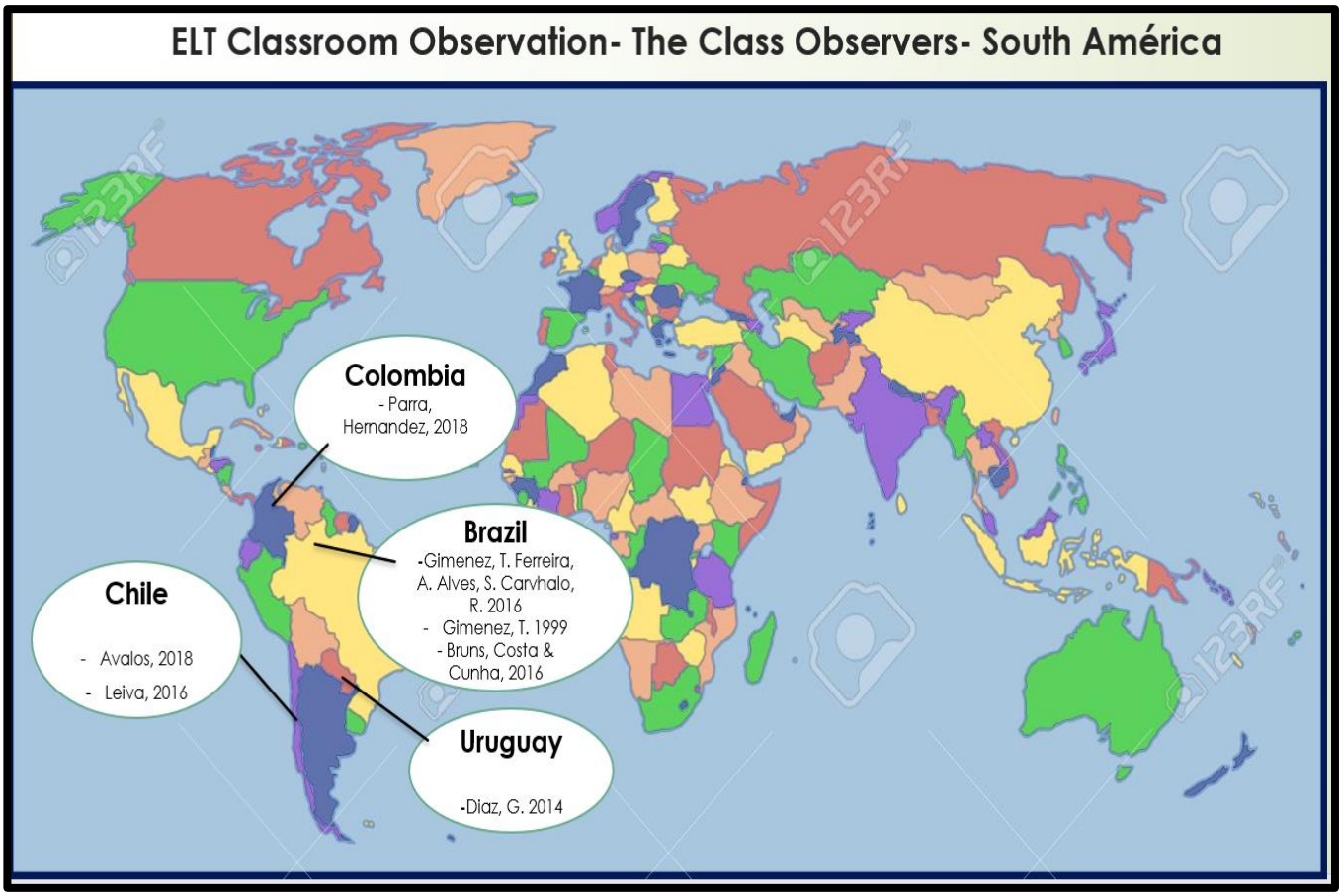
There were 18 countries that appeared in this search. One aspect that caught my attention is the number of scholars who talk about class observation in the North and West. I noticed that of 54 documents (articles) in the software, only six of them came from Latin

America, particularly Cuba, 22 articles came from the U.S, and 6 were from England. It is also important to notice the number of citations in these countries. A high amount of information (544 citations) is interchanged between these countries about the "Observation" topic.

In fact, the following pictures illustrate several worldwide authors who have researched class observations. They are in different parts of the world and set important antecedents about the topic.



Picture 1. Class Observation / Class Observers authors. Own production. Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación



Picture 2. Class Observation / Class Observers authors. South América. Own production.

Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación

The previous pictures evidence the authors who have been researching class observations/class observers worldwide. In the following pages, some of them will be discussed, including the articles, books' chapters.

The next point in this profiling is to establish a more specific panorama about the topic of observation.

I entered the word “Observation” in the VOS viewer software linked with the word “Authors.” The result of this co-occurrence of **“Observation” and “Author”** is the following image.

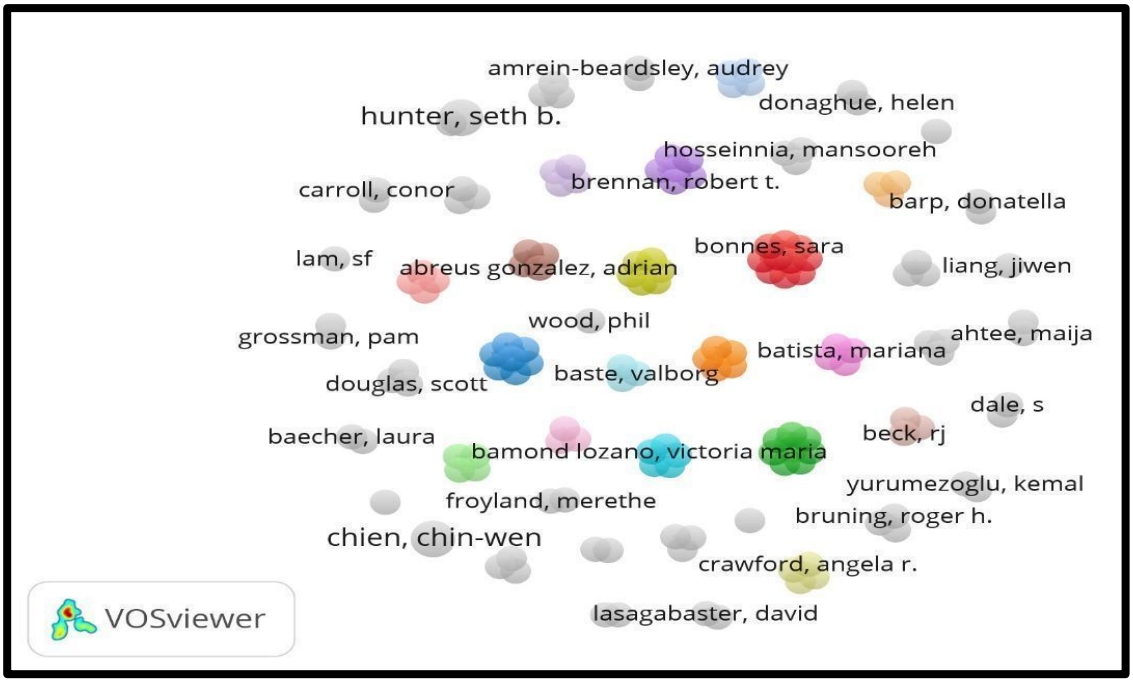


Image E. (Profiling step 2). VOS viewer research data. Co-relation between observation and author

Tendency 1. The prescriptive role of observers within systematic processing of evaluation

There are many worldwide scholars that have studied the topic of Observation. Despite this, the previous image shreds evidence of the connections these authors have in terms of citations, interchanging information, or immediate contact. The clusters which are bigger than others represent the most connections they have. For example, Sara Bonnes, et.al, have explored learners’ behavior once they know they are being observed, and this

effect should be considered when designing assessments of learner behavior. (p.1) This is a common finding in the medical field; in which the observations are perceived everywhere.

On the other hand, the image E shows a scholar in the ELT field who has strong connections with others, specifically researching observations. The role of observers is a systematic process of evaluation as tendency 1 is set. The author mentioned that the observation specifically in the ELT field is a structured process and, in most cases, is judgmental, rigid, and scripted. It operates in standardized and squared grids. The observation for the author must be systematic, to avoid obtaining a distorted view of what happens in class and that its benefits are tangible. He also mentioned that "*the observation needs to be followed through properly, not something is done once and leading nowhere"* (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2011). Assessing while performing a class observation is one of the pillars in this practice. In fact, much literature has focused on this tendency.

Likewise, there are many universities in the world where the topic of observation is researched. Here the results of the co-occurrence **"Observation" and "Universities"**

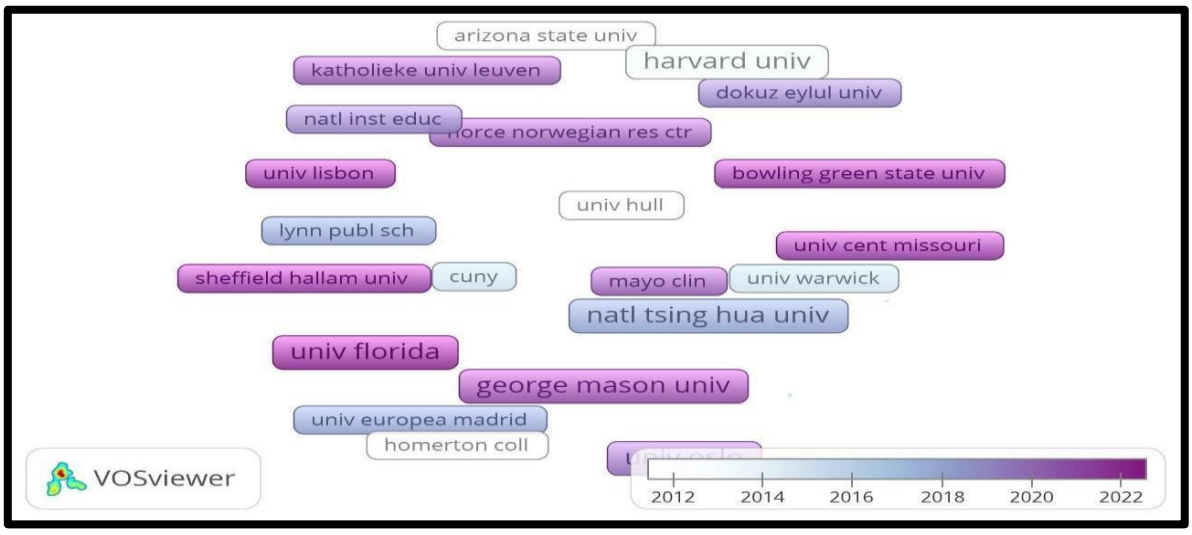


Image F. (Profiling step 2). VOS viewer research data. Co-relation between observation and universities

The image F shows the different universities where the topic of observation has been established. Universities from North America and Europe are evidenced (Arizona U, Florida U, Harvard U, others); however, it is noteworthy that Eastern universities like Tsing Hua take the observation topic into account in their university productions. The previous graphs (2021-2022) show that class observation is an academic level issue, where the processes inside and outside the classroom are raised through a rubric or observation guidelines. Not only in the ELT field, but in all fields of education, observation represents a normalized dynamic to pay attention to and further investigate.

To go on the observation grounds, this next analysis is about the key words I found related to observation. The following image shows the co-occurrence **"Observation" and "Key words."**

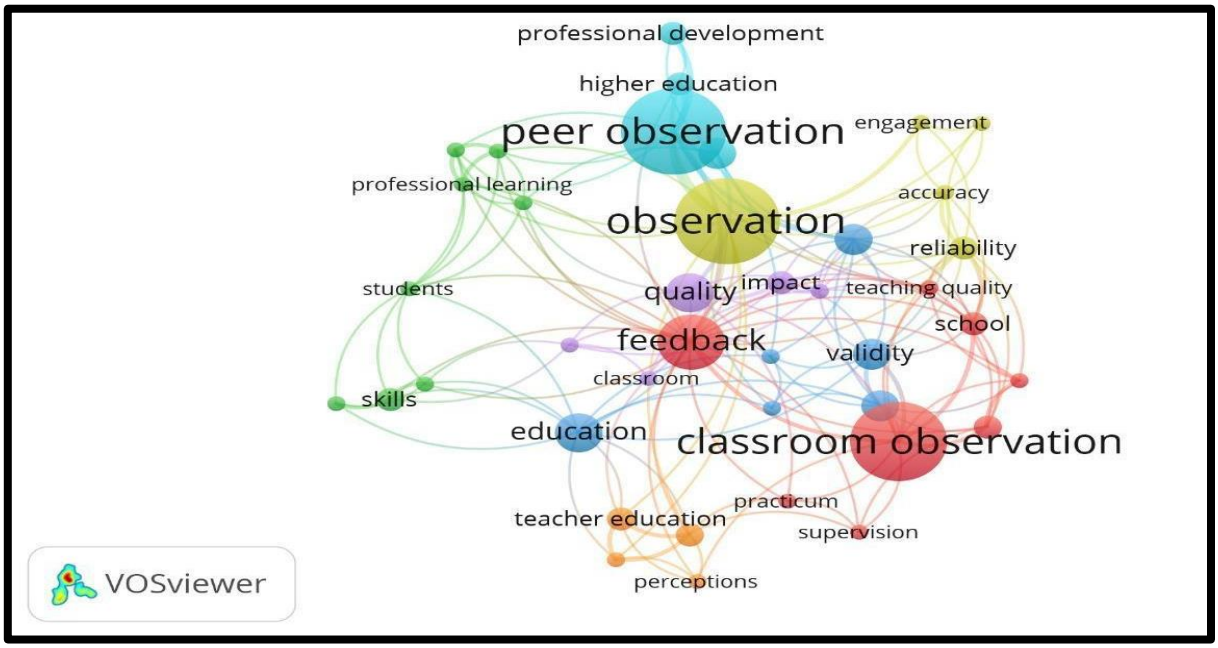


Image G. (Profiling step 2). VOS viewer research data. Co-relation between observation and Keywords

The image G exposes the key words on the topic of class observation. Connecting with tendency 1, words such as feedback, quality and validity are relevant in the class observation practice. In fact, this tendency on the prescriptive role of observers within systematic processing of evaluation is mentioned by Lasagabaster, 2011, where feedback rubrics, constant evaluation towards the observed teachers and validity exercises are produced when there is an observation inside the classroom, p.22.

This also can be evidenced in this thesis since; the observation practices have been immersed in components of constant evaluation; that is, systematic assessment processes. The prescriptive role of the observer becomes more of a merely instructional act than a reflective practice. It will be mentioned later in chapter 7 of this document, where the systematic evaluation processes in class observations will be shown.

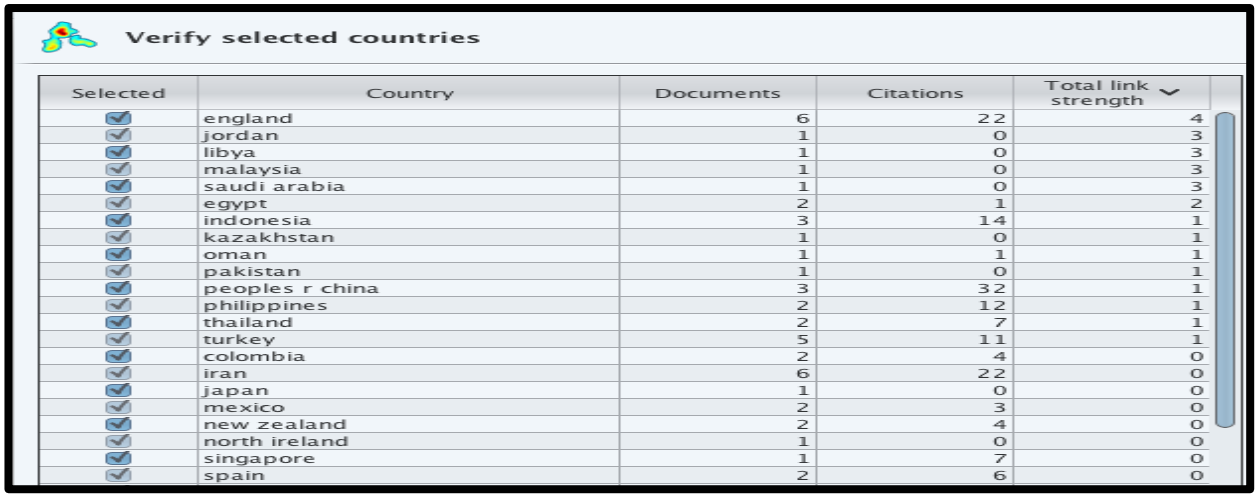
There is a prescriptive labor of the observers to analyze and identify these words (actions) when implementing the process of observation. The process of evaluation at time of observation is linked to the "key words" of the image.

Tendency 2. The supremacy of the observer subject position as an instrument to control and provide effectiveness.

Moreover, this profiling brings importance to the authors' references on observation. Several authors researched this topic, and the similarities are based specifically on some keywords' encounters (feedback, validity, professional development, among others). The relevance of quality of teaching and assessment instruments; and comparison among different teachers' effectiveness is particularly well-noticed when exploring the topic of observations.

As identified, the practice of classroom observations is and has been about a series of actions that are carried out to identify, judge and/or evaluate processes within the classroom during a long time in education. In most cases, there is a need to observe what the teacher does inside the classroom. Also, it is necessary to use standards for this evaluation process (supervision) and a step-by-step procedure. Classroom observations are an evaluating procedure because they have been used to assess teachers' performance (pre, during, and post class). Also, the observations have been teacher oriented as well as handling the peer observation process in the education environments. Many times, the observations are made by a peer (a colleague/co-worker) to closely follow the parameters to observer. Teachers usually receive constructive feedback on their teaching techniques and methods while an observer is doing the practice of observation or even after the evaluation is finished.

In the same way, after delving deeper into the topic of observation, I emphasized more in my research interest. The following chart exhibits the countries where **"Observation in ELT" and "Country"** are the most read ones.



Verify selected countries

Selected	Country	Documents	Citations	Total link strength
☑	england	6	22	4
☑	jordan	1	0	3
☑	libya	1	0	3
☑	malaysia	1	0	3
☑	saudi arabia	1	0	3
☑	egypt	2	1	2
☑	indonesia	3	14	1
☑	kazakhstan	1	0	1
☑	oman	1	1	1
☑	pakistan	1	0	1
☑	peoples r china	3	32	1
☑	philippines	2	12	1
☑	thailand	2	7	1
☑	turkey	5	11	1
☑	colombia	2	4	0
☑	iran	6	22	0
☑	japan	1	0	0
☑	mexico	2	3	0
☑	new zealand	2	4	0
☑	north ireland	1	0	0
☑	singapore	1	7	0
☑	spain	2	6	0

Image H. (Profiling step 2). VOS viewer research data. Co-relation between Observation in the ELT field and country

The image H establishes the co-occurrence of observation of the ELT field with the countries that have been published on it. There are 47 articles about observation in the ELT field, although it is evident a high number of citations among the research productions.

It can be identified in countries such as England which states that observation is "*the bridge between the worlds of theory and practice*" (Reed and Bergemann, 2001, p. 6, in Merc´s words. 2015). It can be concluded that the observation seems to be an operative gismo of learning how instructional methods are implemented, how teaching spaces are structured, and how learners react to the classroom setting. The observer in this article plays as a person who controls and supervises the class.

In the U.S according to Farrell (2011), classroom observations in a reflective practice agenda can provide language teachers with an opportunity to gather information about their own teaching and classroom practices to push them to scrutinize classroom actions more carefully. Kumaravadivelu (2007), on the other hand, puts forward a *critical classroom observation*, where the observer plays the role of someone who gives feedback.

In a very similar way, an article that has called my attention is: *"An investigation-into the effect of classroom observation on teaching methodology"* written by Masoumeh Zaare- Department of English Language, South Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. This study was conducted over a week of visits to an Iranian institute. The observer worked with three peer observers who used the same checklist to record their observations. Some of the findings are that classroom observations can be a guide for teachers so they can reflect on their own teaching practices, and those who are observing can learn from others; this happens especially in some educational experiences where the

trust and well rapport is seen. It is common to hear from teachers that they are in constant learning's enrichment when the observations are done by peers (same partners).

The last research article I kept in mind is *"Classroom observation in context: an exploratory study in secondary schools from Northern Colombia"* (Parra & Hernandez, 2019) This study made in Colombia discusses the role of classroom observations in informing debates on the quality of teaching and learning in secondary education from Northern Colombia. Specifically, the document proposes a methodology for classroom observation in context (CoC) to address many of the epistemological limitations of mainstream input-output observation models in relation to the professionalization of educators. This article provides a brief overview of ELT class observation techniques as a hallmark in education quality debates and feedback opportunities. The discussion surrounded the implementation of mainstream observation techniques in the context of the professional development of educators. It seems that the paper aims to make progress in the design of classroom observation as a tool that contributes better to real improvements in teaching and learning practices at schools, which is different to this study that finds the positions observers have at time of conducting their practices.

These authors from different parts of the world illustrate the importance of class observations in the field of ELT and its several characteristics that surround this practice such as the way of implementing feedback, the supervision they get, and the instruments observers handle at time of doing the observations.

To close this profiling, it is necessary to put on the table the insights about the **"Class Observer in the ELT field".** As I have said, this co-occurrence was the most difficult one to get information; however, simultaneously, it is the main core of this

research. The exploration about class observers plus ELT field did not offer a wide overview (in terms of literature found); this a gap that I identified during the research path. However, there can be seen two images (H and I) about the key words of the co-occurrence named: “Class observer, ELT filed”.

This is the first image (I) about the topic of class observers in the ELT field. It is also important to identify the country, core of the study as well as the year of publication of the research.

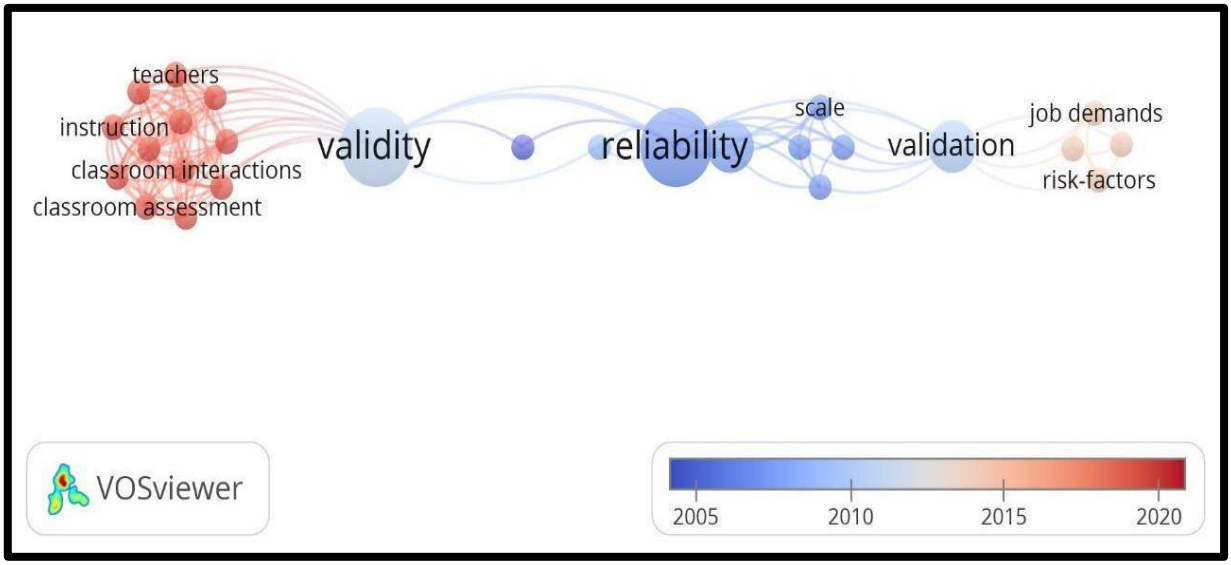


Image I. (Profiling step 2). VOS viewer research data. Co-relation between Class Observer and the ELT field

Image I illustrates some words which are used in the research of class observers in the ELT field. The clusters that appear on it are evidence of the connection of some words. Reliability and validity words are notorious especially from the years 2010 and 2012.

There is a study, “*Keeping SCORE*: Reflective Practice Through Classroom Observations” (Farrell, 2011), that deals with a short series of classroom observations that the author, acting as a facilitator, made to a novice teacher to help her negotiate her first

year of teaching. The article examines the importance of using observation tools and patterns in the observation. This SCORE tool is useful for assessing the validity and reliability of the practice. On the same token, here we can identify the importance of words that are rounded into the class observer in the ELT field. Some words such as validation, instructions, and scales, are part of the interactions, patterns, and guidelines in classroom observations, particularly in the ELT field. These words are largely recognized by the community and have become “normalized” when there are evaluation and/or feedback processes.

The class observer and the ELT field are strongly connected, and some authors have researched about it. For instance, it exists an importance about how the teacher is evaluating, so, in that case the classroom observation is commonly used to measure the quality of teaching (Borg, 2018). On the same hand, this discipline of the ELT faces into several aspects inside/outside the class; reflecting upon, it is necessary to mention a study where the classroom processes, including teaching practices, instruction aspects and teacher-student interactions are explored during an observation. (Hinchey, 2010).

The particularities presented before influencing a link between class observation and the ELT field. As has been said, observation is a relevant practice or instrument for English teachers and even more; the observers are the subjects that perform in these actions.

Below the last image is presented. This image represents the key words immersed in the class observers in the ELT field.

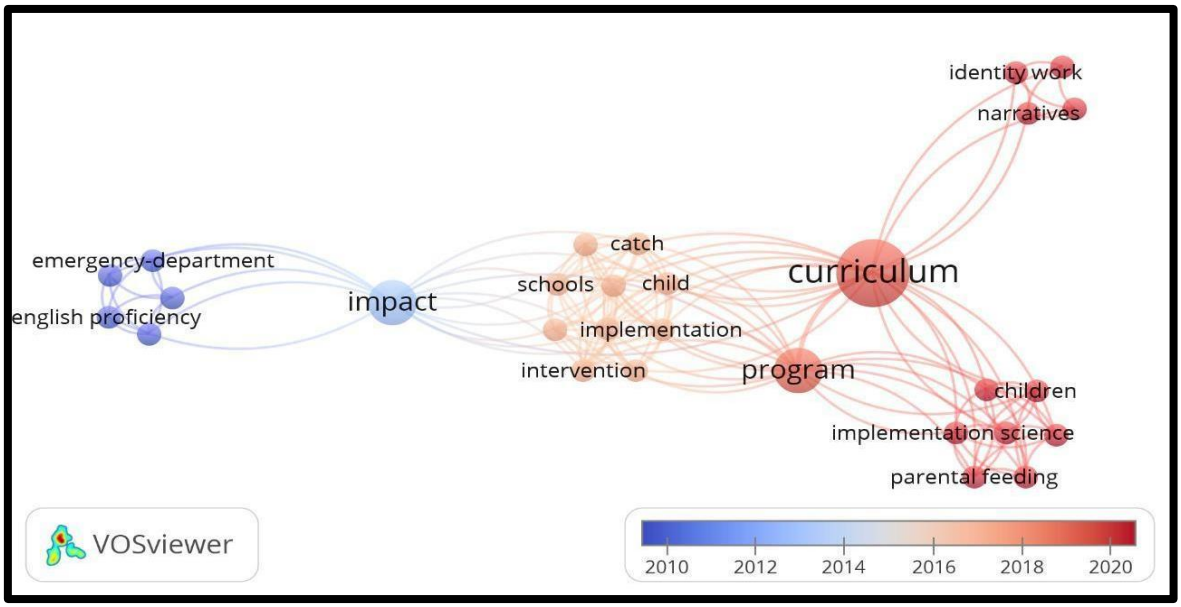


Image F. (Profiling step 2). Co-relation between Class Observer and the ELT field

Image F shows the keywords that appear when including the words "class observer" and "ELT field" in the software. Here, I would like to write about some scholars from South America who have been researching the class observer in the ELT field. I also try to fit the documents I have read within image F.

There is an article titled, *"Teacher evaluation in Chile: highlights and complexities in 13 years of experience"* (Avalos, 2017). It examines the process of establishing a teacher evaluation system in Chile and its acceptance by teachers over time. Evidence is also examined from a variety of data sources and research related to the evaluation system as well as teachers' use of its results. According to the previous statement, it is pertinent to quote this:

> The Chilean evaluation system operates since four sources of evidence: a portfolio, an interview by a peer teacher, a written report, and a self-evaluation report by the teacher following a given structure. The most significant of these instruments is the portfolio that

> every teacher must prepare based on precise instructions provided by the MoE (Ministry of Education) about how it is to be presented. The portfolio contains a documentation of the teacher's actions and behaviors from the classroom observation (P. 3.)

The portfolio deals with a package of activities that are set in the Chilean evaluation system. In such system, according to Avalos, the video recording works as an instrument of observation which evaluates the teachers' *English proficiency* in a "framed", "lined" way. There is a clear implementation of the observation system since an external team organizes the purpose of the evaluation. This program has the rules of the procedures and implements them into the rubric of the system.

Another article called, *"Through the looking glass: can classroom observation and coaching improve teacher performance in Brazil*?" (Bruns, Costa, and Cunha. 2016) evaluated a program in the northeastern Brazilian state of Ceará designed to improve teachers' effectiveness by using an information "shock" (benchmarked feedback) and expert coaching to promote increased professional interaction among teachers in the same school. The Ceará program had two core elements: providing an "information shock" to schools, by giving teachers benchmarked feedback about their teaching practice from standardized classroom observations using the Stallings instrument[2], and access to a one-year coaching program, delivered through ongoing skype interactions with a high skilled team of trainers. Such program was divided into two stages. The first, ***the intervention***, had to do with teachers being exposed to multiple observations of classes as a pattern of monitoring, controlling, and collecting information. The second stage, called

[2] *The Stallings instrument generates robust quantitative data on the interaction of teachers and students in the classroom, with a high degree of inter-rater reliability (0.8 or higher) among observers with relatively limited training, in contrast to instruments such as CLASS, which require a high degree of observer training and skill to apply reliably.* (Bruns, Costa, and Cunha. 2016. p. 6.)

implementation, seek to obtain the appropriate data through classroom observations to have an action plan and execute the project.

Tendency 3. The BNP affects the role/position of the ELT observer when improving the EFL teachers' performance.

Finally, there is another important source in relation to class observers in the ELT field locally speaking. I traced some documents of the Bilingualism National Plan (BNP) policies in Colombia. This profiling also brings out the Class Observations in the ELT local policies.

The bilingualism policies in Colombia have been aimed toward the education projects in reinforcing the teachers' professional development, assessment procedures and curriculum design. The main objectives of the policies and their models consist of having tools for assessing teachers and analyzing children's behaviors and schools' environments.

There are some government policies' objectives (In the Bilingualism National Plan 2021-2021, Colombia Very Well-2015-2025 and, Teacher Training and Teachers of Teachers, 2017, British Council) that trace classroom observation as documents to monitor the performance of teachers, as a technique to assess teaching practices and give feedback to in-service teachers for improving their teaching practices regulated in a quality process. The table below shows the local plan oriented within a specific objective and joining into the class observation strategy.

The following chart illustrates the function of observations in the BNP. It is about a policy-oriented practice where the program gets major benefits about the observations the observer makes at certain times. Every program suggests a specific path to carry out the

observations (depending on the context, places, and objectives). I summarized the observation in the BNP with the next three strategies as well as the discussion of each of them.

Plan	Policy oriented toward	Classroom Observation Strategy
Plan de Bilingüismo Municipal de Mosquera Mosquera Lives English 2012-2021	Professional development of in-service English language teachers	SWOT for formative feedback
Colombia Very Well-2015-2025	Colombian Teachers of English in the public sector	Peer Observation
Teacher Training and Teachers of Teachers, 2017, British Council	Pre-service teachers for ELT teachers	Observation guide. Training in Observation (materials, resources, guidelines)

Chart 1. Own production. Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación. Seminar: Subjectivity in ELT, Bogotá 2020

The first documented project is called, *"Mosquera Lives English 2012-2021"*. It seeks to facilitate the Professional Development of Teachers in English through several strategies. I used to work on that strategy as an observer and I identified some issues to explore during elaborating this thesis. Also, in an archive search, the Secretary of Education of Mosquera (Mosquera is a small town near Bogotá, Colombia's capital) defined the observation of classes as a valuable tool for the improvement of teachers' performances since it allows identification of all the components through a SWOT (Strengths,

Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) matrix. The SWOT matrix serves as an analysis for assessing the already-mentioned aspects in a specific situation/practice) of each one of the teachers and gives them formative feedback about their teaching performance in the classroom.

The second document is from the Colombian National Program: *"Colombia Very Well- 2015-2025."* The objective of this program is to strengthen the communicative competences of English among Colombians since this language "empowers citizens and allows the country to be inserted in global cultural dynamics and in the knowledge economy" (p. 14). One of the strategies consists of peer observations of Colombian English teachers in the public sector. The objective is that, based on peer observation, the opportunities for improvement in teaching practice can be identified.

The last document is EFMMa (acronym in Spanish: Escuelas Formadoras y Maestros de Maestros- English acronym: Teacher Training Schools/Institutes and Teachers of Teachers, 2017). It is a combined project of the British Council (one of the institutions that promotes observation practices in Colombia) and the MoE that seeks to position the pedagogical practice of future teachers as a fundamental axis of their training and to contribute to the improvement of the quality of teaching. The project states a round of observations of pre-service teachers for ELT teachers. The purpose is to follow a class observation guide, where the pre-service teacher will observe the teachers in classes (materials they use, methodology, activities, and evaluation, among others).

A gap that I checked is about the patterns and guidelines the educational strategies belong to the government followed when utilizing class observations. The plans presented in the chart are part of the guidelines followed and they represent the policy-oriented

practice of the government. The class observation objective followed by the policymakers is immersed into this dynamic that can feed trust data. Once again, the observation and the position of the observer is seen as something important in terms of gathering information but not as relevant as offering options in the BNP or Programs to strengthen learning processes.

As stated, there are insights that support this profiling. I first explored the main aspects of CO worldwide. Then I examined the importance of analyzing the observer in different disciplines but in the ELT field. Finally, I identified the tendencies of CO in the ELT field.

This profiling allowed me to develop as of a device, procedure, and technique, or reached at any issue deals with class observations, the observer, and the subject observer. It is seen that the Profiling described the current knowledge about this thesis matter through the analysis of similar or related published work including books, articles, among others). For me, it is important to provide a comprehensive overview of the class observation/the observer in the ELT field and what should be further researched, in order to help formulating the hypothesis this thesis intends to address. The profiling also helped me identify three trends in the literature that clearly show that the observer as a subject has been instrumentalized, taking out the subjectivity as an English teacher and knowledge and putting the observation practice itself in an instrument system. Furthermore, the observation is established as a practice that has been normalized, without being questioned nor the roles/positions of observers and the instruments on it.

I carried out the three tendencies that benefited to me for analyzing the gaps and relevant actions of intervention in the research.

The achievement of carrying out this profiling is about how careful I was when searching for the authors, texts, articles, books, and literature on my doctoral topic's interest. As I said, it is not easy to do research on something for which there is not much evidence. However, I dug into the literature and tried to come up with an overview, summary, and analysis of the current studies about class observations and the ELT observers.

There is one word missing in the profiling, "*narratives*," which would be seen in the correlation between class observer and the ELT field. In this doctoral thesis, this is a keyword. The narratives are evidenced as a methodological path to carry out an analysis of positions of ELT observers in Colombia. In fact, later in this thesis the reader will find many statements related to observers' narratives and the analysis of them.

In that order of ideas, the narratives function as a keyword in the correlation, and likewise, they illuminate this research and the scope that it may have when analyzing the data obtained.

Next, the theoretical framework presented, which aims to bring together a set of concepts and models that constitute a specific approach explaining the research's problem.

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3. Theoretical Framework Voice

Exploration of the Bases and its Foundations

This chapter displays a theoretical framework of the subject positions of the ELT observers through the reflections and analyses of the concepts that were researched in the previous profiling (Observations, Class observers, and the ELT observer).

This theoretical framework identifies the sources about the ELT class observers and the topic of the subject position. This chapter will also emphasize the compilation of antecedents / theoretical considerations on which this research is based as evidence. The theoretical and contextual support of the concepts that were used to approach the research will also be highlighted.

Within this part of the thesis, I will introduce and describe the theory that explains the unseen, silencing, and effective invisibilization of the ELT observers' subject positions in the process of classroom observation practices in Colombia. During this theoretical framework, I included the structure that can hold or support the theory of this research study.

The theoretical framework from the beginning of this research has been built considering 3 main areas: observation as a social dynamic, observation in the educational areas, and the observation in the specific area of knowledge, the ELT field. Later on, in the presentation of this thesis, I will present three constructs about the subject position of the observers.

3.1. Observation as a social dynamic

In this section I want to call the reader's attention towards the practice of observation as a social practice and its subsequent sophistication in different domains of thought in this area.

According to RAE, observation is a journey of discovery and is the ideal means to uncover concrete realities. Observing is "examining carefully ... warning, repairing ... looking carefully." (Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy- Diccionario de la Real Academia Española-RAE, translation). Furthermore, for the classic author, Weber (1997), "observation signifies what is known about reality are partialities, rejecting the idea of absolute reality. This indicates that classroom observations, when done infrequently, only show a small portion of everything that happens in the classroom or every characteristic of the teacher. Observation according to Weber is a comprehensive-explanatory idea, which shapes social relations as actions of meaning" (Droguett, 2009, p.51.). These definitions demonstrate that observations serve as an examining eye to give peeks of various parts of reality.

Moreover, observation has direct and indirect effects on the behavior of the subjects performing the observation, since the observer acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others (observed EFL teachers, directives, and observers). About this fact, it is important to quote Watson's Manifesto (1913), which found that the traditional methods of observation carried out in the home, hospital, nursery, school, research laboratory, or other locations were done by relatively untrained observers such as parents (mainly mothers) or observers with some degree of training. It represents that observations are not only limited to

classroom settings but also in several other circumstances of daily life by all sorts of people and professions.

The observation is regarded as direct if done in the natural environment of the subject being observed with no intervention or intrusion other than the presence of the observer(s), and without the use of questionnaires, interviews, standardized tests, and experiments (Wright, 1960). In an article that was already published, Martínez (2021), I established that observation is a practice that has been validated in situations such as the following: *a). the laboratory, to verify the phenomenon that is faced and to establish a diagnosis, b). hospitals, to assess the progress of a patient's treatment, and c). education, to gauge the behavior of students and teachers*. The observation as a social dynamic has been accepted and widely used in different contexts, fields, and disciplines (p.36).

In contrast, observation becomes hierarchical as a technique, applied in clearly visible mechanisms. For example, the "observatories" enunciated by Foucault (Discipline and Punish 1977), possess an "almost ideal model: the military camp - the short-lived, artificial city, built and reshaped almost at will; the seat of a power that must be all the stronger, but also even more discreet, even more effective and on the alert in that it is exercised over armed men. "Observation can be a technique used to introduce power effects. Based on the previous statement, it is pertinent to name the process of panopticons within observation as a social dynamic". (p. 171). The function of the panopticon, used to be vigilant of prisoners, Foucault explains as:

> "Bentham's Panopticon is the architectural figure of this composition. The principle on which it was based: at the periphery, an annular building; at the center, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the peripheric building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they

> have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other" (p.200).

In Figure 1 (Annex section), the architecture of the panopticon can be seen. The purpose of the design is to allow all (*pan*-) people of an institution to be observed (-*opticon*) by a single watchman without those people being able to tell if they are being observed. This architecture consists of a circular structure with an inspection house in the center, from which the director of the institution can control the rest of the inmates, installed on the perimeter.

