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# EFL Teachers' Identities and Their Teaching and Assessment Practices in a Public University of a Major City in Colombia

Diana Patricia Pineda Montoya

University of Texas at El Paso, dianapatriciapineda@gmail.com

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EFL TEACHERS' IDENTITIES AND THEIR TEACHING AND  
ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY  
OF A MAJOR CITY IN COLOMBIA

DIANA PATRICIA PINEDA MONTOYA

Doctoral Program in Teaching, Learning, and Culture

APPROVED:

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Erika Mein, Ph.D., Chair

---

Char Ullman, Ph.D.

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Katherine Mortimer, Ph.D.

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Elana Shohamy, Ph.D.

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Charles Ambler, Ph.D.  
Dean of the Graduate School

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## **Dedication**

To my family

EFL TEACHERS' IDENTITIES AND THEIR TEACHING AND  
ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY  
OF A MAJOR CITY IN COLOMBIA

by

DIANA PATRICIA PINEDA MONTOYA, B.A., M.A.

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
The University of Texas at El Paso  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

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Department of Teacher Education  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

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included in this work is the result of who I have become with all its limitations and possibilities and after working on the best of my understanding in this moment of my life.



## **Abstract**

This one-year long ethnographic case study seeks to add to the body of literature on EFL teachers' identities in Colombia by drawing on ethnographic methods and sociocultural theories to examine the identity construction of four EFL teachers at the university level. Specifically, this study explores how EFL teachers' identities shaped and were shaped by their teaching and assessment practices. The study was conducted at a public university and involved ethnographic participant-observation with four *cátedra* teachers (adjunct faculty) situated across five language programs in the Foreign Language Teaching Section (FLTS) of the Department of Languages.

The analysis of multiple data sources revealed the role of professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) and its three components –human, social, and decisional– in EFL teachers' identity development and practice. Human capital, which includes knowledge and skills, contributed to teachers' construction of their identities when their experiences as language learners shaped the ways they taught. Social capital, which includes social relations, shaped teachers' identities through their participation in communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), as this made a difference in the practices of teachers in comparison to those who worked more in isolation. Decisional capital, identified as teachers' capacity to reflect on their practices and make judgments, also contributed to teachers' identity development when they exercised their agency, made decisions based on how the curriculum was structured, and implemented reflective practices.

The findings of this study have implications for research and theory because understanding the complexities of teacher identity development can shed light on teacher education and professional development programs. Regarding policy and practice, this study contributed to the construction of local knowledge (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, 2012) that disrupts

deficit perspectives of teachers in the country (Usma Wilches, 2015), particularly in EFL contexts.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

At the beginning of 2013, after some changes dictated by the National Ministry of Education of Colombia (*Ministerio de Educación Nacional-MEN* in Spanish) that raised the English language requirements for students of bachelor's degrees, the president of *Universidad Estatal (UE)* (pseudonym) —a large public university located in a main city in the country— asked the Department of Languages and its corresponding Foreign Language Teaching Section (FLTS) to design a new English language policy for the university that followed what the *MEN* had defined regarding the learning of English at the university level.

The design of the new English language policy for undergraduate students implied a move from two reading comprehension classes in English, French and other languages — Portuguese, Italian and German, accepted by some of the departments in the university— to five course levels of English for general academic purposes that prepared students not only to understand written texts but also to write and communicate orally. At the moment of defining the new language policy for the university, the FLTS had the option to include other foreign languages but decided not to do it due to insufficient capacity to support additional languages.

Being a faculty member of the FLTS, I began doctoral studies where the topic of teacher identity in the context of Colombia came to me organically as I read what it meant to be an English Language Learner (ELL) in the United States or an immigrant in a country where more efforts need to be made to acknowledge its multilingual and multicultural diversity. Those readings were framed in sociocultural approaches to language learning and teaching that led me to understand what ELLs brought to the formal space of school and how teachers could and should use those backgrounds to favor a negotiation of identities that bridged what students brought and what school could offer.

As I learned this, I always kept in mind how I could apply this knowledge to the reality of my home country where English is taught as an additive language (Valenzuela, 1999). My most recent experiences before I left Colombia were working with teachers of English as a foreign language, especially in study groups that were voluntarily formed as a professional development strategy that contributed to the fulfillment of needs teachers had. In my role as an English teacher, I myself had had the opportunity to be part of some study groups and the experience in two of them was not very gratifying. In one of those study groups, I was a participant and there were some power relationships that interfered with the work of the group. In the second study group, I was the facilitator and I found it difficult to work with the teachers toward the achievement of the goals that had been mainly proposed by me and that seemed to have resonated with the needs and interests of the participant-teachers in the field of assessment. Looking back at that experience, I think that on the one hand, more relationships of trust needed to be developed between the participants and I. On the other hand, some institutional factors like the need of an assessment system in the program where the teachers worked, may have functioned as an institutional pressure to be in the study group.

The readings in my doctoral studies and my unsuccessful experiences with study groups led me to start thinking that professional development programs in Colombia followed a deficit perspective of teachers' work because they were mainly focused on what teachers lacked or needed to learn and rarely on what they already knew and brought to the classroom. This idea was validated in Usma's (2015) work when he referred to a "deficit view of schools and teachers" (p. 83) imported from foreign countries. Hence, I came to the conclusion that, in order to design professional development programs that could be effective for teacher learning, we should first know who teachers were or what their identities were. In a recent study published in

Colombia, Cruz Arcila (2018) added to my perception stating that it is possible to build from teachers' efforts and set up professional development programs under the premise that what teachers need to do can perfectly be aligned with what they are already doing.

In the spring 2015, I developed a pilot study where I explored the identities of English teachers at the university level and, to do that, I used sociocultural approaches, including Wenger's (1998) theory of Communities of Practice (CoP). This framework helped me to understand that learning is a social practice as individuals share their experiences and ways of doing things. Thanks to the pilot study, I could identify that teachers learned in formal ways such as in-service trainings and mentoring, in informal ways such as collaborating with peers and students, and belonging voluntarily to community spaces such as those offered online. Another finding from the pilot study was to see the culture or Figured Worlds (Holland *et al.*, 1998) that teachers created around the university as a space to meet other people from whom and with whom they could learn, share and discuss, develop as critical thinkers, and feel part of a democratic space where they could be listened to and taken into account.

The narrative I have just explained, justifies why I aim to address the topic of teacher identity and its connection to their teaching and assessment practices. The connection between English teachers' identities and their classroom practices is based on the need to work on the identification and construction of local knowledge (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, 2012) that recaptures the attention on teachers' work and balances the economic and political driven power that the national government of Colombia has given to foreign agencies (Usma Wilches, 2015).

I see the need to explore the identity development of adjunct faculty (*cátedra* teachers) at *UE* and the incidence or not of their identities in their classroom practices mediated by national and institutional language policies. One of my claims in this study is that if researchers and

stakeholders begin to capture what adjunct faculty working in different language programs of public universities are doing well, teachers can be better prepared to address the economic and political driven language policy ruling in Colombia by relying on the trust that our teachers, students and institutions deserve, and highlighting the importance of the construction of local knowledge. As it will be seen in the findings of this study, teachers' language learning and teaching ideologies are embedded in their practices. This is where the importance of studying teachers' identity development lays on, since it is only through understanding what shapes their practices that actions can be taken to examine the possibilities in which their professional culture can be shaped.

One of my arguments in conducting this study is that knowing the factors that influence teachers' identities can be insightful for professional program developers, institutions and policy makers to determine the best ways to approach teacher learning. This argument becomes relevant in considering the need to work on the construction of local knowledge as scholars from the universities in Colombia have noticed the national linguistic policy should have done (i.e. Quintero Polo, 2007).

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge on EFL teachers' identities in Colombia by drawing on ethnographic methods and sociocultural theories to examine the identity construction of four EFL teachers at the university level during a year-long period. The study aims specifically at establishing the relationship between their identities and their teaching and assessment practices. The study was conducted at a public university of a major city in Colombia and involved ethnographic participant-observation with four *cátedra* teachers situated across five language programs of the Foreign Language Teaching Section (FLTS) of the

Department of Languages at *UE*. Two of the participant-teachers held bachelor's degrees in English, Spanish and French translation; one of them in translation and interpretation in English and a second Foreign Language (FL2); and the fourth teacher held a bachelor's that included preparation in English, French and Spanish translation, interpretation and teaching. Three of the participants were Colombian citizens and one of them was a citizen of another Spanish-speaking country.

In addition to the topic of teacher identity, I initially included teachers' language assessment practices in this study because it is a topic that has been identified in the country as one in which pre- and in-service teachers need to improve their assessment literacy (i.e. López & Bernal, 2009; Arias & Maturana, 2005). Popham (2011, p. 267) defined assessment literacy as “an individual's *understandings of the fundamental assessment concepts and procedures* deemed likely to influence educational decisions” (italics in the original). In addition to identifying a need to improve English Language Teachers' (ELT) assessment literacy, I used the frameworks of formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998, 2009) to understand the connection between teachers' teaching and assessment practices, and Shohamy's (2001) Critical Language Testing (CLT) as an approach that adds to formative assessment and that conceives fair practices in the classroom that become learning opportunities for students.

Connecting identity, language learning and critical pedagogies, Norton (2008) identified CLT as one of the areas that required further research. Shohamy uses Giroux (1995, as cited in Shohamy, 2001, p. 135-136) and defines a democratic system of assessment based on principles, where the power of a test is transferred from the elite to the base. The combination of teacher identity and language assessment will be a contribution to the gap found in the literature by Norton (2008) and that I validated in the unsuccessful search of studies that made this



connection. Conclusions from the research by Cruz Arcila (2018) added to the importance of studying unexplored teaching practices to unveil them and build on that existent local knowledge. These are the main components that add significance to this study.

As the objective of this research is to understand the influence of teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices, I propose to answer the following overarching research question:

How do EFL teachers' identities shape and/or get shaped by their teaching and assessment practices in the context of national and institutional language policies at a Colombian public university?

In order to give clarity and organization to the four main components of this overarching research question, I also proposed the following sub-questions:

- What kinds of identities do EFL teachers construct in this context?
- How do EFL teachers construct their identities?
- What are EFL teachers' teaching practices in this context? and
- What are EFL teachers' assessment practices in this context?

### **Sociocultural Perspectives of Teachers' Identities.**

This study draws on sociocultural theories of identity to understand how EFL teachers identities shape or are shaped by their teaching and assessment practices in the national and institutional context of a new language policy. I specifically draw on the work of Norton's (1995, 2000) identity investment, Gee's (2000) definition of identity, Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice, and Holland et al.'s (1998) Figured Worlds to understand teachers' identity construction as a social practice in their classrooms. I also use the concept of professional

capital, which allowed me to connect teachers' identity development as mediated by practice and social construction.

The concept of identity investment implies a relationship between power, identity and language learning, as Norton sees identity as complex, contradictory, and multifaceted; dynamic across time and place; regarded as something that constructs and that is constructed by language; understood in relation to a larger social processes and marked by relations of power that can be coercive or collaborative; and connected to classroom practice. The concept of investment is related to Bourdieu's (1997) concept of cultural capital, meaning that someone who invests in learning a language acquires symbolic and material resources that contribute to the increase of her/his cultural capital.

Gee (2000) defines identity from four standpoints: the nature perspective or N-Identities which source is nature and cannot be changed since it is already determined by how individuals are born; the institutional perspective or I-Identities where the source of power is given by an institution and it can be a calling or an imposition; the discourse perspective or D-Identities which source of power is determined by discourse or dialogue of other people; the affinity perspective or A-Identities where the source of power is a set of distinctive practices or an "affinity group" that is defined as "people who may be dispersed across a large space" (p. 105) joined by a common interest they share.

Identity as a social practice is used from Holland *et al.*'s (1998) perspective that identities are improvised acts that come out in the form of an activity in a specific social situation. For them, identities are formed in relation to major structures of society such as ethnicity, gender, race, nationality, and sexual orientation. According to Holland et al., the development of

identities and agency in practices occurs through activities that are historically situated, socially enacted, and culturally constructed.

Identity within a social theory of learning was proposed by Wenger (1998) as what defines who we are, as we negotiate and participate with others, by belonging to a group, through what we have experienced and will continue to experience through our life trajectories, and by bridging our relationships between the local and the global.

Professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) adds to sociocultural theories of identity used in this study as it mainly connects the practices of teachers in the classroom to their identity development. Professional capital is composed of three kinds of capital: human, social, and decisional. Human capital is defined as the economic value of knowledge and skills that people can develop through education and training. Social capital is a resource for people that exists in the relations among them and that contributes to a productive activity. Decisional capital enables teachers to make wise judgments in uncertain situations building on the insights and experiences of colleagues.

According to Olsen (2016), teachers' practices have historically evolved from the concepts of teacher knowledge to teacher learning as the perceptions of what teachers did in the classroom moved from a cognitive to a social process. Theories of learning claim that teachers' knowledge can be either cognitive/individual or situated/sociocultural. From a cognitive perspective, knowledge is seen as a thing, whereas from the situated perspective it is seen as a process. For the purpose of this study, I decided to use Olsen's definition of teachers' practices as a combination of cognitive and socially situated processes. As for the assessment practices components, I mainly draw on the concepts of formative assessment as defined by Black and Wiliam (1998, 2009) and CLT defined by Shohamy (2000).

### **Significance of the Study**

This study attempts to contribute to the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Colombia, specifically in the area of teacher identity development and teachers' professional development. The topic of teachers' identities has been little explored in Colombia and more research is needed on the exploration of their teaching and assessment practices to build on local practices that inform professional program development programs, institutional decisions, and language policies. By utilizing sociocultural theories on teacher identity, this study aims to contribute to a more informed and evidence-supported understanding of EFL teachers' identities in higher education and how these shape and get shaped by teachers' personal and professional backgrounds, their language teaching and learning ideologies, their participation in communities of practice, their agency, and the influence of the curriculum, programs and institutions where they have worked.

The inclusion of participant-observation in five of the language learning programs the FLTS has helped shed light on some administrative and curricular implications in the sense that the all the existing programs should be more acquainted with the administrative practices that positively impact teachers' practices and the role that a well structured curriculum plays in teachers' identity development. In addition to this, the informal conversations that I sustained with teachers as well as their narratives in the interviews revealed the intricacies of their identities, which obey not only personal, but also institutional factors, and that make of teachers' practices a construct that is socially situated. The analysis and interpretation of data through the use of ethnographic research methods constituted a learning episode for me as I could experience by myself what developing relationships of trust with participants implied, something that helped see their realities not only through my lens and enriched by theirs.

Looking at teachers' life and professional trajectories from their own perspectives was illuminating for me as the researcher of this study and made me think of the ways in which teachers' learning can be more supported from what they already know and do, and not only from what external agents propose. Understanding teachers' identities with sociocultural lenses was eye-opening for me as I could perceive the structural power issues in society that impinge teachers' identity development, and still, I witnessed the power of their own agency to change their realities and touch students' lives (Holland & Lave, 2009; Holland *et al.* 1998; Urrieta, 2007). Despite my resistance at the beginning of the Ph.D. program towards ethnographic methods, I am grateful for having allowed myself this opportunity that, combined with sociocultural approaches, contributed to my understanding of what humanizing research was about. Having mentioned this, I just have to add that, in addition to the implications of this research for language policy makers in Colombia and the field of ELT, this investigation offers implications for institutional language policies, administrators, curriculum designers, professional programs developers, and teacher educators.

### **Organization of the Study**

This study is organized in eight chapter as follows. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the study by introducing the need to examine the intersection between teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices in the EFL classroom that have been traditionally seen with a deficit perspective. The study attempts to show the possibilities for the construction of local practices building on teachers' personal, professional and institutional trajectories that are also socially situated. My premise is that it is only in knowing more about who teachers are and what they do that their practices, and consequently their students' learning can improve.

In chapter 2, I provide an in-depth explanation of the theoretical lenses that I used to inform the interpretation of the data collected, namely, sociocultural theories of identity such as: identity investment, communities of practice, and identity as a social practice. I also propose to use the concept of professional capital as it helped to connect the role of communities of practice and identity as a social practice. In line with this, I define teaching practices from a sociocultural approach taking a look at how they have been defined in the Colombian context. I included the apprenticeship of observation as the framework that helped me to understand why teachers were reproducing the same ways in which they had been taught. Finally, I used formative assessment and democratic approaches to assessment within the framework of Critical Language Testing that gave me the tools to understand teachers' assessment practices for students' learning.

In chapter 3, I describe the methodology used in this study and provide my rationale for having chosen an ethnographic case study. I describe the research context that include the five English programs where teachers were observed for this study. I also present the procedures for the selection of participants, offer a description of them, and present the data collection and analysis procedures that I followed.

Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7, show my analysis of the data organized by cases. Each of these chapters presents a narrative analysis of the four participant-teachers, organized mainly by the kinds of identities they enacted, how they constructed those identities, their teaching and assessment practices, the interconnection between their identities as language learners and language teachers, and other factors embedded in their identity development such as: the role of the curriculum, the language programs and institutions where they have worked, the influence of teachers' participation in communities of practice, and teachers' reflection capacity as well as their agency. My decision for organizing the analysis in cases comes from the importance of

highlighting each of the teachers' lives and experiences that are unique and because it was by looking at their uniqueness that I was still able to see common patterns that guided me to draw conclusions on what could be done to contribute to teachers' continuous identity development.

In chapter 8, I discuss the main findings: teachers' intertwined identities as language learners and language teachers, teachers' identity construction through practice, their identity construction and the influence of the curriculum, and the role of professional capital in their identity construction. I also discuss the implications for research, theory, policy and practice.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

Before referring to the theoretical framework that guided this work and its corresponding review of the literature, I offer an overview of the national linguistic policy that compelled Universidad Estatal's president to propose a new English language policy addressed to its undergraduate students. This broad picture of the national linguistic policy is derived from Usma's (2015) book *From Transnational Language Policy to Local Appropriation* where he shows the trajectory of language policy in Colombia. He contends that these government decisions have mainly followed international trends of globalization that obey transnational economic tendencies, which have favored the standardization and marketization of foreign language teaching and learning, an instrumental perspective of foreign language learning, and a limited definition of English-Spanish bilingualism, without acknowledging the 65 indigenous languages spoken by the 1.5% of the 44,000 whole population in Colombia according to the national census (DANE, 2008 as cited by Usma Wilches, 2015, p. 81).

According to Usma Wilches (2015), language policies in Colombia have followed a top down approach and have failed "to recognize local knowledge and efforts for school improvement and professional development" (p. 13). Usma also refers to quality and equity gaps in the education system of Colombia that have led to poor learning results at schools, something that impacts students going to college with low academic achievement. This adds to the reality of the department where Universidad Estatal is located where only 10.1% of the population has attended tertiary education. Therefore, competency in English has been identified in the country as a top priority in university graduates in order to become part of a knowledge-based economy.



In 2005, the National Bilingual Program 2004-2019 (*Plan Nacional de Bilingüismo-PNB* in Spanish) was presented by the Ministry of National Education. The idea was to influence formal and informal education systems and to impact the organization of foreign language teaching at the national level. Its main objective was “to make Colombian citizens bilingual in Spanish and English by 2019” (*Ministerio de Educación Nacional*, 2005 as cited by Usma Wilches, 2015, p. 69-70). After the PNB was launched, the government officials produced several decrees to regulate the new system, among which was the adoption of the Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, teaching and evaluation with Decree 3870 (*Ministerio de Educación Nacional*, 2006, as cited in Usma Wilches, 2015, p. 70).

The national government gave full responsibility of the PNB to representatives of foreign organizations such as The British Council, while the voices of Colombian universities were silenced and substituted by an European view of language, teaching and learning (Quintero Polo, 2007). This is what Usma calls the externalization and internalization of policy discourses that have disregarded local knowledge. Usma also explains the utilitarian point of view given to English in the PNB because it serves economic, practical, industrial and military purposes.

Usma Wilches (2015) identifies the standardization and marketization of foreign language teaching and learning in the PNB and concludes that this also renders “a rational logic and deficit view of schools and teachers, imported from abroad” (p. 83). To exemplify this, he cites Elmore (2005) to explain how in the United States educators have been identified as a “relatively low-skill teacher force” and schools as “irresponsive organizations where teachers are isolated from each other, hardly respond to policy initiatives, and lack commitment towards school communities” (p. 83). According to Usma, the government is calling for the implementation of standards in schools, universities and other language programs as well as for

the introduction of prepackaged models of professional development. It is in this national language policy driven by global political and economic tendencies that I conducted an ethnographic case study to examine EFL teachers' identities in Colombia and the connection with their teaching and assessment practices. To do that, I used sociocultural frameworks of teacher identity.

In the following sections, I present three theoretical perspectives that inform my understanding of teachers' identities and the analysis of teachers' classroom practices. For the part of teachers' identities I used: (1) the concept of identity investment defined by Norton and that I adapted to teaching investment; (2) Gee's identity through discourse; (3) Wenger's Communities of Practice; and (4) Holland et al.'s Figured Worlds. I added the concept of professional capital, as it helped me to articulate the concepts of Communities of Practice and Figured Worlds and to have a more holistic picture of what happened in the study. As for classroom practices, I saw what happened in the classrooms to be grounded in social practices, thus I used the definitions of formative assessment and Critical Language Testing (CLT). I especially see teachers' identities as a construct that is built from practice, discourse and culture.

The review of the literature will be focused on international studies of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' identity development such as Duff and Uchida's (1997) study in Japan, Tsui's (2007) in China, Gu and Benson's (2015) study in Hong Kong and China, and Mora *et al.* (2014) in Mexico. In the context of Colombia, I will refer to the studies on teacher identities that I have found until now: Fajardo Castañeda (2014), who used the concept of Communities of Practice identified by Wenger (1998) in the field of theories of learning, and Quintero Polo and Guerrero Nieto (2013), who examined a cultural and political dimension of identity and concepts of identity from sociology and anthropology.