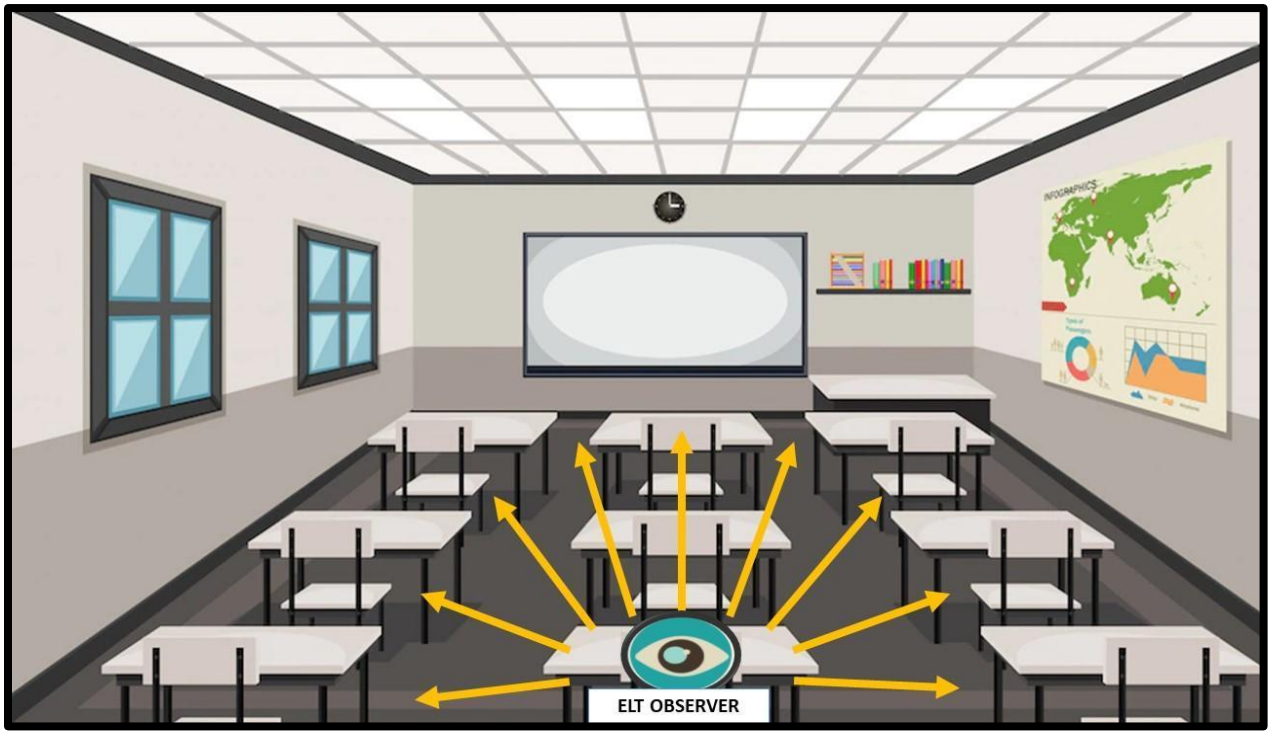
Keeping a sense of perspective on this issue, I consider it intriguing to analyze the ELT class observation through a panopticon system. The observer is physically located in a place where he or she can observe everything that happens in the classroom. We observers receive training where the trainers explain to us where the class can be "best" observed. This is the place where observers can identify each of the actions and movements of both the teachers and the students. It is a panopticon in the ELT classroom, where the observer is placed to evaluate, judge, or simply have an eye for surveillance and control of the class. The observer is the director who controls the teachers, as if they were inmates in the case of the historic purpose of the panopticon, within a specific structure.

This infrastructure must be almost perfect to obtain the expected results during the observation. The better placed I (as an observer) am to observe, the more likely I am to succeed during this practice. However, what happens if I am not in the right place? Will there be problems with the observation? Will I not get the expected data? Do I change my position to observe the class? These questions circle in my mind about what it means to be

located "correctly" to observe an English class; and above all, does this affect the dynamics of English class observation?

According to the observation training I had and the literature that I collected (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010; Lam, 2001; Merç, 2015), the ELT observer should be at the back of the room, observing the whole class picture; therefore, he or she can better see the movements, expressions, and reactions of teachers/students in the class. It is not common to see an observer right in front of students, or next to the teacher since the observer needs to be invisible for the others' eyes; he or she must undoubtedly not be perceived by others.

The following picture shows approximately where ELT Observers should be located when carrying out observations of English classes.



Picture 1. The ELT observer location in an observation. Own design- Image was taken and adapted from: https://www.freepik.com/free-vector/interior classroom_4667461.htm#page=2&query=classroom&from_query=salon%20de%20clase&position=14&from_view=search

The idea is to identify the place of the observer within a control system, which is clearly necessary. The people's behaviors are controlled in prisons which prompts the question, what does the class observer control? The class observer identifies, monitors and controls more sophisticated guidelines/protocols during the observation, which entails an accepted social practice in the field of ELT.

3.1.1. Observation in the educational areas

Another area to explore is observation as a practice used both in pre-service and in-service teacher training as well as research on learning contexts. It consists of systematically and objectively recording what happens in the class to be able to study and interpret it later. Observation is used in most academic disciplines. Reinke, et.al. (2015) stated that class observation goes from the prescription of what should happen in the classroom to the description of what happens in it, and from there to the explanation of its causes, and the learning context. When classes are observed, the description of the interaction in the classroom is strengthened and everything that happens in it is observed in detail (p.7).

The observation of classes incorporates objects of knowledge, the treatment of the mistakes, the teacher's practice, the interaction between students, among others.

In terms of the professional level, it is relevant to argue that several teachers (from all disciplines) have faced the observation during their teaching practices. Some of them like to be observed, others are afraid of being observed, and others just do not care much. Related to the previous part, I would like to add an excerpt from a conversation I had with a social science teacher from a public school. She argues the following,

> "We are observed by a camera (video) to be evaluated and judged. ... It does not seem fair that they observe each of the details of my class, I feel arbitrated and pressured. Besides, a person does not observe me, it is a machine that records all my movements that will be studied by a stranger " [sic] (Conversation taken in March 2021)

The conversation stated before was about the meaning of observations from a teachers' perspective. The social science teacher expressed her opinion about the policies of the local government towards the evaluation system which includes observations.

Therefore, the observation in professional settings has to do with all the contexts where the observed subject is placed, the person or machine who observes, and the main reasons for carrying out this observation practice.

Consequently, the MoE (Ministry of Education) 2002, implements an integral assessment of public-school teachers. One of the strategies consists in the observation of their classes. In-service teachers must record their classes based on a "manual for self-recording of the practice video"; as part of the Formative Diagnostic Character Assessment (ECDF-acronym in Spanish). The observation format, in this strategy, is divided into precise structures on what the observer should see: performance, goals, objectives, strategies, materials, resources, evaluation, among other factors, to control and follow in a rigid way the class observations. Observation formats and rubrics of evaluations will be stated in a further chapter (number 4) of this research paper.

It is possible to identify the observation of classes at a professional level as a practice of surveillance, evaluation, and a certain discipline by following the parameters proposed by the National Government, peer professional staff, and administrative people. Government educational policies have taken class observations into account to assess the

performance of teachers in general. It is a requirement which has affected/benefited the educational community in ways that will be explored in chapters 7 and 8.

3.1.2. The Observation in the specific area of knowledge (ELT field)

The last area to highlight in this theoretical framework is the observation in the ELT field. It is necessary to say that this practice plays a fundamental role in the teachers' evaluation, feedback, monitoring, performance, among other situations in this field.

The ELT Class Observation has implied a standardized and regulated dynamic by many educational institutions in this field. It could be said that it is a "canonical[3]" practice. This has positives and negatives and tends to be an overall objective process despite the subjectivities that are inevitable yet hidden in the process. These subjectivities are reflective of the feelings, opinions, and experiences of the observers who partake in the process.

It is pertinent to quote a passage from a chapter I wrote in 2021 called "Problematizing the Subject Position of the Observers in the ELT Field" in relation to effectiveness. I argued,

> In a review of studies of EFL/ESL, we have found that coupling observation and effectiveness has been overused, for example, in one, done at the King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 2014, of EFL teachers' perceptions of a classroom observation system in its English Language Institute. It states that the classroom observations, which are originally intended for the teacher's professional growth, are usually more evaluative and less developmental, leading to teacher burn-out and less-effective classroom performances. The author also points out how instructional supervision

[3] Although the term *canonica*l is used more from the church, I wanted to include it to show the observation in ELT as a practice held according to the rules, principles, or canon. It is an exercise validated by the field in most teaching evaluation processes.

> is a “ubiquitous mechanism in teachers’ professional lives”, used to collect data about what goes on in classrooms through a box-ticking exercise, and based on judgments made in both Western and non-Western contexts. (p. 33.)

It is seen by the CO as a technique of improving professional development, instructional supervision, and effectiveness. Then, one of the characteristics to analyze has to do with observation tools, patterns and negotiations that are important aspects within this practice in the ELT field. Even though my focus is on the subjectivities found, these aspects should be analyzed and discussed. Those low-inference tools (e.g., collecting data trough observations, the importance of watching interactions between teachers and students, and formats such as checklists or binary yes/no responses in an observation rubric) may be more useful because they focus on separate features of classroom interaction, including verbal, paralinguistic, non-linguistic, cognitive, affective, and discourse features (Chaudron, 1988).

Also, in the ELT field, the observer should keep in mind some other ways emerged from traditional classroom learning, as Nguyen, Le and Ngo, mentions “*The inflexibility (regular attendance, fixed study plans, classroom time, learning pace, etc.) has made it difficult for learners to pursue their education, especially learners with full time work or with unstable working schedules*. The observer also captures these situations inside the classroom (Martínez & Mendez, 2023. p.2)

Most of us English language teachers are familiar with class observations. We have been observed, we have observed classes, and we keep in mind the likelihood of this practice entering our classrooms or we use these to shape our teaching practices. These

previous descriptions about observations are used to have a general idea of the topic, not only in the field of ELT but in other areas.

The following section in this theoretical framework states three constructs (Subject Position, The observer in the Class Observations and, the Subject from the decolonial project) about the subject position of the observers.

3.2. Subject position

Subject-position constructions are built from discourses by those who subject themselves to a position from which they can make the most sense of the discourse (Hall, 1997, p. 56). This is relevant in the sense of contributing to understanding how ELT observers hold authority from this position to expose an insider perspective, showing inner layers that literature within the discourse has not been able to detect.

A position is expressed in terms of regimes of truth. In this case, the class observation rubrics made for class observations are the beholders of what is considered truth. The observers deal with rubrics and guidelines that are sets of rules, statements, and understandings which define what is true or real at any given time in the CO. The observer arrives at the school or institution and generates a superior position towards the teacher who accepts the top-down observations from external eyes; an acceptance that interprets the power as an issue of domination.

A position has to do with situations in which the observed teacher sometimes feels dominated at the time of observation; that is, most of time during observations the position of the observer as well as their expertise and previous experiences are identified, valued, and respected.

The positions (in this case of the observers) are dynamic; but also, these positions can shift within social settings (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003a). The position deals with situations in context, places, and actions. Thus, the position theory also thrives on the connection among subjects in a social environment. About this, it is important to highlight what Moghaddam and Harré, et.al say, "*A position includes rights, duties, and obligations of an individual in any social context*". (2003a).

The positions of the observers can be evidenced during their daily practices. These are different depending on several factors (emotional, work, personal and others) the observer changes her/his observation routine and becomes more dynamic regarding the context where it is carried out. That is, an observer feels differently observing a class because of its geographical location, its state of mind, and the people with whom it deals. This makes the positions of the observers in constant movement and not static or structural. Consequently, the observer is a political subject who provides well-being to the educational community, which understands that there is a person with some positions that transcend collaboration in the pursuit of objectives. As Mendez, 2018, mentioned, an English teacher (who is positioned as Observer as well), recognizes oneself in discourses of the kind, one can discover behind these essentialized and idealized identities, the condition to be at risk or in danger of serving a dominant group instrumentalization and being located in a subaltern position that constrains to obedience without contemplation of what one thinks of oneself, the knowledge that one has of the English teaching or the political stances one has towards this practice, and how it is inserted into bilingualism practices and education as a political act (Gramsci, 1971; Lin, 2008; Zuluaga, O, 2009; Méndez, 2014) p. 204.

The observer is willing to have a series of representations that are carried out socially in a purposeful way to constitute, modify, develop, and organize de-instrumentalized practices of class observations.

About the aspect of the social context within the subject position, Andreouli 2020, stated,

> Social representations provide both the meanings related to an object as well as the positions towards that object that are available for people; meanings and positions are the two components of social identities, p. 14.3.

Concerning the social subject's identities, they "*reflect individuals' efforts to locate themselves in their societies about the social representations of their societies*" (Duveen & Lloyd, 1986, p. 220). Subject´s identities can be defined as positions with social events since people make sense of themselves and their experiences by building social representations (Duveen & Lloyd, 1986, 1990).

The ELT class observers states his or her own position at the start of the observation; however, these positions are changing, diverse and adjustable, for instance the observer could perform different from a public to a private institution, or the observer can omit some rubric's evaluation aspects depending on the dynamics of the class. It is not possible to establish which position the observer takes before performing the observation practice, that is, there is not a position manual of the observer. The experience of the observers in stating their positions are given when a teacher is evaluated, judged, and observed. For this, the following passage reveals an opinion about the position of an observer when observing an English language schoolteacher in a public school in Bogotá, Colombia,

"It is not easy to identify a position when I am observing a class... that is, I have several positions. I can be an evaluative observer, an observer who follows the rules, and others... The position varies depending on the context where you are, that position is not static."

Conversation with an Observer, Bogotá. November 2019.

These observer's positions have institutional configurations (with the institutions that offer class observation services, observation training and/or teacher professional development), as well as the position of the observer within the improvement and institutional feedback processes; and finally, the political position of the observer, according to the government guidelines (National bilingualism plans) and resist the standards that regulate the observation practices at the national level.

ELT observers (many of them) are also teachers, who are fundamental agents in the previously mentioned processes and resist the practices that are carried out. At this part, it is important to quote Mendez 2016, She states,

> It is about establishing descriptions in these relationships from the theoretical field. For example, the positions of the "Maestro" subject as a political subject in her/his participation in the configuration of their work and the resistance to the reform that subjects them to being what they are not willing to be. (p.51). (Own translation)

The ELT observer has handled a position as an agent of change in the National government policy, this subject is a key participant in these processes and has managed to establish dynamics of reformation within the system. This will be identified and argued later in the analysis of the thesis (chapters 6 and 7) for its understanding and development.

During the trace of information, it is also possible to identify a position of the observer in CO called the scientific observer. This observer is demanding with the

observation parameters (followed step by step) and maintains requirements of the rubric in detail and performs a systematic and rigorous observation. There is a small space for subjectivity during the observation carried out by this subject, but the most important thing is to demonstrate the effectiveness in which this practice is implemented. Technique and sequence are powerful tools for this scientific observer subject. Apart from this, this scientific observer must be prepared (getting training on CO) with specific guidelines and certify his or her expertise. In Colombia these guidelines for observers are indicated by the government within all the rubrics/guidelines to follow on. As named in the observation system, also it is in relation to what happen in Colombia, it is relevant to quote apart from the book called Teacher Evaluation to enhance professional practice- *Observer Use of Standardized Observation Protocols in Consequential Observation Systems*,

> "…To become certified, observers watched a videotaped classroom lesson and collected evidence that was objective, detailed, and appropriately used to support scores. Observers needed also to be able to accurately score teaching practice, which is measured by their agreement with master observers' scores. They must be able to do this for all the 21 elements used in 2012-2013.Certification status is broken down into four categories of proficiency (Danielson & McGreal, 2000 P.2)"

Likewise, the subject position is permeated by social characteristics, which have to do with constructions of identity, recognition, and subjectivity particularities. This thesis takes these aspects into account and analyzes them from the observer subject perspective in the ELT field.

3.3. The observer in the Class Observations (CO)

The class observer is molded, trained, and positioned as an "expert" in the functions that he or she performs. The word expert was found and identified in the Colombian National Program “Colombia Very Well- 2015-2025”, as an example. In the document provided from MoE, they named the importance of having “experts” to help the ELT Colombian community p.4-7. For this program it is important to have the expertise of people who know and have experience in teaching EFL, are familiar with teaching dynamics, and have had experience as class observers. The task of the expert is to provide the appropriate tools for the success of the project. Preparation for this expertise is fundamental and will help to form a subject capable of following precise and rigid guidelines to comply with the proposed objectives. The expert sounds like a trainer who can do many tasks including the observation inside EFL teachers’ classrooms.

In Wajnryb’s (1992) words, “*the task of the trainer is to help trainees understand the various processes involved in the teaching and learning of a language and the complex array of activities that occur in a language classroom*” (p. 5). The observer needs a skilled and trained eye to perceive, understand, and benefit from observing the proceedings of learning and teaching. The position of the observer is produced by the power of experts (Foucault, 1982).

These learning and teaching spaces of which the observer takes part are implemented through an imported structure. About that, it is important to highlight the contributions of Jordão (2016). She points out, “*the subjects have submitted to the colonial structure and accepted imported methods, imported language descriptions, and imported acquisition theories*”. The imported classroom observation methods, descriptions, and

theories will become evident; also, “the imported observers’ subject positions” will be seen. p. 196. Through my own experience, I realize that several trainers of the National Bilingualism programs in Colombia are foreigners. Trainings, workshops and/or preparation courses are oriented by native speakers from the U.S., U.K., Canada, and other foreign countries. The topics covered have to do with teacher professional development, assessment, lesson planning and methods of observing English classes. In the next chapter, the sequence that is recommended for a "good” observation of English classes will be shown by suitable forms and guidelines in the observation. For now, it is important to note these observer positions permeated by foreign or imported practices.

As can be seen, observers are also teachers, men, or women with experience in teaching. They have been observed and sometimes they do not agree within the class observation practices. This is an extract from a conversation with an ELT observer taking about the observer in the English Language classroom,

> *“To be honest, I don't feel good when I observe my colleagues’ classes. It's not easy to be observed or evaluated in your practice, I think that few people like that. In fact, I don't like to feel "superior" when I'm doing a class observation. I say this because I would not like a person to feel superior to me when observing my class... that disturbs me a bit...”*
>
> *Conversation with an Observer, Bogotá. March 2020.*

Subject positions in the English CO place those involved in the observation process into hierarchies (Foucault, 1977). These hierarchies are used as a mechanism of control. The position of the observer is permeated by a mechanism for the administration, control, and evaluation of people; that is, the observers have privileges but also, there are positions of the observers (the subjectivities) that are ignored. It does not matter if the observer is a

teacher-male or female; the important thing is to obey the quality item which consists of having a rigid, static, and universal position which makes the (other) positions invisible.

In respect of the observer in the English Class Observations, it is important to state what Bruns, Costa & Cunha, say, that the observer also uses different instruments, rubrics, and techniques that help the individual teacher's abilities (2018). This denotes that the observer manipulates a series of instruments and strategies to be able to carry out a successful CO process. In other words, the observer plays the role of a "user" of tools while performing their function inside and outside the ELT classrooms.

The observer in EFL classes is also a teacher, a co-worker, and a peer. The use of peer observations has increased in recent years. As a teacher, it is important to look over and hear peer suggestions when they observe me in a class. Also, this peer observation process consists of my own reflections based on my peer's practices during an EFL lesson. This quote of Kanuka and Sadowski (2020) shows how important the reflective peer observation is,

> The findings of study show that peer observation programs are not an intimidating and/or judgmental process. This supports the critical role of reflective dialogue for the facilitation of a trusting and caring peer observation process, as well as supportive of feedback through scholarly dialogue by caring about one's colleagues. (p.9)

To conclude, it is insightful to mention that Copland argues, "*there is a lack of professionalism of observers and their inability to frequently revisit the same classroom to record teachers*" (2008). This argument is important and necessary to note since the observer is also a human being. The observer has feelings, makes mistakes, evaluates, criticizes, and feels. The position of the observer, and epistemic, reflective, collaborative, or other positions are rounded in the ELT field. These subjects are in permanent contact with

the educational contexts and can contribute to the field. Here the relevant thing is to scrutinize the position of "others" that dwell within the observers in the ELT field.

3.4. Subject from the decolonial project

The subject of decoloniality is important for its analysis and study. The observer subject has privileges (as mentioned before) considering they are placed at the superior position of the hierarchy, but also their role tends to be limited because they cannot fully express some of their insightful viewpoints since they are bound to a rubric. There may be positions of the observer such as "subject with knowledge", "analytical subject" or perhaps, an "empirical subject," but based on this subject, from the decolonial project, Grosfoguel mentions, "… the epistemic subject is an abstract one… without appearance but this subject has a clear, individualistic and universal vocation…" (2007: 63-64). I can determine through analysis that the subject observer has a clear idea about his or her functions in the community. As an example, the observers can understand themselves as being effective, interpretive, reflective, critical, and so on. However, I keep in mind that the subject in the decolonial project invites the observers to analyze themselves, to understand the actions in "other" ways, in a local process, and to carry out continuous intrinsic analysis of our subjectivities. I have identified that the observer upholds a superior position. The observer shows this superiority in their practices during CO. From my empirical thoughts and the experience in this topic, I tend to think that some observers take advantage of their "superior" situations that are presented to them. I wonder, if an English teacher does not want his or her class to be observed, will the observer employ his or her "superior" position to insist on observing the class? The observer may in some way force an English teacher to be observed. The position of the observer would be analyzed and probably found to be a

problematic one since the observers are identified and conceptualized as "superior" subjects from a decolonial perspective; as well as assigns the observers a superior position.

Another aspect in this construct of the subject from the decolonial project deals with ontological assumptions. The CO tends to be immersed in rigid mechanisms (hierarchical processes, use of rubrics to evaluate, and forms for feedback, among others) which have made the subjectivities of the observers invisible; this is evident in the position of these subjects. The being of the observer is ignored as regards the data collection, figures, and results that must be dealt with in a COP. This practice or act of ignoring represents an unknown situation in the ELT field since most of the literature does not have an overview of this. It is important to catch the attention in dynamics of the coloniality of being, more specifically, of the invisibility and dehumanization of the self, (Maldonado, 2005a, Mignolo, 2000a). The observer has no voice in the creation of a rubric of reflection in her/his observation practice. Coloniality does not admit criticism and rejects all forms of the observers' subjectivity. The subject from the decolonial project allowed me to provide a lens of analysis from that observing subject. That observing subject that is hierarchical, structural, and rigid; it changes into other positions of desire, uncertainty, and humbleness.

On the same token, the subject also generates the possibility of intersubjective relationship between the community and who is the subject of the research, feeling and, analyzing the discourses not only from the spoken word, but incorporating sensations, perceptions, emotions, etc. framed in a social-historical context. Noel, 2019 mentioned that recognizing parts of a network between subjects produces and reproduces an ethical exercise which is relevant in the society (p.3). It is for that reason that the subject in decoloniality enacts an aspect of recognition, but most of the time it does so through communal, reflexive, and mutual practice.

The decolonial project allowed me to provide a lens of analysis from that observing subject. That observing subject has been subjected to power relations, underpinned by colonial situations that are hierarchical, structural, and rigid; however, positions of desire, uncertainty, and humbleness are experienced and obscured by the standardized practice of observation. The observer is sticked, disciplined and attached by coloniality through the observation rubrics that hook us, the training full of monitoring/surveillance and the government policies that are aggressively imposed; Observation is a space where the subject-observers have no voice, the emotions and subjectivities of the subjects involved in these changing dynamics are ignored.

Furthermore, there are ethical assumptions in the COP that are related to the decolonial turn. The observer's position is affected when he or she should decide on a specific situation of evaluation and/or feedback. The ethical position of the observer is not seen now, but it is the time of analyzing this fact. One of the gaps this research wants to fill deals with the self-negotiations that the observers have, and which are not evident in the COP. These are negotiations inside our "beings," but they do not fit in the system. Also, people involved in the ELT field should know the subjectivities of the observers during their daily practices, which will hopefully emerge during implementing this thesis.

The next chapter will be about the rubrics in the class observation processes. It is notwithstanding the use of rubrics by observers when doing this practice. It will be a chapter "out of the model" in the research' procedures; however, it is important to analyze the rubrics, guidelines and forms the observers handle at time of observing EFL classes.

3.5. The forms/rubrics of observation and the ELT observer immersed on them.

This another section of the Exploration of the Bases and its Foundations about the Observations, Class observers, and the ELT observer.

It is known that the rubrics of observation can be used to provide feedback to EFL teachers in types of assignments, evaluating the performance of teaching, identifying the strengths and weaknesses in class, promoting teachers' development, and supplying general information about the class. The class observation rubrics are important since they clarify the expectation of the quality of work that ELT teachers should have. Also, the rubrics allow observed teachers to focus on the criteria by which the process will be assessed, including, learning outcomes/objectives/manage of class/use of language/evaluation/, among other ones.

However, at the same time, the rubrics are instruments used in class observation processes as elements of control, criticism, and supervision.

I have noticed (as an observer) that the rubric of observation is a vehicle to be adapted into real educational contexts and it is helpful to improve practices of teaching. Researchers and the trainers of observers argue that including standard-based observation rubrics as an evaluation measure promotes teacher development by providing information to teachers about how they may improve their practice (Papay 2012).

Many observed EFL teachers do not like when an external observer uses these rubrics, since they feel intimidated by this form and do not always perform what the rubric seeks in his or her usual daily teaching practices.

Even so, there are some questions that have to do with the classroom observation rubrics that I will discuss during the development of this chapter. These questions include:

- Why is it important to use rubrics during a class observation? How relevant are these?

- Is the use of these rubrics for ELT observers a purely objective process? Do they have a voice and a vote to fix the guidelines of the rubrics?

- How does the ELT observer feel when using these rubrics? Do they prefer to omit some parameters within the rubrics?

The answers to these questions will be presented throughout the progress of this chapter which has to do with the use of rubrics of observation and the ELT observer immersed in them.

During this part of the thesis, I included the voices of some observed EFL teachers, coordinators, directors, and the ELT observers. Likewise, some class observation forms are presented with their respective rubrics/guidelines/parameters and step-by-step process to encompass the position of the observer handling them.

This thesis' chapter also highlights the position of observers when dealing with observation rubrics. The observers react differently at time of getting observation rubric forms. The observers' subject position is rounded at the use of rubrics, guidelines, patterns and so on. Their negotiations allow them to drive them into omitting parameters of rubrics or going on the canonical system of observation rubrics.

3.5.1. Checklist scales on observation rubrics

One of the easiest rubrics forms an observer uses is a checklist scale. It offers a general overview of the observed class, and it also allows the observer to be practical and punctual in their job. O'Sullivan, et.al, (2002) argues, "the checklists in observations were

designed to help establish which of the functions resulted, and which were absent" (p. 40). Then, the observation checklists are designed to exemplify the functions that happen in a class. The use of the checklists is related to the "patterns" structurally in line with the specific objective of the class observations.

There is a draft set of three checklists (Appendix 1), representing each of the elements of Weir's categorization (1993), based on the *Validating speaking-test tasks (O'Sullivan, et.al, 2002)*

Although these items (annex 1) are from a speaking observation checklist; They are very similar to those used in the observations of English language classes since the communicative elements are observed/monitored by the observer.

I would like to mention that I feel comfortable at using this kind of rubric due to its simplicity and generality. Observers most of the time only must include a mark on the checklist, which does not require a deep reflection on the observed class.

In forms 1 and 2 we can see an example of the checklist and scales used in an observation rubric.

FORM 1 OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Oviedo, D. 2017. Enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera en preescolar apoyada en materiales audiovisuales auténticos. Universidad de Antioquia, Facultad de Educación.

Fecha _____ Registro # _____

Profesor _____

Lugar _____ Firma observador _____

Investigador _____

Observador _____ Firma investigadora _____

Objetivo de la clase _____

Estructura de clase	¿Cómo da a conocer el profesor su clase?	Se observa	No se observa	No aplica	Observaciones
	Explicación				
	Preguntas				
	Ilustraciones o dibujos				
	Otro				
	¿Cuáles son los momentos de la clase?	**Se observa**	**No se observa**	**No aplica**	**Observaciones**
	Introducción o presentación				
	Desarrollo o modelaje				
	Práctica guiada o independiente				
	Cierre o consolidación				
	Otro				
	¿En qué momentos de la clase el profesor hace uso de materiales?	**Se observa**	**No se observa**	**No aplica**	**Observaciones**
	Introducción o presentación				
	Desarrollo o modelaje				
	Práctica guiada o independiente				
	Cierre o consolidación				
	Otro				
	¿Qué materiales usa el profesor durante la introducción o presentación?	**Se observa**	**No se observa**	**No aplica**	**Observaciones**
	Libro guía				
	Audio CD del libro guía				
	Talleres				
	Realia				
	Programa, aplicación o juego de computador didáctico				
	Tarjetas educativas o afiches				
	Cuentos				
	Videoclips				
	Programa de TV				
	Canción				
	Señales, mapas o cuadros				
	Fotos o imágenes				
	Juegos				
	Otros				
	¿Qué materiales usa el profesor durante el desarrollo o modelaje?	**Se observa**	**No se observa**	**No aplica**	**Observaciones**
	Libro guía				
	Audio CD del libro guía				
	Talleres				
	Realia				
	Programa, aplicación o juego de computador didáctico				
	Tarjetas educativas o afiches				
	Cuentos				
	Videoclips				
	Grabaciones de conversaciones reales				
	Programa de TV				
	Canción				
	Señales, mapas o cuadros				
	Fotos o imágenes				
	Juegos				
	Otros				

	¿Cuáles materiales usó el profesor durante el cierre o consolidación?	Se observa	Objetivo #	Dimensión dllo #	Escala Leuv.	Observaciones
	Libro guía					
	Audio CD del libro guía					
	Talleres					
	Realia					
	Programa, aplicación o juego de computador didáctico					
	Tarjetas educativas o afiches					
	Cuentos					
	Videoclips					
	Grabaciones de conversaciones reales					
	Programa de TV					
	Canción					
	Señales, mapas o cuadros					
	Fotos o imágenes					
	Juegos					
	Otros					

Uso del idioma	¿Qué estrategias usa el profesor para facilitar la exploración del material presentado?	Se observa	No se observa	No aplica	Observaciones
	Da instrucciones sobre cómo usar, mirar o escuchar el material				
	Hace preguntas				
	Pide hacer repeticiones de lo que se escucha				
	Hace explicaciones				
	Corrige y retroalimenta				
	Otro				

Objetivo del profesor para el uso del material (objetivo #)
1. Estimular al estudiante a aprender
2. Ayudar al estudiante a sentirse cómodo
3. Evaluar
4. Vincular al estudiante a sus intereses y preferencias
5. Otro

Dimensión de desarrollo que estimula el profesor en el estudiante con el material (dimensión dllo #)
1. Dimensión socio-afectiva
2. Dimensión corporal
3. Dimensión cognitiva
4. Dimensión comunicativa
5. Dimensión estética
6. Dimensión espiritual
7. Dimensión ética

Escala de valor (Escala Leuv.)
The Leuven Scale for well-being and involvement (Ferre Laever, 2000)
1 = Extremely low
2 = Low
3 = Moderate
4 = High
5 = Extremely high

FORM 2 OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Observation Rubric. University Of Nebraska – Lincoln- Office of Graduate Studies – Instructional Development

Classroom Observation Checklist

Teaching Assistant:_____ Observation Number 1 2 3 4

Faculty Supervisor:_____ Date:_____

Respond to each statement using the following scale:

1=Not observed *2=More emphasis recommended* *3=Accomplished very well*

Organization			
Presented overview of lesson.	1	2	3
Paced lesson appropriately.	1	2	3
Presented topics in logical sequence.	1	2	3
Related today's lesson to previous/future lessons.	1	2	3
Summarized major points of the lesson.	1	2	3
Presentation			
Explained major/minor points with clarity.	1	2	3
Defined unfamiliar terms, concepts, and principles.	1	2	3
Used good examples to clarify points.	1	2	3
Showed all the steps in solutions to homework problems.	1	2	3
Varied explanations for complex or difficult material.	1	2	3
Emphasized important points.	1	2	3
Writes key terms on blackboard or overhead screen.	1	2	3
Integrates materials (examples, cases, simulations) from "real world".	1	2	3
Active, collaborative, and cooperative learning favored over passive learning.	1	2	3
Interaction			
Actively encouraged student questions.	1	2	3
Asked questions to monitor student understanding.	1	2	3
Waited sufficient time for students to answer questions.	1	2	3
Listened carefully to student questions.	1	2	3
Responded appropriately to student questions.	1	2	3
Restated questions and answers when necessary.	1	2	3
Demonstrates respect for diversity and requires similar respect in classroom.	1	2	3
Content Knowledge and Relevance			
Presented material at an appropriate level for students.	1	2	3
Presented material appropriate to the purpose of the course.	1	2	3
Demonstrated command of the subject matter.	1	2	3

Summary Comments

21. What were the instructor's major strengths as demonstrated in the observation?

22. What suggestions do you have for improving the instructor's skills or methodology?

Forms 1 and 2 are taken from two different contexts (preschool education and university respectively); however, the observer has an interpreter role when handling these forms.

The observer takes notes of what he or she observes in class and details this through the checklist. There is little space for extra comments about what was observed in the class, furthermore, placing a tick on the boxes does not show what is observed in a class.

These types of rubrics in observations are common in EFL classes, where there is no specific data on teaching activities, assessment methods, students' participation, feedback, and many other processes that are observed (but not included in the rubric) during a classroom observation.

The scales on the observation rubrics contribute to the observer's duties to validate procedures, offering him or her an instrument to conduct research receiving limited small data to implement an analysis. It is a merely objective process when working with scales and it is the observers could change their position at the time of having these forms during an observation.

The next observation forms display a more open and subjective view of the class observation process.

3.5.2. Descriptions and comments in the observation rubrics

Most of these types of class observation guidelines comprise two moments: planning the work in the classroom and the class observation. In each one, the observer must describe and define the conditions indicated with their respective comments. Subsequently, the class observer and the observed teacher meet to make a global assessment of the class work. This is also valid as a feedback process.

Forms 3 and 4 are examples of when an observer is free to write comments on the items to be observed. There is usually enough space to write down the different situations in the class; including the ones that do not appear in the items' sections.

It is important to note that the assessment of class observation is done qualitatively, that is, comments have been generated that support what is observed in class.

Form 3 is taken from an observation rubric that is made for teachers in the public sector in Colombia and is supported by the Ministry of National Education. The observation rubric is supported by the ANNUAL EVALUATION OF LABOR PERFORMANCE - TEACHERS AND TEACHING MANAGERS DECREE LAW 1278 OF 2002.

Form 4 is freely accessible on the internet. The source indicates that Jaz Guz uploaded this form called *Classroom Observation Form Use criteria that apply to the format of the course observed. Review Section Description/Comments* from Academia.com

These are forms 3 and 4 of the class observation rubric type.

FORM 3 OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Ministerio Nacional de Colombia MEN (2002). Evaluación Anual De Desempeño Laboral- Docentes Y Directivos Docentes

Decreto Ley 1278 De 2002. Modelo de Pauta de Observación de clases.

Establecimiento educativo:	Código DANE:
Nombre del docente:	
Jornada:	Curso:
Asignatura:	Fecha de diligenciamiento:
1. PLANEACIÓN DEL TRABAJO EN EL AULA	
Rendimiento académico actual de los estudiantes y su perfil	
Metas de aprendizaje programadas para la clase	
Estrategias pedagógicas que ha seleccionado para la clase	
Contenidos (temas y subsistemas) que se van a desarrollar en clase	
Procedimientos para evaluar el aprendizaje en clase	
Otros aspectos necesarios para comprender las actividades que desarrollará en clase	
2. OBSERVACIÓN DE CLASE	
Claridad en los objetivos de la clase y forma en que los aborda	
Desarrollo de las temáticas: coherencia, solvencia, actualización, etc.	
Estrategias pedagógicas utilizadas de acuerdo a las características del grupo escolar	
Materiales y recursos durante el desarrollo de las temáticas	
Procedimientos de evaluación y de retroalimentación al estudiante	
Ambiente durante la clase y comportamiento estudiantil	
Aplicación de las normas del Manual de Convivencia	
Otras observaciones	
3. VALORACIÓN DE LA OBSERVACIÓN DE CLASE	
Fortalezas observadas en el proceso de enseñanza – aprendizaje	
Aspectos a mejorar en el proceso de enseñanza – aprendizaje	
Nombre y Firmas	
Observador:	**Docente observado:**

FORM 4 OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Guz, J. Classroom Observation Form Use criteria that apply to format of course observed. Review Section

Description/Comments. Taken from a free web site. Academia.

Instructor: _____ Course _____

Observer: _____ Date and Time _____

Use criteria that apply to format of course observed.

Review Section	Description/Comments of observer
1. **SUBJECT MATTER CONTENT** (shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrates breadth and depth of mastery)	
2. **ORGANIZATION** (organizes subject matter; evidence preparation; is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasizes and summarizes main points, meets class at scheduled time, regularly monitors on-line course)	
3. **RAPPORT** (holds interest of students; is respectful, fair, and impartial; provides feedback, encourages participation; interacts with students, shows enthusiasm)	
4. **TEACHING METHODS** (uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials, techniques, and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise, and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives)	
5. **PRESENTATION** (Establishes online course or classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper enunciation, and standard English)	
6. **MANAGEMENT** (uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective e-platform management)	
7. **SENSITIVITY** (exhibits sensitivity to students' personal culture, gender differences and disabilities, responds appropriately in a non-threatening, pro-active learning environment)	
8. **ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS** (assists students with academic problems)	
9. **PERSONAL** (evidence self-confidence; maintains professional comportment and appearance)	
10. **PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF CLASSROOM (optional)** (State location and physical attributes of classroom, number of students in attendance, layout of room, distractions if any; list any observations of how physical aspects affected content delivery)	

- **Strengths observed:**
- **Suggestions for improvement:**
- **Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:**

I have identified that for the observer it is somewhat more exhausting to fill out this type of form. By not having a numerical assessment, the observer puts into play his or her subjective ability to identify the findings during the observation practice.

The observers are in a more valued position since their comments on what they observed are the data that will be provided later. That is, the observer has the freedom to evaluate the parameters of the observation with this rubric, but in the same way, the observer must be very careful when knowing how to interpret what is observed in class.

On the same token, the type of forms described obeys patterns in rubrics already established institutionally and governmentally. The question remains, who validates this type of section in the observation rubric? It is a constant question that rounds my mind since the observation rubrics (most of them) are done by "experts," and people who do not know the several contextual educational dynamics.

However, from my own experience, I should say that several observers feel more comfortable with this type of form which provides more meaningful data for the objective of the observation. An example of this type of form could be seen from the following quote, "*Observation is a powerful tool which gives participants opportunities to gather data and gain insights into the classroom*" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000)

3.5.3. The observation rubric for EFL classes

This part of the thesis deals with the forms used by the observers in an EFL class. There will be analyzed two forms (5 & 6) which illustrate the sections and items observed in the class development.

It is important to clarify that the observers do not choose the observation rubrics; in fact, these are provided by entities such as the British Council, National Government and Language Strengthening Plans. The observer handles these forms at the time of observation. However, before it takes place, this observer gets training for the "appropriate" use of each used form. The ELT observer has a tool to be modeled during the observation through a form; however, these forms allow us to be critiqued and analyzed especially in this thesis.

Observation form 6 is the one the ELT observers carry on their observations within public schools in Bogotá, as well as the one the participants in this research (the four observers) have been used the most.

Moreover, it should be noted that the observers receive training on the use of these forms before implementing them; that is to say, the script is already scripted and many times it is only to observe guidelines with pre-established items.

The second part of the form 5 is taken from a classroom observation rubric for teachers who teach EFL. In this, we can see that the observation is carried out through specific and contextual characteristics. Consequently, the descriptors of each item play an important role for the observer and the observed teacher.

FORM 5 OBSERVATION RUBRIC

British Council-Secretaría de Educación Distrital, Convenio 1550 (2017). *Guías para la Ronda de observación de clase. Escuelas Formadoras y Maestros de Maestros EFMMa. Guía de Rondas de Observación de Clase.*

**** Escuelas Formadoras y Maestros de Maestros- BC – SED. EFMMa project***

Before the observer goes to a class, the following should be considered:

Class observation round- (Taken literally from BC-SED- own translation)

At this moment you (The observers) are in one of the educational institutions that will allow you to visit the classrooms to carry out an observation exercise, this will be done based on the Progress Benchmarks that the British Council has built with the support of the participating Universities in the EFMMa project.

Objectives of the observation round:

I. Bring Teachers in Training closer to the Referents of Progress.

II. Recognize that the Benchmarks of Progress are the constitutive elements of a good teaching practice around which the feedback of the practice will be made.

III. Initiate a culture of class observation in Teacher Training (MF).

Materials:

• Observation Guide

• Document with the Progress Benchmarks: have the Progress Benchmarks handy for that the "aspects to be evaluated" guide their observation.

• Pencil, highlighters, and white paper.

Observation activity:

Observe the teacher and write the class ***narrative***. The narrative is understood as the accumulation of actions that the teacher performs to achieve the objectives that are proposed.

PARTE A

Guía 1	Coequipero:
Nivel: Básica Primaria	☐ Básica secundaria ☐ Media ☐
Referente de progreso observado	**1. Promover el progreso del aprendizaje de los estudiantes, la evaluación y la retroalimentación constante.**
Narrativa de clase: Describa las acciones que el docente realiza según el Referente de Progreso que usted está observando en el ambiente de aprendizaje. NOTA: Tenga en cuenta que la narrativa: (I) no puede tener sesgos de opinión, (II) debe reflejar una acción del aula del docente o de los estudiantes y (III) debe reflejar el referente de progreso del recuadro superior.	Ejemplos de aspectos observables: • El docente se acerca a cada grupo de trabajo y pregunta ¿cómo lo hicieron? ¿pueden explicarme? ¿ de qué otra manera pueden hacerlo? • El docente modela con todo el curso un ejercicio en el tablero, después de preguntar a dos grupos que no explican el proceso. • La docente entrega un tiquete de salida para que los estudiantes escriban las dudas que aún tienen, al repartirlos les dice; "dependiendo de lo que me escriban ajustamos el taller de la otra clase". • Los estudiantes reciben un trabajo con comentarios del docente y acuerdan nueva la fecha de la entrega con esos ajustes.

PARTE B

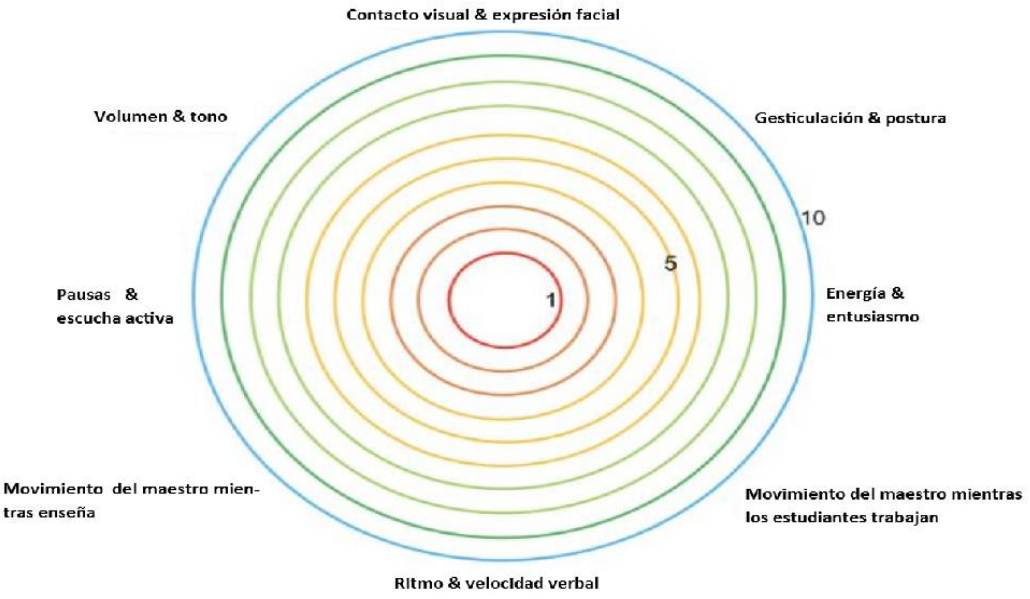
Actividad de reflexión conjunta:
1. Relea su narrativa, corrija los errores de escritura, complete sus ideas y asegúrese de que todas corresponden al Referente de Progreso que está observando.
2. Reúnase con su coequipero, lean las narrativas y subrayen con un color los elementos de la narrativa que representen lo mejor posible el Referente de Progreso que están observando.
3. Seleccionen entre ambos elementos de la narrativa que ilustren lo que más les gustó y lo que no entendieron o no les quedó claro, escríbanlos en el recuadro inferior.
4. De manera individual, respondan las preguntas formuladas (cada uno en su formato).
5. Compartan sus respuestas.

¿Qué fue lo que más me gustó de la clase observada?	¿Para qué otra situación de clase es pertinente esta acción del docente que me gustó?
¿Qué no me quedó claro de la clase?	

Guía 8	Coequipero:
Nivel: Básica Primaria ☐ Básica secundaria ☐ Media ☐	
Referente de progreso observado	**9.Manejar y gestionar la clase y el ambiente de aprendizaje**
Narrativa de clase: Describa las acciones que el docente realiza según el Referente de Progreso que usted está observando en el ambiente de aprendizaje. NOTA: Tenga en cuenta que la narrativa: (I) no puede tener sesgos de opinión, (II) debe reflejar una acción del aula del docente o de los estudiantes y (III) debe reflejar el referente de progreso del recuadro superior.	Ejemplos de aspectos observables: • La organización de los puestos es por grupos de cuatro estudiantes y ningún estudiante le da la espalda al tablero. • El docente entrega el material a un miembro de cada grupo de trabajo para que sea entregado a sus compañeros. • El llamado a lista inicia a las 8 y termina a las 8:15. • El docente camina por el salón y se acerca a los grupos de los estudiantes. • Un estudiante de la parte de atrás dice "no se escucha" y la docente continúa con el mismo tono de voz. • El docente se pone a la altura de sus estudiantes para quedar cara a cara y explicarles.

Auditoría de la voz y el cuerpo del profesor

Marque según corresponda el grado de éxito en la implementación, siendo1 (escaso impacto sobre el aprendizaje) y 10 (máximo impacto sobre el aprendizaje).



Establecimiento educativo:	Período escolar y fecha:	Observador:	Maestro en formación:		
Propósito de aprendizaje:	Cantidad de estudiantes:	MF ☐	MA ☐	MMC ☐	MMU ☐
		Observación esporádica	Observación semanal	Observación mitad de semestre	Observación final del semestre.

Resultados generales (discusión entre Maestro de Maestros y Maestro en Formación)

¿Qué salió bien?	Aún mejor si...
	Indispensable (1 solamente)
	Debería
	Podría

Otras observaciones:

Referentes de Progreso (RP)

Referente 1	Referente 2	Referente 3	Referente 4	Referente 5	Referente 6	Referente 7	Referente 8	Referente 9	Referente 10

FORM 6 OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Class Observation form- Internet free access- unknown author, ScrIbd.

1. SUBJECT MATTER CONTENT (shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrates breadth and depth of mastery)
The teacher is well prepared. In fact, He knows what method to be used that is appropriate to the topic. It also showed his mastery for the topic by being able to gather relevant information that suits to the level of understanding of the learners.

2. ORGANIZATION- LESSON PLANINNG (organizes subject matter; evidence preparation; is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasizes and summarizes main points, meets class at scheduled time, regularly monitors online course)
The teacher showed good mastery of the lesson. In fact, it showed at the start of the class that the teacher is very well prepared and well versed of the subject matter. He talked with a lot of confidence knowing that he can deliver the lesson properly. He was able to start his lesson from simple to complex which will aid further the understanding of the topic.

3. RAPPORT (holds interest of students; is respectful, fair, and impartial; provides feedback, encourages participation; interacts with students, shows enthusiasm)
There was good rapport from the start of the class since good motivation technique was used to get the interest of the learners. The teacher was able to engage learners to participate actively. He calls learners by their names shows a good gesture of valuing his learners. The learners were all enthusiastic and excited to participate in the activity.

4. TEACHING METHODS- ACTIVITIES (uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials, techniques, and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise, and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives)
The teacher had used the right motivational activity. He really nailed it perfectly by using music, visual aids and videos that will really get the attention of the learners. In fact, it really showed in the video that all learners were raising their hands eager to answer every question thrown at them. The learners were able to follow also since the discussion was done step by step, from simple to complex so that the learners will have a better picture of the topic. The presentation was quite spectacular also. The teacher has a loud and clear voice that every

5. PRESENTATION learners will be able to hear inside the classroom. The teacher was able to maintain eye (establishes online course or classroom environment conducive contact all throughout his lesson. His voice and movements were contagious that all to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong his learners became so active as well. This is how we get the attention of our learners. He was projection, proper enunciation, and standard English) also very fluent in English and was able to show command when he speaks. He was able to manage the learners' behavior proactively. The different activities got really.

6. MANAGEMENT their attention to focus on the lesson. The learners were attentive and almost all were (uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates raising their hands to answer questions thrown at them by the teacher. The class was leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains not boring, learners were to engage in the lesson that some were noisy eager to participate in effective e-platform management) the discussion.

7. SENSITIVITY (exhibits sensitivity to students' personal culture, gender differences and disabilities, responds appropriately in a nonthreatening, pro-active learning environment)

The teacher started the class with a prayer, is a good gesture already that he respects everyone in the class. Calling them by their names is also a sign of treating everyone with value and dignity. He calls everyone to participate in the discussion.

8. ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS (assists students with academic problems)

The teacher's energy was able to engage almost all learners to become active in the discussion. The teacher was really a role model for his learners. He was able to assess whether he needs to review back the lesson or not. Since based on the discussion, there was no need to review back further since all learners understood his past lesson which is somehow connected to the present topic discussed.

9. PERSONAL (evidence self-confidence; maintains professional comportment and appearance)

The teacher is neat and well groomed. He has a loud and clear voice. He talks with a lot of confidence. He is also very fluent in English. He never stutters in front of his learners and even with the presence of the different teachers observing his class. It only showed that he has in depth mastery of his lesson.

10. PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF CLASSROOM- CLASS ENVIRONMENT (state location and physical attributes of classroom, number of the classroom is very conducive for good learning. In fact, it contributes to the good students in attendance, layout of room, distractions if any, list interaction of learners during discussion. any observations of how physical aspects affected content delivery) Strengths observed: The teacher has a clear and loud commanding voice, fluent in English, active gestures/movements which engage learners to become active Suggestions for improvement: More fun and learning activity which is age appropriate. Overall impression of teaching effectiveness: The teacher is not only efficient but also an effective teacher as well.

These last forms allow the identification of situations in terms of the EFL classes observed and the positions of the ELT observers. These forms show particularities to identify in EFL classes.

Form 5 shows a step-by-step of what and how to observe a class (even though the observer has already received training in it), apart from an example of what should be written/detailed in the observation. As mentioned, it is a pre-established script in a class observation. Also, form 5 shows the importance of the body during the observation. The observer should identify the teacher's body, gestures, movements, and even eye contact in class. It is important to highlight that within our position as observers, not only teaching and learning sections of the class are captured, but also, the body of the teachers plays a relevant role.

On the other hand, form 6 is descriptive during the observation. Despite this, the aspects of an EFL class are identified by the observer. Several of these items in form 6 have been studied by most EFL teachers, therefore, the role of the observer is to check if they are immersed in the observation rubric.

As a matter of the observation forms, Martínez & Mendez 2023 mention,

> Literature is replete with the observer's role as a very important mediator between the patronized forms and the class observed itself; nevertheless, the primacy in the process relies on the adequacy of the form. What is to be observed in an English class has been formatted and the form agreed upon among different proposals. p. 2.

As a summary/conclusion in this chapter about the rubrics/forms of class observations, I compare the structure of forms aimed to observe in-service EFL teachers with the following table. It provides a wide range of items to be observed as components of an effective class.

Table 1. Observation formats comparative table

Items in the CO Rubric	Items in the CO Rubric
Lesson Planning Class objectives. Clarity in the objectives of the class and the way they are addressed. Development of the activities: coherence, solvency, updating. Pedagogical strategies used according to the characteristics of the class. Materials and resources during the development of the topics Procedures for evaluation and feedback of the student Class environment and student behavior Application of the rules of the class Strengths observed in the teaching / learning process. Aspects to improve in the teaching-learning process	1. Preliminary Questions. The observer asks the observed teacher about the class. 2. General information. About the school and the class (number of students, average age of students, hours of the class, and date, among others) 3. Class preparation. (The observers check/ask if the teacher has a class plan and if the objective is in accordance with the level of the students) 4. Use of the language. (Does the teacher use English to teach? Do the students use English? Is the use of English encouraged in the classroom?) 5. Class development. Is the topic of the class clearly presented? Is there an introductory activity or warm up? Are there transitions between activities? Is the class centered on the learners? Is there a clear objective? Do the teachers use strategies to catch the attention of the students? (The observer notes whether the teacher promotes collaborative work and uses digital tools for such.) 6. 21st Century Skill. The teacher develops activities that promote collaborative work. The teacher develops activities that promote the creativity of the students. 7. Evaluation and feedback. (The teacher offers constructive feedback, the teacher welcomes different types of feedback (self-assessment, peer feedback) and the teacher accepts the use of rubrics for evaluation.) 8. Materials and resources. (The materials used in class help to meet the objective and encourage the participation of the students.) 9. Co-Teaching. The EFL teacher has an active role in the teaching and learning process. The foreign volunteer has an active role in the teaching and learning process. 10. Reflection time. Questions to be developed when the observation is done with.
Source: Colombian Ministry of Education. Educational Law 1278, year 2002. Observation Classes Model.	Source: Partnership 1550, 2017. British Council- Secretariat of Education, Bogotá, Colombia. Observation form within Colombia Bilingüe

Table 1 is taken and adapted from the article Exploring the ELT Observer's Subject Positions: Tensions, negotiations, and contradictions. P. 3.

Appendix 1

Items included in a draft checklist.

Informational functions	
Providing personal information	• Give information on present circumstances? • Give information on past experiences? • Give information on future plans?
Providing nonpersonal information	Give information which does not relate to the individual?
Elaborating	Elaborate on an idea?
Expressing opinions	Express opinions?
Justifying opinions	Express reasons for assertions s/he has made?
Comparing	Compare things/people/events?
Complaining	Complain about something?
Speculating	Hypothesize or speculate?
Analysing	Separate out the parts of an issue?
Making excuses	Make excuses?
Explaining	Explain anything?
Narrating	Describe a sequence of events?
Paraphrasing	Paraphrase something?
Summarizing	Summarize what s/he had said?
Suggesting	Suggest a particular idea?
Expressing preferences	Express preferences?
Interactional functions	
Challenging	Challenge assertions made by another speaker?
(Dis)agreeing	Indicate (dis)agreement with what another speaker says? (apart from 'yeah'/'no' or simply nodding)
Justifying/Providing support	Offer justification or support for a comment made by another speaker?
Qualifying	Modify arguments or comments?
Asking for opinions	Ask for opinions?
Persuading	Attempt to persuade another person?
Asking for information	Ask for information?
Conversational repair	Repair breakdowns in interaction?
Negotiating meaning	• Check understanding? • Attempt to establish common ground or strategy? • Respond to requests for clarification? • Ask for clarification? • Make corrections? • Indicate purpose? • Indicate understanding/uncertainty?
Managing interaction	
Initiating	Start any interactions?
Changing	Take the opportunity to change the topic?
Reciprocity	Share the responsibility for developing the interaction?
Deciding	Come to a decision?
Terminating	Decide when the discussion should stop?

Using observation checklists to validate speaking-test tasks.

O'Sullivan, et.al, 2002

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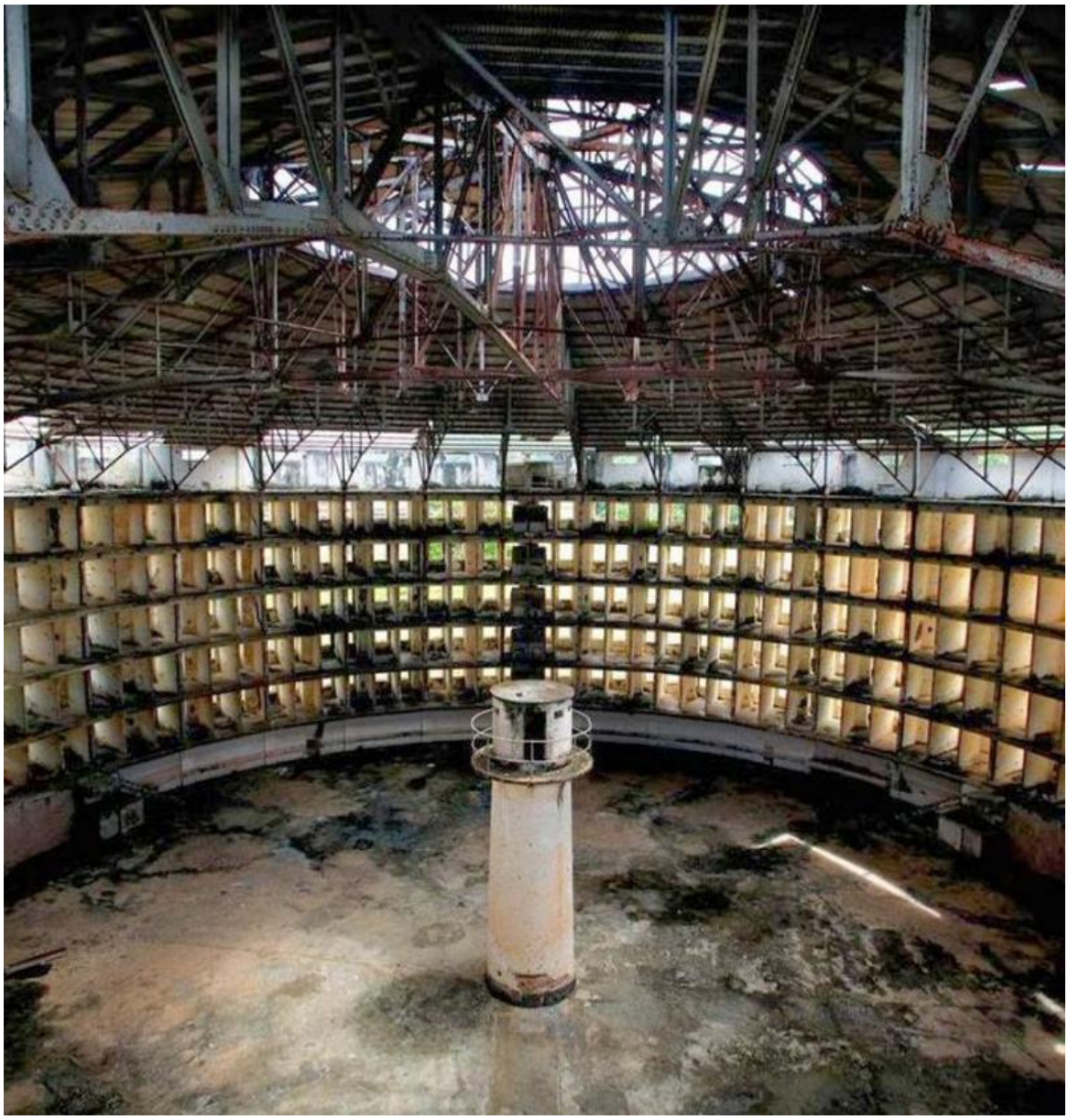
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FORM 6: Class Observation form- Internet free access- unknown author, ScrIbd.

Annex

Figure 1



Panopticism: God in his creation.

Image is taken from: https://www.sikhnet.com/news/panopticism-god-his-creation

5. Doings, Means, and Ways in the ELT Observers' positions

It is important to stress that I am honored to be part of a doctoral program that gives importance to what may seem unconventional, or "other," ways of doing research. This doctoral program also executes research practices that highlight the unseen aspects that are necessary to further the avenues of various possibilities and perspectives found in education rather than only maintaining the normalized structures of research.

The research conducted within this thesis has been inspired by the decolonial acts that consist of relevant characteristics that help me to specify my epistemological reflection. Through honest reflection and dialogue, I would like to break down power relations between the observers-observed teachers (hierarchical positions). Although a clear decolonial methodology is not stipulated, this thesis consists of the different possibilities for doing research, such as the ways of horizontality, ontological assumptions and from the relationship with the participants to the introspective reflections about the positions of the ELT observers.

This part is divided into two different sections. The first one considers the following methodological insights: a conception of *the ontological is before the epistemological*, *participants as teammates,* and the *horizontal provocation.* The second section exhibits some structural concerns which represents an importance in the thesis' procedure as focuses on the systems (structures) within society and the power relations within and among the parts (subsystems) as a whole. The second part contains the research paradigm and approach, data collection (including instruments/procedures), and finally the narrative outline.

These are the ways, actions, and meanings from the ELT observers' positions expressed through the path taken to gather their narratives. This path was rather long and constantly under construction.

5.1. The ontological is before the epistemological (Vasilachis, 1992)[4]

Before determining if the ontology (the nature of the beings/selves) should come before epistemology (the study of the knowledge), I would like to understand this research from an ontological perspective. I have understood that ontology explores the existence or non-existence of specific entities and the way in which they relate to each other if they indeed exist. I tend to say that ontology refers to myself as a researcher, ELT educator, observer, and student since my being has been around those subject positions. Also, this study is based on the humanization of the observers themselves and their perspectives, and not on the situations obtained from them as a series of certain properties. Based on that, I have tried to discover "*the position of the being of my existence*" through my understanding, experience, and self-reflection.

These concepts of understanding, experience, and reflection from my being have helped me achieve epistemological and methodological positions, particularly in this research. To reinforce this idea, I would like to set up what Vasilachis said about the

[4] Part of this methodological insight is taken and adapted from a book's chapter called "*Researching Horizontally: Methodological Assumptions about Observers' Subject Positions*", Martínez, M. (2002) Book: Methodological Uncertainties of Research in ELT Education II, Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación, Universidad Distrital FJDC, 2022.

ontological and epistemological consideration; she argues *"…on that account, ontological considerations come before epistemological and methodological ones. That is why we must deal with the question about who is known before the one about how it is known…"* (Vasilachis, 1992a, p. 52).

I can see myself in a mirror when I observe teachers in classes that foment meaningful or different ways of teaching. This thesis allows me to reflect on the pedagogical and social practices that are performed in English classes in Colombia. There are questions that come to mind such as how to evaluate a class as an observer. Am I interested more in the evaluation rubric or in the dynamics of the class? Could I observe a class from what the students enjoy and learn, but not the step-by-step procedures of the English classes? Should the observer put him or herself in the situation of the observed teacher, yes, or no? These questions reflect the reality of classroom observations and the observer's position from an ontological reflection. I have not identified these realities in documents, policies, or guidelines for bilingualism/language strengthening. These situations rarely come to light; it is something uncertain that I consider should be argued from an ontological assumption. (Martínez & Mendez, 2023)

This part of the research focuses on the study of my own "being" as a class observer and as a teacher-researcher. In methodological words, I can also project myself into a multifaceted position where my position as an observer is affected by analyzing the EFL teachers' classes and knowing what is behind their pedagogical practices, as well as what the observer feels, thinks, and claims. I understand the teacher, also the observer, but my being moves around when analyzing these positions and the subjection processes.

I also kept in mind two headings (ontological dissimilarities and the power relations) in this reflection.

In the first aspect, the presence of some *ontological dissimilarities* is a premise of this research. Ontology deals with concepts such as existence, being, becoming, and reality. Although the subject position of an observer is occupied by many, one observer is different from another one; this subject also comes into several position (s) which are in specific contexts and realities. As Vasilachis (2009) says, "*It is necessary to review first the ontological and then the epistemological grounds of this type of inquiry"* (p. 1). This foundation lies mainly in showing the importance of "being" during the research process and thus reflecting on the properties, qualities, or attributes of the ELT class observers. The observers' positions are moving into ways of becoming, being, and existing which are considered during the development of this thesis; in fact, it can be seen the differences/dissimilarities between the four ELT observers emerged from their narratives in the observation practice.

The second heading is the *Power relations.* There are several times when negotiating among the participants in this thesis is a fundamental strategy in guaranteeing participation of research. I experienced that some of the participants wanted to have the control of the thesis, or did the things in his/her ways… that was not a problem, however, I constantly tried to decrease power issues in order to share control of who asks questions, what type of questions deserve more time and space, and when to change the subject or the pace of the conversation are what I have faced in this thesis. There have been some issues, particularly in the power relations, for instance, participants with different positions as observers, peers, and teachers, different forms of relating to each other, and the permanent

control of the ELT observers when they are involved in research… to be aware of power relations needs to be stated and reflected upon.

5.2. Participants as teammates

In previous academic experiences, I was researching from a hierarchical position where I was a researcher who had the control and power to extract the data, get information from the participants (person x and person y), and interpret whatever I could obtain from them. In this research. I would like to have a mutual construction of knowledge, experiences, and thoughts.

My intention is not to criticize the traditional way of researching, but I am intrigued by the decolonial criticism of the traditional/positivist way to do research.

I wanted to do something different and complementary, such as break the power relations among the subjects, particularly among the ones who are involved in my research, and to dismantle the idea that the researcher knows the most and is the only one who is capable of doing research.

There exists a close relationship among we four ELT observers. We practice sports together (soccer most of the time), usually get coffee together during our free time, and maintain various conversations. There is a friendly coexistence between all of us, as well as we spend time together in different academic and social contexts.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic during 2021 and 2022, some difficulties occurred when setting up times to meet, for two months we suspended our meetings. However, we did find time to share our stories together in which we greatly enjoyed listening to one another and identifying challenges within our field. In that respect, I would like to state that

my team is composed of subjects, who feel and have opinions, and not objects, who have no voice.

My Team[5]

I am interested in researching with three close colleagues who have received training to observe ELT classrooms and have worked as observers for several years in the Ministry of Education and Secretariats of Education in Colombia and worldwide. We also have been working together for more than seven years, and we know the "territory" of Classroom Observation Practices (COP) in the Colombian ELT community. It is meaningful to share as ELT observers and be part of education projects in Colombia where the COP was our daily routine. We had many valuable stories to bring into this research.

I feel the need to change the term from teammates to observers at certain times as we often work together as a team in the work and now in this exercise of researching, but we are still hired as observers, who are molded and fixed for specific purposes in the system.

Before introducing each observer, it is necessary to mention a relevant aspect. I am also part of this research (there are four ELT observers [6]in this research) and I also shared my narratives in this research.

The bios of each teammate were written together, however I recollected their voices and stated textually on it.

---

[5] My Team is the definition related to the group teammates (participants) of this research. I named **teammates** to the ELT observers who were close during the implementation of this thesis. However, Teammates name could change into "observers" in future passages since our positions are not static… they are in constant movement.

[6] Pseudonym was given by each teammate.

Below, the introduction each subject of the Team.

The first one is **Tania**, who works in a well-recognized university. She was also part of a team of observers in the Secretariat of Education of Bogotá, Colombia, and has been working in external international entities for some years. She is a great academic researcher, a passionate educator with a high level of critical thinking and is a fan of the arts.

She has a Bachelor of Arts in modern languages and holds a master's in applied linguistics. She has 15 years of experience as an English language teacher in elementary, secondary, and higher education. As a teacher educator, she has worked in a well-known university in which she has supervised practicum and therefore has had a mentor role. She was also part of a team of observers in the Secretariat of Education of Bogotá, Colombia, observing in-service English language teachers.

Tania is a kind person, very responsible and sensitive. We enjoy walking across a central park in Bogotá and talking about daily aspects in our work and personal things.

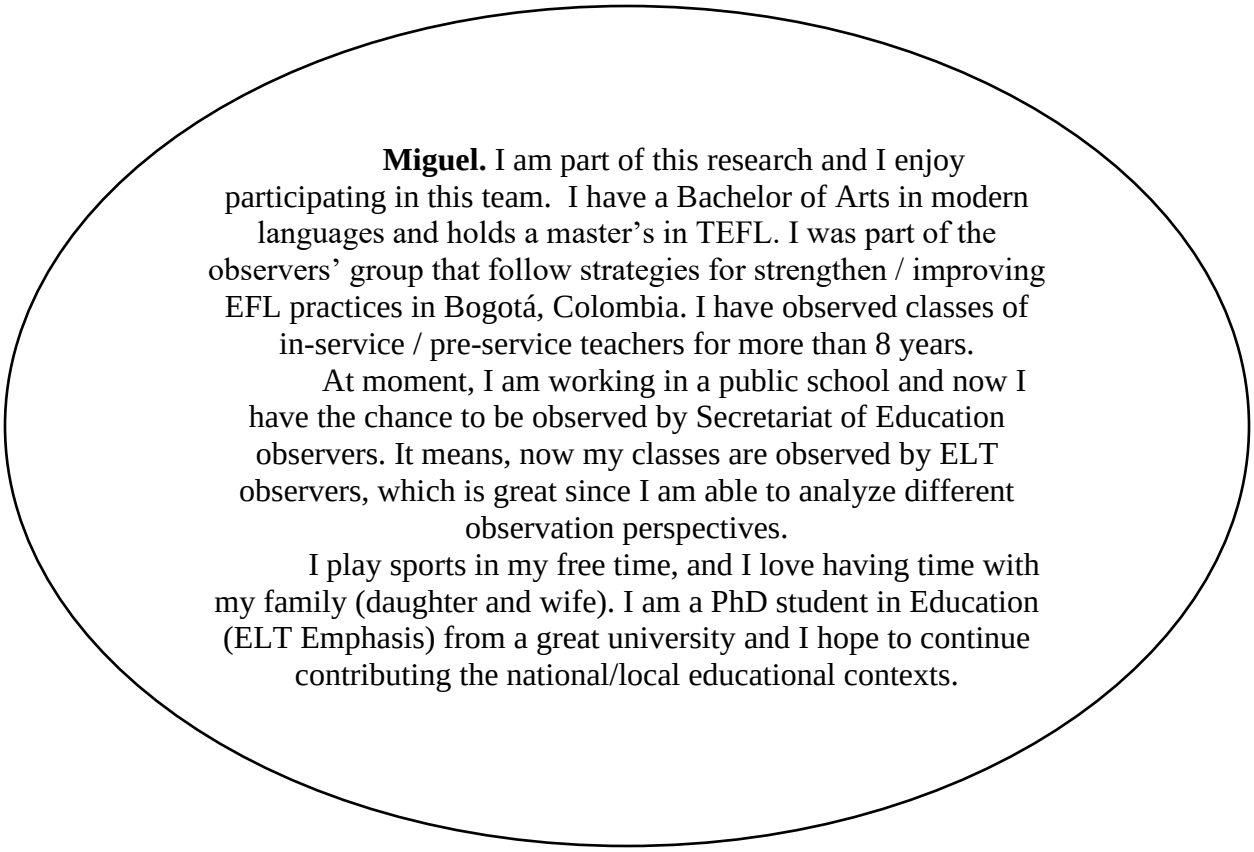
Another teammate is **Wilson** who has been ELT Consultant for over five years here in Colombia. He has carried out many observations in schools, universities and was working most recently with the Ministry of Education. He has experience in both international and local education projects.

Has been an ELT consultant for over six years in the Philippines, Brazil, and UK. He has carried out many observations in schools and universities. He gets experience in both international and local education projects for more than 14 years. He is a well-known trainer worldwide; also, he has got a DELTA certification which certifies him as an expert observer and trainer.

We have shared amazing moments in training, national trips, and CO events. He is a good friend, is kind, is a collaborative person and has a beautiful dog called Pepita.

Alex has been working as an ELT consultant, observer, and advisor for several years in universities, schools, and institutes in Colombia. He has participated in many classroom observations and was part of the language improvement strategies in the Secretariat of Education of Bogotá, Colombia.

He has a Bachelor of Arts in modern languages and holds a master's in applied linguistics. He has been coordinator in Language local institutes as well as observing pre-service English language teachers in the University he works. We have been friends for a long time and have done research projects together as well as participated in academic events, workshops, and talks, among others.



There are some common aspects between the observers such as expertise in COP, professional similarities, working experience, and academic background. However, there are several ontological dissimilarities, such as interests and thoughts, among the teammates which are important in the evaluation of this research. This concern serves to highlight important perspectives regarding the methodological part.

The ontological dissimilarities that I explored with the teammates consist of the personal being as such, in its essence, in the independence of the behaviors as observers. This is important in my study as it refers to being and reality. In the process of researching, being and reality are considered; the subject who researches is a being, immersed in a reality.

Although we all work as observers who have received the same training, we all have our differences expressed through our subjectivities. Our thoughts and feelings reflect our subjectivities as we undergo the experience of being in the observer subject position. During my doctoral studies, apart from this specific research, I have learned about the importance of these subjectivities and specifically the ethics behind them which ties into the methodology of research.

When meeting with my team, many of them expressed the importance of having signed consent. From their high profiles, they see the importance of the ethical parameters involved in this research. They decided by themselves to sign a document that represents some personal aspects without any problem and mentioned that it was an honest action for a researcher. (*See Annex 1*). The consent authorized by their signature is used as authorization given by the observers without any coercion or fraud.

I would like to mention that two of my teammates gave me advice, tips on how to improve, and situations to consider regarding my doctoral research. Their helpful attitude demonstrates that we are human and that we do not exist in the confines of a rigid, academic-demanding process. We are a team that will impact and benefit the field of ELT through this research. I believe that my teammates, my PhD supervisor, the teachers of my doctoral studies, my classmates, the jurors of this thesis, my family and I are valuable people in this academic process, I appreciate their help, knowledge, and time. The ontology involves us as humans, as a constant reflection and way of thinking and being.

5.3. Horizontal Provocation[7]

As a personal struggle in my thesis, I ask myself, how may I carry out a Horizontal Provocation?

The horizontal provocation was an experience that I carried out during my doctoral studies to evidence in a human and transparent way the narratives of the research. This consisted of showing the participants first the narratives that I had built on my steps as an observer, and then induce their narratives elaboration.

I found a lot of information about classroom observations as a technique, instrument, and evaluation process. However, little about the observers' stories, their experiences during this practice, and what happens beyond the evaluation rubrics are discussed. In that sense, I want to propose the following insight, "*Horizontal Provocation,*" to give scope and a broader picture in my research.

"Horizontality is usually the construction of knowledge created in the intersection by subjects and, therefore, by the intersection of knowledge" (Pérez and Sartorello, 2012 p.11). But I again asked myself, how did I carry out this horizontal process in my research? I thought the first thing was to identify my teammates who are part of my research. The people described above are of great importance to addressing paradigms and situations in the future as well as beginning this part of the methodology.

Also, it seems to me that I (as a researcher) should "be transparent" with/for/from the Team. I mean, I consider that a starting point is to tell them in a narrated way my situations as an observer, what has happened to me at the time of my training to observe,

[7] Part of this methodological insight is taken and adapted from a book's chapter called "*Researching Horizontally: Methodological Assumptions about Observers' Subject Positions*", Martínez, M. (2002) Book: Methodological Uncertainties of Research in ELT Education II, Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación, Universidad Distrital FJDC, 2022.

and the experiences that I have had executing classroom observations. Being open with them about my feelings, struggles and thoughts allowed me to have a more horizontal approach since I did not ask the participants for information but rather shared with them a part of myself, from what I have inside.

I wrote some autobiographical chapters (see in the next thesis' chapter) at the beginning of my doctoral studies, and I shared those with my team. Their reactions at time of reading my narratives were surprised and very challenged for them, since they had never seen the life stories of the observers, their intrigues, emotions, and uncertainties we have faced. It has been rewarding to see how these observers reacted to my stories; also, they agreed with some aspects as well as the presence of some ontological dissimilarities. This is also part of the horizontality since it is a mutual, transparent, and an open practice.

This thesis has one narrative about me as ELT observer. The narrative was starting building when I went on the problematization of this research, then, this narrative was given to the observers (teammates) to provoke their insights/thoughts about the positions of the observers. The findings and insights of my narrative will be shown in the chapter 6.



The previous section deals with the idea of being closer to the research. It means to get a human contact with the theory and the methods of research.

This thesis has a critical perspective and some decolonial approaches. One of the realities that I had is that I (my being) as the decolonial mediator reflected as an intermediary of the process and, everyone (Team of observers) contemplated on their knowledge, feelings, and practices.

I consider that configurative reflection, as well as alternative conversations and communal contemplation, are actions of a decolonial doing.

Now, this following second section evidences the narrative path in which I have been immersed, our experiences in the life stories of the ELT Observers and the vehicles I decided to carry out the research. There are also some experienced tensions during this "narrative as data."

5.4. Research Paradigm

This qualitative research has some relevant characteristics which helped me to specify my epistemological reflection. About this, Vasilachis (1992) said,

> Qualitative research comprises different orientations and approaches, various intellectual and disciplinary traditions grounded, often, in different philosophical assumptions. All these different orientations, approaches and assumptions generate new data-gathering and analysis strategies. This variety of views on what is known, what may be known, how it is

> known, and on the way, findings are to be transmitted demands an acknowledgment that here is not one legitimate way to conduct qualitative research. (p.7)

This research also seeks to give great importance to qualitative research, which displays an interest in people's lives, behavior, and interactions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 17), and in trying to appreciate those worlds through such views (Savage, 2000, p. 330; 2006, p. 384). Qualitative research seems to be interested in personal narratives and life stories in social contexts.

Moreover, this research is set within the qualitative research (QR) paradigm. Denzin & Lincoln (2005) argue,

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretative, material practices that make the world visible… At this level, qualitative research involves and interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3).

In this qualitative research I am conscious to address the “how” and “why" observers' subject positions emerge, and it enables a more profound understanding of experiences, phenomena, and context in-class observation practices. Qualitative research allowed me to ask questions and make reflections that cannot be easily put into numbers of class observation dynamics. The qualitative research is important as it serves to demonstrate the feelings of those involved in the classroom observation process. Through this type of research, perspectives that often are hidden or get lost during classroom observations are brought to light and uplifted.

It is important to discuss traditional research paradigms and the subversion of decolonial non-methodology. This thesis endeavors to share common reflections among the ELT observers as an experiential position regarding our epistemologies, ontologies, and emancipatory or liberating aspirations. As the question of methodology is not a concern for decolonial thinkers, I was not able to find or provide a model of this kind. But a critique of the ways doing research has decreased the possibilities of understanding situations that are (body) geographically located (Haber, 2011). Facing the fact that this is "a doctoral dissertation", it was not easy for me to get rid of some patterns within the process and the organization of the analysis. However, inspired by my readings of some decolonial thinkers on the study matter, I was seduced by the idea of changing the logic of traditional research by incorporating some principles such as horizontality, collectively and reciprocally among the observers and the importance of listening between subjects; trough this path, we obtained other ways of thinking (us), knowing (us), and reflecting (us) on the events of the historical-social particularities in the class observations.

I was able to change the relationships between myself as a researcher and the other teammates; however, I tried to explore the recognition of the participated subjects in this research. During our conversations about the class observation practices we could be heard and being emotionally closer.

5.5. Narrative Study Route

Narrative research "*can be defined as any systematic inquiry that focuses on people's stories*" (Barkhuizen and Wette, 2008) regarding the way participants and the research was told, the linguistic repertoire used to represent the story, how people build

meaning from the narrative (Smith, 2001) and the identification of patterns popping up from those stories.

Some scholars argue that narrative inquirers do not "study lived experience; rather, we examine lived textuality" (Denzin, 1995, p. 9). However, from this research (in the methodological part), it is important to quote what Elbaz-Luwisch summarized as Denzin's position as:

> We are already in the midst of language and narrative form; our lives and experiences in society have been written, formulated, theorized, analyzed, categorized, presented, and represented in the various media, print and electronic; they have been verbalized and represented visually to the point where we apparently can no longer have a "pure" experience that has not already been textualized for us. For Denzin, experience is a mystery, a "labyrinth, with no fixed origins, no firm center, structure, or set of recurring meanings." (2005, p. 35)

The purpose of this part is to locate ourselves (ELT observers) as to our underlying the assumptions in the class observations. The narrative study route traces an epistemological/ontological and methodological path in another sense. I consider that the narrative research of class observations in a decolonial stand is an ethical-political process, relationship, dialogue, and horizontal co-interpretation, in which ELT observers participate in a process of transformation and collective action. This narrative and the transformation, global and local, personal, and collective, are articulated in the same scenario.

The narrative approach is developed from different circumstances and events. It was a constant construction of realities that are immersed into methodological needs. In Bruner's words,

> we organize our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative-stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on. Narrative is a

> conventional form, transmitted culturally and constrained by everyone's level of mastery and by his conglomerate of prosthetic devices, colleagues, and mentors. Unlike the constructions generated by logical and scientific procedures that can be weeded out by falsification, narrative constructions can only achieve "verisimilitude." Narratives, then, are a version of reality whose acceptability is governed by convention and "narrative necessity" rather than by empirical verification and logical requirednes. (1991, p.4)

By the same token, the use of narratives is suitable in this thesis. As Barkhuizen (2014) suggested, I explored the different forms of written narrative data that are constructed in a wide range of contexts, from language classrooms to professional development programs, and training settings, to the broader community beyond formal learning and teaching situations. (p.33).

In Polkinghorne's words (2007), narrative research is "the study of stories". The stories are present as historical accounts, fictional novels, fairy tales, autobiographies, and other genres. Stories are also told by people about themselves and about others as part of their everyday conversations (p. 471).

To point out the narrative route of this thesis, it is helpful to mention what Mican 2019 argued about the use of narratives in the ELT field.

> Therefore, narrative inquiry is "the study of stories of experience, or, of life generally, which enables a researcher to identify themes, issues, concerns, and problems of individuals, or communities" (Casey, 1995, p. 214). Through narratives, it is possible to analyze, represent, gather, and understand people's stories while they are told. In this case, the narrative knowledge comes from EFL pre-service teachers. As it is suggested by Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik (2014) narrative inquiry has been used to understand issues related to language education from the views of the individuals who do the teaching and learning. P. 54.

When handling narratives, this thesis constructed data from *oral narratives* (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 102), (Benson and Gao, 2008); (Chen, 2002); (Chik, 2007, 2008,

2011); (Gao, et al., 2002); (Malcolm, 2004) and also in the *written narratives*, (Murphey, Chen, and Chen, 2004); (Barcelos, 2008); (Tse, 2000), (Macalister, 2012).

This part of the research offers an open insight into the analysis and reflection of the narratives. Narratives are key in my research as I am seeking to expose various perspectives of the observers. Narratives expose feeling and experiences that are needed to improve systems and situations, such as those related to classroom observations. In fact, I took a definition of narrative acknowledging the identifications of the patterns found in the data as well as to get a constructive path of the narrations and life stories. Barkhuizen 2011, stated that,

> Use the concept of narrative knowledging to frame the description of the various research contexts. Briefly, narrative knowledging refers to the meaning-making, learning, and knowledge construction that takes place at all stages of a narrative research project, from the conception of the research project to the consumption of the research report. P. 97.

The ways, doings, and means of this research include biographies and autobiographies and life stories as a narrative construction of the ELT Observers. It was not easy to identify or report people's subjectivities or inquire about their subject positions. Even more so, when I was immersed in this study, it could probably be an introspective reflection. All narrative inquiry, following Clandinin (2013) supposes a new story (re-telling) that implies the reconstruction of the action (re-living), particularly in class observations. P.34.