As for the inclusion of the framework of Critical Language Testing, applicable to assessment, which Shohamy (2001) proposes, I opted for it because classroom assessment is a component of teaching or a part of teaching where power can be more easily exercised from figures of power. Also, because as a teacher, I believe in social transformation and the empowerment of students through education that they can be social agents of change and I think that assessment can be a good starting point to do this.

### **Sociocultural Theories of Identity**

#### **Identity investment.**

In studies with immigrant language learners in Canada, Norton (2000) found a relationship among power, identity and language learning. She cites West (1992) for whom identity is related to the desire for recognition, affiliation, and security and safety (Norton, 1997, p. 8). For West, such desires are not separated from the distributions of material resources in society and the more people have access to resources, the more access they will have to privilege and power, then the identity of a person will depend on the social and economic relations.

Norton (1997, 2000) also refers to Bourdieu (1997) who connects identity and symbolic power to explain how the right to speak intersects with the language learner's identity. Then she uses Weedon's (1997) feminist poststructuralist position to integrate language, individual experience and social power in a theory of subjectivity where the individual is seen with more human agency. Norton used three characteristics of the theory of subjectivity that helped her to formulate a new concept of identity: identity and the multiple, nonunitary subject, identity as a site of struggle, and identity as changing over time. In the first, the individual is diverse, contradictory, dynamic and changing over historical time and social space. In the second, the subject is considered as subject of and subject to relations of power in different social sites where

s/he participates. In the third, there is a change as to how the person relates to the social world and starts to position him/herself in a place. This theory also presents subjectivity as produced in different social sites that are structured within relations of power and where the subject is not conceived as someone passive but as subject of and subject to relations of power in a certain place, community, and society.

Norton (1997) also uses Cummins' (1996) distinction between coercive and collaborative relations of power where relations of power can enable or constrain the various identities that language learners negotiate. Cummins identifies collaborative relations of power as useful to empower rather than to marginalize and establishes that coercive relations of power are identified as "the exercise of power by a dominant individual, group, or country that is detrimental to others and serves to maintain an inequitable division of resources in a society" (p. 412).

Norton (1997, 2000) examined how different authors around the world define identity in different ways depending on their disciplines and research traditions. In Canada, Morgan (1997) used the term social identity; in Japan, Duff and Uchida (1997) call it sociocultural identity; in the U.S., Schecter and Bayley (1997) use the term cultural identity; in South Africa, Thesen (1997) refers to identity as voice; and in England, Leung, Harris and Rampton (1997) refer to ethnic identity. Despite these differences, Norton (1997) found some similarities in the definition of identity. First, all these authors reject a simplistic notion of identity and see it as complex, contradictory, and multifaceted; second, identity is identified as dynamic across time and place; third, identity is regarded as something that constructs and that is constructed by language; fourth, identity construction is understood in relation to a larger social processes and marked by

relations of power that can be coercive or collaborative; and finally, identity theory is connected with classroom practice when what teachers do identifies them as a kind of teacher.

For Norton (1995, 2000) identity is defined as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 5; p. 410). Social identity is defined as “the relationship between the individual and the larger social world, as mediated through institutions such as families, schools, workplaces, social services, and law courts” (Norton, 1997, p. 420). Cultural identity for Norton (1997) refers to “the relationship between individuals and members of a group who share a common history, a common language, and similar ways of understanding the world” (p. 420.)

It is in this social context of language learning that Norton (1995, 2000) introduces the concept of investment as a complement to the notions of instrumental and integrative motivation that Gardner and Lambert (1972) introduced in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Whereas instrumental motivation refers to the desire of a person to learn a language for utilitarian purposes such as getting a job, integrative motivation refers to the desire to learn a language to be part of the target language community. In her work, Norton claims to establish a connection between language learning, power and identity that other researchers (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Dorney, 19994, 1997; Oxford and Shearin, 1994) could not achieve in their attempt to broaden Gardner and Lambert’s theoretical framework of motivation in SLA.

Norton’s (1995, 2000) concept of investment denotes a relationship of learners to the target language that is socially and historically constructed. To explain this concept, Norton uses Bourdieu and Passeron’s (1997) concept of cultural capital, arguing that when an individual invests in learning a language, they do it having in mind that they will acquire symbolic and

material resources that will contribute to increase their cultural capital. Norton's notion of investment references the language learner "as having a complex social history and multiple desires" (p. 10). In this notion of investment that Norton proposes, language learners are constantly defining who they are and their relationships with the social world. Thus, when individuals invest in learning a language they are also investing in their own identity, one that changes across time and space.

Transferring Norton's concept of investment to the field of language teachers, it can be said that language teachers teach English (as in the case of my study) altogether with the language they use in their everyday lives (Spanish) as the means through which they construct their identities. This identity construction is situated in a local and global context, where learning and teaching English as a foreign language have a significance, and may contribute to increasing their knowledge base for academic and professional purposes, or in Bourdieu's words, to increasing their linguistic and cultural capital.

Investment in language teaching can be defined then as the relationships of teachers to the language they teach that has been socially and historically constructed. As a consequence of this, it can be said that teachers who invest in language teaching and assessment acquire symbolic and material resources that contribute to increasing their cultural capital as language teachers. Then teachers will be constructing who they are and their relations to the social world as they invest in language teaching and assessment. In my study, I observed how teachers constructed their identities as they taught English and connected their teaching to the world in their classes, with their students, their colleagues, the institution and the local and global context where they worked.

### **Identity construction through discourse.**

In a study carried out by Duff and Uchida (1997) about English teachers' sociocultural identities in a language institute in Japan, the authors found that identities and ideologies depend on "the institutional and interpersonal contexts in which individuals find themselves, the purposes for their being there, and their personal biographies" (p. 452). They explain that sociocultural identities and ideologies are not static but that they are "co-constructed, negotiated and transformed on an ongoing basis by means of language" (p. 452). Duff and Uchida define identity in the field of applied linguistics based on He (1995 as cited by Duff & Uchida, 1997, p. 452) as "a process of continual emerging and becoming."

The findings of the study included teachers' past learning experiences, past teaching experiences, and cross-cultural experiences, the local classroom culture, the institutional culture, and the textbook or curriculum. Findings of the study revealed the cognitive and affective connections that teachers developed with their students such as: their lives and their students' lives, the classroom and the English-speaking world beyond, the textbook and the local culture, institutional goals and teachers' personal pedagogical aspirations, their pedagogical beliefs and their actual teaching, the past-present and present-future, and their role as national versus expatriate teachers and their membership in the wider diasporic community. Another relevant finding was how the participant-teachers in the study tried to create a student-centered environment in the classroom; however, they were all grappling with issues of control and disdain for authoritarianism. In this regard, Duff and Uchida refer to pre-service and beginning teachers' professional development studies that suggest that the image of these teachers and their role identity interacts with observed teaching practices and guides teacher's growth.

### **Identity as a social practice.**

This study also draws on a social practice view of identities. Holland *et al.* (1998) define identity from an anthropological and cultural perspective. They refer to identities as improvised acts that come out in the form of an activity in a specific social situation. They explain that identity “combines the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations” (p. 5). For them, identities must be conceptualized as they develop in the social practice because identities are lived in and through activity. They also see identities as psychohistorical formation that people develop over their lifetime and as a tool through which people care about and care for their surroundings.

Holland *et al.* (1998) developed a more sociogenic approach to personhood and refer to the joined efforts of cultural studies and feminist theory to see issues of identity as people taking form in the flow of historically, socially, and culturally and materially-shaped lives. They define cultural identities as “identities that form in relation to major structures of society: ethnicity, gender, race, nationality, and sexual orientation” (p. 7). Holland *et al.*’s focus is also on the development of identities and agency in practices and activities that are historically-situated, socially-enacted, and culturally-constructed. These cultural studies are in opposition to the Western notion of identity that uses a prototype of a coherent, unified and originary subject and contrasts with newer studies which focus is on feminist and psychodynamic approaches. As in poststructuralism, Holland *et al.* see the individual as someone that is made of contradictory self-understandings and identities whose loci is spread over the social environment. The definition of identity that Holland *et al.* (1998) propose conceives identity mediated by activity, related to major structures in society, and situated socially, historically and culturally.



### **Social theory of learning.**

Adding to Holland *et al.*'s view of identity as a social practice, Wenger (1998) defines identity within the context of social learning theory explaining that we define who we are as we negotiate and participate with others, by belonging to a group, through what we have experienced and will continue to experience through our life trajectories, and by bridging our relationships between the local and the global. In addition to these scopes of identity, Wenger also establishes a parallel between practice and identity, identifying identity as something that is lived, that is, an experience that involves participation and reification; experienced across different moments of life, influenced by the belonging to a community, and continuously evolving in time.

Thus, the definitions of identity by Holland *et al.* (1998) and Wenger (1998) complement each other in the sense that the first offers a broader perspective of identity and the second is inserted into the first one. That is to say, while Holland *et al.* define identity in relation to the cultural context, Wenger locates identity into the communities of which teachers take part everyday but acknowledging also the interplay between the local and the global.

The concept of identity as defined by Holland *et al.* (1998) turns the focus of my study into those cultural factors or idiosyncrasies that permeate teachers' practices influenced by the social context where they grew up, developed and continue to develop as individuals and professionals. This scope can also be useful to explore how teachers' practice is influenced by those cultural factors and idiosyncrasies that are geographically, historical, institutionally, professionally and globally located. At the same time, these theories continue to be connected to the four standpoints of identity as defined by Gee (2000): the natural, institutional, discourse and affinity identity.

A theory-integrated approach to understanding teacher identity includes what Varghese *et al.* (2005) explained in their examination of language teachers' identity. According to them, a perspective inclusive of multiple theoretical approaches can better help to understand the processes and context of teacher identity than an isolation of theories that may be limiting. For practical reasons, I excluded psychological and poststructuralists theories of teacher identity and my decision for the theories that I chose comes from my belief that teacher learning as student learning are socially constructed. It is also my belief that including the social and political context to understand teacher identity gives the complexity required to deconstruct and reconstruct teacher identities.

Following this theory-integrated approach to teacher identity that Varghese *et al.* (2005) propose, I consider Gee's (2001) standpoints of teacher identity will help me identify aspects of teacher identity that cannot be changed as those determined by nature, the influence of institutions and group affinity in the construction of teachers identity, as well as the role of discourse in teacher identity development. Knowing that examining teacher identity only from discourses may have limitations, I decided to include also Wenger's (1998) contribution of social theory of learning and include teacher practice. Situating identity in the context of language learning, I drew on Norton's (1995, 2000) notion of investment to refer to investment in language teaching and try to find relationships between teachers' identity, their social world and their cultural capital. The anthropological and cultural perspective that Holland *et al.* (1998) propose will also help me to understand identity from the teachers' lives trajectories and experiences and from social practice, adding the cultural component of identity formation through practice. From my perspective, these theories complement each other and have different contributions to construct a definition of identity that is historically, culturally, socially and

scholarly evolving. In addition to this, my focus on the examination of the incidence of teacher identity in teaching and assessment practices requires the inclusion of practice and experience to be necessary.