A Biographical/ Autobiographical study

It was relevant and challenging to work together with the team. We could analyze the position of the observers, and research in-depth about the observer's lives, feelings, and

wonders. We are narrators of our own stories in the classroom observation practices; and it was demanding to analyze the observers' roles and hidden subjectivities, what is not written in the rubrics of observations, and what possibly helps in the field of ELT through the analysis of those stories.

The below quote represents a variety of options in biographies and autobiographies. To get in deep about the difference, it is key to highlight the following passage from Barkhuizen, at. al (2013),

> Recognizing that the distinction between biography and autobiography is often blurred in research, Benson (2004) uses the term "(auto)biographical" to describe research that involves either, or both, third person and first-person data and methods. One source of confusion lies in the fact that the data used in biographical studies are often autobiographical from the participants' perspective. P. 4

The difference is about the perspective of the reader and the researcher. I wrote my own narrative based on my experiences (autobiographical process) and had the other ELT observers read them (biographies of an observer). The situation rounds into the analysis of the database, and the spectrum these narratives can offer for the thesis.

The objective of this biographical/autobiographical study reveals evidence about the feelings, struggles, achievements, failures, and other things that observers have from their positions. It is possible to identify some sensations with a biographical/autobiographical narrative that are not found in previous research papers. I obtained many texts where the experiences that observers have had in their daily practices are kept and analyzed. I also collected the observers' narratives and presented hidden subject positions that have been invisible in the ELT field in Colombia.

In this biographical/autobiographical study I tried to be as involved as possible despite the difficulties, but the information was obtained in an authentic and dynamic way. We observers enjoyed talking about our experiences in the observation practices.

Barkhuizen et al. (2013, p. 10) states*: "The biographical case studies" category, although an important feature of them is that the narratives are not elicited but collected from naturally occurring conversations ("small stories" being short excerpts of these conversations*" These biographies are important to understand deeper the backgrounds and perspectives and feelings of the observers. They are helpful to understand the importance of inclusivity when deconstructing the colonial ways of observations.

I did not want to get a rigid and structural procedure technique in the methodology. In fact, I did not forget that my Team is made up of humans who are their own "beings", who need to be heard by the ELT community, so I reflected upon people's life experiences.

Throughout the time of getting the biographical and autobiographical passages, I identified personal characteristics where spontaneous thoughts, unexpected ideas, and narratives of the team come out more real than an "ideal" production, since experience plays on in real life, it actually happens and is not just in a story or in someone's imagination.

The stories in this research become an object of study, focusing on how groups (Team of Observers) make sense of events and actions in their lives. Narratives in this thesis acquires a reflexive character of penetration on the reality in the COP. These narratives provide information to enrich the understanding of the events experienced by the ELT class observers and, there have been dialogues about key parts of the story that a subject reconstructs about his or her experience as an ELT observer.

Life Stories

Life stories within the methodological process of this research are relevant in the methodological aspects. As Cornejo, Mendoza, and Rojas (2008) state, "*these life stories [8]about how we feel, how we define ourselves or about our position facing a certain theme, they are the first level of interpretation of the experience we live, placing it from a "narrator" that is us ourselves*" (p. 37).

The life stories of the ELT Observers define and differentiate us from others which play a role in identity construction. In them, there are contradictions, tensions, and ambivalence. The stories we tell ourselves about ourselves have a dynamic character that is constantly changing, but always depending on another story that integrates them and gives them a new meaning (Cornejo, Mendoza, and Rojas (2008) p. 38.)

By using life stories in this research, I worked analytically on the account of the observers' positions about themselves or about an aspect of their lives. I interpreted the production of the narrator which, in turn, is an interpretation the observers make of their own.

The ELT Observers' life stories correspond to the enunciation -written or oral - by a narrator of one's own life or part of it. It is necessary to include important facts in their life stories. (See next chapter - Analysis and findings of ELT Observers)

In these life stories I learned to see the observers' realities in the COP, feelings when the observer is capturing information inside the classroom, achievements, and disappointments in the observations, and more which will be recognized for the analysis of this thesis.

[8] I adapted the term "relatos" into Life story. It is a tool closer to the logic of qualitative designs based on the approach of in-depth interviews with a sample of human being (s).

The interpretation and purpose of narrative in this research draws on Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) view of narrative inquiry as involving narrative both as a "social phenomenon (storied experience)" and as a "method of data analysis (restorying)" in the experiences, stories, reflections, and discussions among the ELT class observers' through life stories, biographies, and autobiographies narratives.

The following section displays the walkway I transited into the ELT observers' narratives including the strategies, tools, and procedures regarding the methodological assumptions.

5.6. How I enacted the means of this thesis

The piloting of the means (instruments) was the first step of enacted the means of this thesis. It was made by my colleagues and professors in a seminar at Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación in 2019. I had the opportunity to show them the possibilities that exist based on the data I captured from the observers' narratives.

I remember that this piloting helped me to identify the ways and means to establish in my thesis. My colleagues and teachers gave me a hand as observers' "roles", so, they were in a different role: as *observers* and *observed teachers*. It was a challenging exercise since it was not easy to be in a position which people do not feel comfortable or do not like. I tried to be natural and coherent during this practice; however, there were some aspects that included a script which help to portray specific characters correctly. The teachers and my colleagues supported me by giving feedback about the implementation of these ways and means among the observers.

To be honest this piloting was demanding and fruitful because it represented the path I walked through the narratives and experiences of the observers. More than a

validation, it was a construction of a runway to persuade the observers' reflections; I got meaningful comments of the subject in the piloting, especially on "how" to present it and "why" the narratives of observers are important.

I also incorporated a column called "my comments" as a suggestion from my advisor and this was about to help the observers to write their own concerns/points of view. This incorporation supported the observers' ideas and my teachers and colleagues who did the piloting enjoyed filling it out.

The sample papers of this piloting are seen in Annex 2.

5.7. Narrative Construction Path

This thesis is composed of a transcription file of 72 pages, 14 online encounters with each one of the observers (participants), 25 individual encounters, and 3 in groups (with the four of us the observers). There has been a total of 28 sessions with the participants and a 30-page archive where the autobiographical stories are divided into 9 chapters. Data collection was spanned for 14 months (2021-2022) without following a strict schedule or format, in part because of the virtual encounters during the COVID-19 pandemic and the tight schedule of the participants. The pandemic allowed us to hold sessions at different times, we also had to leave the initial plan and allowed us to talk in other moments other than those stated from the beginning.

The description of this narrative path can be seen in Table 1 of this chapter.

5.8. Data collection means

Data collection in the narratives were in virtual and in-person sessions, during which there were some rest periods (observer vacations). As aforementioned, there were

complications due to the dynamics of the pandemic. Sometimes there was a script for the conversations we had between observers, but most of the time, the narratives came out naturally and spontaneously.

The process of collecting data lasted 14 months approximately and was organized as follows:

- *A provocative narrative.* As a triggering instrument, a narrative written in advance by a participant was shared with the rest of the participants with a 2-column structure as spaces to react and comment. As an observer, I showed them some autobiographical passages to the fellow observers. The observers had the chance to write comments about my experiences as observers. These autobiographical passages and observers' reflections can be seen in Annex 3.

- *Autobiographical narratives:* Using an open format, each one of the participants produced a narrative giving it his/her own structure. Some general guidelines were suggested to spot the observer's subject position. An example of it is in Annex 4.
- *Transcripts of conversations*: More than 15 recorded conversations were transcribed and organized in thematized files. Some transcripts can be observed in Annex 5.

5.9. Ways of moving along

These ways were taken and adapted from an article called "*Exploring the ELT Observer's Subject Positions: Tensions, Negotiations, and Contradictions*". (Martinez & Mendez, 2023). As a product of this doctoral research. Doctorado Interinstitutional en Educación, District University, Colombia.

Phase 1. Setting the groundwork for the project

The first phase was developed (from the 1st of June to the 25th of June 2020) and consists of initial conversations on the nature and possibilities of participation in the project. To achieve this, some virtual meetings were arranged (due to pandemic restrictions) in which presentations were shown to participants to explain the mechanics of the participation.

This first stage was key to agreeing with some details and rules and answering some participants' questions about their understanding of the research objectives, their expectations of the research, and the distribution of tasks.

Phase 2. Triggering narrative

As part of a toolkit for the creation of the thesis, an autobiographical narrative had already been created beforehand to nurture the problematization. This phase was considered a fundamental piece to triggering participants' reactions. This autobiographical narrative consisted of 10 chapters (written between May-August 2019). It was framed and adapted with columns to facilitate participants' note-taking. This involves a narrated and reflected experience of my decisive moments, positive and/or negative, in the professional career of being an observer in a chronological way and locally oriented.

Phase 3. Formal conversations

This exchange of ideas and reactions at the initial stage of conversations included questions related to antecedents and biographical issues; later, these were part of the natural flow of conversations as reactions to participants' comments with questions or the clearing up of doubts. This enabled the participants to discuss topics that arose during the conversation. Some of these conversations were transcribed and subdivided into clear topicalized sections.

Phase 4. Producing our own narrative

Observers were asked to write down a narrative about their process of becoming a trained observer of other English language teachers. Although the triggering narrative had a certain type of format, participants decided to write down their narratives following a personal narrative style. In the case of Tania, a 6-page narrative was produced, in Wilson's case, a 5-page narrative, and I wrote a 3-page narrative. Considering the transcribed conversations, these narrators complemented their narratives by a selection of these conversations to complete gaps in content or give participants their own rationale about a particular topic.

Phase 5. Subjects' position (others) beyond the commonalities

Although the narratives unveiled some commonalities among participants' experiences as trained observers such as: being trained, having similar backgrounds as teachers, having certified proficiency in English, and having a master's degree in ELT, our focus was to identify critical instances in which the observers problematized the imposed way to observe, that in this paper we understand as "the canonical way to observe."

Also, I paid attention to conflicting moments in which observers were problematizing their subject position as observers or introducing positions to others. By doing this, narratives were subjected to a grid of analysis in which color-coding procedures were applied.

This thesis is based on the life experiences, stories, and reports of the ELT class observers. These narratives are required to be read and reread, interpreted, and analyzed to generate findings and reflections which will be stated in the next chapter.

I had the opportunity to explore diverse ways / means to do research; my doctoral studies have helped to identify “other” ways of embracing research. The subjects as beings, the instruments as means/ways and the narratives as reflections are pillars in my path to be a transformative researcher who can give a hand to the ELT community.

The following chapter will highlight two perspectives in this Doings, Means, and Ways in the ELT Observers’ positions. The first one stands that *one event comes from another event*. (Bruner 1991) and the another stands that *there is a chronological sequence in a story*. (Biesta, 2010)

Table 1. Narrative Construction Path

Number of participants	4 ELT Observers
File's Transcriptions	72 pages
Individual encounters **Within the ELT Observers**	11 (in-person) / 15 (remote access)
Group's encounters (The four observers)	3 (remote access)
Total of meetings with the ELT Observers	28 sessions
Transcripts of conversations	16 recording sessions saved
Archive in the sessions	48 pages (see annex 4)

Own elaboration, 2022

Annex 1

Research Consent

Bogotá, Junio, 21 2020

Apreciada colega,

Como te he comentado, estoy realizando mis estudios de doctorado alrededor de la posición del sujeto observador de clases de inglés en Colombia. Con base en tu experiencia, conocimiento y acercamiento con el tema de mi proyecto, te pido por favor me colabores para llevar a cabo algunas actividades de la investigación y me gustaría que te convirtieras en mi compañera en este camino y poder compartir tiempo para conversar o escribir acerca de:

- tus experiencias como observador de clases.
- la manera como se han llevado a cabo tu rol como observador.
- las inquietudes surgidas al momento de observar una clase, recibir entrenamiento para observar y dentro del aula observando una clase de inglés.

Agradezco tu colaboración porque sin ella es improbable poder llevar a cabo este estudio.

Cordialmente,

Miguel Martínez

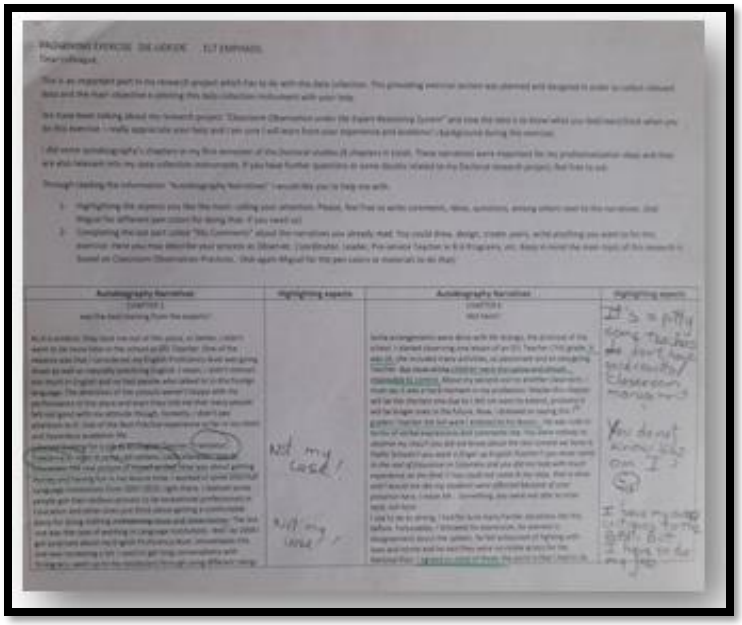
Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación UDFJDC

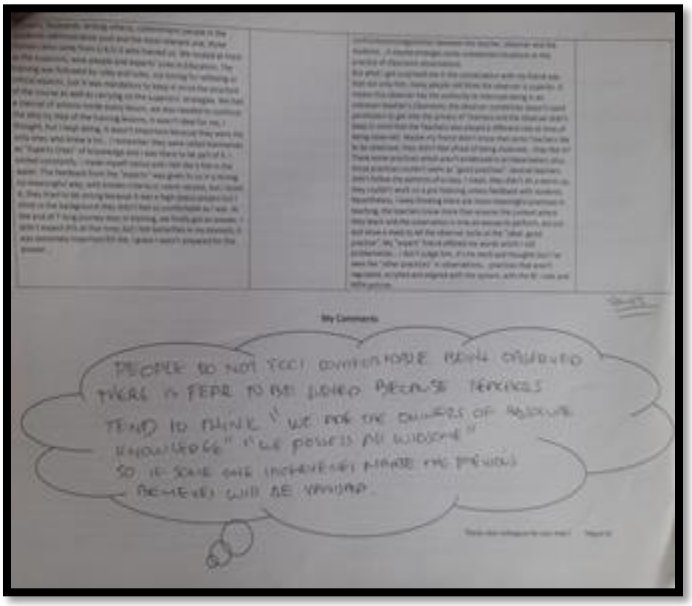
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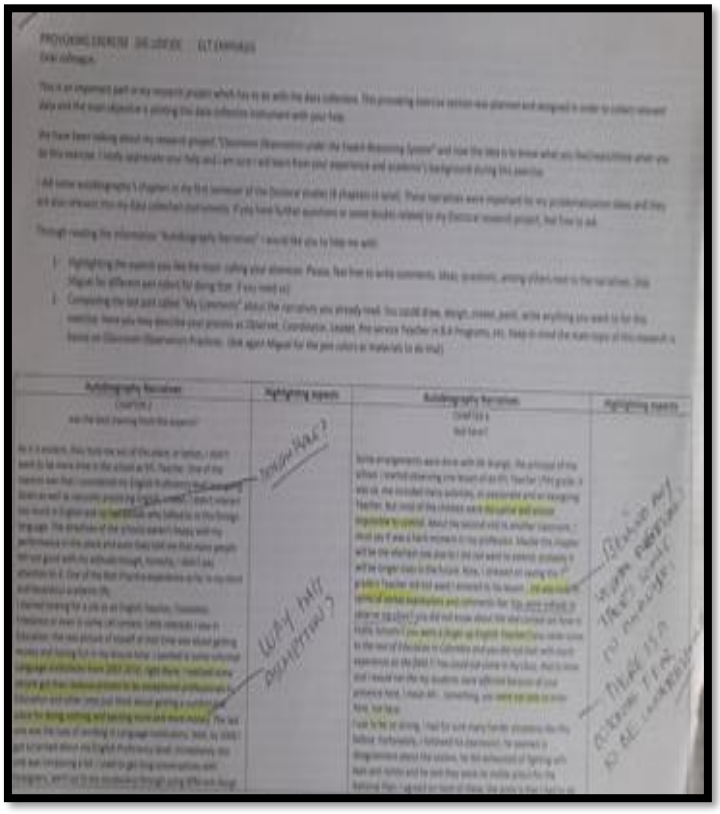
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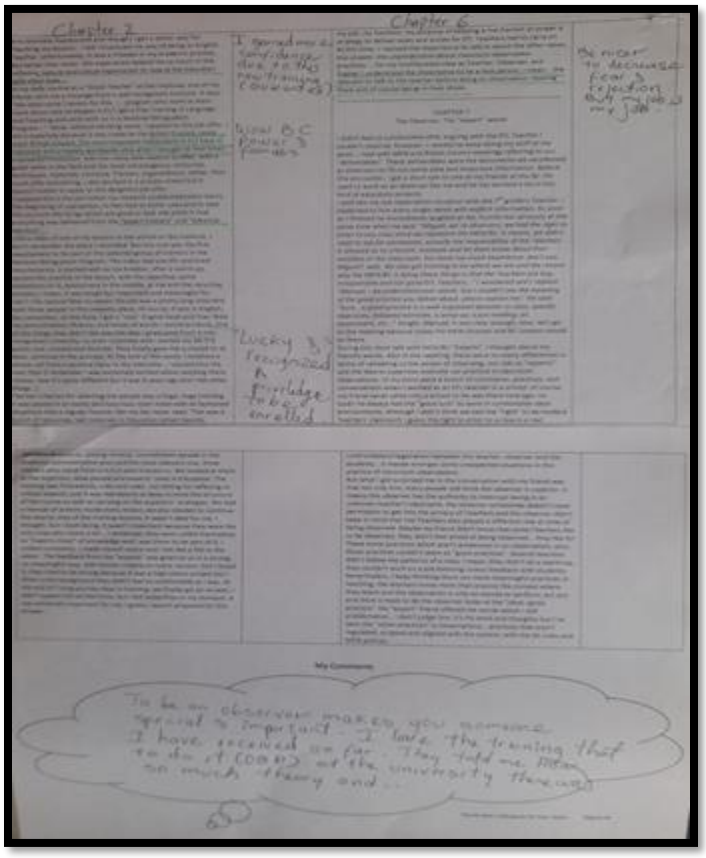
Annex 2

Piloting Ways in the Observers' Narratives









Annex 3

Provocative Narrative- Tania

Meeting 1- A Provocative Narrative DIE-UDFJDC ELT EMPHASIS

Dear colleague,

This is an important part in my research project which has to do with the data collection. This exercise was planned and designed to collect relevant data and the main objective is piloting this data collection instrument with your help.

We have been talking about my research project *"The Observers' Subject Positions- Unseen Situation in the Classroom Observation Practices"* and now the idea is to know what you feel/react/think when you observe English Classes. I really appreciate your help and I am sure I will learn from your experience and academic's background during this exercise.

I did some autobiography's chapters in my first semester of the Doctoral studies (8 chapters in total). These narratives were important for my problematization ideas, and they are also relevant into my data collection instruments. If you have further questions or some doubts related to my Doctoral research project, feel free to ask.

Through reading the information "Autobiography Narratives" I would like you to help me with:

1- Highlighting the aspects, you like the most- calling your attention. Please, feel free to write comments, ideas, questions, among others next to the narratives.

2- Completing the last part called "My Comments" about the narratives you already read. You could draw, design, create, paint, write anything you want to for this exercise. Here you may describe your process as Observer, Coordinator, Leader, Pre-service Teacher in B.A Programs, etc. Keep in mind the main topic of this research is based on Classroom Observation Practices. (Ask again Miguel for the pen colors or materials to do that)

Autobiography Narratives	Highlighting aspects	Autobiography Narratives	Highlighting aspects
CHAPTER 2 was the best training from the experts? As it is evident, they took me out of this place, or better, I didn't want to be more time in the school as EFL Teacher. One of the reasons was that I considered my English Proficiency level was going down as well as naturally practicing English. I mean, I didn't interact too much in English and no had people who talked to in this foreign language. The directives of the schools weren't happy with my performance in this place and even they told me that many people felt not good with my attitude though, honestly, I didn't pay attention to it. One of the Best Practice experience so far in my short and hazardous academic life. I started looking for a job as an English Teacher, Translator, Freelance or even in some call centers. Little interests I saw in Education, the real picture of myself at that time was about getting money and having fun in my leisure time. I worked in some informal Language institutions from 2007-2010, right there, I realized some people got their tedious process to be exceptional professionals in Education and other ones just think about getting a comfortable place for doing nothing and earning more and more money. The last one was the case of working in Language Institutions. Well, by 2008 I got surprised about my English Proficiency level, immediately this one was increasing a lot. I used to get long conversations with foreigners, went up to my vocabulary through using different slangs and idiomatic expressions and thought I got a better way for Teaching my lessons... I felt I improved my way of being an English Teacher. Unfortunately, it was a mistake in my academic process, but better than never, this experience helped me so much in this reflexive, natural and critical expectation to look at the Education with other eyes. In my daily routine as a "Good Teacher" at the Institute, one of my friends sent me a message from a well-recognized Institute. It says: "We need some Trainers for this ..... program who want to learn more about new strategies in ELT, get a free Training in Language and Teaching and work with us in a National Bilingualism Program...." Wow, without thinking twice, I applied to	**I also felt this way while I was teaching at schools. The hardest thing for me was to deal with parents. I also feel I didn't have any motivation for learning from my context at that time. I think I missed important learnings there. Also, I felt everything was a mess and nobody could help me out. I felt my students were not learning anything, but I didn't have a plan, I didn't ask for help because I already had a diploma and it was supposed I already knew everything.** **Emotional intelligence is tied to the way we drive our lives. Actually, our emotions contradict themselves and many times we end up judging what we see on other people, but we act the same way. Emotions determine, at the end of the day, our routines, dreams, achievements, and challenges. Sadly, these are**	CHAPTER 6 Not here!! Some arrangements were done with Mr Arango, the principal of the school. I started observing one lesson of an EFL Teacher (7th) grade. It was ok, she included many activities, so passionate and an easygoing Teacher. But most of the children were disruptive and almost impossible to control. About my second visit to another classroom, I must say it was a hard moment in my profession. Maybe this chapter will be the shortest one due to I did not want to extend, probably it will be longer ones in the future. Now, I stressed on saying this 7th graders Teacher did not want I entered to his lesson... He was rude in terms of verbal expressions and comments like: *You were nobody to observe my class!! you did not know about the real context we have in Public Schools!! you were a finger up English Teacher!! you never came to the real of Education in Colombia and you did not look with much experience on the field.!! You could not come in my class, that is mine and I would not like my students were affected because of your presence here, I mean Mr.. Something, you were not able to enter here, not here.* I use to be so strong, I had for sure many harder situations like this before. Fortunately, I followed his expression, he seemed in disagreement about the system, he felt exhausted of fighting with laws and norms and he said they were no visible actors for the National Plan. I agreed on most of these, the point is that I had to do my job, my function, my purpose of keeping a mechanism of power a strategy to deliver tasks and duties for EFL Teachers had to carry on. At this time, I realized the importance to talk to about the other views, the unseen, the unpredictable about classroom observation practices.... On my multifaceted view as Teacher, Observer, and Trainer I understood the importance to be a nice person, I mean... the relevant to talk to the teacher before doing an observation, hearing them and of course being in their shoes. _____	**This is a key issue I could connect after my participation in the project: policies, stakeholders, policy makers do not care about people. I had my ideas on it based on my academic readings and training, but it was the opportunity I got to prove it. Something we did not talk at all during the training sessions was how to be empathetic with teachers/administrative at schools...it just comes to my mind a word one of the trainers said to us: 'use your charm'...but, using a freaking smile was not the point. I also made decisions based on handing my paperwork, so I received my payment, but.....☹. That's what policies and its application miss: REAL EMPATHY**

Annex 4

Autobiographical Narratives- Wilson

Meeting Autobiographical Narrative DIE-UDFJDC ELT EMPHASIS

Dear colleague,

Thanks to be part of this research path.

We have been talking about my research and this time, I would like to know more on detail some assumptions you have at time of observing EFL in-service Teachers and things related to the Classroom Observation.

First, could you please answer the following questions from your experience and knowledge:

What is Observing for you?	How do you feel at time of observing EFL Teachers?	What main aspects could you highlight when getting training of "experts" for observing classes?	What is the main purpose of observing an EFL Class? How to be a "good" observer?
Sitting in a classroom watching a lesson and taking notes about it, while using my knowledge to assess it. I'd like to believe that for me the process has become more objective and less subjective throughout the years. I often focus on 2 things: students' participation and use of English, and the quality of teachers' feedback and correction.	*I feel fine, I don't usually have any strong emotions about it. Except for if I've been working with the teacher on some key pedagogical areas and I see s/he put it into practice, then I feel pretty happy for him/her. When they are not able to do it, I don't feel frustrated.*	*There is hardly ever any calibration exercise: i.e. an exercise where everyone watches a recording of a lesson and uses the same instrument to assess it; then they discuss it and 'must' agree on the assessment. This is for standardisation. It is not uncommon to see trainers having different 'opinions' regarding methodology and SLA; there can be 20 trainers in a programme about Task-based learning, for example, with 20 different views of what it is. This is rarely addressed.*	*Q1. The main purpose is to standardize teaching practice. Also, to offer developmental activities to teachers. It's possible to have both at the same time.* *Q2. "Good" for whom? For me, a 'good' observer gives teachers feedback that is relevant and credible for them. A good observer has a lot of tact and is very careful about how they speak to the observed.*

2- Do you remember my Autobiographic narratives? I would like to ask you to create **your autobiographical narrative**… It is not necessary to tell all the things related to Classroom Observations, but the important aspects you consider should be here. Feel free to do it as you prefer, it means, you could draw, paint, write, so on. It would be great if you include information at the time of receiving training for observing, the people who handled these training events, also, when you observe EFL Classes, people who are involved in this process, your feelings, struggles, particular aspects and more about Classroom Observation Practices. One chapter is enough.

I became a 'good' observer without any formal training. I learned it by doing and studying it independently. Later, I was given a job in which I needed to be an 'expert' observer, I don't remember how my employer assessed me on this, probably by asking me how I would deal with or give feedback to a hypothetical teaching situation. Later on this same job there was a strong developmental component for the observers, so the 4 or 5 of us always had to discuss observation and feedback and the instruments we used for them

We were also included in the revisions of the instruments, which for me was a great learning opportunity. My subsequent jobs involving observation lacked in proper standards for giving feedback, that is, the training focused more on using the observation instruments (using, not 'understanding' it), the programme managers were mainly interested in the number of observations completed and secondarily on whether the observed teachers 'improved'. In qualitative terms, it was all very loose and without proper guidelines. My main struggle was on how to redact the comments section of the observation instrument (this is key for example to form a discourse community). Moreover, one assumption that always struck me as 'unreal' has been the naive belief that from one observation to another the teacher will be able to demonstrate better teaching skills just because someone observed their lesson and gave them some feedback.

I first learned this in the so-called 'apprenticeship of observation' - basically by seeing other people do it, then I learned a lot by reading teacher-training books and studying the observation instruments of courses like CELTA and DELTA. I then studied basic principles of Assessment like reliability, credibility and validity, in order to then start designing my own observation instruments. (this was between 2007 and 2011).

In 2012 I delivered a paper at IATEFL exposing everything that I thought was wrong in initial teacher training and development. In 2013 I was hired to write a certificate course for new teachers, in which I had to design the observation instruments, so I basically had to learn all about it by reading and writing this course. So, in sum I had no formal training.

In 2015 I was hired by the British Council to work as a quality manager, the main bulk of my work was to carry out observations. In theory I already knew a lot about it, that's why they hired me… but on this job it was the first time I had a continued training on the subject. It basically consisted of all four or five trainers in the project observing recorded lessons and filling out observation forms, then discussing it in order to 'calibrate' the instrument.

Later between 2018 and 2020, I had some training, sort of, to observe classes in Colombia, but I don't think they added anything to my knowledge of the subject, as the training was mainly the course designer explaining the instrument.

There are only very few items that could be said to be 'universally' good in educational practices - I'd say they are the ones with extensive evidence of what works - what works that is to drive better student outcomes… (but student outcomes are also a controversial thing, so…). In ELT, these items would be what is very-well known in SLA that helps people learn languages.

At this moment in my career, I'd only consider an observation instrument valid if there is a clear indication that it was designed based on hard evidence of what is desired to happen in the classroom. Anything other than this is heavily subjective. Moreover, the instrument must by all means be socio-culturally situated and have face validity to the observed.. Big mistake, which happens a lot, is importing methodology and observation practices from the UK and US to be implemented elsewhere.

Annex 5

Transcript of conversation- Alex

Alex Transcript- November 2021

People talk about a culture of observation in the ELT field, of a collective memory of observation. This is based because we have the same observation pieces of training. However, I think there is a big gap there because there is no format that allows us to see the needs of the different research projects, much less the institutional needs.

Despite this, there is an overall (observation criteria) that many observers follow and observe or normalize and this is the standardized guidelines for in-class observation.

In Colombo Bogotá what I notice is the importance of training, those meetings with the observers and teachers observed. When they tell me that I am going to observe, it is so that I can improve my class dynamics. This also occurs in BC where there is a clear idea when class observers are trained

During the training that I had, I had a lot, a lot of disparity in the criteria of activities of the EFL teachers. But in the binary code of the observation list, the student is practicing English because she was looking at the book and for them, it was to practice English; the matter implies one more process of interaction but in the binary code of the observation list the student is waiting and is practicing English because he was looking at the book and for me, it was not.

So, the issue is to see what theorists or what theory is used for class observation, But I think that if you, the other two ELT observers of this project start to say if it is that in the theory behind the observation training, we do not arrive at any. In conclusion, I believe that this is the great void of collective memory in-class observation. Now you ask me if training in class observations is effective, my answer is that it is... it is needed.

The primary issue in observation training lies fundamentally in establishing clear, reliable criteria for collecting information and, above all, having a collective observation memory.

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6. A close look at Observers' Narratives

This chapter seeks to show data that has been collected on the positions of the ELT class observers. It includes observer narratives, reflections about the observers' stories, the sensitive facts in the class observation practices, the human characteristics displayed when observing classes, and the themes between the four ELT Observers' subject positions during this analysis.

Autobiographical narratives are the central pivot of collected data, which is why it is relevant to develop an analysis of it. The Horizontal provocation (explained in the previous chapter) helped to emerge the observers' narratives. The observers felt more confident when writing stories of their experiences in the class observation practices.

In addition, the procedure (phases) handed out before, benefits the reflexivity and self-reflexivity in terms of the acquired data. I decided to carry on data analysis in qualitative research since it consists of examining raw data, reducing them to themes through coding and recoding processes and representing the data in narratives.

This thesis suggests two constructs of data analysis insights (temporal sequence of action events & subjective interpretation of the data) that are lined up with the information collected. Each of the ELT observers immersed in this research revealed their narratives about the positions in which they have been hanging around in the English class observation practices.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, it was not easy to establish narrative methodological principles among ELT observers. Narratives gathered from ELT observers

through decolonial doings (Horizontal[9] provocation, Breakdown the power relations and the Ontological comes first to the epistemological) were the result of multiple dialogues and discussions. Also, the process of analysis entailed a challenging one to understand the positions of the ELT observers.

Through a close look at Observers' Narratives, the intention is to approach a reflexive turn by navigating the alternative conversations and configurative reflection with/from the ELT observers which can be a decolonial perspective, especially when doing research.

It is not easy to implement a decolonial methodology; however, through the decolonial doings that were implemented in this research (Horizontal provocation, Breakdown of the power relations and the Ontological come first to the epistemological), it was intended to develop critical forms of liberation though. In the words of Dussel (2007), he affirms that only working hypotheses are being proposed that others must continue arguing since it is "a project for several generations to come" (p. 11).

Following Dussel, Rodríguez (2016a) considers that the methodological issue is important in the decolonization process. He states: "*The new generations have the task of continuing with the hypotheses raised, one of the most interesting is to investigate in a decolonial key, which is more enriching than doing it passively-uncritically under the Eurocentric colonial scheme*" (p. 215).

[9] These decolonial doings were presented before in the methodological chapter. Page 121

6.1. Data Analysis insights

"Narrative research, as well as conventional research, most often involves two performances: (a) the collection of evidence and (b) the analysis or interpretation of the evidence" (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 478). However, Mishler (1995) proposes a more detailed and comprehensive typology (than Polkinghorne's) of the models of narrative analysis that encompasses most of the narrative approaches available in the field of narrative inquiry. As he states, the models of narrative analysis reviewed in his typology demonstrate "the depth, strength, and diversity of the 'narrative turn' in the many sciences" (p. 117). Mishler's typology attempts to cover the ways in which narrative researchers "story the world", focusing on making meaning of events and experiences through the researcher's telling and retellings of stories for different purposes in various contexts through various genres. That is, the data analysis in this research focused first on Mishler's idea because it delineates a comparative perspective on differences in narrative inquiry in terms of theoretical aims and assumptions, types of data, analytic methods and strategies, and genres, based on the triad of language functions proposed by Halliday (1973). The triad includes: "reference, structure, and function". Mishler believes that narrative inquiry is a "problem-centered area of inquiry" (p. 89).

To briefly provide an overview of Mishler's narrative typology, the methods of data analysis in the first construct, *Reference, and temporal order: The "telling" and the "told,*" focus on a reference as a problem of representation; specifically, looking for a correspondence between the temporal sequence events and their order of presentation in the data.

For the second construct, I needed to do several readings of the data, and suggest codes to organize the extracts which are later presented under thematic headings (Benson, Barkhuizen & Chik, 2014, p. 75). The three authors state three key terms in analysis—"iterative," "emergent," and "interpretive"—as they are used in Dörnyei's (2007).

In this case, I handled the analysis on interpretive, which is based on what is "fundamentally interpretive." The research outcome is ultimately the product of the researcher's subjective interpretation of the data" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 37). The findings of narrative inquiry studies, and qualitative studies more generally, are never "objective" in this sense and there is, indeed, often an explicit acknowledgment that they are necessarily "subjective" and "interpretive." I made the subjective interpretation within the themes of ELT observers' positions getting from their narratives.

During the data analysis, my intention was not to make comparisons between participants of this study. In this close look at observers' narratives, the conception was to build the word from other ways of looking and feeling, made up alternative conversations and by establishing configurative reflections among the ELT observers.

Traditional analysis is the process of exploring, transforming, and examining data to identify trends and patterns that reveal important insights and increase efficiency to support a thesis. The positivist methodology has given us great approaches to follow. I consider that in this part of my thesis there is a combination between a traditional approach and some decolonial findings. The simple fact of relating to ELT observers, alternate conversations and decolonial discoveries which intersect in this thesis chapter offer a challenging view in research.

To carry out this process, an analysis roadmap is necessary, which is presented below.

6.2. Analytical RoadMap[10]

I walked behind three stages through this data analysis: collection of data and organization, iterative subjective reading, and application of data analysis/interpretation. There will be a short rationale of every stage in this analytical roadmap, as well as considering some specific aspects.

This part of the thesis takes two insights from different authors to complement and make the analysis more rigorous. From Harré, "a positioning analysis strategy", and from Barkhuizen "the interpretation of additional overviews". These two perspectives of analysis are supported below.

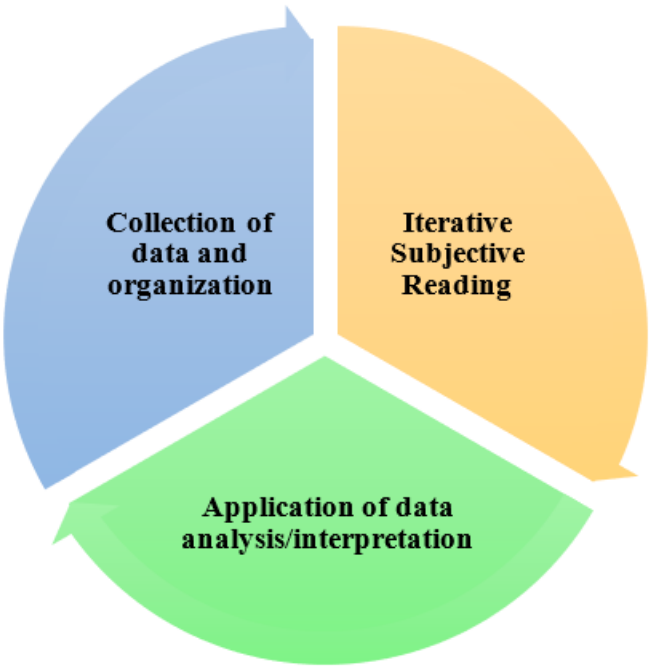


Image 1. Analytical RoadMap of ELT Observers

[10] *Image 1, own design.*

1) Collection of data and organization.

I stated before the data collection of this research. It includes biographies/autobiographies, narratives, observers' life stories, and conversation narratives.

I organized the narratives of the observers individually to understand the particularities that each one proclaims. Also, there is a need to establish a chronological order in their narratives; thus, it will be possible to have narratives produced by the ELT observers that were complemented by conversations, audio scripts, virtual meetings, and written compositions. (See Collage Appendix 1).

At the end of each narrative from the ELT observers, I could obtain a subjective interpretation of the data. By way of interpretation, I decided to organize the extracts which are presented under thematic headings.

2) Iterative subjective reading

Iterative refers to a systematic, repetitive, and recursive process in this qualitative data analysis. During the inquiry, the iterative process helped me elaborate, refine, and improve the data obtained from the narratives of the ELT observers. As Benson, Barkhuizen & Chik (2014) state, iterative data analysis stops at the point of "saturation," when further data collection, analysis, or interpretation it is unlikely to yield additional insight or, more practically, when a piece of work needs to be completed and written up (p.72).

Additionally, I went into a subjective reading which offers a wider variety of options in the interpretation of the data. It is known that usually, subjective means are influenced by emotions or opinions; however, subjective reading means making assumptions, making interpretations based on personal opinions within my experience as an ELT observer, as well as the design of autobiographical narrative passages.

3) Application of data analysis/interpretation

Some phases in the research procedure (methodology) were presented to identify a way to dig into the ELT Observers' positions. Notwithstanding, I did not follow a rigid linear structure in this interpretation since it represents more a retrospective exercise of ELT observers' reflections on their observation experiences.

Davies and Harré, (1990) have been working on "positioning analysis" which is a strategy in small story research, a strategy that involves the identification and interpretation of the interactional features through which speakers identify self and others in terms of mutual relationships in interaction and relationships to broader contexts of discourse (p.12).

I looked out for positions of ELT observers, but also, during the application of this data analysis, I had an analysis position regarding their and my own narratives. Also, this analytical RoadMap allowed me to transcribe all the narratives, then get some themes and develop an analysis.

6.3. Discoveries and analysis on the ELT Observers

In their research, Benson, Barkhuizen & Chik (2014), explain that "narrative analysis," Polkinghorne (1995) means an approach to the analysis of varied data sources that are based on the construction of narratives. In the thematic analysis of narratives, categorization, and the construction of theoretical relationships among abstract categories are the main analytical tools. In this narrative analysis, the narrative itself becomes an analytical tool that is brought to bear through "narrative writing."

I was able to do the analysis through a timeline of temporal sequence events of the ELT observers, which revealed some themes to be included into a subjective interpretation of the data. Each of the steps will be next presented.

This part of the research includes historical accounts, personal events, and storied episodes of the ELT observers. I argue that by reading and rereading these narratives, I allow myself to reflect, as well as have alternative conversations (among ELT observers) and contemplate the practices that we have carried out. These are actions of a decolonial doing since we as ELT observers have tried to delink from traditional knowledge hierarchies and ways of researching in the world in order to enable other forms of doing actions. We break down a wall for observers to express feelings, perspectives, and experiences that have been traditionally hidden by the standards and guidelines of classroom observations within Colombia.

Also, in this chapter, I dug into the objectives of the thesis and explored the reflections of them. During the analysis it is the possibility to understand the observers' subject positions in the narrated experiences within four ELT class observers in Colombia, as well as unveiling the power relations that observers have with the academic community in the class observation practices. Thus, there will be statements to identify the class observer's negotiations among their different subject positions through autobiographical narratives.

6.3.1. Tania's Narrative



"I'm not sure if there are good or bad observers."

Observation is the act of seeing and describing what you see. The conclusions of what you observe should be a supply for reflection. It might have two intentions, to monitor (transformed into surveillance) behaviors, actions to evaluate performance, and, to build up knowledge based on the conclusion drawn from the observations.

(Conversation excerpt, May 2020- Horizontal provocation)

6.3.1.1. Tania's Narrative discoveries

This section, called discoveries, is intended to replicate the narrations of the ELT observers who are involved in this thesis. It is a subsection of the document since I tried to show clearly and naturally the narratives of the subjects who have been surrounding the observations of the English classes. However, these life stories, events and narratives were written by each of the observers and were not edited by me as a researcher. Each of the below titles were attributed by the observer.

Act I. What Tania observes in a class…

The ways I feel depend on the intention I have or am told to have when observing. If I'm told to observe to evaluate performance, I feel doing surveillance, judging, checking, listing, and anxious. On the other hand, if my intention is to build up knowledge, I feel empowered, transformative, constructive, and motivated when observing a class. Based on my experience as a professional teacher, the main purpose is to decipher and build, along with the observed teacher, pedagogical knowledge that allows us to have stronger pedagogical, didactical, and classroom practices. I'm not sure if there are good or bad observers. I'd rather think about successful observer practices. If I think about that, I'd say that successful practices from class observers imply high negotiation skills, assertive communicator, high levels of empathy and emotional intelligence, teamwork, active listener, trustful, self-confident, task-oriented, willingness to learn, and unlearn, systematic, organized. The observation in classes should help me grow, learn, construct, change, reinvent, and this practice shouldn't be homogenized. We teachers should have the right to create practices all the time, not be framed by them.

(Tania's biographical passage, November 2020- Narratives about observation)

II. I'm being a class observer.

My first contact with class observation was at the undergraduate program I studied at "XXX" university; I was the observed one. It happened around 2006. I had a mentor teacher, and she was part of the teachers' staff at the public school I was assigned to. I don't have a good memory, so I don't remember that much from my mentor teacher's feedback. I didn't really see her as a person whom I built up strong learning discussions with. She was barely in the classroom while I was teaching. The practicum process lasted just one semester. During the BA, around 2004, I also had initial experiences as an observer when a professor (pedagogical models' class) asked us to do some primary in-service teachers' observations to collect features of how teachers taught and connect them to the pedagogical models we were studying. The class professor gave us a form, but I don't remember the criteria it had. It was not easy to find the school to work with, since most teachers were not interested in

being observed. We never discussed our observation notes with the observed in-service teachers. My path as a classroom observer started some years ago when I started working at a university in a language bachelor's program. I was the English area coordinator, and as part of some actions taken for the 'Registro calificado', the coordinators' team decided to have some class observations from the area teachers in order to characterize the pedagogical practices we had. I did not receive any training, except for some suggestions from the team to include in the observation form. I remember there were lots of resistances and 'buts' during the meeting I socialize that idea with the English teachers; as a result, it was a difficult thing to schedule with them such observations. Something we intended to have been a reflecting time after the observation, but just a few teachers attended to those moments. At the end of the day, I ended up feeling frustrated and judged by my colleagues, since they felt as if I had been evaluating their performance. My boss at the time used some of that information to not hire some of them posteriorly. That made me feel even worse. I was actually passive towards that situation.

The second context in which I continued doing classroom observation was in the context of language bachelor programs, but with pre-service teachers' practices at private and public schools. I still do that. I can say that in these contexts by 2008 we have seen as even more normal the teacher-observer as the one who evaluates, judges, and has the correct answers on how to do things. However, working in this context has had, for me, pre- and post-moments. Before the third context, I will mention in the following paragraph, I used to assume this imposing observing role as part of my job. Observing was for evaluating performance, assigning a grade, and telling the pre-service teacher what to change and how. After the third context, my perspective has been changing and I started understanding the observers' role as more empowering and constructive. Now I feel more like an agent, than just a passive one.

The third context happened to me some years ago when I was offered to work with a renamed international language teaching institution along with the Secretaría de Educación for implementing English language policy in public schools in Bogota. I felt this would be THE chance to have a role in policies, which is something I saw far from reaching in my role as a university teacher. Everything was fancy and seemed like a dream, even the wage. I was hired to be a 'pedagogical consultant'. The basis of the program was the training sessions

where we, the consultants, were told what and how regarding stages, procedures, goals, schedules, numbers, forms, and materials. Two of those stages implied class observation or, as the trainers called it, class accompaniment to the school English teachers. The goal was to have the teachers' class practices identified and based on that build an action plan to fit their practices to what the policy considered was the 'correct' way to teach English. I remember the first training session for those observations (2019), the trainers gave us a format where we just had to checklist whether the teacher accomplished or not items regarding lesson planning, target language use, strategies, interaction, XXI century skills, assessment, and resources. No space for drawing conclusions. Just at the end, some reflective questions were for discussion with the teacher, but the point was for them to see what they had wrong in their practice and decide which element they wanted to focus on to adjust to the 'correct' way of teaching. I felt as if I were there just to put a tick. I had the feeling that observing the practice, proposed by the trainers, was the correct one, so I assumed passive behavior. When I started getting in contact with the schools and talking to the principals and coordinators at the beginning of the consultancy process, most of them felt class observation was an opportunity for them to know how their teachers were doing inside the class; they even complaint on how 'their teachers' were not open with their classes despite the constant worrying comments they received from students and parents. To tell you the truth, I could carry out every single observation I was required to do; however, during the reflection moments, many of the teachers did it just as part of the requirement, and they seemed to feel judged or angry. They just ended up saying something for me to fill in the form and to leave them alone. Actually, during the whole process of the project, most of the teachers were not interested in participating, it was more the principal's imposition. I started noticing how understanding myself as a class observer who is there just to monitor performance was far from what I expected to contribute to the language teaching context. I knew I couldn't change my role on this project, which was highly frustrating for me and for the teachers I worked with, but I could do it in my role as an observer of pre-service teachers' practices, and I did. I remember, during the training sessions, the consultants mentioned how the forms for observing were not being what we expected, professionally speaking. The trainers adjusted the form including two more columns, but the intention and the principles of observing were not adjusted. Now, I feel disappointed thinking about how those training sessions guided me

on how to fill in forms, follow a teaching borrowed route, and impose ways of teaching, but I did not receive any training on negotiation techniques, assertive communication, or emotional intelligence that allow me to deal with me and my colleagues' emotions towards being observed, being a teacher at a public school, educational policies, and all the things that involve being a teacher in this city.

(Tania's biographical passage, August 2020- Stories of an Observer)

III. Training in my observation practices / The formats and rubrics

My experience as an observer has had three stages, mainly, in which I can tell experiences related to training. The first stage happened right after I got graduated from my master's program and I had my first experience working with BA programs in languages. I didn't have training sessions as such since I was assigned practicum classes in which my role was to support pre-service teachers in their practicum spaces. I did a self-training process if I can call it that way, in which I searched for possibilities to systematize in-training teachers' experiences. I came across mainstream formats that started shaping my experience as an observer following the vision of me just as someone who checks some items and tells the pre-service teacher what to improve and how. The second stage came when I participated in the British council (BC) project in which I received explicit training for observing in-service teachers at public schools in Bogota. Although my experience here responded to the vision I mentioned in the first stage, it was highly frustrating since I started noticing how those imposed, punishing, and top-down observation strategies produced rejection and conflicts with the observed teachers. I think I already mentioned some of my insights about the training sessions at BC in previous narratives; however, I want to highlight some ideas from y experience. I remember leaving those training sessions and talking to my colleagues about how frustrating it was to see the forms we were told to complete during our observations. I felt there was a mismatch between my pedagogical viewpoints and the way the observation process was being carried out. I felt trapped in something I didn't want to do. I was constantly asking myself: If I were that teacher, how would I feel during and after being observed in such an arrogant way? My answer was: I'm sure I wouldn't allow it, period. After those training sessions, I felt like an object, a machine that executed a task. However, I appreciate those experiences at BC, since they forced me to inquire myself how not to continue spreading those dehumanizing observation

practices as an observer. The third stage is the one I'm going through now. It has a non-common training dynamic, I'd say. After the BC and some personal and emotional reflections on my role as a language teacher, I decided to learn from the pre-service teachers I observe, so now I build up with them the criteria for observing their practicum based on their interests and needs. It implies a constant negotiation, and it allows us to have a more horizontal relationship. I'm in the process of piloting this training strategy, so I don't have specific experiences yet. When carrying out class observation, training should always be included; however, orienting such training towards check listing, monitoring performance, adapting pedagogical practices to a given model, etc., might drive the role of the observer as an object that fulfills a mechanic role. The training I've received so far has been oriented towards that perspective, which makes me see it as useless for the way I understand observing practices nowadays; nevertheless, if it hadn't been for such training and subject positioning, I wouldn't have asked myself on which type of observer I expected to be. The use of rubrics for assessment processes is highly useful in the educational context. However, rubrics have also gained a certain bad reputation due to their, sometimes, harshness when being used for observation processes. I agree with the use of rubrics; nevertheless, in my opinion, when observing a class, it would be more fruitful to adapt a rubric based on the observed subject's interests and the observer subject's needs. To make it more of a negotiated tool would definitely provide different dynamics when observing, this would contribute to a more democratic and constructive environment. Well, I have contributed to discussions and design of some observation formats, and a few times I have designed my own. When it happened, I had to mention two stages. The first stage happened around 8 years ago when I had a different vision of teaching and learning, one more oriented towards top-down agendas and me being the 'expert' observer person. Back in those days, I observed elements linked to teaching strategies, use of target language, lesson plan structure, and coherence, classroom management, use of resources, and assessment from the perspective of the observed teacher who met successfully or didn't meet those criteria. The second stage started happening around 2 years ago when I started re-constructing my views on myself as a teacher and the things that underlie my professional self. These reflections and turning points have guided me to see myself as a learner and the observed subjects as subjects with voice, agency, fears, strengths, needs,

etc. Thus, I observe point to the elements we consider important regarding didactic and methodological elements, but emotional, contextual, identities, and discursive ones as well, just to mention some.

I can see in a class observation rubric:

- *Binary type of assessment: observed / No observed. There is just extra space to comment on the things that are wrong according to the observer. Organization.*
- *If it is used during just one session, ambitious. It focuses on lots of aspects at the same time. When we teach, we usually have processes and practices that do not necessarily happen in every single class. This rubric seems not to be created to observe and process. Well-structed.*
- *By reading it as an observer subject I feel disconnected and overwhelmed.*
- *There is a reflection space at the end. I think I'd propose reflections moments before and after.*
- *Every single item included has to do with didactic and disciplinary knowledge. There is nothing linked to the human or emotional part.*

(Tania's biographical passage, May 2021- The rubrics within the position of the observer)

IV. My position as an Observer

I believe something that characterizes the observation in the classroom is surveillance, punishment, and arrogance. I don't have a personal experience to talk about it. Still, some colleagues have shared with me their experiences in which they have supervisors (colleagues as well) who observe their classes and give them a sort of feedback, but with some hidden agendas to keep their contracts active as long as they 'listen' to the 'suggestions' given. Those things make me think about observation as a tool to preserve what is believed to be the correct way to deliver a class provided by the ELT western agendas. This anecdote happened while I was observing a pre-service teacher. The teacher had planned her class beforehand in a careful way responding to the feedback we both discussed during that process. She decided to use a video as the central source of the class. On the day of the observation, the light had gone at the school. When I met the teacher, she was going through an anxiety crisis due to a light situation. She knew her class was not going to be possible as she had planned it. It was a situation in which neither she nor I could do anything. It was out of our hands. She started crying and telling me she

wouldn't feel able to perform in the class in those conditions. She was going through an emotional crisis. I felt frustrated too, but I was conscious punishment was not going to contribute to her growth as a teacher. We both agreed on postponing the observation. From that day on, this teacher started including plan B which didn't require electronic resources in her planning. I guess that was an important learning for both of us. Observation is also a matter of negotiation and emotional intelligence. She was an outstanding teacher, but if she had decided to teach the class in the middle of the anxiety crisis, she could have made different pedagogical and emotional decisions that put her into trouble with herself and her students. I felt proud of her for making that decision; however, that's a chance pre-service teachers have those in-service teachers might not. In-service teachers must teach the class no matter the conditions the classroom has. Making decisions on the spot seems to be an important part of the emotional self's novice or experienced teachers might have, and I wonder to myself if we're being taught those skills in bachelor's programs…don't think so.

(Tania's biographical passage, August 2021- The Observers' Subject Positions)

I think I position myself from what I call different 'selves'. As humans and as observers we understand and comprehend realities depending on the 'selves' we perform or have. Selves imply not only identities such as teacher, student, observer, and woman, among others, but also selves understood as the emotions I have while performing a task or living my life. As an observer, the fact that I am a 40-year-old woman born in Bogota transversalizes my comprehensions and ideas every time I enter a classroom as an observer. Those are 'selves' of mine. Besides, if during the observation session I'm feeling mad or arrogant my understanding of the class and the observed teacher is going to be impacted by those feelings. I remember I felt like an outsider and rejected by some of the public schools where I observed in-service language teachers. I could feel how awkward it was for the observed teachers to have me in their classrooms just because they might have been forced to do it. Those feelings positioned myself emotionally toward the observation moments. Therefore, it's difficult for me to stand just from A position as an observer. I have multiple selves that set my cognitive and emotional assets for the observation practices I perform.

(Conversation excerpt, March 2022- The Observers' Subject Positions)

ANALYSIS of Tania's narrative

- Timeline of Temporal sequence events in Tania's narrative-

Tania. Chronological events of an ELT Observer

This part consists of identifying the historical background of the ELT observers.

Observer as a Student

"It happened around 2006. I had a mentor teacher, and she was part of the teachers' staff at the public school I was assigned to. I don't have a good memory, so I don't remember that much from my mentor teacher's feedback. I didn't really see her as a person whom I built up strong learning discussions with. She was barely in the classroom while I was teaching."

Tania had her first steps in the observation practices in the university she studied. It is important to analyze that she paid attention to her "mentor" during this practice. However, her bad experience helped to identify possible facts of a practice of observation. She also pointed out the relevance of the feedback while a person is observing others. It was one of the first contacts within the observation and did not have enough experience in the field so, she did not have a meaningful experience. However, to understand her position as an observer, this initial experience is important to express her ideas.

"During the BA, around 2004, I also had initial experiences as an observer when a professor asked us to do some primary in-service teachers' observations to collect features of how teachers taught and connect them to the pedagogical models we were studying. The class professor gave us a form, but I don't remember the criteria it had. It was not easy to find the school to work with, since most teachers were not interested in being observed. We never discussed our observation notes with the observed in-service teachers."

Here, it is important to highlight which seems to be a canonical practice into the class observation. There is an observation format that conducts on parameters to evaluate / control the class performance. Despite this, Tania did not exercise the importance of the format since her teacher did not explain to her. This way to do observations is traditionally implemented in universities and training centers, using forms without questioning the relation form-observer.

On the same token, Tanis realized a power relation between the class professor and students; the Professor did not discussed/confronted the students' productions about the observation practice. The professor was not interested in the observation insights of the students.

Observing Pre-service teachers

"I continued doing classroom observation in the context of language bachelor programs, but with pre-service teachers' practices at private and public schools. I can say that in these contexts by 2008 we have seen as even more normal the teacher-observer as the one who evaluates, judges, and has the correct answers on how to do things… I used to assume this imposing observing role as part of my job. Observing was for evaluating performance, assigning a grade, and telling the pre-service teacher what to change and how...My perspective has been changing and I started understanding the observers' role as more empowering and constructive. Now I feel more like an agent, than just a passive one."

I got this passage as a normalization exercise in the practice of CO. The head teacher is the one who assigns tasks in the practice of observation. The observation in a university program offers the possibility to do this practice, however, there is just one person who handles the dynamics and has the right to decide for the upcoming events. The context of observation allows her different positions in which she can/cannot be (imposing observer or constructive one) The observation at university (practicum) is quite different to observe an in-service teacher. Tania realizes that and she assumes the dynamics in the observation are also depending on the context. This context differs from university, school, or another institution.

"I did not receive any training, except for some suggestions from the team to include in the observation form. I remember there were lots of resistances and 'buts' during the meeting I socialize that idea with the English teachers; as a result, it was a difficult thing to schedule with them such observations. Something we intended to have been a reflecting time after the observation, but just a few teachers attended to those moments.
At the end of the day, I ended up feeling frustrated and judged by my colleagues, since they felt as if I had been evaluating their performance. My boss at the time used some of that information to not hire some of them posteriorly. That made me feel even worse. I was actually passive towards that situation."

Tania at this moment also had no training on how to observe a class correctly. Despite this, she had to continue with the role of the observer who criticizes, judges, and evaluates. It was difficult for her to follow these enactment practices, even if she did not want it. The observation practice is introduced at education programs without any training as it was neutral and value laden. The lack of guidelines is experienced as a negative aspect, however when the observer role is assumed activities such as giving feedback, implementing judgements, following a rubric, but the emotional aspects are not seen in the practice, the position of the observer manages a more structural / mechanical role. Tania realizes that there are confronted emotions when the observation is continued, likewise, she identifies the consequences of not following "adequate" patterns/guidelines when doing an observation. There are consequences to it.

Observing in-service teachers

"I remember the first training session for those observations (2019), the trainers gave us a format where we just had to checklist whether the teacher accomplished or not items regarding lesson planning, target language use, strategies, interaction, XXI century skills, assessment, and resources. No space for drawing conclusions. Just at the end, some reflective questions were for discussion with the teacher, but the point was for them to see what they had wrong in their practice and decide which element they wanted to focus on to adjust to the 'correct' way of teaching. I felt as if I were there just to put a tick. I had the feeling that observing the practice, proposed by the trainers, was the correct one, so I assumed passive behavior."

There is a canonical way to do observations within EFL teachers. The observer gets first a "special" training to follow a successful practice, however, the observers feel they are "static/passive" when the job is done. Tania understood that the practice of observing in-service teachers requires a suitable process, this exercise needs some specific requirements as the academic purpose as well as the structural guidelines.

"To tell you the truth, I could carry out every single observation I was required to do; however, during the reflection moments, many of the teachers did it just as part of the requirement, and they seemed to feel judged or angry. They just ended up saying something for me to fill in the form and to leave them alone. Most of the teachers were not interested in participating, it was more the principal's imposition. I started noticing how understanding myself as a class observer who is there just to monitor performance was far from what I expected to contribute to the language teaching context"

It is evident during Tania's chronological events she problematized several aspects that are assumed to be natural within education and doing this allows her to see after moments of her contact with observation to position herself and understand herself.

When she observed in-service teachers, they apparently lived this practice to control, evaluate or judge. Tania realized the importance of contributing something to the ELT field through observations, but in the specific contexts she did her job, the real scenarios are quite different, and she did not have the chance to obtain a diverse position as an ELT observer (Transformative, experiential, or emotional).



6.3.1.2. Exposition of Tania's Narrative-

Tania, a sensitive class observer

Tania has been immersed in several contexts in which the observation took place. This lived experience gave her insights to recall her experience in the observations. Tania as an ELT observer recognizes that this practice should be analyzed and problematized. She also pays attention to the observed (pre/in-service teachers). Tania expressed herself from a very natural and authentic position when narrating stories about class observation practices. She told stories of her experiences in-class observations, as a student, with pre-service teachers; she also identified key views of surveillance (caused by the observers when she was observed), vigilance, and control and she provoked to analyze further the position of an observer, not as a simple machine, but as a sensitive subject.

For Tania, the observation of EFL classes is generated from aspects such as emotional intelligence, socialization between observer-observed, and, of course, the feelings that surround this component of practice. Tania as an ELT observer has been a passive subject for several moments, but in turn, she has participated as an active subject when required and when she wanted.

The technologies that are part of the observation (rubrics, guidelines, formats, among others) have permeated Tania's position as an ELT observer, as she is a subject hired by external entities to fulfill a fundamental task/objective: to observe an EFL class.

Tania's experiences and perspectives tell us that the knowledge through history has been imposed on us from class observations; For example, Tania criticizes why she was not questioned in the workplace about the type of observer she wanted to be, or she evidences the importance of analyzing the emotions of the observers in the classroom. The mentioned representations have not been exposed in the class observation and Tania (through her narratives) shows us the importance of discussing "other" practices within the observations. The following part is my perspective of a critical reflection around the "other" configurations of Tania in her position as an ELT observer.

Issues about class observation training[11]

"I felt as if I were there just to put a tick, a machine…" (Tania)

In Tania's narrative, one of the most salient issues in the process of becoming an observer of in-service English teachers within the context of the study deals with the contradiction it entailed for her to be hired as a "*pedagogical consultant*." The meaning she supposed at first was quite different from the training she received. As consultants, they "*were told what and how regarding stages, procedures, goals, schedules, numbers, forms, and materials."* Two of those stages implied class observation based on "*what the policy considered was the 'correct' way to teach English*."

In her view, instead of being someone with the knowledge to share and discuss with observed teachers. In the sense of a consultant, she was reduced to merely an "eye" with

11 This finding passage was adapted from an article called "*Exploring the ELT Observer's Subject Positions: Tensions, Negotiations, and Contradictions*". (Martinez & Mendez, 2022) Forthcoming. As a product of this doctoral research. Doctorado Interinstitutional en Educación, District University, Colombia.

which to complete the observation format, without any possibilities during her training for reflection, questions, or discussion:

> *I remember the first training session for those observations (2019), the trainers gave us a format where we just had to checklist whether the teacher accomplished or not items regarding lesson planning, target language use, strategies, interaction, XXI century skills, assessment, and resources. No space for drawing conclusions. Just at the end, some reflective questions were discussed with the teacher, but the point was for them to see what they had done wrong in their practice and decide which element they wanted to focus on to adjust to the 'correct' way of teaching. I felt as if I were there just to put a tick, a machine. [sic]*

Tania's discomfort in the class observation training is evident. Her position right there is to follow orders in her work as an observer, despite this, she experienced a series of rigorous parameters on how to observe and what to observe. Tania problematizes the correct way of teaching. Training sessions for ELT observers require continuous and a rigid process that requires commitment without leaving it.

Tania pinpointed it as something critical in training in the sense of denouncing a de-contextualized observation practice. This last aspect agreed on the need to have socio-cultural-oriented instruments to match with observed practices and in doing so, she pinpoints that it is "*a big mistake to import methodology and observation practices from the UK and US to be implemented elsewhere."*

As can be seen, observers' reactions to training entailed a critical positioning of it in which personal knowledge about the observation practice itself helped them to assess positively or negatively some aspects of it. In fact, Tania can point out those dilemmatic components of training that contradict her vision of teaching and observation. Tania was able to identify the specific training tasks accomplished by the trainee. Despite this, she wanted to be part of that construction of suggestions or guidelines during a class observation. No space for extra comments in an observation rubric? She argued that these

components (like other ones) are relevant in the observation training processes. She identified that the rubrics/instruments are part of a colonial system. These colonial mechanisms that are reflected in some ELT ideologies and practices (observations inside classrooms), which are the control, supervision and invisibilization of opinions were caught by her through the position of observer.

In Tania's biographical narrative there are some essential elements to understand, for example, what it means to be an observer and the personal concerns involved in this process. Her consideration of the other who is observed, places her as an empathic and caring observer who understands the pressure of being observed no matter how "normalized" the observation practice in the teachers' professional life is:

> *I'm also aware that being observed might feel terrifying, although observations are part of teachers' professional life. When I'm told I'm going to be observed I feel afraid of being judged, even though I have taught for a long time. Besides, many teachers might have had negative experiences receiving feedback, since observers may hurt as much as a rude resistant teacher as the one, we confronted. [sic]*

As can be seen in this previous excerpt, she is able to talk about observers as an outsider, since it is a person not belonging to a particular group. As an outsider within the practice of observation, she is a stranger — someone who does not fit in, or someone who observes a group from afar. Likewise, as an authorized practice, the observation is presented as an activity of judgment and feedback. Tania perceives that the observation hurts, but it must be done, since it is something regulated by society.

In the following excerpt, I would like to draw your attention to the subject who looks into, scrutinizes, analyzes and has a position towards the observation. Tania identifies variables that go "beyond" the observation. They are alternatives that are rarely talked about in the observation training, but they are there... in the hidden practices of observation.

She has a critical position on the way observation formats are decontextualized and based on imported approaches and realities; indeed, she argued that:

> *One of the big issues of the ELT field is that we have been categorized by the western theories on specific lesson planning formats or approaches that have promised to be the rescuers. Such frames have mainly overlooked things that every schoolteacher has to face in our context: negotiation techniques, psychological counselling, emotional intelligence, substance abuse, hunger, poverty, [and] social injustice, among others. [sic]*

Tania's invitation as an ELT observer is to analyze our local realities. During the training, she lived within exported approaches, taken from other contexts and decontextualized.

For Tania, a training for observers must include reflections on local contexts, realities that EFL teachers live every day on which ELT observers can identify and collaborate.

Surveillance and Control

"Class observer who is there just to monitor performance…" (Tania)

Tania's narratives highlight the negotiations we as observers face during observing a class. These negotiations include compromising among ELT Observers, the collaboration between observers and the observed EFL teacher and the relationships which fit into the class observation practices. However, the class observation is an introspective facet of our teaching practices. Tania reminds the importance to understand that observers are teachers, EFL teachers who have breathed the observation many times and her position defines surveillance and control as a successful practice that often consists of one or more different negotiation styles. The previous statement deals with an objective in this thesis about to identify the class observer's negotiations among Tania´s positions through autobiographical narratives.

Tania denoted a conscientious look in front of the practice of observation since the observer has also been in the shoes of the observed teacher. Empathy and critical sense play a preponderant position of Tania in the practice of observation.

> *If I'm told to observe in order to evaluate performance, I feel doing surveillance, judging, checking to list, and anxious. On the other hand, if my intention is to build up knowledge, I feel empowered, transformative, constructive, and motivated when observing a class.*
>
> *… the observation in classes should help me grow, learn, construct, change, reinvent, and this practice shouldn't be homogenized. We teachers should have the right to create practices all the time, not being framed by them. [sic]*

I interpreted the narratives she made, and it was not easy to develop a concrete stand from her words. I had some troubles, especially in this passage on surveillance and control, because she argued the observer carries on a role of monitoring. That is for me a way of surveillance and control when observing a class. She declares that,

> *…during the whole process of the project most of the teachers were not interested in participating, it was more the principal's imposition. I started noticing how understanding myself as a class observer who is there just to monitor performance was far from what I expected to contribute to the language teaching context. [sic]*

She understands that her position as an observer implies being a controller, making judgments because that is how the identity of the observer has been configured for a long time. However, when she speaks of herself as an observer, she distances herself from that identity and expresses her position as a teacher that observes from a less violent level than a regular ELT observer does.

Furthermore, the observer monitors the performance of an EFL teacher. It is an institutional practice of control and surveillance of in-class observations from government entities. In an informal conversation with Tania, we thought about the vertical forces that are introduced in classroom observation practices. This is part of what she mentioned in our conversation referring to such forces:

> When I think about deliverables, I just think about numbers and percentages. That's what we, observers, teachers, coordinators, principals, and students, mean for the governments and stakeholders. The numbers are what governmental reports show, that's what supports quality. And that's what I ended up collecting when I worked on the project as an observer: numbers for the Ministry of Education to show.
>
> (Conversation excerpt, November 2021- The Observers' Subject Positions)

The ELT observer is responsible for following guidelines proposed by external/government entities. These steps must be followed to track educational/professional development plans; however, there is a step-by-step approach to monitoring, controlling, and evaluating the teachers' performances. The eyes that observe must go on with these processes, to ensure the "success" of normalized practices held by the system and the subjects involved in them.

Tania's position as an observer allowed her to critically analyze the dynamics in government plans or actions carried out by external institutions. Tania took a practical position in her job as an ELT observer, the position of delivering data and numbers through a classroom observation practice. Although she knew it was a data-generating machine, the point is that her role as an observer involved identifying observation patterns, organizing observation data, and delivering the results.

At the same time, I found it intriguing how different corporate entities (stakeholders, educational directives, and external organizations, among others) circulate in her classroom observation practices. These subjects/entities also shaped her subject position as an observer. In this case, this position followed orders, walked behind a series of rules, and preserved standards/guidelines established by the observation system.

The colonial histories of understandings are revealed by Tania during the practice of observation. She resisted and explored various ways of moving into this practice. As an example, she constantly criticized the rules which are stated in the observation system and Tania fixed these components (guidelines, set rubrics, among others) into the reality of the class observations.

Humbleness when observing classes.

"I was conscious punishment was not going to contribute to her growth as a teacher."

When Tania was recalling her experience as an observer of pre-service teachers, the way she emphasized these social and educational aspects made us reflect upon her position as a context-sensitive observer.

The subject position as an observer of pre-service teachers is different from in-service teachers. Tania clearly had a position of humility in the face of the observation that she carried out at the university (pre-service teachers). Her qualities included honesty, integrity, courage, self-awareness, and patience These qualities define herself through humbleness when observing classes.

> *The second context in which I continued doing classroom observation was in the context of language bachelor programs, but with pre-service teachers' practices at private and public schools. I still do that. I can say that in these contexts by 2008 we have seen as even more normal the teacher-observer as the one who evaluates, judges, and has the correct answers on how to do things. However, working in this context has had, for me, pre- and post-moments. Before the third context, I will mention in the following paragraph, I used to assume this imposing observing role as part of my job. Observing was for evaluating performance, assigning a grade, and telling the pre-service teacher what to change and how. After the third context, my perspective has been changing and I started understanding the observers' role as more empowering and constructive. Now I feel more like an agent, than just a passive one. [sic]*

Tania also faced the weight of duty as an observer, expressing her desires with hypothetical questions that reshaped in her mind how an observation practice can be more just.

> *If I attend a classroom as a mighty observer with a list of regulated items, I will continue discrediting teachers' pedagogical practices. What if we better enter a classroom and negotiate with our colleague to describe and construct his teacher's identities and knowledges? instead of criticizing, judging, and evaluating. [sic]*

I selected relevant aspects in the previous narrative's passage. Tania distinguished some frames that had mainly overlooked things that every EFL school teacher has to face in our context: negotiation techniques, psychological counseling, emotional intelligence, substance abuse, hunger, poverty, and social injustice, among others. These previous aspects are not identified in-class observation, Tania instead went further, since she reached to capture the needs and realities that are lived in day-to-day schoolwork. It is an act of humility for the ability to understand the teachers, students, and the context, from the position of the observer.

The following passage is conceivable to see a conscious observer about a situation that occurred in a classroom. It was seen how recursive we can be as EFL teachers, and to understand that subject from a shared position,

> *The teacher had planned her class beforehand in a careful way responding to the feedback we both discussed during that process. She decided to use a video as the central source of the class. On the day of the observation, the light had gone at the school. When I met the teacher, she was going through an anxiety crisis due to a light situation. She knew her class was not going to be possible as she had planned it. It was a situation in which neither she nor I could do anything. It was out of our hands. She started crying and telling me she wouldn't feel able to perform in the class in those conditions. She was going through an emotional crisis. I felt frustrated too, but I was conscious punishment was not going to contribute to her growth as a teacher. We both agreed on postponing the observation. From that day on, this teacher started including plan B which didn't require electronic resources in her planning. I guess that was an important learning for both of us. [sic]*

According to what I analyzed from the previous passage; a top-down position of the observer was not established. In other words, this narration placed us in a purely horizontal plane with the observed teacher inside a classroom. Training, observation rubrics, and even guidelines are useless when we observers place ourselves in the position of observed EFL teachers; The positions are constantly changing, they circulate at every moment; however, Tania acted like a teacher, a colleague, not only what role of observing, criticizing, judging, or evaluating required. Tania understood the pre-service teacher and did not help much with the theory about CO practices or the "effective" process that should be carried out. Many observers would have done the same, while others do not care and just follow "good" practices in an observation.

The last part of the analysis of Tania's narratives deals with personal issues and likes/dislikes from her position as an observer. Not just in the following passage, but in several situations, I have spoken with Tania about how arrogant some observers feel (and look like). We were coming out of training and some observers limited their conversations as they felt "up" to the EFL teachers.

> *I remember leaving those training sessions and talking to my colleagues about how frustrating it was to see the forms we were told to complete during our observations. There was a mismatch between my pedagogical viewpoints and the way the observation process was being carried out. I felt trapped in something I didn't want to do. I was constantly asking myself: If I were that teacher, how would I feel during and after being observed in such an arrogant way? My answer was: I'm sure I wouldn't allow it, period. [sic]*

The questions that Tania asked herself are due to her humble and charismatic position; she thought about the EFL teacher, she was aware of the context and situations that she had inside and outside the class observation practices. Tania could be seen as a caring and empathic ELT observer, (quite conscious of the teachers' duties and desires).

There is a tension within the role of observers which is unseen and ignored. The ELT observers are not seen in the data of the class observation analysis as well as the rubrics of observations. Their feelings, emotions, and points of view have not been stated while this practice has been implemented. The observers' attitudes and values are not expressed in the guidelines, forms, or data at the time of giving a result. Many of the ELT observers do not like to see each other more than the EFL teachers. In the previous analysis, I collected Tania's narratives from an interpretation of her stories into the class observation practices. Tania has had strains in power relations when the observation is conducted in English language classes. This is another uncertainty that orbits the position of the observers. Although Tania's narratives showed the importance of classroom observation for education, manifesting an emotional reaction towards the observation, acknowledging that observers occupy a key place in the organization of observation practices, she was claiming other types of relationalities not only with the contracting institution but also with the observed teachers.

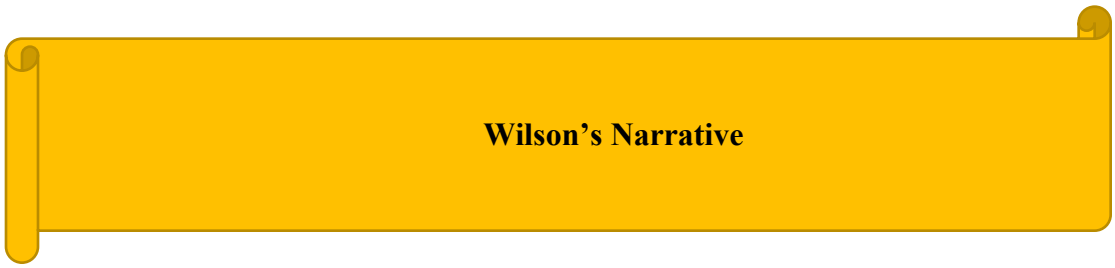
In this analysis I understood the observers' subject positions in the Tania's narrated experiences and unveiling the power relations that observers have with the academic community in the class observation practices. For example, there are two aspects to consider in Tania's analysis. The first one deals with the power issues that are mixed in with this observation practice. Another one is about the relationships, collaboration and compromising are categories that Tania used in the negotiations' class observation practices.

Finally, at an institutional level, the supervision and control are part of a schema in the National Bilingualism Plan in which observers must report to the entity (i.e., Ministry

of Education or Secretariat of Education) what was observed. This situation continues to occur, and Tania as ELT Observers was aware of it.

The observation technology from hierarchical entities continued to be constituted and normalized in the educational National programs. Tania reached to identify these characteristics and had a critical position. A position where observers are unaware, and it is an "untouchable" place of opinions. This position of the ELT observer has not been explored and requires further attention.

6.3.2. Wilson's Narrative



"Observation for me is sitting in a classroom watching a lesson and taking notes about it."

It's challenging when observing EFL teachers around the world. In this observation you can identify several characteristics, for example, the use of language, classroom management, assessment for students, lesson planning, among others. As an observer, I've seen bad and good teaching practices… all these aspects should be incorporated at the observation rubric, then it is sent to the Strengthening Teachers' development program. Nowadays, my responsibility is to carry on data from the observation.

(Conversation excerpt, January 2022- The Observers' Subject Positions)

6.3.2.1. Wilson's Narrative findings

Act I. The key to observation

The main purpose of observing classes is to standardize teaching practice. Also, to offer developmental activities to teachers. It's possible to have both at the same time. A 'good' observer gives teachers feedback that is relevant and credible for them. A good observer has a lot of tact and is very careful about how they speak to the observed.

My own experience of becoming teacher trainer and observer was basically since I had pretty 'bad' teachers and trainers, so I wanted to do it better, and give a few people the opportunity to learn in more pleasant conditions than I had myself, with openness to pragmatic and critical thinking.

Observation for me is sitting in a classroom watching a lesson and taking notes about it, while using my knowledge to assess it. I'd like to believe that for me the process has

become more objective and less subjective throughout the years. I often focus on 2 things: students' participation and use of English, and the quality of teachers' feedback and correction.

(Wilson's biographical passage, December 2020- Narratives about observation)

II. My long path to be an expert observer.

Near Oct/Nov 2000 - That I can remember, it must have been when I was 18 and was invited to teach a private class, taking over from another teacher, I then observed this teacher, then he walked me through the coursebook they were using and off I went to start teaching - with zero training basically.

Then it must have been until 2004 or 2005 that I was observed again. But just as a standard procedure from the academic management of the places that I worked at the time, no real evaluation or constructive feedback as far as I can remember, it was mainly to check if I was following the methods, and I was, so nothing developmental there.

2007 - The first time I evidenced rigorous/standardized observation as a CELTA trainee. By then I had been teaching for almost 7 years, so you can imagine how new and strange it was to be hardly criticized about my teaching (when I had lived experience of what worked for me, but the 'CELTA method' disagreed). It was then that I decided I wanted to be a teacher trainer and do it better (than my trainers).

I first learned this in the so-called 'apprenticeship of observation' - basically by seeing other people do it, then I learned a lot by reading teacher-training books and studying the observation instruments of courses like CELTA and DELTA. I then studied basic principles of assessment like reliability, credibility, and validity, in order to then start designing my own observation instruments. (This was between 2007 and 2011).

In 2012 I delivered a paper at IATEFL exposing everything that I thought was wrong in initial teacher training and development. In 2013 I was hired to write a certificate course for new teachers, in which I had to design the observation instruments, so I basically had to learn all about it by reading and writing this course. So, in sum I had no formal training.

In 2015 I was hired by the British Council to work as a quality manager, the main bulk of my work was to carry out observations. In theory I already knew a lot about it, that's

why they hired me… but on this job it was the first time I had a continued training on the subject. It basically consisted of all four or five trainers in the project observing recorded lessons and filling out observation forms, then discussing it to 'calibrate' the instrument.

Later between 2018 and 2020, I had some training, sort of, to observe classes in Colombia, but I don't think they added anything to my knowledge of the subject, as the training was mainly the course designer explaining the instrument.

I think both sides, observer and observed could take a lighter approach to the observation practice. Many teachers and trainers are scared of class observations - why?

The 'foreign expert' syndrome is a thing; it should be addressed. It's not that bad in Colombia, if you look at the British Council staff for example it's clear that over 90% or more is made up of local 'talent'. On the other hand, school directives really look up to consultants, and mistakenly see them as the solution to their problems (of mismanagement, of discipline, of apparent lack of knowledge and competence – the latter sometimes rightfully, sometimes not). The external observer as a proxy for educational police. The power struggle is inevitable when the external observer comes most often from private institutions, making money (local currency) COP plus an hour, visits the school a few times (definitely not enough), and have the 'right' to tell teachers who are part of a depressing and oppressing system how to do their jobs. Someone in the end needs to tell them how to do their jobs, but who is in a position to do it well?

(Wilson's biographical passage, September 2020- Stories of an Observer)

III. The well-done preparation for observing classes.

In a training for observation, there is hardly ever any calibration exercise, i.e., an exercise where everyone watches a recording of a lesson and uses the same instrument to assess it; then they discuss it and 'must' agree on the assessment. This is for standardization. It is not uncommon to see trainers having different 'opinions' regarding methodology and SLA; there can be 20 trainers in a schedule about Task-based learning, for example, with 20 different views of what it is. This is rarely addressed.

I became a 'good' observer without any formal training, I learned it by doing and studying it independently. Later, I was given a job in which I needed to be an 'expert'

observer, I don't remember how my employer assessed me on this, probably by asking me how I would deal with or give feedback to a hypothetical teaching situation. Later on, this same job there was a strong developmental training component for the observers, so the 4 or 5 of us always had to discuss observation and feedback and the instruments we used for them. We were also included in the revisions of the instruments, which for me was a great learning opportunity.

My subsequent jobs involving observation lacked proper standards for giving feedback, that is, the training focused more on using the observation instruments (using, not 'understanding' it), the programmed managers were mainly interested in the number of observations completed and secondarily on whether the observed teachers 'improved'. In qualitative terms, it was all very loose and without proper guidelines. My main struggle was on how to redact the comments section of the observation instrument (this is key for example to form a discourse community).

Moreover, one assumption that always struck me as 'unreal' has been the naive belief that from one observation to another the teacher will be able to demonstrate better teaching skills just because someone observed their lesson and gave them some feedback.
(Wilson's biographical passage, July 2021- The rubrics within the position of the observer)

IV. I observed from an objective position…

Culturally, worldwide, teaching has been a very isolated profession, an ordinary teacher spends 80% of their working day (I'm guessing) in classroom with students, that is, not with other teachers - which in turn means they are not bouncing ideas back and forth with other teachers, sharing experiences, learning from others, etc. So, then one's practice becomes a very individual one, and when there's an outsider observing it, of course, it will be an unpleasant experience.

In the end, I think that observations should be a special event, it should be 'normalized'... in a positive sense of course. I position myself as an observer who analyzes the most objective aspects inside the class.

There are only very few items that could be said to be 'universally' good in educational practices - I'd say they are the ones with extensive evidence of what works - what

works that is to drive better student outcomes… (but student outcomes are also a controversial thing, so...). In ELT, these items would be what is very-well known in SLA that helps people learn languages.