The explanation of a language teacher and learner development of identity in China by Tsui (2007) is a good example of how Wenger's framework of identity can be developed through the dual process of identification and negotiation of meanings. Tsui takes Wenger's (1998) definition of how identities are formed by the tension that is created between the investment in different ways of belonging and the ability to negotiate the meanings. She explains the three modes of belonging that Wenger (1998) refers to as sources of identification, engagement, imagination and alignment. Engagement is referred as the investment in ourselves and in our relations with other members of the community because it is through relating to other people that we better understand who we are and it is through engagement in practice that we get to participate in activities and competences required. Imagination is explained as the "process of relating ourselves to the world beyond the community of practice in which we are engaged and seeing our experience as located in the broader context and as reflective of the broader connections" (p. 660). Alignment is explained as the process through which members of a community identified themselves with actions and practices that make part of a broader enterprise.

In her study Tsui (2007) identifies two sources of identity formation: the recognition of one's competence and the ability to take part in the construction and negotiation of meaning. Having competence means being able to engage with other members, to understand the enterprise of members, and the ability to share the mediating resources. The process of negotiation of meaning with the community refers to showing the process that the research

participant engage in to understand the concept of Communicative Language Teaching as an effective teaching approach to develop English proficiency in the context of China.

Tsui's (2007) conclusions include that teacher identity formation is complex, relational and experiential, reificative and participative, and individual and social. These findings clearly exemplify that the development of identity is a process that is affected by the interactions with the communities that surround an individual and by his/her own perceptions of the world or the development of the self. Tsui claims that participation is also central to identity formation and that the legitimacy of access to participation is shaped by power relations in social structures that cannot be separated from the sociopolitical context.

In a study with seven Hong Kong and Chinese mainland pre-service teachers, Gu and Benson (2015) used Communities of Practice and critical discourse theory to investigate how teacher identities were discursively constructed during teacher education and explored how these identities were influenced by the social structure. Gu and Benson mainly analyzed pre-service teachers' identity formation examining the roles of cultural and social context and agency. They first found that the identity of the participants was represented on how they engaged with learning to teach, for instance when they defined their identities in opposition to models they had from mentors or the image of teachers in society. Second, participants' identity was also aligned with social discourses; this was clear through the different perceptions participants from Hong Kong and Chinese mainland had regarding the use of standard English versus discourses of English as an international language, and the use of code-switching to support students' learning. Third, pre-service teachers challenged the image of the teacher that was socially constructed by going beyond to help students achieve good scores and enlightening their lives.

In the study carried out in a university language center in Mexico, Mora *et al.* (2014) identified an interplay between professional development, identity and agency. They explain that there is a connection between teachers' identities and their professional development and suggest the need to study teachers' identity issues and their impact on classroom and school lives. They contend that there is little research that addresses the relationship between these two concepts.

In Colombia, Fajardo Castañeda (2014) conceives teacher identity as what teachers do and know; in the first one, he includes social recognition and in the second, beliefs, motivation and emotions. He then analyzes how teachers' beliefs are used to construct teachers' professional development. He contends that teachers construct professional identities through their participation in a teacher community and through the relationship between beliefs and classroom practice. Also, that a teaching community plays a fundamental role in forming, sustaining, and transforming professional identities. Fajardo's work is located between theories of social learning such Wenger's (1998) concept of communities of practice and also in poststructuralist theories when he refers to how knowledge and beliefs of pre-service teachers guide their practice.

### **Professional Capital**

The definitions of teacher identity within the frameworks of social theory of learning and identity as a social practice fit into Hargreaves and Fullan's (2012) concept of professional capital that they explain is essential for effective teaching. Professional capital is composed of three kinds of capital: human, social, and decisional. Human capital is defined as the economic value of knowledge and skills that people can develop through education and training. Education and teaching are two forms of capital investment because they bring economic returns after some time. In the field of teaching, human capital is understood as developing and acquiring the

required knowledge and skills. This means that teachers should not only know what they teach but also know how to teach it, know their students, understanding how they learn, understanding students' family and cultural circumstances, having the ability to deal with successful and innovative practice, having emotional capabilities to empathize with students, having passion and moral commitment to serve students, and being willing to improve the practice.

Social capital is a resource for people that exists in the relations among them and that contributes to a productive activity. It refers to how access to knowledge and information is affected by the quality and quantity of interactions and the social relationships among people. Social capital increases individual knowledge because it gives access to other people's human capital, expanding an individual's networks of influence and opportunity, and developing resilience because there are people around one to offer support and advice when needed. For Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) social capital strategies are fundamental to transform teaching because they are shaped by groups much more than by individuals.

Professional capital and communities of practice have social capital in common. According to Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), concentrating on the group accelerates learning, but in order to help a group accomplish their goals, extensive trustworthiness and trust should be part of the group relationship. Social capital is not necessarily about working in groups, but about finding support from a person in the group. It can be said then that when teachers work in an institution but are not part of a community with social capital, they may feel isolated. This could explain why teachers in the study who possessed social capital had better teaching and assessment practices.

According to Leana (2011), social capital is connected to patterns of interaction among teachers and between teachers and administrators that are focused on student learning and

individual capital is based on the belief that the power of individuals can change the system. She examined the relationship between human and social capital and found that both kinds of capital need to be combined. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) conclude that high social capital generates increased human capital meanwhile the opposite does not happen because when individuals have the right kind of people and good quality interactions and relationships among them, they gain confidence, learning and feedback. According to what they explain, it is more likely that a teacher with a low human capital who enters an institution with a high social capital does a successful job than a talented teacher entering a low social capital institution.

Human capital includes individual teacher qualifications, experience, and ability to teach. But human capital should be combined with social capital, which implies feelings of trust, closeness between teachers, and frequent and focused conversations and interactions with peers. According to Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), it is more likely that change occurs if a collective effort rather than individual is put into it. The authors point out a direct relation between high social capital and human capital because of the confidence, learning, and feedback individuals obtain when they have access to the right kind of people, interactions and relationships around them. Not only human and social capital are something personal that happens within an institution but they also have to be part of a whole-system for changes to occur.

The third component of professional capital is decisional capital. For Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), the essence of professionalism is the ability to make discretionary judgments, which is a capital that is acquired through the accumulation of structured and unstructured experience, practice, and reflection. This capital enables teachers to make wise judgments in uncertain situations building on the insights and experiences of colleagues because decisional capital adds to social capital.

Practice is one of the components to develop decisional capital and become a skillful professional. However, this practice needs to be thoughtful, reflective and shared. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) draw on Schön's work, which defined a professional as someone who was able to engage in reflective practice that consisted basically of reflection in action and reflection on action. The first one is the capacity to think about a problem in the middle of it and to think about what one is doing, to think about the decisions that are made in the middle of a situation. Reflection on action is the capacity to think back on a event that is already over. These two kinds of reflection are key to professional practice. Reflection in and on action are maximized when there is a coach who provides feedback and encourage reflection on what was done. The ability to reflect in action is developed through reflecting on action. For Hargreaves and Fullan it is reflective practice that makes perfect.

Aligned to Schön's reflective practice, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) refer to one of the seven principles of mindful teaching that MacDonald and Shirley (2009) proposed in their book *The Mindful Teacher*. This principle simply proposes to stop and reflect in the middle of everyday practice to pay attention to forms of learning. According to MacDonald and Shirley, a lack of mindfulness and reflection occurs when there is a heavy workload and not because teachers are mindless. Mindfulness, Hargreaves and Fullan say, is also related to reflection about action which is the capacity of establishing priorities and avoid context or external agendas interfering with teachers' work.

Another strategy mentioned in teacher reflection is action research or teacher inquiry. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) highlight that not only practice but collective reflective practice makes part of professional capital and mention action research or teacher inquiry as another strategy that added to reflective capacity contributes to human and social capital to hone the



capacity to make informed decisions. Fullan and Hargreaves conclude that teachers are short of professional capital when they are under qualified, spend most of the time alone, do not get feedback and support from colleagues, do not work on improving their practice, are not provided with a coach, a mentor, and time to reflect on their practice and that in order to create a professional culture or community teachers should be able to work, plan, and make decisions with other teachers.

In their book *Professional Capital*, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) refer to teaching like a pro and establishing five Cs of professional capital that enhance effective teaching: capability or expertise, commitment, career, culture and context or conditions of teaching. About capability the authors explain that confidence is built when there are skills and qualities that lead to accomplishment; that a wider repertoire of well-founded classroom strategies makes a teacher feel more capable producing successful learning that is self-reinforcing and that leads to more learning, stronger commitment, and professional fulfillment.

To explain commitment, Hargreaves and Fullan refer to Day's (2007 and 2010, as cited in p. 59) books, *Teachers Matter* and *The Lives of Teachers*, where teachers' effectiveness is explained in relation to their commitment to their work, their students, the ability to become more capable, and to serve others with dedication and effort. Day and his team point out that there are some factors such as: career stage, leadership, colleagues, workload and policy that lead to a sustained and renewed teachers' commitment to their work over time. Figure 2.1. explains my understanding of professional capital as a set of three wheels that are in a mesh and where each one is supportive of the other ones to build teachers' professional capital.

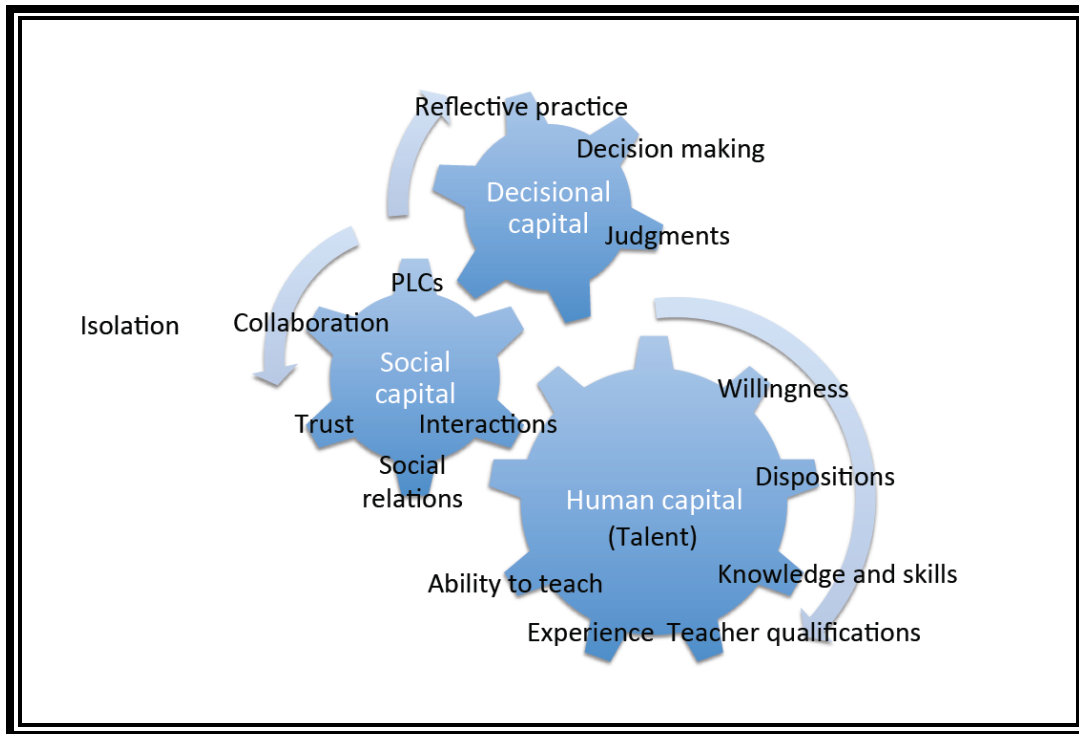


Figure 2.1: Professional Capital Wheels.