At this moment in my career, I'd only consider an observation instrument valid if there is a clear indication that it was designed based on hard evidence of what is desired to happen in the classroom. Anything other than this is heavily subjective. Moreover, the instrument must be socio-culturally situated and have face validity to the observed... Big mistake, which happens a lot, is importing methodology and observation practices from the UK and US to be implemented elsewhere.

I feel fine when observing teachers, I don't usually have any strong emotions about it. Except for if I've been working with the teacher on some key pedagogical areas and I see s/he put it into practice, then I feel happy for him/her. When they are not able to do it, I don't feel frustrated… these are some feelings expressed myself as an observer.

(Conversation excerpt, July 2020- Horizontal provocation)



Analysis of the Wilson's narrative

- Timeline of Temporal sequence events in Wilson's narrative-

Wilson. Chronological events of an ELT Observer

Here the historical background of Wilson as an observer is seen. A canonical line can be observed to be an "expert" observer, where there is a process of learning, the importance of training and the experienced observer.

The following is Wilson's timeline from a narrative analysis.

- Learning observer –

"2004 or 2005 that I was observed again. But just as a standard procedure from the academic management of the places that I worked at the time, no real evaluation or constructive feedback in the observation as far as I can remember."

Wilson identified early in the observation that elements were missing from this practice. He was aware of the processes such as feedback, evaluation, and others when he carried out a class observation. At this time, he also analyzed the observation as a procedure to check if he was following the methods, and he was, but just developmentally.

"2007 till 2011. I first learned this in the so-called 'apprenticeship of observation' - basically by seeing other people do it, then I learned a lot by reading teacher-training books and studying the observation instruments of courses like CELTA and DELTA. I then studied basic principles of assessment like reliability, credibility, and validity, to then start designing my own observation instruments."

The observation for Wilson has always been a rigorous and systematic process. At the beginning of his practice of observation, he was demanded at using forms, rubrics, and observation theory. He paid attention to the "correct" way to lineal observed a class. Wilson studied on his own from books and literature about observation training courses and principles of observation.

As a learning observer, Wilson has been a rigorous student, following the historical-structural ways of appropriate observation. All these aspects were taken from experts, books, and literature.

- Training in the observation practices –

"I became a 'good' observer without any formal training, I learned it by doing and studying it independently. Later, I was given a job in which I needed to be an 'expert' observer, I don't remember how my employer assessed me on this, probably by asking me how I would deal with or give feedback to a hypothetical teaching situation. Later, this same job there was a strong developmental training component for the observers, so the 4 or 5 of us always had to discuss observation and feedback and the instruments we used for them. We were also included in the revisions of the instruments, which for me was a great learning opportunity."

Curiously, Wilson is a great observer without having taken any training in this. He contradicted himself a bit since he paid attention to what the other "expert" observers offered but argued that there was no formal training for this practice. Training for him is a moment of revision, calibrating instruments, and feedback. Wilson understood that teamwork in an observation practice was relevant for an educational project, so, he spent time on standardization within an observation procedure which brought him a learning purpose in his experience.

"Later between 2018 and 2020, I had some training, sort of, to observe classes in Colombia, but I don't think they added anything to my knowledge of the subject, as the training was mainly the course designer explaining the instrument."

It was difficult to identify the aspects Wilson required in observation training. He argued he did not learn something new from an observation training practice. He has had a lot of experience worldwide in observation, which may be one of the reasons for his discomfort. He needed more contextualized training, something to highlight the local education contexts instead of technical/structural guidelines of observations.

- The experienced observer –

"At this moment (2022) in my career, I'd only consider an observation instrument valid if there is a clear indication that it was designed based on hard evidence of what is desired to happen in the classroom. Anything other than this is heavily subjective."

Wilson as an experienced observer sees the importance of having a purpose in observation. He seeks main objectives during a moment of class observation, he also would like to obtain constant objectivity when carrying out this practice. Some observation rubrics/instruments are necessary just to identify the aspects inside the classroom, however, there is no room for subjectivity in this exercise.

"As an observer, I've seen bad and good teaching practices… all these aspects should be incorporated at the observation rubric, then it is sent to the Strengthening Teachers' development program. Nowadays, my responsibility is to carry on data from the observation."

Wilson discussed the observation as an important process in education. He had experience and knowledge about what a good observation could offer for a certain context. Despite this, Wilson was shown to be a "data messenger" during the observation practice. He got involved but up to a point. He was an observer who saw the educational needs, analyzed them, and then documented everything in formats and processes required in a specific project.

6.3.2.2. Exposition of Wilson's Narrative

Wilson, objectivity through an observation practice

Wilson positions himself from a framework of action in which the knowledge produced by class observation is highly valued by him and his subject position as an observer consequently is an embodied one. Another aspect that it is important to highlight is that he was pushed by some educational/external entities to do observations probably because of his English proficiency and his improvement through observation of others and self-training.

As he is not a person who studied to be an English Language Teacher, the impact of training CELTA/DELTA to follow procedures influenced the way he sees what a good class entail. Being an expert for him also meant a process of validation of his capacities to surpass their trainers and be better positioned in this field.

Wilson constantly took apart the close relationship between the observer and the EFL observed teacher. He did not come up with the reason an observer should know further details about simple teaching practice. It means, he has focused his observation with objectivity immersed in a lineal/traditional way.

I must say, the conversations with Wilson were related to power issues, and right here I added one of this thesis' objectives which is unveiling the power relations that observers have with the academic community in the class observation practices. He revealed his extensive experience as an observer, all the environments where he has implemented this practice, and suggested the "ideal paths" of classroom observation. It was challenging to analyze Wilson's narrative about his position as a class observer, since his view about the

observations are thoughts overseas, it means, he has done observations around the world and sometimes it was hard to understand the realities and situations in several places.

The objectivity in which Wilson elaborated his narratives can be seen in this analysis of Wilson's position as an ELT class observer.

Skillful and experienced class observer

"I was given a job in which I needed to be an 'expert' observer" (Wilson)

This thesis has brought out information about the quality ways of doing observations. Some aspects linked to specialists, success, and experts have been discussed. In this part of the analysis, I would like to scrutinize how the observation has been placed and more importantly, the position Wilson represents in a class observation structure.

It seems that Wilson has much experience as an observer worldwide. He considers himself as a skillful and experienced class observer. Here is what he said about the foreign expert and external observers:

> *The 'foreign expert' syndrome is a thing, it should be addressed. It's not that bad in Colombia, if you look at the British Council staff for example it's clear that over 90% or more is made up of local 'talent'. On the other hand, school directives really look up to consultants, and mistakenly see them as the solution to their problems (of mismanagement, of discipline, of apparent lack of knowledge and competence – the latter sometimes rightfully, sometimes not). The external observer as a proxy for educational police. The power struggle is inevitable when the external observer comes most often from private institutions, making money (local currency) plus an hour, visits the school a few times (definitely not enough), and has the 'right' to tell teachers who are part of a depressing and oppressing system how to do their jobs. Someone in the end needs to tell them how to do their jobs, but who is in a position to do it well, the observer? [sic]*
>
> (Wilson's biographical passage, September 2020- Stories of an Observer)

In Wilson's experience, the word "expert" is a bit fake, people who hire observers always call us experts but then expect us to follow the script they wrote. Wilson disagreed

somehow with local observation practices. He was contradictory because he saw the need for an expert observer, but at the same time he identified that the observer did not have enough tools to suggest precise situations to local EFL teachers.

It is evident that people who work in external companies as observers get a script to observe a class and follow the rule of an " observation plan". Is this subject an expert? Or just follow the guidelines of an observation? As can be said from the previous excerpt Wilson has understood the importance of being inside the school context where a class observation is done as well as noticing there are unexpected situations in observations. The fact of being a foreigner does not mean that he or she has authority over EFL teachers to observe their classes. Wilson knows that the skillful and experienced class observer knows the educational context, the reality, and the needs of the community.

There is a tension in Wilson's position as ELT observer since his criticism is against the lack of preparation of the foreigner (because this subject does not know the local context) and is not prepared to effectively observe.

As a researcher of this thesis and friend of Wilson, it was very pleasant to talk with Wilson about classroom observations and the role/position of the observers. Wilson is a very demanding and talented professional. Also, he detected great importance in training when carrying out educational projects. This is a part of his narrative about the relevance of the feedback, discussion, and training components.

> *I was given a job in which I needed to be an 'expert' observer, I don't remember how my employer assessed me on this, probably by asking me how I would deal with or give feedback to a hypothetical teaching situation. This same job there was a strong developmental training component for the observers, so the 4 or 5 of us always had to discuss observation and feedback and the instruments we used for them. We were also included in the revisions of the instruments, which for me was a great learning opportunity. [sic]*

Wilson focused on the details in a class observation. Revision of material, instruments and evaluation are components of implementation in an observation and learning opportunities for everybody, especially for the class observers. The space where we as observers interpret and analyze the instruments of observation requires a time of demanding concentration.

From a subjective interpretation, I learned next to Wilson that the observer must be aware of specific and punctual elements to develop their practices more pleasantly and effectively. The observer is a skillful and experienced subject who shares within the people in several educational contexts.

It cannot be denied that the knowledge produced on classroom observation includes methods, guidelines, and procedures that have been shown to be effective in determining the effectiveness of classes. However, I interpreted that Wilson resisted the practice of observation since he performs it as a way of restoration and reparation that depends on the context, historical conditions, and geography.

This knowledge has been focused on the purpose of teaching and the method rather than on the subject who teaches, and the context where they teach; and it is taken for granted that whoever observes does so from that framework without criticizing the method. This is confirmed by the literature, scholars, traditional ways, and normalization of the practice of observing EFL teachers; but he also identifies the methods and practices of observations consider differences in ideas, social practices, histories, identities, and beliefs as part of production of knowledge. However, Wilson affirms that it is naive to believe that from one observation to another there may be huge changes, which calls into question the skills that he implements in the observed teacher to introduce those changes and at the same time it looks a contradiction to the effectiveness of the observation practice.

Standardized and objective class observations.

"In the end, I think that observations should be a special event, it should be 'normalized'... in a positive sense of course". (Wilson)

The situation that observation is a normalized practice especially in the ELT field has been problematized here before. The observer understands that his or her work function is a traditional way to be "good" in this practice. We start from an observation training made by experts. Then, we study the rubrics of observations and some patterns about the importance of carrying out the guidelines. After, we observe EFL teachers (including the observation from); and finally, the observers give to the leader of the project (expert) the observation data. This happens within in-service teachers in a regular educational plan, but it is not far from a pre-service observation practice.

Wilson knows all the previous facts, and he has the quality of judgment and quick decision making. He holds the ability of knowing good and bad, relevant, and irrelevant issues in a classroom through observation.

> *It's challenging when observing EFL teachers around the world. In this observation you can identify several characteristics, for example, the use of language, classroom management, assessment for students, lesson planning, among others. As an observer, I've seen bad and good teaching practices… all these aspects should be incorporated at the observation rubric, then it is sent to the Strengthening Teachers' development program. Nowadays, my responsibility is to carry on data from the observation. [sic]*

Wilson introduced himself as a rigorous observer. He has the quality or character of being objective and lack of favoritism toward one side or another. The purpose of his observations is to recognize the teaching aspects inside classes and give the appropriate feedback on certain specifications. During the analysis of Wilson's narratives, I realized that he incorporates Teachers' professional views during observations; he obtains data from the

teaching practices and is aware of some principles in class (use of language, classroom management, assessment for students, lesson planning, among others). In the observation training sessions, we receive materials, rubrics, and guidelines to follow an observation pattern; as more objective as we can, the better quality of this exercise is made. Wilson catches on to this objective and finds a more standardized practice inside the class observation.

In the same token, Wilson most of the time continued the script of observation. He enjoyed going on the step-by-step observation path. For him, this practice of observation is something that needs to be normalized. Here is a passage of one of the conversations next to Wilson in the Horizontal provocation.

> *In the end, I think that observations should be a special event, it should be 'normalized'... in a positive sense of course. I position myself as an observer who analyzes the most of objective aspects inside the class. [sic]*

I consider it important to state that Wilson recognized the observation as a ceremony / ritual especially at the Professional Teachers' Development system. He has been working for many years as an observer and feels it is a need in the ELT field. The observation must be done most of the time and he is sure that educational contexts are asking for it; it means the teachers, students, directives, and people in general accept the observations inside the classroom as a regular practice and do this as objectively as possible.

More precise observer

"... these are some feelings expressed myself as an observer" (Wilson)

When talking to Wilson, I understood the class observations are diverse and they are different from one place to another. The schools' environments changed, and the objective of this practice is different. Wilson paid attention to what other ELT observers (me, as

example) argued about the observations. There is a contrast between being subjective/objective when observing an EFL teacher. Wilson is meticulous in this aspect.

> *Observation for me is sitting in a classroom watching a lesson and taking notes about it, while using my knowledge to assess it. I'd like to believe that for me the process has become more objective and less subjective throughout the years. [sic]*

Wilson follows the process that is about to take notes, write comments and give feedback during the observation. He does not have the intention to know beyond the teaching's situations but neither the other issues inside the classroom.

Being objective is the key to and success of his practice. He also identified high importance in the evaluation system. Wilson is a factual observer since he wants to obtain a clear panorama in the evaluation process. Data brought out during the observation has allowed him to define clear and precise situations in the evaluation. Based on the experiences of Wilson, the class observation operates from a mechanical routine which facilitates the objective findings. One of the most challenging things in this analysis is that each observer has dissensions and different positions. Some ELT observers focused on the emotional aspects during a classroom observation practice, while others like Wilson paid no attention to it. There is a situation of Wilson carried out in emotions under control.

> *I feel fine when observing teachers, I don't usually have any strong emotions about it. Except for if I've been working with the teacher on some key pedagogical areas and I see s/he put it into practice, then I feel happy for him/her. When they are not able to do it, I don't feel frustrated… these are some feelings expressed myself as an observer. [sic]*

Wilson performed his job as an observer in an operational process. I deduced from Wilson's narratives and the conversations we have had that it is important to get experience about the ELT class environments, also the observer should know if the class is good or bad and does not need to start a conversation with the observed EFL teacher since the observer identifies relevant aspects as an outsider observer. Wilson does not feel bad for any teacher

who is running a "bad" class, he is an external person… an outsider, who has all the skills to assess teachers' progress.

Wilson as an observer highlighted key points on the class observation rubric. If he has a space on the observation form to make suggestions, he will do so. Otherwise, he does not become emotionally involved with the observed teacher. Observation is an objective process that requires punctuality, efficiency, and assessment.

ELT observers are subjects that change their positions depending on the contexts, unexpected situations, and with whom we work. Next to Wilson, I can see the importance of being precise when observing a class, following an established guideline, and having clear purposes in an educational project (involving class observation).

Many ELT observers do not care to start conversations with observed teachers, in fact, that is not part of their role as an observer. These observers have the label of "external / outsider" subjects, despite this, they do their job in the best way by walking behind a rubric.

This ELT observer specifies key points in observation such as standardization, objectivity, and structuralism. These pillars are fundamental in observation as many ELT observers who have the same vision.

Wilson has experience as an observer, he has extensive knowledge that has been produced from his skills; this has allowed Wilson to solve and adapt educational processes locally and nationally through the implementation of classroom observations.

6.3.3. Alex's Narrative



12

"As an observer I have had to negotiate…"

Observing is the process in which I get to see and reflect upon what I see. It is also a self-constructive exercise in which I get to pinpoint outcomes. What I feel when observing EFL teachers is that I have been lucky for they have been understanding and open. As an observer I have had to negotiate my expectations considering the context I observe.

(Dialogue excerpt between Alex and I, November 2021)

6.3.3.1. Alex's Narrative findings

Act I. The need to be a trained observer.

The main aspect for observing classes is the need for standardization. When we (ELT Observers) are in training, it is necessary to pay attention to the dynamics of the experts to properly observe a class. I have had many training sessions on how to observe classes, with several experts, and I recognize that they know about it and can offer us

12 * Before the description of Alex's narratives, I like to state that this narrative was the most challenging one to analyze and interpret. There were many aspects that influenced it; especially the lack of text he produced during recollecting and hearing his position (s) as an ELT observer. It is important to mention that Alex did not have enough time (a comprehensive situation), despite this, he tried to do his best to incorporate narratives about his experience as an ELT observer. As said, it was not easy to access such information in this narrative, however, it has also been a demanding process in this research. Alex is a member of a well-recognized group of ELT teachers/Observers, he has had several duties in his job.

suitable tools to carry out good practice in the classroom. It is a process of study and analyzed the several facts of the educational environment.

The main purpose to be a "good" observer varies from institution to institution. It also depends on the outcome of the observation. These aspects are organized and fixed in training sessions. I think there's no good observer, but rather good observations.

(Conversation excerpt, October 2020- The Observers' Subject Positions)

II. The observed, trained and ELT observer.

I have to say my teaching life started when I first got observed, it was in 2000, at about. I think that taught me how to be more self-conscious about what I do, as well as to spot every single activity in a class, and understand the classroom as whole. Later, through my professional life, I understood that observations were quintessential for teachers' development. I had the chance of being observed in another country, a different context, different population, and different frame of mind; luckily, thanks to my previous experiences I was able to pull the observation off. Shall I admit as I had already had some experience observing, I played with that, and I kind of knew what the observer wanted to see.

I also had the chance to observe pre-service teachers in 2005 and walked them through the checklist the institution gave me to assess them. I think my main goal was not to see whether they complied with the checklist, but rather how to improve and reflect upon their own practices. It was amazing for not only did I get to see how much they have improved, but also how much these youngsters believed in observations and their benefits. It was a very relevant experience since I analyzed the needs, duties, professional development, among other ELT areas.

Closing this narrative of experiences, I want to mention an experience that I am involved in. I have become an observer again, but now it is more challenging for I am assessing and collaborating with teachers from different regions, ergo different contexts. It has been a daunting task, first of all because it has been online, and being an online

observer is a new experience. I have had to adapt to different experiences and of course different obstacles, but in the end, and then again, observations happen to be fruitful and enriching. I realized the understanding that more than mere observers we must be pairs and colleagues. We as observers were observed by others, although we understand the principles of this practice.

The observation is a unique environment in where EFL teachers are in a close relationship, so, I would dare to say I am quite a fan of observations.

(Alex's biographical passage, November 2020- Stories of an Observer)

III. The importance of knowledge during observations

I remember there was this one teacher who was extremely reluctant of being observed. He was pretty upset and fussed because he thought the observation was going to be directed to his immediate boss without even being consulted or shared with it first. I talked to him explaining him the observation was a mere descriptive exercise, but he still felt reluctant and untrusty. Once I observed him, I sat down with him and showed him my notes and the descriptors, making sure we walked through every single aspect and descriptor, so he understood the nature of my exercise. I let him ask as many questions as he did and criticize as many as he wanted. Once he did that, he felt as if he had a voice, respected, and empowered. I finally created a bond with him, and I was able to work with him and his community in a very solid and friendly way.

There is undoubtedly a format to follow during the observation, I have followed it and, I agree with it, but you should also talk to the EFL teacher. It is good to ask how she or he saw my observation. The work that I have done over the last ten years must be professional and meaningful. During the observation, experience, control, and knowledge are evidenced not only as an ELT observer but also as a EFL teacher.

I feel more like a colleague observing and learning from others. I try to display a sense of learning and understanding without showing judgment perspectives. Even if there

is a set of objectives to be accomplished, the main idea is to construct building with the fellow colleague who is being observed. Not only do I try to make the teacher comfortable, but I also ask questions on the space observed.

There exists an importance of the rubric of observations (assessment area), which I consider we as observers should go inside. Even if the observation has certain evaluation components, I try to make the teacher feel the outcome is rather constructive than judgmental or punitive.

(Alex's biographical passage, September 2020- Horizontal provocation)

IV. Observation as a collective route

People talk about a culture of observation in the ELT field, of a collective memory of observation. I tend to say this is stated because we have the same observation training. However, I think there is a big gap there because there is no format that allows us to see the needs of the different research projects, educational purposes much less the institutional needs. Despite this, there is an overall (observation criteria) that many observers follow and do or normalize and these are the standardized guidelines for in-class observation. These patterns are required for the system and we as ELT observers should continue and established at schools while doing the observations.

In the Colombo institution by 2014 I noticed the importance of training, those meetings with the observers and teachers observed are meaningful in my own interests. I am working now in this institution and when they tell me that I am going to observe, it is so that I can improve my class strategies. This also happens at the BC where there is a clear idea when class observers are trained. The observer is that subject who knows how to teach a class and therefore can give recommendations and instructions to the observed EFL teachers. Apart from that, the observer receives a specific training... he is a prepared and a quick-witted person to observe a class in several educational contexts, both local and international. During the training, I did it too many times, I noticed a lot of disparity in the criteria of activities of the EFL teachers. But in the binary code of the observation list, the student is practicing English because he/she was looking at the book and for many experts /

trainers, it was to practice English; the situation implies one more process of interaction but in the binary code of the observation list, the student is waiting and is practicing English because he was looking at the book and for me, it was not. So, the issue is to see what theorists or what theory is used for class observation, but I think that if you, the other two ELT observers of this research start to say what can we find behind the observation training, we do not get any of it... In conclusion, I believe that it is a huge problem of collective memory in-class observation. Now you ask me if training in class observations is effective, and my answer is that it is… it is needed. The main issue in observation training lies fundamentally in establishing clear, reliable criteria for collecting information and, above all, having a collective observation memory.

(Alex's biographical passage, August 2021- The rubrics within the position of the observer)



Analysis of Alex's narrative

- Timeline of Temporal sequence events in Alex narrative -

Alex. Chronological events of an ELT Observer

This part consists of identifying the historical background of Alex.

"I have to say my teaching life started when I first got observed, it was in 2000, at about. I think that taught me how to be more self-conscious about what I do, as well as to spot every single activity in a class, and understand the classroom as whole."

Time ago, Alex experienced the observation in the position of an observed subject. He understood this practice as something to reflect upon and being conscious about details in the classroom.

Alex allowed himself to be ready about different perspective in the classroom through the observation; on the same hand, the activities implemented in classroom are essential to be observed.

"I also had the chance to observe pre-service teachers in 2005 and walked them through the checklist the institution gave me to assess them. I think my main goal was not to see whether they complied with the checklist, but rather how to improve and reflect upon their own practices."

When Alex started observing classes, he followed a checklist / rubric to do this practice. In fact, he constantly mentioned the importance to be part of a specific guideline for observing classes.

However, he positioned again in a reflective view over the class-observation practice. He kept the contexts and subject in mind when an observation is required.

"In the Colombo institution by 2014 I noticed the importance of training, those meetings with the observers and teachers observed are meaningful in my own interests. ... when they tell me that I am going to observe, I can improve my class strategies. This also happens at the BC where there is a clear idea when class observers are trained."

Alex enjoyed having training during long time. He has interpreted that sessions of repetitions, use of rubrics and following guidelines are relevant tools in an observation exercise. He also took advantage from it since he can improve their teaching skills as well as being updated of current educational purposes in his position as ELT observer.

6.3.3.2. Exposition of Alex's Narrative -

Alex's roles as an observer

Alex has two different characters or phenomena in the same person or in the same state of in-class observations situations. There are two principles of observation in the conception of Alex as an observer. The first has to do with the great relevance that he gave to the training, rubrics, guidelines, and step-by-step during a class observation. The other situation shows how Alex felt the need to understand and "put himself in the shoes" of the observed teachers.

Alex positions himself as an observer who learns from what he observes. It is evident as an observer he also benefits from the observation. This position is interesting because it gives a different face to the practice, since in Alex's case the observation of other subjects is constitutive of themselves.

He positions himself as the observer offering constructive feedback and as the one open to criticism. It is assumed that there is resistance, rejection on the part of the observed teachers but it is not seen how the subject observers have had to find ways to do their job. Apparently, Alex negotiated these aspects seeking to connect with the EFL teachers and conceived the benefit of being an observer, he liked that role/position and took advantage of it during his daily duties.

Alex's roles as an observer are a mix between the observer who is also a teacher, the observer who understands his role but also learns something.

The observer who constantly planned.

"These aspects are organized and fixed in training sessions" (Alex)

During the practice of observations, many ELT observers decide to plan the activities to carry on in-situ in the classrooms and others just are ready (prepared) for this situation. Alex has a specific purpose on the first mentioned aspect. He was a very active observer who enjoyed planning criteria and events in a class observation process.

Alex believed in the trainers/experts who lead the standards/guidelines of "good" class observation. He used to take careful note of what the experts said during training sessions. Below is an example of Alex's commitment to planning and preparation in class observation procedures.

> *The main aspect for observing classes is the need for standardization. When we (ELT Observers) are in training, it is necessary to pay attention to the dynamics of the experts to properly observe a class. I have had many training sessions on how to observe classes, with several experts, and I recognize that they know about it and can offer us suitable tools to carry out good practice in the classroom. It is a process of study and analyzed the several facts of the educational environment. The main purpose to be a "good" observer varies from institution to institution. It also depends on the outcome of the observation. These aspects are organized and fixed in training sessions. I think there's no good observer, but rather good observations. [sic]*

Depending on the institution, the observer's subject position needs to accommodate. That is why he or she is situated according to the institution's demands.

Alex argued that when observing a class, clear processes must be identified, such as standardization and recognition of formats/tools that are conducive to carrying out this practice in the best way. He also attributed importance to the change between institutions when going to observe a class or got observation training. He was aware of the current

educational changes and proposed adjustments within the training dynamics or in-situ class observations.

On the same token of organization and planning, Alex named the evaluation rubric in a class observation as an important process and that should be paid attention to.

> *There exists an importance of the rubric of observations (assessment area), which I consider we as observers should go inside. Even if the observation has certain evaluation components, I try to make the teacher feel the outcome is rather constructive than judgmental or punitive. [sic]*

An important aspect of roles in Alex' position is evident in this narrative excerpt. On one hand, he normalized the use of evaluation rubrics in observation; however, he also specified that the observed teacher required a closer, less "evaluative" process.

These events happen constantly in-class observations. ELT observers are not static subjects, we present behavioral and personality alterations. Sometimes the observers follow the evaluation rubric, and I quickly continue with the format, but at the same time, I understand the observed teachers, their teaching practices, their feelings, and their worries, and I am part of his or her experiences and concepts.

The purpose of planning as ELT observers is a situation that has been going on for several years. Alex is part of that group of rigorous, punctual, and planning observers, he is a subject who identifies needs during the observations and has a plan to overcome obstacles.

An observer stays open to the contexts.

"but also how much these youngsters believed in observations and their benefits" (Alex)

The ELT observers are usually next to the educational contexts and the needs of the community. Some of them do not like to be involved closer to these aspects, but we

understand the dynamics in/out of the classrooms. Alex realized the high importance to recognize the contexts (educational, social, and emotional) through his role as an observer. Since he was starting in observations, he identified key aspects of the benefits of observations as well as things to be improved while in action.

> *I also had the chance to observe pre-service teachers in 2005 and walked them through the checklist the institution gave me to assess them. I think my main goal was not to see whether they complied with the checklist, but rather how to improve and reflect upon their own practices. It was amazing for not only did I get to see how much they have improved, but also how much these youngsters believed in observations and their benefits. It was a very relevant experience since I analyzed the needs, duties, professional development, among other ELT areas. [sic]*

Despite the use of a checklist in observations, Alex kept hold of benefits about the contexts he and his observed subjects had. Alex understood that observation is not just follow-up or traditional events in education. It is an opportunity to learn about the context, the observed teachers' needs and some areas for improvement.

Moreover, Alex was nurtured close to the observations, and he caught a glimpse of importance about the reflection that was produced during the way of positioning an observer close to the contexts (in the training observational practices).

> *This also happens at the BC where there is a clear idea when class observers are trained. The observer is that subject who knows how to teach a class and therefore can give recommendations and instructions to the observed EFL teachers. Apart from that, the observer receives a specific training... he is a prepared and a quick-witted person to observe a class in several educational contexts, both local and international. [sic]*

Since the problematization of this research, the observer was focused within BNP, but as can be seen from the narratives, the experience of being an observer exceeds that purpose until Alex, who mentioned this case of the BC project and the MEN.

Lastly, in this subjective interpretation of Alex's narrative, I would like to state some aspects related to self-conscious and personal growth. At the beginning of this part of

Alex's analysis, we can see an ELT observer more in the structural position, a quite rigid and methodical subject.

This passage deals with Alex more aware of the role of the teachers observed. He mentions during his narratives that it is valuable to understand the dynamics of the school and to be part of the community of ELT teachers.

> *I feel more like a colleague observing and learning from others. I try to display a sense of learning and understanding without showing judgment perspectives. Even if there is a set of objectives to be accomplished, the main idea is to construct building with the fellow colleague who is being observed. Not only do I try to make the teacher comfortable, but I also ask questions on the space observed. [sic]*

Alex understands the observed teacher, he is next to him or her. But in turn, he questioned the teacher, asked questions about the observed classes. This evidence shows a role in his position. O'Leary's (2012, p. 806) presents, "*tutors observe each other as part of a formative process... it is the purpose of promoting the development of [the] observer and [the] observed*".

Alex, based on his roles, not only enriched the process of class observations, but also fed himself and identified the characteristics that the observed teacher should improve.

Something that was not stated in the Alex analysis is the "*collective memory in-class observation".* I did not include since it is something to explore in my view as a researcher. Alex in the class observations seemed like a leader, an expert, but at the same time, he performed close to the community (especially teachers). He mentioned the *collective memory in-class observation* as a process to acknowledge and pay special attention to the observation practices; as observation is already a normalized practice, institutions do not conduct research on it.

He said it is important to follow the rules of experts/scholars in the observation system, but he also proposed getting a collective memory of observation within local agents. At this specific part, I should say it is a duality exploration in Alex´s observer position.

Alex is a well-prepared observer, he has a robust experience in this field, and he recognizes the work of EFL teachers. He is next to the observed teacher, he perhaps understands them, in a “horizontal” position however, he does not belong to mutual aspects. Alex, during an observation, listens to the EFL teachers and helps them; however, he asks questions and evaluates their performances (in a top-down position). Alex is clear evidence of the ELT observers who work in local contexts and are permeated by events of duality in daily life.

Alex positioned himself as a teacher and a fellow observer. Those fellow observers who are in the same situation as we are, or people we feel you have something in common with.



6.3.4. Miguel's Narrative



[13]

6.3.4.1. My Narrative findings

Act 1 I am playing from local.

Although the students were nice, the teachers made me feel a good social environment, the directives did not bother me a lot or well, they did not push us too much, the most disgusting and not well was the idea of having external training in our school. By 2006, the INEM school had several training courses, many of them in my opinion included people from "other" places, entities that did not get the overall view of what our School worked or was. It is a public school, the realia of Education in our country, the natural view of social practice in Education.

People who offered the training courses argued the way of delivering different things we supposedly needed, such as new materials or resources, techniques, and tools for implementing something that we use to get in our classes, and specially, they tried to persuade us into these training courses which were totally suitable for everyone.

In my mind, it was a wonder, if these trainers, experts, consultants did not have any idea about our practices, they would not probably help us to improve our skills or just simply, they were arguing some money from the "other" expectations. I always disagreed

[13] This part is an autobiographical narrative. I would like to put on the table my concerns, thoughts, perspectives and/experiences I have had as an observer. This whole chapters' material (Acts) was made as a problematization exercise shared with my thesis advisor, teachers, and classmates at Doctorate classes and now it is shown through a data analysis.

about it, I felt uncomfortable about the training sessions and pursued from people who worked outside the school, even if they wanted to help or did a good job.

The experience I got in shock was one day when I entered my class and immediately, I saw an external person next to my desk. I was red as an apple (a tick of fury). The first thing that came in my mind was that I have been selected to be observed, checked, evaluated, and tested… No way! I said once. I talked to this person outside the classroom. I did not want to be part of this project; they didn't observe my classes and of course they could be out of my class. The argument of this person was valid enough, he said, he had to do it because of the order of directives, plus, they thought they helped me in the future about my pedagogical practices, curriculum design, strategies in ELT and so on. I did not give up about my opinion and told him that if he did not leave, my class would not continue. The person came out and I felt very proud because I had won that battle.

On one hand it is relevant to have training in Education, I kept in mind that the permanent study and practice of new strategies inside and outside the classroom plays a very important role as Teachers, but I considered this kind of help could be got by our own ones. I mean, we Teachers developed meaningful ideas for increasing our English level proficiency as well as the pedagogical practices.

This first chapter ends when the directives of the school mentioned the importance of having external training and observations in our role as Teachers, the "These people (observers) were helping us, they offered new dynamics in our experience and the schools influenced more and more on maintaining the "others" right there, but I disagreed. It was more than obvious, this speech was pointed to me, with no pain, no inferential reading, it seemed the directives attacked against me and with a dangerous ally: "the others".

II. Was it the best training from experts?

As it is evident, they took me out of this place, or better, I didn't want to spend more time in this place. One of the reasons was that I considered my English Proficiency level was going down as well as practicing English as a natural way. I mean, I didn't interact too much in English and I didn't have people who talked to me in this foreign language. The directors of the schools weren't happy with my performance in this place and even they told

me that many people felt not good with my attitude though, honestly, I didn't pay attention to it. One of the best Practice experiences so far in my short and hazardous academic life.

I started looking for a job as an English Teacher, Translator, Freelance, or even in some call centers. Little interests I saw in Education, the real picture of myself at that time was about getting money and having fun in my leisure time. I worked in some informal Language institutions, right there, I realized some people got their tedious process to be exceptional professionals in Education and other ones just think in getting a comfortable place for doing nothing and earning more and more money. Last one was the case of working in Language Institutions. Well, by 2008 I was surprised about my English Proficiency level, immediately this one was increasing a lot. I used to have long conversations with foreigners, went up my vocabulary through using different slangs and idiomatic expressions and I thought I got a better way for Teaching my lessons… I felt I improved my way of being an English Teacher. Unfortunately, it was a mistake in my academic process, but better than never, this experience helped me so much in this reflexive, natural and critical expectation to observe the Education with other eyes.

In my daily routine as a "good Teacher" in the Institute, one of my friends sent me a message from a well-recognized Institute. It says: "We need some Trainers for this …. program who wants to learn more about new strategies in ELT, get a free Training in Language and Teaching, being class observers and work with us in a National Bilingualism Program…." Wow, without thinking twice, I applied into this job offer. I did it especially because it was made by British Council, come one, British Council. The most important Institutions in ELT here in Colombia and probably worldwide (this is what I thought at that time). A powerful Institution, with too many new aspects to offer, with a great name in the field and the most advantageous resources, techniques, materials, curricula, Trainers, and organizations, rather, they could offer everything. I also worked in a private school, but it doesn't matter to apply into this delightful job offer.

I do suppose this is the part when my research problematization starts. The beginning of oppression, to feel tied to some rules and to consider the things which are good or bad, the point is that everything was delivered from the north, west and non-localism view on it.

I did a video of one of my lessons in the school or the Institute, I really don't remember the place I recorded. But this one was the first requirement to be part of this selected group of trainers in the National Bilingualism Program. The video had specific and lined requirements, it started with an icebreaker, after a warmup, second the practice of the lesson, with the objective, some transitions on it, assessment in the middle, at the end the recycling process, I mean, it was really tough but important and meaningful for me!!! The second filter to obtain the job was a long interview with three people in this majestic place, of course, it was in English, but remember, at this time, I got a "nice" English level, and they liked my pronunciation, fluency, and stress of words I would produce. One of the things they didn't like was the idea I graduated from a non-recognized University: La Gran Colombia and I started my BA in a public one: Universidad Distrital. They finally gave me a chance to at least continue in the process. At the end of this week, I received a phone call of a positive reply to my interview… I passed into the next filter (I remember I prayed, and I was extremely excited about working there, I know, such a stupid asshole as that time, so naive nowadays...)

The last criteria for selecting the people were a huge, huge training. It was placed in an exotic and luxurious room hotel with all fashioned situations that a regular Teacher like me has never seen. That was a bunch of resources, last materials in Education (smart boards, pointers, flashcards, among others), commitment people in the academic-administrative pool and the most relevant one, three trainers who came from the North and West who trained us. We looked at them as the superiors, wise-people, and visible ones in Education. The training was followed by rules and rules, not timing for reflection or critical aspects, just it was mandatory to keep in mind the structure of the course as well as carrying on the superiors' strategies. We had a manual of actions inside every lesson, we also needed to continue the step by step of the training lessons, it wasn't ideal for me, I thought, but I kept in my no vision brain, it wasn't important because they were the only ones who knew a lot, remember they are the "Imperio" of knowledge, and I was there to be part of it. I smiled constantly, I made myself notice and I felt like a fish in water. The feedback from the "experts" was given to us in a strong, no meaningful way, with non-criteria or rubric version, but I loved it, they tried to be strong because it was a high-status project, but I think in the background they didn't feel so comfortable as I was. At the end of

7 long journey days in training (Including class observation rubrics), we finally got an answer, I didn't expect this at that time, but I felt butterflies in my stomach, it was extremely important for me, I guess I wasn't prepared for this answer…

III. The agenda

I honestly did not find the address of this place, because it was a hotel!! Come on, a hotel for this? I did not understand the reason. I found it and let me tell you, it was one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen here in Bogotà.

People were fashioned, they looked like actors and actresses… the smell in the room was amazing!! Also, the treatment with each person was really comfortable and polite. Most of the words people said impacted on the elegant way and very well used of English (great pronunciation, fluency, and stress in words). That was my impression about the first day of work at this place, full of brightness, elegance, and a wealthy environment. They began the presentation of the meeting with a strict, complex, and mandatory agenda:

1- 7:00 am- 7:15 am- Registration to the meeting (extremely punctual… British style!!)

2- 7.15-8.00 am- English Director speech (The leader of the leaders, trainer of trainers… I mean, he was the man!!)

3- 8.00- 10 am- (Overview of the project- Specific aspects of the program)

4- 10am- 10.30am- (breakfast time- a delicious dish full of things)

4- 10.30am-12.30 pm- (General things about the payment (great salary by the way), rules of behaviour, policies of equality, diversity and inclusion and the contact of 4 people who were above us as trainers, they had roles of leader of project, coordinator, head of, among others. Actually, I did not remember all those hierarchical powers.

5- 12.30pm- 2.00 pm (lunchtime, an imaginary buffet, I bet I just ate these things once or twice top!! in my entire life) Money was an important part at this time in my life, about this, I talked to one of my colleagues, another Teacher, another mortal… like me. I asked him: How much do you think is every dish? his answer: Do not care about it… we deserved this and more, also, they received a lot from the government and at least they must include that for us!! He was quite rude or boasting. I continued doing math with the

food and what I thought was for every dish at about 80000 thousand Colombian pesitos. Well, this part is not too academic, but I must express my feeling I got at that time.

We will have to follow the agenda later, but before, I would like to narrate in detail the things we did in the first part of the meeting at this place. Morning was tough, cloudy day and freezing breeze. I have never woken up early, but it was my first day at the most important Institution in Colombia, I could not start with my left leg, in fact, I did my best and my arrival was on time. Huge smiles, happy and funny people, and the elegance I did not have (neither I do nowadays!!). My name was labeled in a big license, it said: "EFL MENTOR" WoW, I just needed this to feel superior, smarter, and better.

There were many activities to know each member of the team, socializing things about our previous works, academic backgrounds, future expectations among others. I immediately noticed a pattern on it: many people have studied Universities and they recognized between them. I felt like I was flying in the buttermilk… Not really a good feeling there. I was in a bubble of something of racism and exclusion, particularly because I did my studies in non-recognized University as well as I did not have experience in these "super nice academies" or "I did not have any f"%/) idea of working here"

There were mainly 3 objectives of this first meeting. First, to know each other and to recognize our 4 bosses, second it was about identifying the information of the project (our duties, challenges and functions) and finally, studying carefully the formats of the project. Last thing will be narrated in detail later.

An extra sensation about my first day at work was to see the person who oversaw the project, of the model of the training, of everything… that was a plain, hegemonized and right-hand speech. I naturally did not like too much because as it was mentioned before, I have always tried to defend my ideas. My expectation of this part was higher, but I could move on other things in this meeting.

The rest of this morning was related to money, money, and money. The cost of the full contract, the payment for us, payment for transportation, help on extra things such as the internet, cellphone, and others. It was really kind for them. I thought these exceptions did not happen to Teachers, like me.

Finally, what I impacted a lot (various things also shocked me) is the policy of equality, diversity, and inclusion. Ahh? They were talking about that, why. Not clear for

me. I could not imagine they cared about these aspects, plus, their discourses were not coherent with the policy they looked for.

IV. I should not have asked.

After a great meal at lunch time, we had been sharing more about our lives. For sure, I was the least prepared person in the meeting (this is what I thought that time, now, I am thinking different). The places where the other "expert observers" have worked on… well recognized universities, their trips to Europe, USA, Australia and among others, I Laughed by myself because I reminded, I was in Boyaca these days they were speaking about, jajaja, it seemed certainly a point for me, of course I did not mention anything about it. The way they speak, act out and perform was a notorious view of someone who is "over the moon" "in the 7th heaven", I mean, they were really secure about themselves. The comparison is maybe not convenient on this, but I always consider myself as a humble, hard-working, and easygoing professional… I do have my things, unless at this moment I felt so embarrassed (again) and humiliated.

2:00pm-4:00 pm. Recognizing and studying the formats of the project.

It was my first day knowing the formats to go to have my job, I realised there was something strange in everyone. I was trained to give this information; I was adjusted to prepare the same discourse and I was pushed to impose these formats in every public school I needed to go to. I felt absolutely disoriented because I thought I could not do it but I remember I was in the correct way… I was trained to be "superior", "the best one" and "the only one" in terms of Education in Public schools.

The words of one of the 4 leaders were: "These observation forms are mandatory to be used in the Public Schools, you must keep in mind these ones are perfectly designed and your function is to implement in those places. Well, if you have comments, suggestions, or ideas to fix them or to add something, this is the time for saying". Mmmmm, I rised my hand (I have this stupid manner of arguing something I disagree) my questions was:

- *"I could not understand in the Encuesta de estudiantes format, there are no more options to be answered in the question N. 10?*

10. ¿Utilizas el idioma inglés fuera de clases? ☐ SÍ ☐ NO

I mean, is there no necessary to include more options than yes/no… maybe, utilizas el idioma inglés fuera de clases… algunas veces, muy poco, si, no, feo, bonito, alto?"

They did not like my intervention and the conclusion was that this question was implemented in the U.K and right there the results were great and other things I honestly do not remember. Ok, this short speech was one of the starting points of disagreements in this work. They immediately noticed I got something different to my other "expert observers" partners.

There were a bunch of observation guidelines / forms or rubrics to follow in our daily process in the public schools. I was exhausted and thoughtful of my first day at work. I tried to remember the protocol of the other 20 things I had to do, but it was impossible, then I kept in mind I got many doubts. Instead of this I prefer to be silenced because it could affect my performance in the company.

V. A nice talk

Next day of the meeting was about defining the last details of the first encounter "in-situ" with the public schools. I was chosen to be in the South of the city (no one liked it) I did!! My favorite place, I have passed over and over many streets in these places and it was for sure my local environment. The protocol of the agenda included a step-by-step format on "how I needed to talk to the people in the Public schools" words of another, another, another leader said were: "tried to interact with the principal of the school in an elegant way, follow the actions of what he said, be nice and be assertive with the information they used to have. Also, when you were with a teacher, you should explain to them specifically all actions (they sometimes do not know what is about this), if they did not like to be observed, you immediately went to the principal and informed them of the situation. They (EFL Teachers) had to understand we are the people they needed, and we were solutioning many of the problems they have had in their regular practices in Public Schools. Unbelievable, this entity did not see the Teachers as great professionals, I was totally in disagreement with this. At this time, I could not explore the practices of Teachers I did not have enough experience by interacting and talking to them. As I said just before, I thought the Teachers were brilliant in their lessons as well as terrific practitioners with little children.

Well, I traced back to my first day of "in-situ" dates with a Public School as an "expert Observer". I put the quotations because I think this is not an in-situ practice since it was an under-pressure activity to generate angry, anger and unexpected actions… the second one about observers is a huge lie!!! I am not the one who has to tell a teacher what to do or when to do… more than an observer, I was a deputy of functions, a dictator of knowledge, in other words: an idiot who follows rules and a script. Things have changed a lot recently!!!

The watchman looked at me and he noticed I did not belong to this Public Institution, what a pity!! I have worked in those places; I could imagine my aspect changed so much. My body as an observer was announced to go to the principal office. An elegant lady took me up and we were walking to the office. She was extremely kind, she asked me things such as: How is working in the BC? Are people foreigners… from North/West? Is it hard to pass an interview there? Is that true about the payment of it? Every answer was done in a polite and non-humiliating way. I had not felt so good since I was out of INEM. What a good sensation, by 2015 I might say, this is a great part of working there. The respect, the pride, and the courage of being an Observer. Of course, by now, I would say it is an imaginary component that I realized on time, for that reason, I could write about this. Ok, after the questioning, it was my turn to do my job… so ´professionally I started asking about her experience, language proficiency, academic background, and others. She made my day, I mean, she is a super prepared professional, successful in her past jobs, high qualifications, and a great passion for public schools. It was a nice talk. The most surprising part was when many children embraced her, they said, love you, when do we play again and more compliments. A principal with this profile?? even the Teachers said to her with love hello. My inspiration to be the leader of a school, she was a good example to help the community in a local way. She told me to wait a second because she needed to fix something in the yard. For sure, I said, you were the leader of this institution, went on patiently, I waited for you Mrs Principal. She just smiled quite a bit. I saw the pictures in her office, and it looked shining, all pics of the principal evidenced a nice performance, in general a great embodiment.

After 10 minutes the principal entered her office. I was more relaxed; I already had a nice talk with her and now she signed the papers to start the process. She introduced me

Mrs Arango, another person who accompanied the principal. Mrs Arango requested for my identification of the MEN-BC. I did not understand why a regular Teacher asked for it. I said: "But the Principal next to you did not do that (of course in a good manner) why you did it?" They both laughed too much, I did catch the joke… My Principal told me: Nop Miguel, I am Mrs Sanabria, I am an Elementary Teacher here, actually I am an English Teacher in 3rd-4th graders, she is the Principal of the school: Mrs Arango… WoW, I did not feel so well but at the same time I was pretty happy to know an EFL Elementary Teacher like this, I recalled times and times this 20 minutes talk and I should say again, it was a nice talk, it was.

VI. Not here!!

Some arrangements were done with Mr Arango, the original principal of the school, not for me. I started observing one lesson of an Elementary Teacher (2nd) grade. It was ok, many activities she included, so passionate and easygoing. But most of the children were disruptive and almost impossible to control. About my second visit to another classroom, I must say it was a hard moment in my profession. Maybe this chapter will be the shortest one because I did not want to extend, probably it will be longer similar ones in the future. Now, I stressed on saying this 2nd grade Teacher did not want me for his lesson… He was really rude in terms of verbal expressions and comments like: You were nobody to observe my class!! you did not know about the real context we have in Public Schools!! you were a finger up English Teacher!! you never came to realia of Education in Colombia, and you did not look with much experience on the field.!! You could not come in my class, that is mine and I would not like my students to be affected because of your presence here, I mean Mr… Something, you were not able to enter here, not here.

I used to be so strong, I sure had many harder situations like this before. Fortunately, I followed his expression, he seemed in disagreement about the system, he felt exhausted from fighting with laws and norms, and he said they were no visible actors for the National plan. I agreed on most of these, the point is that I had to do my job, my function, my purpose of keeping a mechanism of power, a strategy to deliver tasks and duties for Elementary Teachers had to carry on.

At this time, I realized the importance of talking about the other views, the unseen, the unpredictable about classroom observation practices…. In my multifaceted view as Teacher, Observer and Trainer understood the importance of being a nice person, I mean… relevant to talking to the teacher, hearing them and of course being in their shoes.

VII. The Observer- The expert words

I didn't feel so comfortable after arguing with the last Teacher I couldn't observe, however I needed to keep doing my stuff at my work. I had a MEN and British Council meeting referring to our "deliverables". These deliverables were the documents we recollected as observers to fill out some data and important information. Before this encounter, I had a short talk with one of my friends at British Council. He used to work as an observer like me and he has worked a lot in this kind of projects.

I told him my last observation situation with Mr Arango, I explained every single detail with explicit information. As soon as I finished my words he immediately laughed at me, in a funny way but seriously at the same time we said: "Miguel, we're observers, we had the power to enter to any class since we represent the MEN/BC, it means, we didn't need to ask for permission, actually the responsibility of the Teachers is allowed us to criticism, evaluate and let them know about their mistakes in classroom. You have too much experience, don't you Miguel? well, we also got training to be where we are and the reason why the MEN/BC is doing these things is because the Teachers are lazy, irresponsible and not good ELT Teachers…" I wondered and I replied: "Manuel, I do understand your words, but I couldn't see the meaning of the good practice you talked about, please explain me" He said: "Sure… a good practice is a well-organized dynamic in class, specific objectives, followed activities, a wrap up, a pre-reading, an assessment, etc…" Alright Manuel, it was clear enough, now, let's go to the meeting because today the MEN Director and BC Leaders would be there.

During this short talk I thought about my friend's speech. Also, in the meeting there were not many differences in terms of validating us the power of observing, our role as "experts" and the idea to supervise-realize our practice in classroom observations. In my mind were a bunch of comments, practices and conversations when I worked as a teacher in a public school, of course my friend never came into a public Institution, no God!! he

always had the "good luck" to work in comfortable-ideal environments. Although, I didn't think we had power to be inside a teachers' classroom, in fact, I guess the power is a deal confrontation between the teacher, observer and the students…

But what I got surprised me in the conversation with my friend was that not only him, many people still think the observer is superior, it means this observer has the authority to interrupt-being in an unknown teachers classroom, the observer sometimes doesn't need permission to get into the privacy of Teachers and the observer didn't keep in mind that the Teachers also played a different role at time of being observed. Maybe my friend didn't know that some Teachers like to be observed, they didn't feel afraid of being observed, they like it!!

There are some practices which aren't evidenced in an observation, plus, those practices couldn't seem as "good practices". Several Teachers didn't follow the patterns of a class, I mean, they didn't do a warmup, they couldn't work on a pre-listening unless feedback with students. Nevertheless, I keep thinking there are more meaningful practices in teaching, the teachers know more than anyone the context where they teach and the observation is only an excuse to perform, act out and show a mask to let the observer look at the "ideal- good practice". My "expert" friend offered me words which I still problematize, I don't judge him, it's his work and thoughts but I would like to make evident the "other practices" in observations… practices which aren't regulated, scripted, and aligned with the system.

VIII. What to observe?... Why

Tuesday morning… I remember this day a lot because it was my daughter's birthday. I already observed some classes in this school, in fact I could enter many classrooms, at about 4-5. But It was always something picky with one of the teachers in this school. I did not want to push her to let me observe the class, I did not like to interact with her or have a word while I was working there. Some students and coordinators admired her job (I could notice that), and she was walking with authority, and something related to

respect with her colleagues. Deep in my own, I knew she has been a great teacher and now she is waiting for her retirement.

I came to her to ask about my observation, and she asked me: "What would you like to observe in my class?" I reply, I just wanted to observe your great didactic, content, methodological paths, etc, etc in your class. She laughed, she said to me if I want to observe a great class, I could see it but next day. It means, by Wednesday. She invited me to be in her class but suddenly something awkward was saying: "I was going to be a great actress in my observation, I would be as the forms or rubrics require… I would be a nice teacher model in your observation…" This teacher would perform a rehearsal, a movie, or a play inside the classroom, it means, the information (data) I obtain from the observation would not be certain, precise, or real!! How about if other observed teachers did this before? How could I identify this? Is this important in an observation practice? I was totally disoriented about this, perhaps for many observers this was not important, however in my case, to be honest, I thought about the authentic aspects in a class observation.

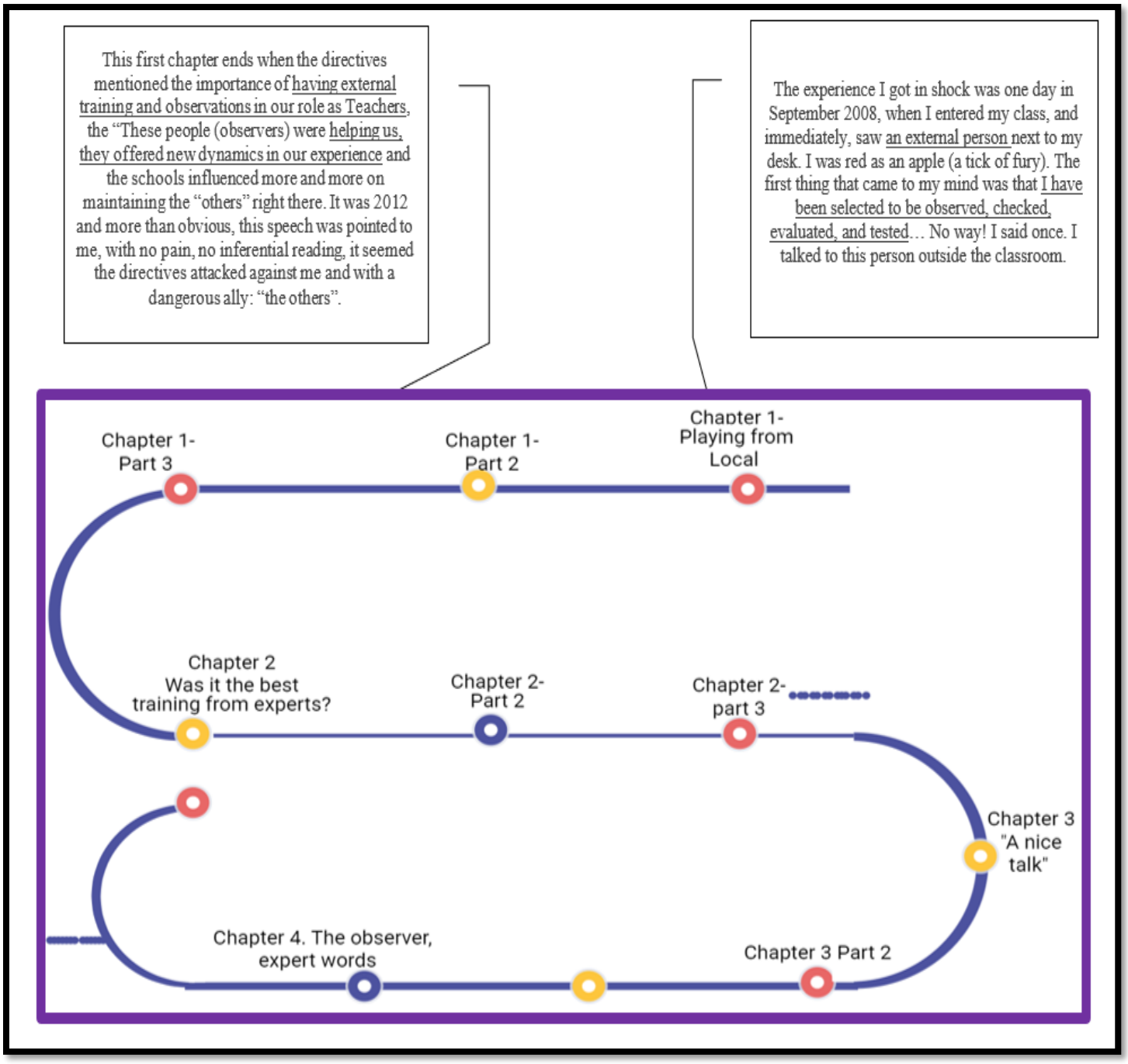
I also tend to think that I feel bad when people observe my classes, I don't really like it and I have played different roles at the time of being observed… Why do the other teachers feel differently to me?At this time, I realized the importance of reflecting upon our observation practices, the need to know the context as well as talking first with the observed person (teacher). The BNP requires observers who can have all the insights of a regular English class, the MEN want to get as much data as possible from the observers, I do not agree with that… in fact, I think this is something to criticize and problematize… But I keep in mind the question: What to observe and why to observe… No answer on these ones… yet.

Analysis of my narrative

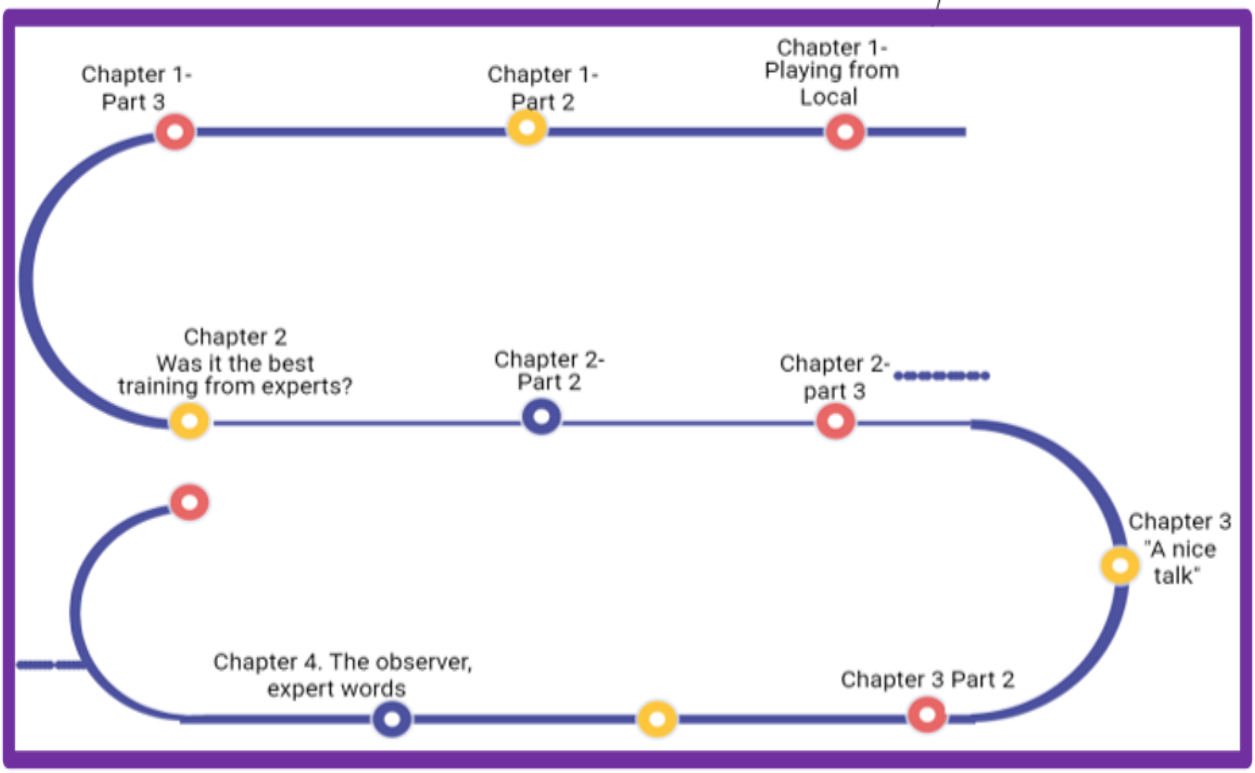
- Timeline of Temporal sequence events in my narrative -

Miguel. Chronological events of an ELT Observer

This is the historical background of me as an observer.



(2015-2016) The feedback from the "experts" was given to us in a strong no meaningful way, with a non-criteria or rubric version, but I loved it, they tried to be strong because it was a high-status project, but I think in the background they didn't feel so comfortable as I was. At the end of 7 long journey days in training on how to observe classes we finally got an answer, I didn't expect this at that time, but I felt butterflies in my stomach, it was extremely important for me, I guess I wasn't prepared for this answer…



What a good sensation, by 2015 I might say, this is a great part of working there. The respect, the pride, and the courage of being an Observer. Ok, after the questioning, it was my turn to do my job… so professionally I started asking about her experience, language proficiency, academic background, and others (I guess this is not part of the observation rubrics, or standards...). She made my day, I mean, she is a super prepared professional, successful in her past jobs, with high qualifications and, a great passion for public schools. It was a nice talk between the observer and the observed. The most surprising part was when many children embraced her, they said, love you, when do we play again, and more compliments.

6.3.4.2. Exposition of my narratives –

Miguel, the reflective observer

It is challenging to interpret my own narratives as well as identify different subject positions' perspectives on the ELT observers.

Examining my own perceptions and class observation experiences is something contemplative or thoughtful about myself. This introspection is a process that involves looking inward to examine my own thoughts and emotions as an ELT observer. During the subjective interpretation of my narratives, I would get an informal process of exploring my inner life but also apply to a more formalized process in the research's analysis.

The autobiographical chapters were written long ago, during a process of problematizing my research (as mentioned before in this thesis, chapter 5). However, at that moment I was writing about my experience as an observer and, I did not imagine that these narratives could be contemplated to carry out an analysis and thus be able to show other positions of the ELT class observers. Now as a researcher I identify several aspects to explore and reflected upon the positions of the observers.

The experimental use of introspection in my data analysis consists of analyzing my own thoughts and feelings – sensations and emotions but in a much more reflexive and rigorous way.

Becoming an Observer

"The first thing that came in my mind was that I have been selected to be observed, checked, evaluated, and tested" (Miguel)

Many people have certain skills at time of observing, in fact we as humans get from the beginning of life a well-structured way to observe things. The point is that many can observe, but not many can analyze the observed aspects.

Becoming an observer requires discipline, perseverance, and experiences in class observations. The name given to the subject: "Observer", is sometimes earned, one becomes an observer of classes, or it is simply given to that subject that is inside a class observing specific parameters.

This (auto) analysis shows some dynamics of how a subject becomes an observer through some narrative moments.

I did not want to be observed (I do not like it, in fact...) since it represented that someone could judge the things that I did in my teaching practice. The first step to become myself as an observer was to be an observed subject. The reasons to not to be observed were because the observation was done by another person, a person I did not know. Despite this, I needed to allow this person to enter my class to observe my class. I did not feel comfortable nor well, but it was part of a strategy that could help the academic community.

> *The experience I got in shock was one day when I entered my class and immediately, I saw an external person next to my desk. I was red as an apple (a tick of fury). The first thing that came in my mind was that I have been selected to be observed, checked, evaluated, and tested…*
> *the directives of the school mentioned the importance of having external training and observations in our role as teachers. These people (observers) were helping us, they offered new dynamics in our experience and the schools influenced more and more on maintaining the "others" right there, but I disagreed. [sic]*

One step in becoming an observer was to be in the shoes of an observed teacher, even if I did not want to be there. However, when I let the observer go inside my class, I realized that this subject offered a service and followed aligned and very organized parameters. That was a meaningful and contradictory feeling, but it was the first moment of the work that a class observer did.

I consider that I wanted to be part of that "group" of trainers and external observers. In fact, when I had the opportunity, I took advantage of it. The following passage shows feelings I had when belonging to that institution and, in turn, the reflections I thought about being part of it.

> *one of my friends sent me a message from a well-recognized Institute. It says: "We need some Trainers for this …. program who wants to learn more about new strategies in ELT, get a free Training in Language and Teaching, being class observers, and work with us in a National Bilingualism Program…." Wow, without thinking twice, I applied into this job offer. I did it especially because it was made by British Council, come one, British Council. The most important Institutions in ELT here in Colombia and probably worldwide (this is what I thought at that time)*
>
> *The feedback from the "experts" was given to us in a strong, no meaningful way, with non-criteria or rubric version, but I loved it, they tried to be strong because it was a high-status project, but I think in the background they didn't feel so comfortable as I was. At the end of 7 long journey days in training (Including class observation rubrics), we finally got an answer, I didn't expect this at that time, but I felt butterflies in my stomach. [sic]*

Becoming an observer does not necessarily imply just receiving training... I tend to say it goes beyond this. I had already been observed, I did not like it very much, but I wanted to be part of a group to observe teachers. The first step I took to be an observer guided me to think that I wanted that recognition from the community, from my friends, and from myself. Becoming an observer is not simply receiving guidelines on what to do and how to do it; but this part of the autobiographical narrative makes it possible to identify the initial paths of an observer and the sensations that this subject feels.

In the following part, a passage from my narrative is established where training plays an important issue in the position of the observer. The observer's positions are also permeated by training and the dynamics of those spaces.

The Trained Observer

"The training was followed by rules and rules, not timing for reflection or critical aspects" (Miguel.)

From the beginning as ELT observers, we should attend training sessions, so that the practices in observations may be successful and according to the established parameters. I have seen many people involved in this training (school directors, trainers, lead observers, ELT observers, businesspeople, among other actors, stakeholders, publishing houses, universities, and so on). Despite this, when I (ELT Observer) was in training, I did not have time for interacting, reflecting, discussing, and/or giving an opinion about the format of observation, the rubric, or the practice itself.

I analyzed that class observation training was a top-down process where different subjects handle an agenda to strictly follow without any struggle or the opinion of the ELT observers, however, I felt fine with it. The agenda of training was mandatory to follow, it was rigid and static. Also, deep inside these pieces of training and agendas, there were a lot of situations that were not visible to others. Here is an example of what I lived during the training to observe a class,

> *The last criteria for selecting the people were a huge, huge training. It was placed in an exotic and luxurious room hotel with all fashioned situations that a regular Teacher like me has never seen. That was a bunch of resources, materials in Education (smart boards, pointers, flashcards, among others), commitment people in the academic-administrative pool and the most relevant one, three trainers who came from the North and West who trained us. We looked at them as the superiors, wise-people, and visible ones in Education. [sic]*

Many people like me were surprised by the organization and implementation of this massive training. It was something that I had never experienced; therefore, it was fascinating. This gave me a lot of satisfaction to be part of those training processes. However, I always had doubts about the criteria to be evaluated in the observation, the items in the observation rubric, and the moment of feedback when the observation was done. I also identified there was no space for questions or reactions from the ELT observers, which was something unusual; I examined it closely in the training moments, I talked about it with colleagues (ELT observers), and several of them agreed with me, but they did not say anything else. Others argued that they "were the ones who knew", that we as observers had just to follow orders and instructions.

Scrutinizing in pieces of training had advantages, as can be seen in another part of the narrative…

> *The training was followed by rules and rules, not timing for reflection or critical aspects, just it was mandatory to keep in mind the structure of the course as well as carrying on the superiors' strategies. We had a manual of actions inside every lesson, we also needed to continue the step by step of the training lessons, it wasn't ideal for me, I thought, but I kept in my no vision brain, it wasn't important because they were the only ones who knew a lot, remember they are the "Imperio" of knowledge, and I was there to be part of it. I smiled constantly, I made myself notice and I felt like a fish in water. The feedback from the "experts" was given to us in a strong, no meaningful way, with non-criteria or rubric version, but I loved it, they tried to be strong because it was a high-status project, but I think in the background they didn't feel so comfortable as I was. [sic]*

Being part of an organization like BC had some benefits. For example, recognition among colleagues and many professionals would like to be hired/granted by this entity, but others see it as something almost impossible to be part of. I remember (and I see in my

narratives) that I needed the experience at BC, it was a dream that came true. Nonetheless, I also had other feelings which let me know about other aspects of the observation training.

I sometimes felt upset at the time of having the observation training in this entity. On the one hand, it was a great achievement to be together with recognized and brilliant people in the field of ELT, but on the other hand, I was on the side, that is, there was no time to ask questions or reflect on the evaluation's rubrics. I was silenced many times for being part of "them", of the institution that would intervene schools to observe EFL teachers as well as testing, preparing, and training ELT observers who were innocent and blind to the realities of EFL teachers and their local educational contexts through a class observation.

As a trained observer I followed the requirements in training, and I did it well. There were several moments in which I had to keep quiet and in others I was able to give my arguments. These are sensations that an ELT observer should inquire into, even if we do not agree with the training patterns. The trained observer is a subject to follow a precise and concrete agenda, it must be conducted with the appropriate guidelines, but the ELT observer also reflects on it and problematizes their realities within the dynamics of observation training.

Observing in-service Teachers

"I already had a nice talk with her and now she signed the papers to start the process" (Miguel)

I remember when a teacher surprisingly told me that she could not understand the reason why I continued talking to her. She thought the observation was just finished and I needed to go away. I have tried to stay extra time when doing observations, paying attention to the schools' environments, analyzing the situations that happen inside/outside

the classroom, and of course, I enjoyed having time with the teachers. To be honest, I also had time with teachers in different spaces, for example, I went out and had coffee with them outside the school, or we met in a cafeteria or talked in other places. That is not common in an observation practice, in fact, the rule is clear: "*the observers just have to observe, evaluate and give feedback about the observations*". I skip this rule and I love doing that.

One of my first steps when going to observe is to talk to the teacher; I tried to be some minutes before the observation for having a short and informal conversation with the teacher. This space is for me something meaningful, natural, and humanistic inside the structural aspect of observation despite the trainers not mentioning it during training sessions.

I have learned when an observer is close to the teacher, this pity aspect could generate great trust and confidence for the future intention. I understand when teachers are observed, some feel panic and stress, and taking out that pressure is a nice contribution in this practice.

As an ELT observer, I have identified that teachers should be placed in a very honored position when doing observations. Some ELT observers behave in front of the teachers in a top-down position (as a vertical way). The ELT observers do not care if the teacher is worried about the observation, nor if the teacher does not want to continue in this practice. I reflected upon the teachers' realities, I tended to realize they have needs and many situations in what to think. Despite this, the rule is again strict… "*observers should follow the guidelines of the observations, it includes we need to do the observation, no matter what*".

After talking with the other ELT observers of this thesis, from the experience as an observer and the reflections, I have realized that I took my time to listen to the teachers and had a short talk before the observation. I remember in an observation experience at a school, I got confused about who the principal and teachers are. It was a fun time but at the same time people understood the importance of generating a good relationship and good rapport with all of those at the school.

> *After 10 minutes the principal entered her office. I was more relaxed; I already had a nice talk with her and now she signed the papers to start the process. She introduced me Mrs Arango, another person who accompanied the principal. Mrs Arango requested for my identification of the MEN-BC. I did not understand why a teacher asked for it. I said: "But the Principal next to you did not do that (of course in a good manner) why you did it?" [sic]*

There are several situations of power issues when observing a teacher. The observer feels superior because of the credentials that this person gets, or it is because the observer belongs to an external entity or simply because of his or her role as an observer. This is said in one way or another in the observation training.

The purpose of being an observer with "good rapport" lies more in making the observer teacher feel good, it deals with an idea to obtain an ethical and reflective position; Building trust, providing support, and letting go of arrogance can be valuable pillars in the ELT observers' positions.

I have made mistakes when I observe a class, in fact, the observer is constantly changing and produces different positions. This part of the analysis confronts me about how it was when I started the observations and how I am now... observing in-service teachers requires being in their shoes and having an ethical position; It is not about being good or bad as an observer.

This part also gives me a more collective understanding of the observations. Several subjects (directors, teachers, observers, students and some more) are part of my exercise of observing classes. When I observed in-service teachers, it was not just observing them, I felt as part of the community and the people immersed there.

The Reasoning Observer

Unseen and unexpected aspects in class observations

"…the need to know the context as well as talking first with the observed teacher" (Miguel.)

Before starting with this last introspective analysis of my narratives, I would like to point out some passages of the book "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" (Doyle, 1892), specifically in the chapter *A Scandal in Bohemia*, where Sherlock had a talk with Watson about the observation. In the first instance, Holmes mentions the importance of seeing beyond, that this practice of observation is not only about visual aspects.

> *It is important to realize that observation is much more than merely seeing something; it also involves a mental process. In all observations there are two elements: (a) the sense-perceptual element (usually visual) and (b) the mental, which, as we have seen, may be partly conscious and partly unconscious. Where the sense-perceptual element is relatively unimportant, it is often difficult to distinguish between an observation and an ordinary intuition. For example, this sort of thing is usually referred to as an observation: "I have noticed that I get hay fever whenever I go near horses." The hay fever and the horses are perfectly obvious, it is the connection between the two that may require astuteness to notice at first, and this is a mental process not distinguishable from an intuition. Sometimes it is possible to draw a line between the noticing and the intuition, e.g. Aristotle commented that on observing that the bright side of the moon is always toward the sun, it may suddenly occur to the observer that the explanation is that the moon shines by the light of the sun. (p.146)*

Similarly, in the same conversation, characteristics are stated on the two types of observations,

> *Claude Bernard distinguished two types of observation: (a) spontaneous or passive observations which are unexpected; and (b) induced or active observations which are deliberately sought, usually on account of a hypothesis. […] Effective spontaneous observation involves firstly noticing some object or event. The thing noticed will only become significant if the mind of the observer either consciously or unconsciously relates it to some relevant knowledge or past experience, or if in pondering on it subsequently he arrives at some hypothesis. In the last section attention was called to the fact that the mind is particularly sensitive to changes or differences. This is of use in scientific observation, but what is more important and more difficult is to observe (in this instance mainly a mental process) resemblances or correlations between things that on the surface appeared quite unrelated. (p.174)*

Holmes taught Watson the difference between seeing and observing. It is also named that observation involves conscious or unconscious events / spontaneous-nonspontaneous processes or unexpected realities inside the observations.

These previous situations bring us to an interesting point on how our experiences as observers' impact what we consider meaningful or not. We (ELT Observers) do scientific observations sometimes! However, we are able to analyze the correlations between the EFL teachers-students and the educational community.

When we are novice ELT observers, all observations are unexpected and worthy of our attention but as we learn more about the educational contexts, evaluation process, professional development, and emotional aspects, among others in the ELT field, we become more discerning about that which we consider important and noteworthy in a class observation.

The detective Holmes explained to Watson the difference between observing and seeing as well as stated the great importance of following unconscious emotions when

identifying the data. The previous passage provides a considered overview of what we ELT observers face during the practice, and, in turn, it is an example to follow in our exercises within the observer positions.

Something that I have learned as an ELT observer is to go further. I do not feel comfortable with the structured, linear class that meets all the "ideal" parameters. Behind that preparation, planning, and process of the EFL teacher, there are countless reactions, emotions, and realities which are rarely observed in an observation. In addition, the observer is trained to evaluate the format of a class with rigid guidelines. However, my position offers different perspectives on binary codes (good-bad / yes it did-it did not), the experience invites me to have facts like Holmes', full of unexpected situations in a class observation.

> *There are some practices which aren't evidenced in an observation, plus, those practices couldn't seem as "good practices". Several teachers didn't follow the patterns of a class, I mean, they didn't do a warmup, they couldn't work on a pre-listening unless feedback with students. Nevertheless, I keep thinking there are more meaningful practices in teaching, the teachers know more than anyone the context where they teach and the observation is only an excuse to perform, act out and show a mask to let the observer look at the "ideal- good practice" [sic]*

There are unseen practices in the class observations and the ELT positions of observers. At the time of carrying out an observation, one of the main objectives is recollecting data from the EFLT teachers' classes; in fact, some of the ELT observers did this practice in a hurry, just the importance of filling out the format is relevant. It is necessary to state that ELT Observers are in their comfort zone (not all of them), but they do not care about issues that happen in educational contexts and do not go further with any expectations in the class observation. The following passage shows my reflection when finishing training and started going to an observation:

> *I realized the importance of reflecting upon our observation practices, the need to know the context as well as talking first with the observed person (teacher). The BNP requires observers who can have all the insights of a regular English class, the MEN want to get as much data as possible from the observers, I do not agree with that… in fact, I think this is something to criticize and problematize… But I keep in mind the question: What to observe and why to observe… No answer on these ones… yet. [sic]*

To measure teaching abilities, evaluate the EFLT teachers' performances, and have systematic observation is not enough when the observer takes place. The ELT observer is a subject who has the experience, receives training, many times is an EFL teacher and basically, s(he) identifies unseen and unexpected aspects in-class observations.

The observer constantly learns, works as a team with other observers and listens to the teachers/schools' directives. This observer analyzes and interrupts the normalized way of observing, to go further and identify some unseen factors in the classroom.

Appendix 2

Conversations, audio scripts, virtual meetings, and written compositions of ELT observers



Stories of an Observer

Could you please narrate some experiences in the training to be an observer?

What is the training agenda to follow... the information trainers talk to... other important aspects?

My experience as an observer has had three stages, mainly, in which I can tell experiences related to training. The first stage happened right after I got graduated from my master's program and I had my first experiences working with BA programs in languages. I didn't have training sessions as such, since I was assigned practicum classes in which my role was to support pre-service teachers in their practicum spaces. I did a self-training process, if I can call it that way, in which I searched possibilities to systematize in-training teachers experiences. I came across mainstream formats that started shaping my experience as an observer following the vision of me just as someone who checks some items and tells the pre-service teacher what to improve and how. The second stage came when I participated in the British council (BC) project in which I received explicit training for observing in-service teachers at public schools in Bogota. Although my experience here responded to the vision I mentioned in the first stage, it was highly frustrating since I started noticing how those imposed, punishing and top-down observation strategies produced rejection and conflicts with the observed teachers. I think I already mentioned some of my insights about the training sessions at BC in previous narratives; however, I want to highlight some ideas from y experience. I remember leaving those training sessions and talking to my colleagues about how frustrating it was to see the forms we were told to complete during our observations. I felt there was a mismatch between my pedagogical viewpoints and the way the observation process was being carried out. I felt trapped into something I didn't want to do. I was constantly asking myself: If I were that teacher, how would I feel during and after being observed in such an arrogant way? My answer was: I'm sure I wouldn't allow it, period. After those training sessions, I felt as an object, a machine that executed a task. However, I appreciate those experiences at BC, since they forced me to inquire myself on how not to continue spreading those dehumanizing observation practices as an observer. The third stage is the one I'm going through now. It has a non-common training dynamic, I'd say. After the BC and some personal and emotional reflections on my role as a language teacher, I decided to learn from the pre-service teachers I observe, so now I build up with them the criteria for observing their practicum based on their interests and needs.

First, could you please answer the following questions from your experience and knowledge:

What is Observing for you?	How do you feel at time of observing EFL Teachers?	What main aspects could you highlight when getting training of "experts" for observing classes?	What is the main purpose of observing an EFL Class? How to be a "good" observer?
The act of seeing and describing what you see. The conclusions of what you observe should be a supply for reflection. It might have two intentions: a. To monitor (transformed into surveillance) behaviors, actions in order to evaluate performance b. To build up knowledge based on the conclusion drawn from the observations	The ways I feel depend on the intention I have or I told to have when observing. If I'm told to monitor in order to evaluate performance, I feel doing surveillance, judging, check listing, anxious. On the other hand, if my intention is to build up knowledge, I feel empowered, transformative, constructive, motivated.	Some aspects to highlight are: When carrying out class observation, training should always be included; however, orienting such training towards check listing, monitoring performance, adapting pedagogical practices to a given model, etc., might drive the role of the observer as an object that fulfills a mechanic role. The training I've received so far has been oriented towards that perspective, which makes me see it as useless for the way I understand observing practices nowadays; nevertheless, if it hadn't been for such training and subject positioning, I wouldn't have asked myself on which type of observer I expected to be.	Based on my experience as a professional teacher, the main purpose is to decipher and build, along with the observed teacher, pedagogical knowledge that allows ourselves to have stronger pedagogical, didactical and classroom practices. I'm not sure if there are good or bad observers. I'd rather think about successful observer practices. If I think about that, I'd say that successful practices from class observers imply high negotiation skills, assertive communicator, high levels of empathy and emotional intelligence, team work, active listener, trustful, self-confident, task-oriented, willing to learn and unlearn, systematic, organized.

Meeting 1- Co researcher participation DIE-UDFJDC ELT EMPHASIS

Dear colleague,

This is an important part in my research project which has to do with the data collection. This exercise was planned and designed to collect relevant data and the main objective is piloting this data collection instrument with your help.

We have been talking about my research project *"The Observers' Subject Positions- Unseen Situation in the Classroom Observation Practices"* and now the idea is to know what you feel/react/think when you observe English Classes. I really appreciate your help and I am sure I will learn from your experience and academic's background during this exercise.

I did some autobiography's chapters in my first semester of the Doctoral studies (8 chapters in total). These narratives were important for my problematization ideas and they are also relevant into my data collection instruments. If you have further questions or some doubts related to my Doctoral research project, feel free to ask.

Through reading the information "Autobiography Narratives" I would like you to help me with:

1- Highlighting the aspects, you like the most- calling your attention. Please, feel free to write comments, ideas, questions, among others next to the narratives.