### **Professional culture and communities.**

Explaining what is key to transforming any culture, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that answer lies in connecting what people believe, who believes it, and creating the necessity to examine their own culture and its impact. They add that when one spends all of one's time with the same people or at the same institution, it is likely that overtime one begins to think the same way and believe the same things. In the same way, there is more probability to be open to change when one interacts with people from different backgrounds, contexts and experiences. For Hargreaves and Fullan, what one believes is the substance of a culture and is profoundly affected by the form of a culture or the relationships with who does or does not believe it. They think that if these relationships among people or form of a culture are changed, there is a good chance of changing the content of the culture.

Under the claim that to change people's practices and beliefs, patterns of communication have to be altered and new kinds of relationships need to be built and that this may involve a change of people's roles and the structures of an organization, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) identified six kinds of professional culture in schools and examined their implications for student learning and professionalism. They argue that collaboration is better than individualism and center the professional cultures in these two categories and a further subset of collaborative cultures: balkanization, contrived collegiality, professional learning communities, and clusters, networks, and federations. I will only refer to individualism and collaboration as these were closely connected to what data analysis of this study showed.

***Individualism and collaboration.***

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) begin saying that teaching has been one of the loneliest professions. They identify professional isolation as the most common state in teaching, and explain that isolation allows teachers to exercise their discretionary judgment in the classroom although this prevents them of receiving valuable feedback that could help them to make wise and effective judgments. They state that uncertainty is the nature of teaching, the parent of professionalism and what makes teaching interesting, variable and challenging. Also that uncertainty is magnified to unhealthy proportions when it is encountered alone because teachers will be dealing with all that uncertainty by their own, without any feedback, advice or support.

One study by Rosenholtz (1991) identified "moving" and "stuck" schools. Stuck schools had high levels of uncertainty, teacher isolation and did not support improvement related to low student learning gains in literacy and mathematics for a period of two years. One of the causes of uncertainty Rosenholtz found was the absence of positive feedback. According to what she explained, teachers neglected each other, did not acknowledge, support or complimented

frequently the efforts of their colleagues. She identified “learning impoverished” settings as places where teachers learn little from their colleagues and associated this to the isolation and uncertainty that teachers experience.

### **Teaching Practices.**

In this section, I situate the concept of teaching practices historically based on the connections that Olsen (2016) makes of teacher knowledge and teacher learning. Then, I provide an overview of the theoretical lenses that studies on English Language Teaching (ELT) in Colombia have used to frame research on teachers’ practices. I conclude saying that more investigations should be done in the country to identify these practices and that, although studies in similar areas have contributed to the field, we need to know first what teachers are doing in order to propose intervention studies.

Defining teaching practices can be a complex endeavor as much as defining teachers themselves. Trying to define such a broad term in the field of teacher identity, I found terms such as: teacher learning and teacher knowledge. According to Olsen (2016), these terms seem to be interconnected as they have historically evolved. About 40 years ago there was a concern about how teachers learned; hence, the area of teacher cognition emerged. In the 1970s educational researchers began to investigate teacher thinking. Then in the 1980s and 1990s questions about teacher knowledge emerged. After that, critical theory scholars added issues of power and sociocultural contexts. Olsen concludes that teacher-identity is a better term than that of knowledge as well as teacher-identity development is better than teacher learning because these terms are more holistic and can help to be focused on a wider range of influences of teachers’ everyday activities.

Trying to explain the origins of teacher knowledge, Olsen (2016) defines theory as the guiding system, the personal, experience-based, and to some extent idiosyncratic ideas about teaching, learning, and schooling that teachers rely on to understand the world as educators. Olsen also defines Theory with capital a letter, as claims about the world that are systematically generated and disseminated. For him, both types of theory are important for teachers because successful professionals integrate both into their practice of teaching. Olsen (2016) defines teacher learning as a “looping or spiraling process where one automatically negotiates among different knowledge sources, adapts parts from each of them and tentatively stitches them together as a way to think about and do teaching (p. 33).” For him, a teacher is always in the act of becoming and that is true for novice and expert teachers since they will always be learning to become a better teachers.

Theories of learning claim that this can be either cognitive/individual or situated/sociocultural. From a cognitive perspective, knowledge is seen as a thing, whereas for the situated perspective it is seen as a process. The point of teacher learning is that if teachers do not understand the learning process, it will be more difficult to maximize student efforts to construct learning. Teachers' understanding of learning theory guides the teaching practice. This learning theory is what, for the purposes of this study, I identified as teachers' ideologies of language, teaching and learning that influence teachers' practices. Teachers for whom knowledge is transmitted from teacher to student will act very different in class from teachers who believe that knowledge is a social construction. When it is assumed that the process of teacher learning is situated and that, as a consequence of it, teachers construct their own knowledge based on their activities and contexts, it can be said that teachers' knowledge construction and the process of teachers' knowledge are inextricably linked to their lived experiences (Olsen, 2016).

A close examination of the publications of EFL teachers' practices in Google Scholar and some of the most important journals of ELT in Colombia (Profile, Ikala, How) showed that teachers' practices through consistent classroom observation have been little examined. Most of the publications are focused on different approaches and techniques to teach (e.g. CLIL, project work), but little has been done on what in-service teachers, especially in higher education professionals, are doing in the classroom. Due to the fact that some of the studies on EFL teachers' practices are already educational interventions, it seems to be that the improvement of teachers' practices is being taken for granted. In the same way that there has been a growing number of research and publications on language policies in Colombia, it would be good that more research be done on the specifics of teachers' classroom practices to contribute to informing stakeholders' decisions and professional development program design.

Trying to situate the concept of teaching practices in Colombia, I found: pedagogy (Posada Ortiz & Patiño Garzón, 2007), didactics (Alvarez, 2008), and instructional sequences (Jaime Osorio & Insuasty, 2015). An exploration of how teaching practices are defined in Colombia indicated that they go from what the Ministry of Education dictates: a crucial social event to which the field of pedagogy makes its contributions (Colombian Ministry of Education, 1998 as cited in González Peláez, 2008, p. 77) to what has been defined in the field of second language teacher education where teachers' actions are influenced intentions on the social setting and by beliefs that underlie the chains of reasoning before and after the action (Barlett, 1994 as cited in González Peláez, 2008, p. 77).

Teaching practices are also defined as pedagogical practice that require permanent analysis permeated by knowledge, ways of doing, and issues of ethics and purpose that constitute the basis for the construction of teaching practices (Gimeno 1983 as cited by Posada Ortiz &

Patiño Garzón, 2007, p. 128). Patiño (2002), a Colombian scholar in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), defined pedagogical knowledge as “a dimension of the teaching practice in which theory, action and reflection interweave” (as cited in Posada Ortiz & Patiño Garzón, 2007, p. 128) .

Jaime Osorio and Isuasty (2015) defined teaching practice drawing on the definitions by Flórez Ochoa (1994), Tamayo Valencia (2002), and Malderez and Bodóczy (1999). For the first, teaching practice is the intentional and planned process that facilitates knowledge in individuals; for the second, a teaching practice is a methodological notion that includes theoretical and pedagogical models or refers to teachers’ work in the classroom supported by beliefs, research, theories and models; for the third, teaching practices represent a dynamic interplay between practice and theory.

Alvarez (2008) situates the concept of teaching practices in the field of didactics where this constitutes and is a constituent of the curriculum and socio-historical contexts Litwin’s (1997, as cited in Alvarez, 2008, p. 30) and social, political, economical or cultural dimensions (Prabhu, 1992, as cited in Alvarez, 2008, p. 31); adding components of knowledge based on reflection and dialogism (Alvarez, 2007, as cited in Alvarez, 2008, p. 31). Then in the field of foreign language, he defined didactics based on Richards and Rodgers (2001) as techniques, practices and behaviors that operate in teaching and language. Other authors Coll (1991) and Zabala Vidiella (1997) define didactics as activities in the classroom (as cited in Alvarez, 2008, p. 31).

In a study by Cruz Arcila (2018) where he examined the teaching practices of English teachers in public schools of rural areas, he defined teachers’ expertise from Olsen (2016) who used the terms “wisdom of practice” and “personal theories” meaning professional knowledge

teachers construct throughout their experiences. Cruz Arcila situates language teaching and learning from the traditional perspective that includes instrumental and positivistic oriented activities that Pennycook (1990, 2001) criticizes and moves to the call that Kumaravadivelu (2003, 2006) makes of alternative critical approaches to engage in socially responsive practices.

The few studies found on teachers' EFL practices in Colombia (Posada Ortiz & Patiño Garzón, 2007; Chaves & Hernández, 2013) concur with saying that a more communicative emphasis of the teaching of English is required. Other necessities implied from studies like these are the needs of designing curriculum guidelines that orient teachers' work and the design of professional development programs based on teachers' needs and realities.

Chaves and Hernández (2013) implemented a study with elementary and high school English teachers to examine their methodological approaches at public and private schools of a main city of Colombia. They found that institutional and class conditions played a key role in teachers' methodological orientation and that teachers' practices still needed to go beyond the teaching of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar.

From the studies that were found in Colombia on the topic of teaching practices, I can conclude that more research is needed on the examination of what teachers are really doing in their classrooms. Although research on fields connected to ELT such as language policies in Colombia (Sánchez Solarte & Obando Guerrero, 2009), the need to design professional development programs from a social justice perspective (Sierra Piedrahita, 2016), research on curriculum innovation (Clavijo Olarte *et al.*, 2004), the relationship between teachers' beliefs about the communicative competence and their classroom practices (González Peláez, 2008), and the need to change teachers' practices (Sierra Piedrahita, 2018) have contributed to the field of ELT in Colombia. I agree with Cruz Arcila (2018) when he said that numerous pedagogical



practices may remain unknown as there may be a wealth of unexplored teaching practices that ensure teachers' agency and creativity.

### **The apprenticeship of observation.**

The apprenticeship of observation was a concept that emerged in this study as I began to see that teachers were not only teaching how they would like to be taught as language learners but in some cases as they had been taught. For this reason, I read Lortie (1975, 1998) who defines the apprenticeship of observation as the prior experience as a student that teachers had and that is also understood as the implicit knowledge teachers get of how to teach based on their experiences they had with their teachers (Borg, 2004). More recent studies like the one conducted with pre-service teachers by Smagorinsky and Barnes (2014) see the apprenticeship of learning as a conservative approach. It is necessary to say that I initially did not consider the inclusion of the apprenticeship of observation, but that I used it as tool that helped me to understand and explain what I saw in some of the participant-teachers. However, as it will be seen in the analysis of the findings, teachers' agency also operates in different ways and their practices in the classroom may not be due only to the implicit teaching models that rest in their heads.

### **Approaches to language teaching.**

Celce-Murcia defines approach and method drawing on Anthony's (1963) and Rodgers and Richards (2001) work (as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2014, p. 2-3). Whereas for the first author the term approach includes theories of the nature of language and language learning with reference to psychological and pedagogical principles; for the second author, an approach provides a broad philosophical perspective on language teaching. Also for Richards and Rodgers method is an overarching concept that includes the terms approach, design and procedure, but for

Anthony, a method is a set of procedures that define the step-by-step to teach a second or foreign language.

Celce-Murcia (2014) offers an overview of the teaching methods throughout history of teaching languages as a second or foreign language. These methods have evolved from the grammar-translation and the direct method to the communicative approach and Kumaravadivelu's postmethod condition (1994). I will only refer to the first three which characteristics I found in this study. The grammar-translation method began at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In it, the instruction is given in students' native language and there is little use of the target language for communication. In the classes, students are exposed to early reading of difficult texts and the focus of the instruction is on grammatical parsing, that is to say, forms and inflections of words. A typical exercise is to translate sentences from the target language into the mother tongue or viceversa. The result of this approach is usually an inability on the part of the student to use the language for communication. The teacher does not have to be able to speak the target language fluently.

The direct method dates from the end of the nineteenth century. In this method, teachers do not need to know the students' native language and the use of students' mother tongue is not permitted. In a class that follows this method, the lessons begin with dialogue and anecdotes in a modern conversational style, actions and pictures are used to make meanings clear, and grammar is learned inductively, that is, by repeated exposure to language in use rather than through rules about forms. The culture is also learned in an inductive way.

In the communicative approach, the purpose of language is communication. The goal of language teaching is the learner's ability to communicate in the target language. Course contents include semantic and social functions and academic or job-related material. Class materials

activities often consist of authentic tasks and projects presented and practiced using segments of preexisting meaningful discourse. Students regularly work in groups or pairs and language skills are integrated from the very beginning. The teacher's role consists primarily of facilitating communication and secondarily correcting mistakes.

### **Assessment Practices**

As the focus of this study is to examine EFL teacher's identities and the connection to their teaching and assessment practices, I initially opted for a democratic approach to assessment framed within Critical Language Testing (CLT). At the moment of proposing the study and based on my previous experience with assessment (Pineda, 2014), I truly believed that this approach contributed to students' learning. This learning occurred as students developed metacognition when teachers held fair and transparent assessment practices, negotiating and designing with students' assignments, and sharing with them the scoring criteria. Nonetheless, it seems that being a teacher myself, I took for granted the formative component of assessment in the design of this study. It was only until I began the participant-observations that I realized the unbreakable connection between teaching and assessment. Therefore, I added the definition of formative assessment as what could help me explain and understand how teaching and assessment are to processes that go hand in hand.

#### **Formative assessment.**

Formative assessment was the type of assessment that allowed me to understand and explain the relationship between teachers' teaching and their assessment practices and as the component that, to my understanding, seems to be effective for students' learning. I situate formative assessment in relation to other types of assessment and conceptualize formative assessment drawing on Black and Wiliam (1998), mentioning some of its characteristics of formative, and finishing with an explanation of formative assessment in the social context. At the

end, I explain the usefulness of formative assessment for the interpretation of teachers' assessment practices in this study.

Despite different types of assessment have evolved with time, see for example alternative assessment (Lynch, 2001), dynamic assessment (Poehner & Lantolf, 2005), transformative assessment (Popham, 2008), classroom assessment (Welhburg, 2008), teacher-based assessment (Davidson & Leung, 2009), and assessment for learning (Chappuis *et al.*, 2012; Wiliam, 2011), I mainly draw on the definitions that Black and Wiliam (1998, 2009) developed. In my opinion these different types of assessment have their roots in formative assessment and for me it was important to keep it simple and go back to the roots of the concept.

Consequently with this, I decided to take Black and Wiliam's (2009, p. 9) conceptualization of formative assessment based on earlier definitions by Black and Wiliam (1998) and the Assessment Reform Group (ARG, 2002):

Practice in a classroom is formative to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peer, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decision they would have take in absence of the evidence that was elicited.

Black and Wiliam (1998) define assessment as “all those activities undertaken by teachers —and by their students in assessing themselves— that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities” (p. 140). For them, assessment becomes formative when the evidence is used to adapt the teaching to meet students' needs. They also add that an examination of teachers' beliefs about learning is necessary because a transmissionist approach to teaching and learning is not aligned to formative assessment.

Feedback is an important component of formative assessment that Black and Wiliam (1998) see as an opportunity for the teacher to dialogue with the student to reorient his/her thinking. Feedback results the most important component of formative assessment and, to function effectively, the results should be used to adjust teaching and learning. They explain three characteristics of feedback: “recognition of the desired goal, evidence about the present position, and some understanding of a way to close the gap between the two” (Sadler, 1989, as cited in Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 143). Another effective characteristic of feedback for learning is giving specific guidance to students on their weaknesses and strengths.

For Black and Wiliam (1998), students should be trained in formative assessment in order for them to understand the purpose of their learning. The authors criticize the teacher questioning approach since this usually leaves little room for students to reply. They suggest pair and group activities instead, where students can have time to discuss the answer, where teachers ask students to vote after several given options and to write down an answer that can be read later on. According to them, this is a way in which students can be encouraged to think and express their ideas. Black and Wiliam also propose shorter tests with a periodicity of a week rather than long and less frequent exams because frequent tests can also be a source of feedback for students.

The authors see self-assessment as an essential component of formative assessment. They recommend the use of self and peer-assessment to enhance formative assessment since these are alternatives that have proved to be reliable. However, they foresee the problem of students not being clear enough of the targets they should achieve in their learning.

Some of the recommendations Black and Wiliam (1998) make for the implementation of formative assessment to raise standards include more research on ways to carry out this work and the empowerment of teachers’ work to incorporate ideas and lessons “into the cultural norms and

expectations of a particular school community” (Stigleer & Hiebert, 1997, as cited in Black and Wiliam, 1998, p. 145). However, they state that such approach can only be achieved through sustained professional development programs.

Instruction and formative assessment cannot be separated and the choice of classroom tasks is of remarkable importance. In formative assessment, teaching and learning are interactive processes where teachers should be attentive to the students’ progress and difficulties in order to adapt their work to the students’ needs. Formative assessment contributes to raising standards since formative assessment is at the heart of effective teaching. When formative assessment of good quality it especially helps low achievers and that this also contributes to raise the overall achievement (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

For Black and Wiliam (1998), knowing that formative assessment is at the heart of effective teaching, reform initiatives should address help and support for the work of teachers in the classroom. According to them, changes in education can only be achieved slowly through professional development programs “that build on existing good practice” (p. 140). In the U.S. the political trend has been to believe that testing can improve learning altogether with a distrust of the teacher. Then their proposal to implement a classroom-focused policy is to improve formative assessment. This would imply more emphasis on the quality of the interactions between teacher and students, enhancing students’ active responsibility for their learning, and the development in students of life-long learning.

Black and Wiliam (1998) also refer to the use of tests when these are used to encourage rote and superficial learning and when the questions included in the tests do not have construct validity. They examine the negative impact that is generated when there is an overemphasis on marks and grading and an underemphasis on the learning function of advice. This negative

impact can be noticed, for instance, when students' performance is compared, because this highlights competition rather than personal improvement. A third issue is the managerial role of assessments when teachers' feedback serve a social and managerial function rather than a learning function. An additional negative impact can also be seen when teachers know very little about their students' learning needs and when collecting marks is prioritized over the analysis of students' work to discern their learning needs.

Black and Wiliam's (1998, 2009) approach to formative assessment was relevant for this study because it gives power to the role to teachers in the classroom, for the connection that facilitates between teaching and assessment, and for the contribution to students' learning. By using formative assessment, I borrowed some lenses that help to understand organically the nature on teachers' assessment practices and the connection to their teaching.

### **Critical language testing (CLT).**

In a revision of assessment from a critical perspective, Lynch (2001) establishes a distinction between the philosophical and social tradition of Critical Theory (CT) and a critical perspective in applied linguistics that follows Pennycook (1999, 2001 as cited in Lynch, 2001, p. 351). Critical Theory comes from what is identified as the Frankfurt School. Lynch cites Rasmussen (1996, p. 351-352) to explain that CT originated with Kant, Hegel and Marx and its successors, especially the group led by Jurgen Habermas who defined CT as "a tool of reason which, when properly located in an historical group, can transform the world." Lynch expands by saying that CT has historically been distinguished by its attempt to address issues of political oppression, as what serves to link thought and emancipation, reason and transformation.

Pennycook (1990 as cited in Lynch, 2001, p. 356). defined 'critical applied linguistics' as "a linking of our professional practice with social, political and cultural concerns, including the

exploration of ‘the ways in which our work supports the increasingly sophisticated forms of physical, social and above all ideological coercion’” Pennycook (1999, p. 356) identified the following characteristics of a critical approach:

- an interest in domain such as gender, class, sexuality, race, ethnicity, culture, identity, politics, ideology and discourse and a resistance to normative responses to questions in this domains;
- the embrace of transformative pedagogy and transformative research practices;
- a self-reflexive stance on critical theory.

Following the work of Pennycook (1999, 2001) Lynch (2001, p. 357) offers these characteristics of a critical approach to applied linguistics:

- 1) an interest in some domains such as gender, class, ethnicity, and the ways in which language and language-related issues are interconnected;
- 2) the notion that research needs to consider other paradigms than the dominant postpositivist;
- 3) a concern for changing the human and social world, not just describing it but transforming it with the concern for social justice and equality;
- 4) the requirement of critical applied linguistics to be self-reflexive.

Aligned with Lynch’s (2001) frame of Critical Theory and critical applied linguistics, the framework of assessment that I will use to guide the understanding on teachers’ language assessment practices is the critical language testing (CLT) that Shohamy (2001) proposes, understanding testing also as assessment and including the critical perspective and critical language testing principles that Shohamy identified.



Lynch (2001) based on Shohamy's (2001) work established a correlation between the critical approach to assessment and the postpositivist approach he has followed in his proposal of using portfolios as an alternative assessment tool. He refers for example to the work he did with Shaw (Lynch & Shaw, 1998) where five characteristics of a validity framework to assess portfolios are identified: fairness, ontological authenticity, cross-referential authenticity, impact/consequential validity, evolved power relations. For purposes of my interests in this study, I will only focus and expand on three of the characteristics of the validity framework to alternative assessment that Lynch proposes.

Ontological authenticity is defined as "being able to access and use information from research (or assessment) in a meaningful way" (Lynch, 2001, p. 365). Lynch explains that the objective of this focus is to establish a meaningful identity for oneself in the sense that Foucault (1990, 1997 as cited in Lynch, 2001, p. 365) defines it: "the active practice of constituting an identity or, more accurately, identities of oneself". Then I wonder if the learner is the only one who should be included in the active practice of the constitution of identity and if this constitution of identity should also include the teacher. Lynch refers to his work with Shaw (Lynch & Shaw, 1998) where they suggest the term 'ontological creativity' rather than 'ontological authenticity' because Foucault emphasizes the creative, active construction of identity rather than just on authenticity.