2- Completing the last part called "My Comments" about the narratives you already read. You could draw, design, create, paint, write anything you want to for this exercise. Here you may describe your process as Observer, Coordinator, Leader, Pre-service Teacher in B.A Programs, etc. Keep in mind the main topic of this research is based on Classroom Observation Practices. (Ask again Miguel for the pen colors or materials to do that)

Autobiography Narratives	Highlighting aspects	Autobiography Narratives	Highlighting aspects
CHAPTER 2 was the best training from the experts? As it is evident, they took me out of this place, or better, I didn't want to be more time in the school as EFL Teacher. One of the reasons was that I considered my English Proficiency level was going down as well as naturally practicing English. I mean, I didn't interact too much in English and no had people who talked to in this foreign language. The directives of the schools weren't happy with my performance in this place and even they told me that many people felt not good with my attitude though, honestly, I didn't pay attention to it. One of the Best Practice experience so far in my short and hazardous academic life. I started looking for a job as an English Teacher, Translator, Freelance or even in some call centers. Little interests I saw in Education, the real picture of myself at that time was about getting money and having fun in my leisure time. I worked in some informal Language institutions from 2007-2010, right there, I realized some people got their tedious process to be exceptional professionals in Education and other ones just think about getting a comfortable place for doing nothing and earning more and more money. The last one was the case of working in Language Institutions. Well, by 2008 I got surprised about my English Proficiency level, immediately this one was increasing a lot. I used to get long conversations with foreigners, went up to my vocabulary through using different slangs and idiomatic expressions and thought I got a better way for Teaching my lessons... I felt I improved my way of being an English Teacher. Unfortunately, it was a mistake in my academic process, but better than never, this experience helped me so much in this reflexive, natural and critical expectation to look at the Education with other eyes. In my daily routine as a "Good Teacher" at the Institute, one of my friends sent me a message from a well-recognized Institute. It says: "We need some Trainers for this ..... program who want to learn more about new strategies in ELT, get a free Training in Language and Teaching and work with us in a National Bilingualism Program...." Wow, without thinking twice, I applied to	**I also felt this way while I was teaching at schools. The hardest thing for me was to deal with parents. I also feel I didn't have any motivation for learning from my context at that time. I think I missed important learnings there. Also, I felt everything was a mess and nobody could help me out. I felt my students were not learning anything, but I didn't have a plan, I didn't ask for help because I already had a diploma and it was supposed I already knew everything.** **Emotional intelligence is tied to the way we drive our lives. Actually, our emotions contradict themselves and many times we end up judging what we see on other people, but we act the same way. Emotions determine, at the end of the day, our routines, dreams, achievements, and challenges. Sadly, these are**	CHAPTER 6 Not here!! Some arrangements were done with Mr Arango, the principal of the school. I started observing one lesson of an EFL Teacher (7th) grade. It was ok, she included many activities, so passionate and an easygoing Teacher. But most of the children were disruptive and almost impossible to control. About my second visit to another classroom, I must say it was a hard moment in my profession. Maybe this chapter will be the shortest one due to I did not want to extend, probably it will be longer ones in the future. Now, I stressed on saying this 7th graders Teacher did not want I entered to his lesson... He was rude in terms of verbal expressions and comments like: *You were nobody to observe my class!! you did not know about the real context we have in Public Schools!! you were a finger up English Teacher!! you never came to the real of Education in Colombia and you did not look with much experience on the field.!! You could not come in my class, that is mine and I would not like my students were affected because of your presence here, I mean Mr.. Something, you were not able to enter here, not here.* I use to be so strong, I had for sure many harder situations like this before. Fortunately, I followed his expression, he seemed in disagreement about the system, he felt exhausted of fighting with laws and norms and he said they were no visible actors for the National Plan. I agreed on most of these, the point is that I had to do my job, my function, my purpose of keeping a mechanism of power a strategy to deliver tasks and duties for EFL Teachers had to carry on. At this time, I realized the importance to talk to about the other views, the unseen, the unpredictable about classroom observation practices.... On my multifaceted view as Teacher, Observer, and Trainer I understood the importance to be a nice person, I mean... the relevant to talk to the teacher before doing an observation, hearing them and of course being in their shoes. _____	**This is a key issue I could connect after my participation in the project: policies, stakeholders, policy makers do not care about people. I had my ideas on it based on my academic readings and training, but it was the opportunity I got to prove it. Something we did not talk at all during the training sessions was how to be empathetic with teachers/administrative at schools...it just comes to my mind a word one of the trainers said to us: 'use your charm'...but, using a freaking smile was not the point. I also made decisions based on handing my paperwork, so I received my payment, but.....☹. That's what policies and its application miss: REAL EMPATHY** **When I think about deliverables, I just think on number, numbers, and percentages. That's what we, observers, teachers,**

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7. Relevance and discussion in the ELT Observers' Positions

When developing this thesis, I was able to realize that the process of observing a canonical class implies a standardization of the practice, that is, something regulated and approved by the community. I also became aware that the process of doing this thesis implied an introspective negotiation; where the observer is positioned as a teacher, fellow, colleague, and peer. Among these negotiations I could explore the collaboration between observers and observed EFL teachers. I was also able to navigate through the relationships that are rounded in-class observation practices, agreements when handling formats/rubrics of observations, and the observers' preparation to set up this activity. The previous negotiation's elements were identified before and now it is the time to highlight the positions of the ELT observers which have been ignored in the ELT field.

The observers' narratives offered traditional insights within in-class observations, such as vigilance, control, supervision, surveillance, and hierarchical positions. These positions come hand in hand with training to carry out a "good" practice and formats that approve their procedures validated by "experts" in the observation. The traditional positions within observers' positions are circulating time by time as well as we as observers can move from one to another side.

This chapter emphasizes the comprehension of the observers' subject positions in the narrated experiences within four ELT Class observers in Colombia. Also, I would like to discuss the relevance of researching the ELT observers' positions.

There are observers who are seen on a day-to-day basis during class observations. These subjects are "seen" and are generally perceived by the academic community. This chapter offers an overview of the relevance of researching the ELT Observers' positions.

According to the research question: What observers' subject positions have been neglected by the canonical way to observe in the ELT field? The positions of the observers are in permanent movement; so, every position in this thesis would apply to everyone since they are not fixed.

These are the positions of the ELT observers picked out from the narratives, findings, and analysis and are ignored.

7.1. The Knower ELT Observer

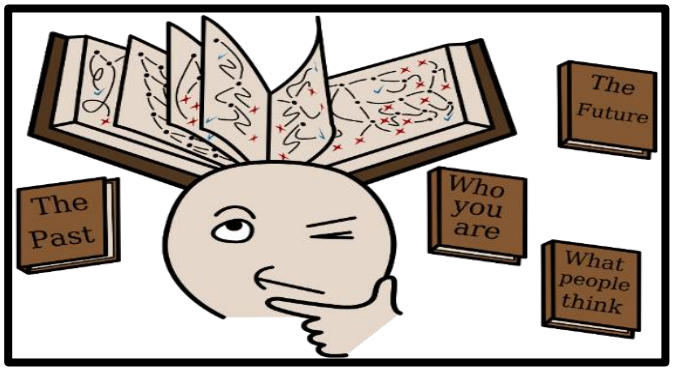


Image taken and adapted from: https://www.caretakerdefiance.com/different_people/everything_knower.html

The word *knowledge* from Britannica Dictionary refers to *information, understanding, or skill that you get from experience or education.* Also, it is an understanding of or information about a subject obtained by experience or study, either known by one person or by people generally (Cambridge dictionary).

On the same token, knowledge is an act of knowing different things. Among those things, exist class observations, or the practices that are applied to them. In that order of ideas, the observer is the one who performs the act of knowledge pertaining to class observation.

ELT observers have specific objectives when they carry out their practices, likewise, they learn from the specific situations of observation. The observation according to Sabariego Puig & Vilá Baños (2014) is one that: "[...] allows systematically and carefully contemplating how social life develops, without manipulating or modifying it, just as it runs by itself from a prior knowledge of the observer " (p.16).

Observation requires that the subject, or the knower, is the one who understands the dynamics of observation, knows the paradigms of observations, is prepared for the moments (step-by-step) of observations, and has extensive knowledge about the field (ELT). Among these, the preparation of classes, class management, theories, and approaches/techniques of teaching are also required knowledge of the subject. The narratives of the four observers do not abandon this subject position because they accept that the observation training comes from some theoretical understanding about "how" English classes should be. In the explored literature on classroom observations, there is information about what an observer should observe; however, during the development of this thesis, the natural, unexpected, and hidden way in how observers position themselves has been shown.

The knowledgeable observer also handles evaluation aspects. The evaluation as a practice is considered an objective paradigm where the skills, emotions, and facts inside an observation are particularly observed. Here in this narrative’s passage, we can be seen the characteristics which round around the knower observer:

> *Observation[14] for me is sitting in a classroom watching a lesson and taking notes about it, while using my knowledge to assess it. I'd like to believe that for me the process has become more objective and less subjective throughout the years. I often focus on 2 things: students' participation and use of English, and the quality of teachers' feedback and correction.*

Accordingly, it is then necessary to highlight some attributes of the knowledgeable ELT observer which have transited in the positions of this subject. They focus on:

- An objective process when carrying out an observation.
- Expertise in several characteristics of an EFL class, e.g. (Class management, lesson planning, use of materials in class, strategies/techniques/approaches, use of language)
- A need to evaluate the observed aspects. Assessing when required, and in every single moment.
- The use of feedback and correction as one of the main strategies in the observation practice.

Furthermore, the knowledgeable observer has the chance to get training in observations. The way to observe a class permeates his or her position. The training also depicts a resource for this knowledgeable observer since it can offer more strategies and particular aspects which are forgotten or unused in a class observation. The following words of an observer show the importance of training in an observation practice,

> *I had some training, sort of, to observe classes in Colombia, but I don't think they added anything to my knowledge of the subject, as the training was mainly the course designer explaining the instrument. In these training, there is undoubtedly a format to follow during the observation, I have followed it and, I agree with it, but you should also talk to the EFL teacher. The work that I have done over the last ten years must be professional and meaningful. During the observation's training, experience, control, and knowledge are evidenced not only as an ELT observer but also as a EFL teacher. Wilson's narrative*

[14] The narratives' passages were taken from Wilson in an informal conversation. However, this narrative has been said by many ELT observers (including me); it applied to everyone.

To connect with the last passage, another considerable insight of this research states in the training of the ELT observers. As mentioned, the training of ELT observers is essential before going on an observation. This training is systematic and operational; that is, the observers perform the possible dynamics that they will observe in the classes, and then go to do their work. The knowledgeable observer identifies the training as:

- An opportunity to pay special attention to the observation forms, the guidelines, and structural paths on the training, particularly within the use of instruments/rubrics of a class observation.
- A time to reflect, criticize, and put into practice the experience or knowledge as an observer.
- Collects data and will address the teacher's targeted area. Without a focus, the data collected are likely to reflect the interests of the observers more than those of the observed teacher. Grimm, et.al (2014)
- Something to understand/realize the knowledgeable observer can have a successful practice; the training is also the reality to analyze that I (the knowledgeable observer) get the skills to make an outstanding observation.

In essence, the knowledgeable observer plays a relevant role in the observation practices. This subject is needed in the ELT field, and she/he has contributed to many educational programs and Bilingualism National strategies through the implementation of her/his expertise and knowledge at the observation practices.

The previous highlights of the knowledgeable observer are not “recipes” or guidelines that an observer carries on, but they help in the construction of diverse positions of the ELT

observers in Colombia. The knower observer deals with power issues, top-down positions, and the normalization of the role of the observers. The Knower ELT Observer was one of the positions which I identified from this long research.

7.2. Contextualized ELT Observer



Image taken and adapted from: https://jude3pca.org/contextualization-is-a-bad-idea/

There are some significant aspects of this research that deal with the context and specific learning and teaching environments that the ELT observers have rounded around. Contextualization is the process of considering something in its context; the situation within which it exists or happens. In the case of the ELT observers, these facts are important to the historical and cultural contextualization of the observation practice.

A contextualized observer can never be isolated from their educational environment; therefore, he or she must always be analyzed in relation to the set of phenomena that surround them.

I remember once again that during observation pieces of training, the trainers usually expressed themselves the importance of “to know” and “to understand” the context where the observation takes place. It was quite funny since they did not know about the context or

the educational environments that the in-service teachers bring out in their EFL classes. However, it is remarkable in this research to identify this Contextualized ELT observer who is adapting observational practices content to the reality of observed teachers and class observation settings.

Parra & Hernandez (2019), express the importance of observing in context. They mention that observing in context entails working with a non-structured observation strategy to identify patterns in classroom events and the subsequent opening of spaces for collaborative dialogues (among observers and between observers and observed) to reflect about the potential mechanisms behind these patterns. P. 3.

There are “diverse” aspects (classroom management, lesson planning, use of materials/resources, emotional aspects of teachers/students, among others) inside an observation that deals with the context of the whole educational community on which the contextualized observer plays.

Before starting with the argument about the importance of the contextualized ELT observer, it is necessary to quote the following definition of observation through the context,

> The observation is that "procedure aimed at articulating a deliberate perception of manifest reality with its adequate interpretation, capturing its meaning so that through an objective record, systematic and specific behavior generated in a way spontaneous in a certain context, and once it has been subjected to an adequate coding and analysis, results are found valid within a specific framework of knowledge" (Anguera, 1988, p. 7).

These contexts in which the observer transits are the educational environments of EFL classes as well as the current situation of teaching and learning in a specific institution. Likewise, the contextualized observer identifies the context of "policies and institutional environment" at a national and local level (the school) and observes an academic-administrative structure of the place where he or she is observing classes. The possibilities to

identify education policy initiatives that can foster educational change in different teaching and learning contexts (O'Sullivan, 2006)

The contextualized ELT observer will be able to capture through his or her observation exercise "the EFL teacher teaching" in local environments. The contextualized ELT observer moves around contexts as it is part of his or her identity construction. The contexts bring us new opportunities, challenges, and meaningful aspects. It is different to observe in a certain context through the lens of another one. The context depends on the population the observer involves and the place where he or she is required to be. In the next narrative passage from an ELT observer, we can see the transition between context -to-context and the essence of observation in each component.

> *The second context in which I continued doing classroom observation was in the context of language bachelor programs, but with pre-service teachers' practices at private and public schools. I still do that. I can say that in these contexts by 2008 we have seen as even more normal the teacher-observer as the one who evaluates, judges, and has the correct answers on how to do things. However, working in this context has had, for me, pre- and post-moments. Before the third context, I will mention in the following paragraph, I used to assume this imposing observing role as part of my job. Observing was for evaluating performance, assigning a grade, and telling the pre-service teacher what to change and how. After the third context, my perspective has been changing and I started understanding the observers' role as more empowering and constructive. Now I feel more like an agent, than just a passive one.*
>
> *The third context happened to me some years ago when I was offered to work with a renamed international language teaching institution along with the Secretaría de Educación for implementing English language policy in public schools in Bogota. I felt this would be THE chance to have a role in policies, which is something I saw far from reaching in my role as a university teacher… Tania's narrative.*

The importance of this thesis stands in identifying the observers' negotiations among their different subject positions. These negotiations are permeated also by the context in which the ELT Observer does the job. I am able to carry out an observation and I understand that my position could change; however, this position is dependent on the context, the

environment, and the population. As an observer, I must negotiate with several contexts which have been around the teaching practices, Bilingualism Educational projects, and programs to strengthen EFL among other strategies. These previous aspects are not discussed in the training of observations. Maybe they have been mentioned, but the point is that ELT observers understand the context where they are immersed at the time of executing the observation and not before.

The following are the characteristics of the Contextualized ELT Observer that I bring to light:

- He or she implements mainstream observation techniques/tools in the context of the EFL classes.
- He or she provides valuable information to policymakers, Educational Programs, Bilingualism projects, etc. to keep records/data of class dynamics. This is something that the local agencies demand them.
- He or she explores the possibilities to identify diverse effective ways to transform educational systems for the benefit of class observers, teachers, and students.
- He or she gives support to the local/national entities and the government/schools and-or educational institutions in terms of the true feelings of the observer. This subject can comprehend the needs and strengths of different teaching and learning strategies of a specific environment.

The previous statements represent the position of a contextualized ELT observer. Apart from this, I would like to mention that this construction of the subject is not finished. As it has been said many times before, the positions are changing and are in constant movement; and perhaps what is important here is to analyze the observer as a subject who also negotiates with the context. The question of how this is performed remains. Sometimes the observer

does not know the context; therefore, he or she could move to another position, the position of an emotional observer.

7.3. The Emotional ELT Observer

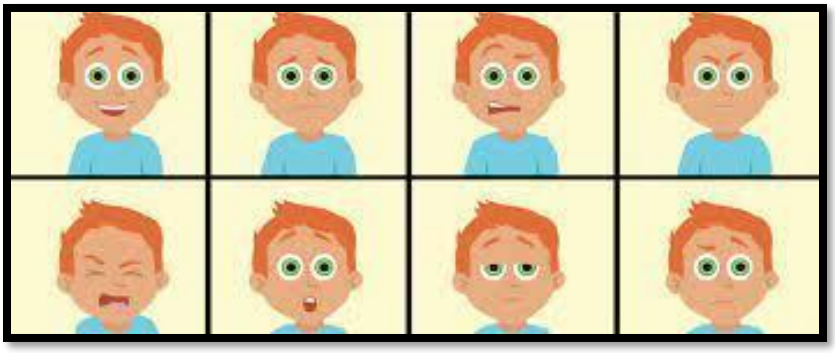


Image taken and adapted from: https://kids.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/frym.2018.00015

I had a conversation with an ELT observer some time ago, and he told me that sometimes he did not feel well when evaluating an EFL teacher during an observation. I was quite shocked since he seems to portray a serious or stoic person; so, I thought it would be uncommon to be that way. He said, "*I usually involved my feeling in a class observation… the rubric of observation could change depending on how I felt and how my day is running*" So then, I thought to myself that in the position of the observer, the feeling and emotions represented a very important issue.

There are various positions about what specific emotions are, but they often include happiness, sadness, fear, disgust, anger, and surprise. In an EFL class, emotions are constantly flowing, from teachers, students, and from observers who are inside these contexts. The four ELT observers are different subjects, with different opinions about observing classes. We are four observers with changing positions and with our own objectives; however, there is a common space: the observation of classes.

The ELT observers have moved from observation to observation evaluating many classes in just one day. For example, on a regular workday, I used to observe about four/five EFL classes. I started from early morning until late afternoon. It required plenty of effort and high focus most of the time. There are good and bad days. Some days you may have the opportunity to observe the class as scheduled, but sometimes the class is canceled, and you cannot do your job. These dynamics of observing classes are changeable, which means you do not have the chance to do the same things every day. The observation practices are different in all ways and the observer should understand them in order to adapt accordingly.

Despite the observation training, the trainer emphasized to pay attention only to the step-by-step procedure or the rubric of assessment. I am sure we as ELT Observers feel and have different emotions when observing a class. We are humans, subjects who understand our realities and touch them in diverse ways. Unfortunately, the practice of observation has traditionally not been for ones who feel since it is a mechanical process where an observer is a machine that identifies every detail in the class. I disagree that observations should be treated solely as a mechanical tool lacking human feeling; therefore, I stress the importance of the role of human mentions during a classroom observation.

In this part of the thesis, I offer a look into the emotional observer, the subject who is happy, sad, surprised, angry, and feels many emotions during an observation.

I would like to discuss that ELT observers are full of emotions and play a role depending on the situations they have. Several of them feel like outsiders, while others are insiders. This is because of the feelings and sensations that fall into our observation practice. The following part of an observer's narrative invites us to think about those feelings that ELT observers have,

> *Besides, if during the observation session I'm feeling mad or arrogant my understanding of the class and the observed teacher is going to be impacted by those feelings. While writing this, I remember I felt like an outsider and rejected by some of the public schools where I observed in-service language teachers. I could feel how awkward it was for the observed teachers to have me in their classrooms just because they might have been forced to do it. Those feelings I got, positioned myself emotionally toward the observation moments I experienced. Therefore, it's difficult for me to stand just from a position as an observer. I have multiple selves that set my cognitive and emotional assets for the observation practices I perform. Alex's narrative*

This construction of the thesis exposes issues that are not commonly seen in class observations. Many people think that feelings are not involved in an observation; however, a true contribution to the field involves the emotional ELT observer who provides important enrichments to the dynamics of class observations. We have multiple positions as observers, one of which is the emotional one, which we move according to several particularities during a class observation.

Owing to the fact that the ELT observers have to be "neutral" when observing classes, many of them are not comfortable at times expressing emotions or feelings. The following passage shows how an ELT observer is involved in terms of sentiments,

> *I feel fine when observing teachers, I don't usually have any strong emotions about it. Except for if I've been working with the teacher on some key pedagogical areas and I see s/he put it into practice, then I feel happy for him/her. When they are not able to do it, I don't feel frustrated… these are some feelings expressed myself as an observer. Wilson's narrative*

Many ELT observers are not interested in the emotional or feeling aspects of the class observation. For some of them, if there is a very good connection with the observed teacher, feelings are involved. The way in which the ELT observer acts considers the context in which they are placed, some do insert, and others do not insert their emotions into the evaluations depending on this.

Here are some peculiarities of the emotional ELT observer,

- This observer is highly sensitive, feels the need to be understood, tends to avoid conflict, is thoughtful, empathetic, and intuitive during class observation.
- When observing classes, this observer is respectful and polite. He or she is very sensitive to criticism and reacts passionately.
- He or she does not pay much attention to the observation rubrics, in fact, this is not an important part of the observation. There are relevant tools when doing their job. For example, listening to the observed teacher, being in their shoes, and understanding the realities of the classroom environment.

7.4. The Fellow ELT Observer



Image taken and adapted from: https://twinklsecondary.blog/teacher-friends-why-fellow-teachers-are-best-friends/

It is comfortable at sharing our experiences between the ELT observers and showing in this document the events and situations we have explored in the class observations. Likewise, when reading the narratives of the ELT observers, I realize some situations that fail to appear in government plans and teacher evaluation processes (where observation is a specific strategy). This part of the thesis discusses an ELT observer who is the colleague, the peer, and the fellow, all this related to the positions of the observers.

As said before, most observers are English language teachers. This connection is important when observing a class, since the observer is like a coworker who does a job that the teacher does too so he or she also understands what the teacher implements in the classroom. That colleague, pair, fellow, whom we observe is ourselves. There is a mirror through observation.

Even though we must evaluate as an observer, we also recognize the value of work of the teacher and learn from him or her. This is a clear example of a fellowship as a class observer:

> *I feel more like a colleague observing and learning from others. I try to display a sense of learning and understanding without showing judgment perspectives. Even if there is a set of objectives to be accomplished, the main idea is to construct building with the fellow colleague who is being observed. Not only do I try to make the teacher comfortable, but I also ask questions on the space observed…. Even if the observation has certain evaluation components, I try to make the teacher feel the outcome is rather constructive than judgmental or punitive. Wilson's narrative*

The Fellow ELT observer is interested in knowing beyond the observations because he or she feeds off what he or she observes in class. The observer is a subject who learns from what they observe from their colleagues. The space when observing becomes a constant learning process, full of reflections and ideas that benefit both subjects (observer and observed). The Fellow ELT observer takes advantage of the co-construction that can occur in the class observation and there is no hierarchical relationship there.

Possibly the fellow observer is similar to the emotional one; however, the fellow is a subject whose meaning depends on the context (in this case the ELT observer). The Fellow ELT observer refers to a qualified member who is specially chosen in recognition of her work and achievements.

The Fellow ELT observer knows that the evaluation can harm the observed teacher; therefore, he or she does not emphasize the negatives or what can hurt the teacher and prefers to make the teacher feel better. This observer does everything possible for the teacher to feel comfortable and gives detail to the important characteristics that will nurture both during the observation.

Based on the identified narratives and conversations with ELT observers, it can be identified that the Fellow ELT observer is not the expert on a (novice) teacher in classroom observation. This thesis' discussion highlights importance on that fellow who contributes to the ELT field within the following instances:

- The Fellow ELT observer permanently interacts and discusses with the observed teacher. There is a space of dialogue, conversation, and reflection.
- The Fellow ELT observer not only examines the dynamics of an observation (teaching, use of materials, didactics, among others). This observer understands the social task that the observed teacher fulfills and comprehends it through observation.
- The Fellow ELT observer also recognizes the responsibilities involved in teaching English and reaches agreements with the observed teacher to benefit the educational community. This observer knows how to listen, interpret, and provide options/benefits based on what he observes and the acquired experience.

This is the goal of the relevance of researching the ELT observers' positions. There may be more positions that were not detailed in this thesis, such as the contesting or challenging observer or the reasoning expert or skillful ELT Observer. However, I apprehended these four observer positions that consolidate the life histories, narratives, and conversations of the ELT observers in Colombia.

This last section has to do with the final discussion on the positions of the ELT observers.

7.5. Last discussion

The study of the ELT observers' narratives is in line with the idea of the observer as someone well-trained, objective, careful, and meticulous to fill in an observation form, gather information from a class, and give feedback during an observation process. Consequently, the normalized way to observe has placed the observer as someone who is obedient to the training and the imposed format or form of the observation.

Moreover, we cannot fail to notice an experience of dehumanization [15]in the ELT classroom observation practices. There is a tension within the role of observers that is unseen or ignored. The ELT observers are not seen in the data of the class observation analysis. Their feelings, emotions, and points of view have not been stated while this practice has been implemented. The observers' attitudes and values are not expressed in the rubrics, forms, or data at the time of giving a result. This means little information about the observers' lives has been provided in bilingualism plans and programs or when a strategy such as a classroom observation is carried out. The dehumanization of the observers in the ELT classroom observation practice also deals with the primacy of the observers' eyes. It seems that the observation system places an observer in a machine-like position that needs to observe everything as if he or she were a mechanism of control without consideration of subject positions, their wonders, expectations, and voices. This demonstrates that the observation practice is still governed by the visual canon of a hegemonic thought process.

15 This passage was adapted from a part in the article called "*Exploring the ELT Observer's Subject Positions: Tensions, Negotiations, and Contradictions*". (Martinez & Mendez, 2022). As a product of this doctoral research. Doctorado Interinstitutional en Educación, District University, Colombia.

This discussion also offers a wall to power relations in classroom observations. Martínez et.al (2022) argue the following,

> Another angle to consider is the hierarchy-power relations as an observer towards the observed teacher. In some conversations among observers, it was evident that the observer is "superior" to the observed teacher, either by her/his credentials, the validation of other entities, by culture and/or other situations. Many of the ELT observers do not like to see each other more than the English teachers (in the case of Tania and me); however, there are tensions of power relations when the observation is carried out in English language classes. This is another uncertainty that orbits the position of the observers. (p.11.)

The ELT observers' narratives showed that participants agreed on the importance of classroom observation for education, acknowledging that observers occupy a key place in the hierarchical organization of observation practices in which they are constructed as "expert teachers." Some of them were claiming other types of relationalities not only with the contracting institution but also with observed teachers. Power issues are mixed in with this observation practice. At the institutional level, the supervision of observers is part of a scheme in this National Bilingualism Plan in which observers must report to the entity (i.e., Ministry of Education or Secretariat of Education) what was observed. At the school level, the observer should follow the rubric to observe the class; as such, this observer evaluates the performance of the class, gives feedback to the observed teacher, and brings out some recommendations for an "ideal" class. A vision of English and its teaching is immersed in training and rubrics to observers. The CO rubric exercises power when the observer assesses a class, and it represents a fact to carefully follow. The interaction between the observer and observed teacher evidence relations of power at the institutional level.

Consequently, some of the ELT observers enjoyed the privilege of being an observer (salary, hierarchies, etc.), thus expressing compliance with salary, time, labor, and target objectives, others were critical of the absence of the feedback phase that classroom observation practices

incorporate. The four ELT observers of this thesis are part of a National Bilingualism Program; they knew the specific duties this job offers. However, it seems there are times when the feedback provided by the observer is disregarded. I identified there are blanks for this item of feedback because what really matters is the performance, evaluation, and general characteristics data in a class observation. Some observers have worked as teacher educators in Bachelor of Arts programs, and they have guided teaching practicum subjects in which feedback is fundamental for noticing aspects to be improved or acknowledging results. So being subjected to the observer subject position brings to the surface these other experiences in which the feedback entails contact, conversation, and an interchange of ideas.

Lastly in this discussion, and despite the rigid system of knowledge in which the observer administers the format, these narratives illuminate that being an observer of other teachers confronts observers themselves with their positions as teachers. Being in the other shoes means that an observer does not hide the position of a teacher but the opposite. It allows the observers to connect with their own identities as teachers in similar contexts. It seems to us that notwithstanding the subjection to the format, the format itself does not obscure observers' knowledge and their own subjectivities. Subjectivities are understood here as being a "*site to resist and heal the wounds left by the antagonistic forces that turn us into subjects of a practice*" (Méndez, 2021), that in the case of the Emotional ELT Observer can be seen as caring and being empathic, (quite conscious of the teachers' duties and desires); in the case of the Knower ELT Observer also, in being professional and objective (ways he regulates formats); and the Contextualized/Fellow ELT observer, who places him or herself as a local observer (who identifies the educational contexts).

References chapter 7

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8. Contribution of Knowledge

This last chapter considers the importance of the facts in the research's needs. This part of the thesis echoes the following question: what observers' subject positions have been neglected by the canonical way to observe in the ELT field?

Also, I bring relevance to this research with an interconnection of other educational fields. As previously seen, the observer plays around different environments and disciplines (math, science, social studies, arts, and more). It is basically the level up to which I applied research findings in real life. In a nutshell, this investigation is useful for everyone working in any aspect of education.

This chapter that focuses on the contribution of knowledge developed throughout the thesis encompasses enrichments which are summarized in four main aspects: a reflective part of the ELT observers' positions, an unconventional way to build up data, the next steps, and a closing stage.

8.1. Reflections on the ELT observer's positions

This thesis represented a high effort and many reflections. Especially because I was immersed as an ELT observer and, sometimes being part of this study was not easy. This research enacted an introspective process. It dealt with my past events and the moments I had with other ELT observers and different educational contexts.

Every day I saw that during the observations how there were ELT observers who evolved depending on the rubrics, the training they had, and the teachers they were going to

observe. Right now, I can realize that we (observers) change permanently, from a fellow observer to a contextualized one, or an ELT emotional observer.

Many variables of the observation practices were explored, such as the institutions where this practice is carried out, the power relations between the observed teacher-observer, observer-observer, or between "expert"- observer, and the training sessions of which these subjects were part. The observer is found in many different areas of daily life. We see them in prisons, in hospitals, in experiments, and in classes at schools, universities, institutes, and others. The observer is a subject that analyzes, details, and evaluates by observing every single aspect.

This thesis contributes to humanizing classroom observation practices by showing the hidden positions of ELT observers. The research provided a more human overview by re-signifying the observer as a subject, not as an object within a normalized and standardized practice.

In the educational field, the observer has many roles such as a coordinator, external peer, specialist, or recording camera. It is common to see the practice of observation in educational contexts, either to evaluate, monitor or provide feedback on a process inside or outside the classroom. A contribution of this research also lies in the analysis of the evaluation of promotion and relocation for public school teachers in Colombia[16]; where a criterion of evaluation is a video recording that records a classroom activity of teachers or the work of teaching directors, counselors, tutor teachers, and union leaders. This observer is

[16]In Spanish, Evaluación de ascenso y reubicación Docente. It is understood as the classification system of public teachers and teaching directors according to their academic training, experience, responsibility, performance, and competencies, constituting the different grades and levels that they can reach during their working life and that guarantee permanence. In the teaching career based on the suitability demonstrated in their work and allowing to assign the corresponding professional salary (Decree Law 1278 of 2002).

not a person, it is a machine, a device embedded inside the teacher's classroom to observe each movement in their practice. This thesis can collaborate with the teacher evaluation processes, since it is possible to identify that it is a person/subject who observes and not a system or a machine. It is intended that the entities identify the importance that a subject with different positions observe a class, different from how it is currently carried out.

The observation, the observer, and the machine transcend beyond the specific area and affects/contributes to a part of the community. The research conducted in my thesis can help eliminate the barriers that are cold and leave out the unheard voices of the observer. My research humanizes these observers to a deeper level.

We also perceive the subject observer in the ELT field. Their practice was normalized meaning most people validate their exercise inside and outside the classroom. The observer interrupts classes, gets involved in other people's fields, and has (many times) permission to evaluate the processes performed by EFL teachers. This observer has specific qualities they put into action when doing this exercise. He or she also participates in training moments, with experts who guide the "good" practices of how to observe. However, until now the observer was perceived as a subject that we see and feel but do not understand.

During the development of this thesis, some unseen aspects during the training of the ELT observers were identified. A contribution in the ELT field deals with the Observers' life stories that came to light during the research I conducted. These are aspects denied during the class observation training, the hierarchies of power between the trainers and the observers, the disagreements when organizing the visits (observation) to an institution, and the lack of understanding about the local contexts to carry out an observation.

The resignification of the observer transcends beyond his or her practice. The observer has different positions and walks through them. The ELT observer negotiates with

the observed teachers, with the observation rubrics, with the training, and with his or herself. The observer sees his or herself when they observe since this person is also (most of the time) an EFL teacher. ELT observers deal with power issues, between peers (observers) with schools' directors, EFL teachers, and among themselves.

This thesis shows that the experience of observing English language teachers in Colombia is not a canonical practice. It is a series of subjectivities within a practice of how to observe and for what to observe. Observation formats are designed with specific patterns; however, the ELT observer manages, shapes, and adjusts these to show what is real, authentic, and true within a classroom observation.

In brief, this thesis achieved to understand the observers' subject positions in the narrated experiences within four ELT observers in Colombia; and identify observers' negotiations among their different subject positions in autobiographical narratives.

8.2. Unconventional way to build up facts.

8.2.1. Horizontality when researching

This thesis contributes to the processes carried out in research regarding collecting information. The term "horizontality" consists of establishing parity with the people involved in the investigation (ELT observers). Horizontality, according to Pérez and Sartorello, is the "*construction of knowledge created by the intersection among subjects and, therefore, by the intersection of knowledge*" p.11.

It was more than just a data collecting process that I did during this research. It was a constant-mutual learning where we reflected and inquired among observers. The goal of this

is to furnish the field of ELT, especially when it comes to methodological procedures or data collection. I grasped the narratives of the participating observers through my instinct and persuasion. The first thing was to show the ELT Observers my narratives, so they could read and analyze them. I received several opinions and comments on these, but the exercise of being honest with a peer during research processes will contribute to the investigative dynamics in the field of ELT. To carry out research horizontally, we should trust the people involved and constantly listen to my other "self" about their suggestions and additional comments.

The horizontal movements have some implications, for example, the lack of time during the process and the validation of this “instrument”. Despite this, I tried to get involved in it in an honest and unexpected way. I say horizontality should be a natural way to construct things together as a Team. Other researchers could benefit from their process of doing research in horizontal ways. An advantage of this research lies in taking horizontality more as a methodological process, as a way of understanding, listening, and being part of the body of the work. It is a co-construction in which one as a research subject is immersed and is part of it.

8.2.2. Substantial Narratives

The life story, in language, is a gateway through which a person enters the world and through which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Seen in this way, the narrative is the phenomenon that is studied in this type of research. Narrative research is recorded as a dialogue methodology (Atkinson & Coffey, 2003), in

which the narratives represent the lived realities since it is from the conversation that reality becomes a text, and a deep reflection can be made in front of this.

An aspect that can be contributed to substantial narratives has to do with the fidelity with which the narratives were presented. That is, the observers elaborated their narratives, and these were exposed (without correction or editing) in this thesis. It was a demanding exercise on their part of writing and intellectual production, where most of their experiences and life stories as observers came to light to enrich the ELT field.

In that same sense, it seems important to me to highlight the autobiographical production process in a doctoral thesis. This establishes challenging parameters where the researcher plays two or more roles within the thesis. The self-recognition exercise, understanding my strengths, areas for improvement, and commitment as an observer was detailed in the autobiographical chapters and is an analysis of understanding a constant negotiation with the reader, and myself. as a researcher and classroom observer.

In practice, when carrying out a doctoral thesis, as a researcher we must scrutinize the information that is presented; an example of contribution to knowledge in this thesis allows the academic community to be invited to go beyond narratives. In other words, it is not enough to simply include passages from a life story, it is about exploring the details of those crucial moments in life. It is a reflective and mutual understanding, where importance is given to the storyteller, rather than extracting data from their narrations.

8.2.3. Unseen issues in life stories

It was very gratifying to listen to and analyze the life stories of the ELT Observers. Particularly, there were events that had an impact on class observations. Honestly, rather than just record and collect data from observers' life stories, I listened to them and put myself in their shoes.

There is always something more when it comes to classroom observation narratives. Therefore, Martínez and Mendez 2023, state the following,

> The ELT observers are not seen in the data of the class observation analysis. Their feelings, emotions, and points of view have not been stated while this practice has been implemented. The observers' attitudes and values are not expressed in the rubrics, forms, or data at the time of giving a result; it means little information about the observers' lives has been provided in bilingualism plans/programs or when a strategy such as a classroom observation is carried out. (p.18)

There are subjective situations of ELT observers that the common eye does not see; however, the life stories of ELT observers have emotions, experiences, attitudes, values, and learnings are always present in some form. These life stories are offered in the thesis for readers to enjoy several moments of in-class observations. The life stories of the ELT observers bring up chronologies, memories, and "unseen" events from the observers' positions with a narrative compilation of analysis and reflection.

Finally, in these unseen issues in life stories, it is necessary to denote the importance of power practices in-class observations. Martinez et.al. argue,

> Another angle to consider is the hierarchy-power relations as an observer towards the observed teacher. In some conversations among observers, it was evident that the observer is "superior" to the observed teacher, either by her/his credentials, or the validation of other entities, culture, and/or other situations. (p.19)

Hierarchical power relations are not easily seen in-class observation. During the conversations with the observers these processes are identified; in fact, the ELT observers were confident and humble when their life stories narrated the power issues in this practice. These stories took place in classrooms, observation training, and some institutions. They are hidden life stories now brought to light.

8.3. The next step

The results and impact of this research were presented from a biographical analysis and brought on personal points of view or subjectivities in theoretical and conceptual stances. This study has to do with the little literature on the positions of the ELT class observers. Scholars around the world research a lot about classroom observations, but not on ELT observers and their positions against this practice. At the same time, it remains the few observers who provide information on their practices, either because they cannot talk about this, or they declared exclusivity clauses with some entity during its observer's training. In the future, the sample size of the narratives of ELT observers could be larger. Future studies require a more considerable sample of participants, who have a desire for reflecting and proposing ideas about the positions of ELT observers.

Following this study, it would be challenging to have ELT observers who work in several institutions (public schools, private schools, universities, language institutes, and so on) since the different context can offer an open perspective into educational/learning dynamics. It could be enriching to share the experiences/life stories of ELT observers providing their practices in different contexts.

On the other hand, one step that this thesis can take is to pay attention to the observed teachers. Although they are named in this thesis, the focus was the ELT observers. The educational community has subjects that interact in class observations (teachers, students, and schools' directives); therefore, the next stage can cover these subjects and continue reflecting on their experiences in terms of observation.

Finally, I will get the degree of Doctor of Education, and this thesis will be the beginning of detailing and reflecting on the practices of class observations at an interdisciplinary level. Observation is constituted as a fundamental process in school, university, and in educational purposes in general. The study of class observation and the observers can be researched in several knowledge disciplines; this is an opportunity to explore diverse educational fields.

8.4. Concluding notes

The first direction of this conclusion is about the observer as a pertinent subject in the ELT field. Observation is not just for recollecting information, gathering data, evaluating educational processes, or giving feedback. The practice of observation seems a dynamic of reflection in which the participants are students, school directives, teachers, and observers. The last mentioned is the ELT observers (subjects) who interact on the lands of supervision, control, and surveillance as well as the practices of emotions, subjectivities, and humanistic ones.

What is more, many of us have felt in the ELT field a hierarchical observation, which tries to judge and assess the role of the teacher in the classroom. The following conclusion taken from Martínez et.al. (2023), mentions the importance of going beyond observation

more as an object of information collection, as a way to resist the vertical practices of observation,

> The reason most used for observing classes is to evaluate several pedagogical/disciplinary items. Although observers play a decisive role in this practice, their subjectivities appear to be mistreated by the system, local regulations, external educational institutions, and by the instruments they use during their work. This analysis tries to understand the positions of observers who have been neglected by the canonical way to observe in the ELT field in which the canon places more importance on what is to be observed and not on who observes or who is observed. As a result of this analysis, a more humanistic perspective is needed to modify vertical relations in classroom observation practices and create better conditions to get to know the subjects involved in this practice. (p.20)

The observation may continue within a hierarchical regime where the observer (above) identifies patterns about an observed teacher (below). However, this thesis enlightens us that the subjects who observe EFL classes reflect, feel, and express their experiences of the observations they do. This thesis shows great relevance in government plans at an educational level, in local and national educational policies, and of course within our educational contexts; where the observer, among his or her subjective relationships, observes beyond the traditional way, places themself in the shoes of the EFL teachers, and adjusts the vertical connections in an observation practice.

Another heading in this conclusion is about the positions' migration of the ELT observers. Based on the literature of class observations, perspectives on subject positions (pedagogical consultant, mentor, trainer, class observer), and the narratives of the ELT observers, I can conclude that participants in this study experienced the observer subject position via recalling their previous experience as English language teachers. Their comprehension of this practice brought to light that observers follow a normalized practice that is established despite lacking full insight. Also, within the same constraining practice

and observer subject position they were able to play as local observers to value the complex context of English language teaching. To follow in the same concluding note, I quote Martínez et.al. (2023):

> …it was noticeable that affirming the observer position does not exclude the English language teacher position who is empathetic with colleagues, nor does it exclude the observer's critical views about observation classroom patterns, including training for observation and their struggles, tensions, and contradictions. The ELT observers in this study recognized the calls in education towards greater value-neutral objectivity and top-down hierarchies in classroom observation, and all agreed on the need to give a more horizontal, relational, and humanistic vision to this practice. (p.21)

As mentioned in the quote, this thesis highlights the horizontal means (through the horizontal provocation), the relational (with an autobiographical introspection in the narratives as an observer), and the humanistic (through which I as a researcher broke the power relationships with the other observers).

The reason most used for observing classes is to evaluate several pedagogical and disciplinary items. Although observers play a decisive role in this practice, their subjectivities appear to be mistreated by the system, local regulations, external educational institutions, and the instruments they use during their work. This thesis offered the option to understand the positions of observers who have been neglected by the canonical way to observe in the ELT field in which the canon places more importance on what is to be observed and not on who observes or who is observed.

This thesis delights us with the construction of a pure, human, and sincere narrative of the ELT observers; This was, is, and will be a constant commitment to education in the country and the subjects that participate there. The class observation holds key components

of study and problematizing, and it was possible to understand the observers' subject positions in the narrated experiences within four ELT Class observers in Colombia as well as to identify observers' negotiations among their different subject positions in autobiographical narratives.

Observers are present in the educational field, we have experiences to narrate, and, in turn, we permanently change in a way to look for the subject positions that have been neglected by the canonical way to observe in the ELT field.

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