The concept of cross-referential authenticity is derived from Guba and Lincoln's (1989) criterion of 'educative authenticity' and is used by Lynch (2001, p. 365) "to examine the understanding of the identities that others have constituted for themselves as a result of the assessment process". The characteristics of evolved power relation or the validity framework that Lynch proposes is also a combination of educational research and philosophy. Guba and

Lincoln's (Lynch, p. 366) concept of 'tactical authenticity' is used and defined as "the degree to which participants are empowered to carry out the changes that are made possible through the research or assessment process". This concept is used in combination with the notion of power relations as defined by Foucault (1982) meaning that if assessment has an effect on power relations (e.g. students assuming more responsibility in the curriculum, teachers gaining control over assessment practices established by others) then this impact should be evaluated to determine if it is positive or negative.

***Democratic approaches to assessment.***

Shohamy (2001) defines critical testing within the area of critical pedagogy, where tests are seen as powerful tools. She states that "critical testing implies the need to develop critical strategies to examine the uses and consequences of tests, to monitor their power, minimize their detrimental force, reveal the misuses, and empower the test takers" (p. 131). The following are some of the principles of critical testing she adapted from Pennycook (1994) and Kramsch (1993):

- Encourage test takers to be critical about the tests, questioning and criticizing them
- Question whose knowledge is evaluated in a test and if this is unchangeable or negotiated
- Include other members of the educational context in the test: students, teachers, parents, test writers, policy makers

According to Shohamy (2001) critical testing cares about issues such as: who the test takers and the testers are, what their agenda is, what the context and the context of the topic assessed is, who derives benefit from the test, why the test is provided, how the results will be used, what is and what is not tested and why, what is behind the test, what the decisions made

based on the test are, who participates in the test design in addition to the tester, and the type of feedback that is offered based on the test, among others.

For Giroux (1995, in Shohamy 2001, p. 135-136), a democratic system of assessment is based on principles, where the power of a test is transferred from the elite to the base. In line with this, Shohamy refers to Freire's (1985, p. 135-136) dialogical idea between the evaluator and the evaluatee. This view of evaluation is a current approach where the responsibility of testing is shared among testers, test takers, peers, teachers and parents, all of who construct assessment knowledge in a cooperative and dialogical form. This perspective of working together within the educational community that includes administrators is also supported by Freedman (1993, in Shohamy, 2001, p. 136-137).

Fetterman, Kaftarian and Wandersman (1996, in Shohamy, 2001, p. 137) use the term empowerment evaluation as "a collaborative approach to evaluation which fosters improvement and self-determination and aims to help people to help themselves and improve their programs using a form of self-evaluation and reflection". New models of assessment are more democratic because the power is shared and there is collaboration and representation. One way of sharing power is to collect different evidence of students' assessment, such as portfolios, self-assessment, projects, observations and tests. The tester acts out as a facilitator who collects information and interprets it. Shohamy (2001) proposes a democratic model as the best one to evaluate, where the power is shared, rather than transferred, and where the evidence collected from different sources is contextualized.

According to Nevo (1996, as cited in Shohamy, 2001, p. 138) in a dialogical model of evaluation, "dialoguing implies a two-way relationship that is based on the assumption that nobody knows everything, but both parties know something and through dialogue they will learn

more. Dialoguing implies a willingness of both parties to understand, and it acknowledges that each side has limitations”.

Fetterman *et al.*’s model of empowerment (1996, as cited in Shohamy, 2001) focuses on self-determination and collaboration, where evaluation is a group activity that takes into account participation. The participants of this program of evaluation assess their progress continuously on the basis of the goals they have set up and redefine their plans and strategies according the assessment completed. One of the roles of the evaluator is to teach ways to conduct self-assessment.

Shohamy (2001) recognizes that democratic models of assessment are expensive and time-consuming. Nonetheless, she emphasizes that democratic practices are chosen for their principles, rather than for their efficiency and cost. Shohamy considers that having multiple sources of assessment is an important component of democratic approaches. The reason is that tests are limited to what they assess, but it is necessary to access other procedures to assess those areas that tests cannot reach.

For Shohamy (2001), the use of tests as a learning tool rather than as a power tool is also a democratic approach to assessment. According to her, tests are useful tools that provide meaningful information when test takers receive feedback. Test takers who do not receive feedback do not benefit from the information tests give and are used by those who have the power, the examiners, who are the only ones who achieve their agenda. Providing feedback is an ethical and pedagogical approach that results in students’ improved learning. Shohamy suggests that less power should be given to tests and more emphasis placed on the information tests lead to improve teaching and learning.

Fredriksen and Collins (1989, as cited in Shohamy, 2001, p. 142) state that information obtained from tests can contribute to improve learning when tests are connected to the learning that takes place in the classroom. Systemic validity occurs when tests are introduced as a part of the learning and instructional system. For these authors “changes in the education system take place according to feedback obtained from tests”. For them, high systemic validity can only be achieved when a whole set of assessment activities foster it. Those activities include the use of direct tests, self-assessment, repeated testing and feedback.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, I presented the theoretical framework of this study which is composed by four sociocultural theories and that include: teacher investment, identity construction through discourse, figured worlds, and communities of practice. After the introduction of these theories, I grouped studies on the topic of language teacher identity at the international level including TESOL and EFL contexts, and at the national level of Colombia including studies that are not limited to language teachers due to the little documentation of this topic in the country. I drew on professional capital as what allowed me to put together all the components of teacher identity together to understand and explained how their identities were connected to their practices in the classroom. I also used a situated definition of teaching practices aligned with sociocultural frameworks and defined assessment practices using formative and democratic approaches to assessment that allowed me to establish an organic relationship between what teachers knew and did in their classrooms. In the next chapter, I will explain the methodology implemented to carry out this study.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I describe the research method and procedures I used to explore the relationship between teachers' teaching and assessment practices and their identities. At the beginning of chapter 3, I define the terms ethnography and case study and explain why those research methods were the approaches to examine the topic I intended. Then, I offer a description of the university, the Foreign Language Teaching Section (FLTS) that houses and the programs where the study was conducted, and the English programs where the participant teachers worked. Next, I present the procedures I followed to contact the participants and the description of who participated in the study. After this, I explain the data collection instruments that I used which are as follows:

- Participant-observations and fieldnotes;
- In-depth interviews;
- Artifact collection (e.g. teachers' timelines as language learners and language teachers, samples of the evaluations teachers use, and institutional and legal documents that frame the programs where the participant teachers work); and
- A background questionnaire.

Furthermore, I explain my positionality in the study as an insider and outsider simultaneously and I refer to the data analysis procedures I used, which were basically coding and memo writing. I also describe what I did to interpret the data analyzed, how the data was triangulated and how the trustworthiness and validity of the study were addressed.

In line with the methodology proposed for this study, the research question I proposed and that allowed all of the parts of the study to be connected is how do EFL teachers' identities shape and/or get shaped by their teaching and language assessment practices in the context of

national and institutional language policies at a Colombian public university? As Hays (2004) suggests, the question is what allows the researcher to maintain a focus throughout the project. The question I present follows the focus Hays proposes which –for this case– will be on teachers’ identities and their possible influences on their teaching and language assessment practices in the context of national and institutional language policies. When this study was proposed, the initial idea was to focus only on teachers’ identities and their language assessment practices; however, as soon as I began to collect data in the field, I realized a strong connection between teaching and assessment practices, then these two were included at an early stage of the study, just as Parlett and Hamilton (1976 as cited in Stake, 1995, p. 9) suggest, changes may occur in progressive focusing. As part of the main research question, I also proposed the following sub-research questions that helped to answer the main research question:

- What kinds of identities do EFL teachers construct in this context?
- How do EFL teachers construct their identities?
- What are EFL teachers’ teaching practices?
- What are EFL teachers’ assessment practices?

## **Methodological Framework**

### **Ethnographic case study.**

The methodological approach that I opted for in this investigation combines ethnography and case study. The study will include ethnography because I addressed the specialized fieldwork with culture as the main concept, where over time deep engagement is expected, and where its main objective is to present the culture from an insider’s point of view (Preissle & Grant, 2004). Hale, Snow-Gerono, and Morales (2008) define ethnography as a written description of culture adding that culture is viewed as “the acquired knowledge that

people use to interpret experiences and generate social behavior” (p. 1418). They add that “ethnography seeks to learn about a people group from studying *with* them”. Hate *et al.* cite Spradley (1979, p. 1418) to say that ethnography “starts with a humble attitude of ignorance with the goal of developing an “epistemological humility”. For them, the goal of ethnography is to learn about people and this entails a desire to learn about oneself.

Summing up, I consider an ethnographic case study was an appropriate methodological approach for this research because it allowed me to understand teachers’ realities as well as the intricacies of the decisions they made in the classroom, beginning with their inner worlds but also examining the role that social constructed practices, their own agency and the institutional-embedded professional practices played in their identity development. Moreover, the mutual trust that ethnographic work facilitates was crucial to access the participants’ classroom and to shape the understanding of the phenomena observed through their own eyes, giving them a voice and avoiding exogenous views that more orthodox research approaches tend to do. As a researcher, I was methodologically interested in understanding the uniqueness and commonalities of *cátedra* teachers (adjunct faculty) who had the profile to work in the new English program. I was also interesting in knowing and understanding their experiences within the language policy context already described.

Case study was also made part of this research because of its characteristics as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 13). For Yin, there are three conditions that should be considered to choose a research strategy: the type of research question, the extent of control the researcher has over behavioral events, and the degree of focus on contemporary events. Case studies are the preferred research



method when the questions of the study are of the of the “how” and “why” type, when the researcher has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary real-life phenomenon. These type of questions are more explanatory as they are intended to deal with operational links that need to be traced over time.

According to Yin (2003), case studies are used to contribute to the knowledge of an individual, a group, or an organizational phenomenon. The need to do a case study comes from the desire to understand a complex social phenomenon. As a result, case studies allow the researcher to maintain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events that, in my case, apply to the implementation of a new language policy and the different English programs that were going to be transformed in the university where the study was carried out as well as to the identification of the incidence of teachers’ identities in their teaching and language assessment practices.

Case studies also deal with different situations where there are more data variables than the pointed by data, they rely on multiple sources of evidence that should allow triangulation, and are benefited from prior development of theoretical propositions that guide the data collection and analysis. This means that case study is a research strategy that comprises a method with its logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific data analysis approaches (Yin, 2003).

In his book *The Art of Case Study Research*, Stake (1995) uses the metaphor of the complexity of a leaf or a toothpick to explain what is expected from a single case and explains that his view of case studies comes from naturalistic, holistic, ethnographic, phenomenological, and biographical research methods. Stake claims that we study a case “when it itself is of very special interest” (p. xi) and contends that “case study is the study of the particularity and

complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi). For Stake, the case is “a specific, complex, a functioning thing”, an integrated system (p. 2).

According to Stake (1995), people and programs are the cases of interest in education and social service and researchers are usually interested in understanding their uniqueness and commonality, to listen to their stories of people or actors, as he calls them. Meanwhile researchers may be interested in learning how the case functions in the specific context of the everyday life, they may also be willing to separate the assumptions that may happen during this learning process.

Stake (1995) identifies intrinsic, instrumental and collective case studies. He defines intrinsic case study when we are interested in a case because we need to learn about it. Instrumental case study occurs when we want to understand something else than the case, for example, when we choose a teacher to study, look broadly to the teaching but focus on a specific aspect of the teaching. Collective case studies happen when more than one teacher is chosen to be studied.

This project included the three types of case study. It was intrinsic because I was interested in learning about the relationship between teacher identities and their teaching and language assessment practices. It was instrumental because to examine the incidence of teachers’ identities in their teaching and language assessment practices, I needed to have a look at their teaching and assessment practices as well as the aspects of their identities that may be present or not in those practices. Finally, it was a collective case study because it included four teachers allowing me to have participants with different professional backgrounds and experiences, and

ages that were representative of the profile of teachers who will work in the English program derived from the new language policy at the university of the study.

### **Positionality**

In this study I played a dual role of an insider and outsider at the same time. I was an insider because I worked as a faculty member in Foreign Language Teaching Section (FLTS) to which teachers who participated in this study work and where the new English language policy and program was designed. I also consider myself an insider in this study because I know some of the teachers who work in these programs since some of them have been my colleagues and some others are my friends or were classmates in the undergraduate program. In addition to this, for 12 years, I worked at the university where the study took place under the same working conditions that teachers of this study currently have. For these reasons, it is my belief that these roles will facilitate the trust, empathy, and rapport teachers can have with me (Hays, 2004).

Nonetheless, as the researcher in this study, I also played the role of an outsider. The contractual conditions that I have now differ from those of the participant teachers. As a faculty member –in studies leave– of the FLTS and because of my graduate studies, I was absent from the university for about five years, and I was allowed to do research in the study without assuming any teaching responsibilities. Knowing that I also played an outsider role in this study, I was aware of the possible tensions that being studied may generate in the participants (Hays, 2004) therefore, I adopted a non-judgmental approach to maintain my ethics as a professional and researcher and to avoid –as much as possible– any interference in the setting. To accomplish this, I kept some methodological notes as wrote fieldnotes reflecting on my teaching experiences and positioning myself as an insider and outsider simultaneously during the duration of the study.

My familiarity with the context of the university and its community facilitated me the initial contact with teachers that were the target audience to participate in this study. Nevertheless, I have to say that despite having already been in contact with the participant teachers before the study initiated, the insertion into their everyday practices and classroom was a little bit awkward at the beginning as I had never conducted a research study with them. Nor had I had the opportunity to be in their classrooms, much less for the amount of time that I invested in this study. It is worth saying, however, that with time, we developed strong relationships of trust that I immensely value and I am grateful for that. In most cases, we even spent valuable time sharing experiences and holding teaching-related discussions that illuminated my understanding of what happened in this study.

I must add that, this being my first time carrying out a study of this sort, I also faced unexpected situations from the very first classes that I began to observe, but I was able to face those situations as I continued to be part of the teachers' worlds in the classroom. As I progressed in the study, I also experienced power relationships as the participant-teachers saw me in a position of power for being pursuing doctoral studies; nonetheless, I became aware of these forces and tried to maintain a position of humility as I developed understanding of my role as the researcher and as my intention with this study was to understand and describe if there is a connection between English teachers' identities and their teaching and language assessment practices.

As a member of the FLTS, I decided to do this ethnographic case study in this setting to contribute to the professional development needs of approximately 140 teachers that will be hired to teach in the first five years of the implementation of the new English program. Also, I wanted to contribute to how professional development programs have been oriented not only in

the context of the university, but also in the city and the country. Thus, the participants in the study needed to be teaching in any of the programs that preceded the new English program, namely: the Reading Comprehension Program, the Foreign Languages Teaching Program, and the Communicative English Program and voluntarily accept to participate in the study.

### Research Setting

This study was conducted in a public university of a major city in Colombia that I will call *Universidad Estatal (UE)*. This is a research-based higher education institution that mainly serves low and middle socio-economic status students who usually come from public schools. In spring 2008, the student population was 40,881 between undergraduate and graduate students (*UE website*<sup>1</sup>) (See Table 3.1). Its total number of faculty in June 2018 was 7,360 of which 1,418 (19.27 %) were in tenure-track positions, 519 (7.05 %) were lecturers and visiting professors, and 5,423 (73.60 %) were adjunct faculty (*Cátedra* teachers) (*UE website*<sup>2</sup>) (See Table 3.2).

Table 3.1: Number of Undergraduate and Graduate Students at *UE*

Undergraduate Students	37,253
Graduate Students	3,628
Total Number of Students for Spring 2018	40,881

Table 3.2: Number of Faculty at *UE*

<i>Cátedra</i> Teachers (Adjunct Faculty)	5,423	73.60%
Faculty in Tenure-Track Positions	1,418	19.27%
Lecturers and Visiting Professors	519	7.05%

<sup>1</sup>These ciphers were taken from *UE website*.

<sup>2</sup>These ciphers were taken from *UE website*.

Total Number of Faculty by June 2018	7,360	100%
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In addition to the main campus, located near the city's downtown, the university has eight satellite facilities in the city and nine satellite campuses across the state (*Departamento*). The university has 14 colleges (*Facultades*), 4 institutes (*Institutos*), 4 corporations (*Corporaciones*), and 4 departments (*Escuelas*) among which the Department of Languages is located. The Department of Languages has three main sections; the section in charge of two bachelor's degree programs (Foreign Language Teaching and Translation); the Outreach Center (OC) that serves foreign languages courses to young adults and English courses to the external community (Children, teenagers and adults); and the Foreign Languages Teaching Section (FLTS), that is in charge of serving eight foreign languages courses, including English, to undergraduate, graduate students, and professors in the university. (See Figure 3.1)

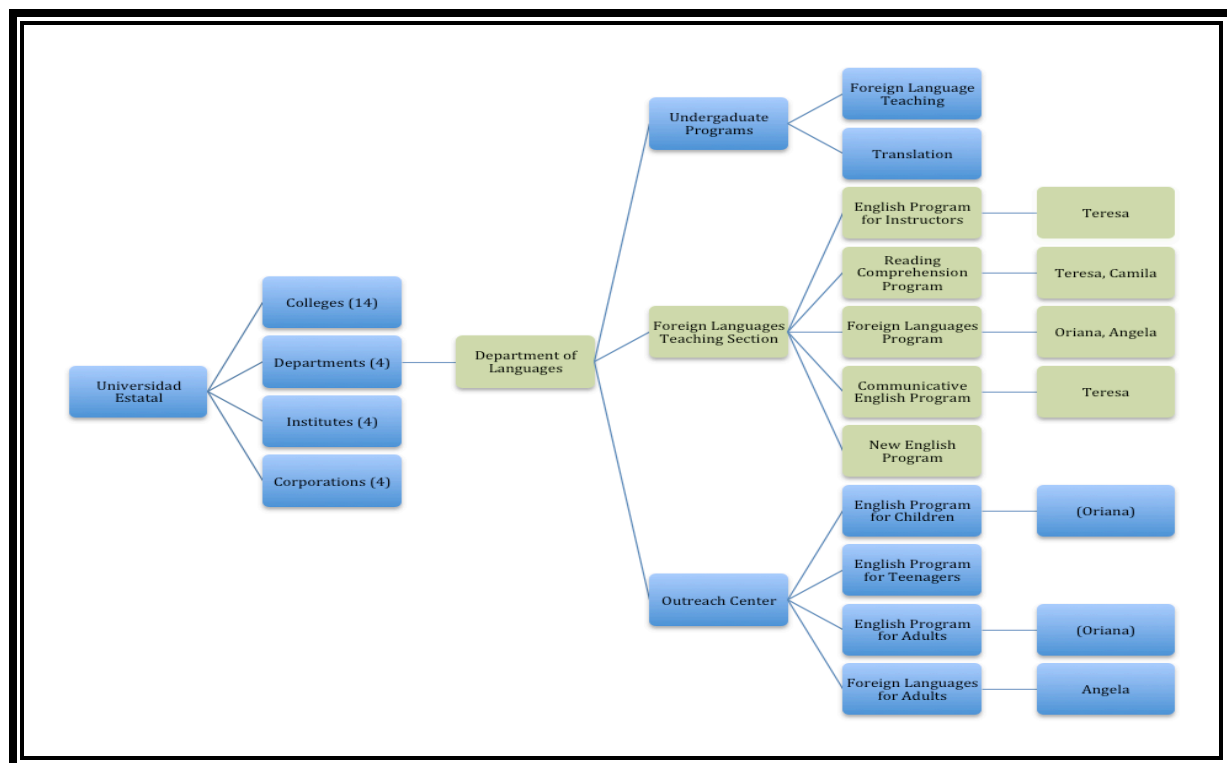


Figure 3.1: Structure of the FLTS Courses in the Context of *UE*.

This study is also situated in the context of a new English language policy that was designed in the beginning of 2013 and which was approved in December 2014 (*UE Institutional document, Academic Agreement 467*). This language policy followed what the National Ministry of Education mandated for universities in Colombia in the teaching of English. One of the claims that support the English language policy is the promotion of a foreign language to integrate the university with the international community and to promote the mobility of students, faculty and administrators. A second claim refers to the importance of consolidating international relationships and the development of academic processes that guarantee the quality and usefulness of the university alumni who should have the knowledge, competencies and skills that prepare them to face the challenges of the globalized world and to facilitate the education in values that promote knowledge and respect for other cultures. A third claim is the addressing of the quality of education based on international parameters that strengthens the academic programs and the skills development of faculty.

Among the objectives of the English language policy, were the reformulation of the academic programs, an increase of the 20% in the academic mobility of students, and the achievement of a good English language proficiency for its entire faculty. In the 467 Academic Agreement, the university also refers to the command of English as something fundamental because this is representative of the competitiveness of its professionals and it expects faculty to be able to understand texts from their specific area of knowledge, communicate fluently, produce texts of diverse topics, and argue points of view in other languages.

The document offers a short descriptor of what the students should be able to achieve at the end of the English program and compares it to the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (2001) for language learning. For students from technical and

technological programs only two levels of reading comprehension will be required. The Academic Agreement also proposes the cross-curricular inclusion of English language learning in the academic programs. Indigenous students who have their own native language and deaf students who use sign language are excluded from the requisite of the foreign language component, as well as students from the Department of Languages who receive instruction in English throughout their programs.

The new English program, derived from this language policy, started to be piloted by instructors in tenure-track positions and lecturers in the spring of 2016 and only two years later in spring 2018, *cátedra* started to teach in this program. The program was designed to teach English for general academic purposes and represented a move from requiring undergraduates to approve two reading comprehension courses in a foreign language –English and French basically; Italian, German, and Portuguese in certain cases– to pursuing five English levels. The FLTS in charge of designing the language policy and the English program belong to the Department of Languages at the university. Instructors in this section were primarily lecturers whose professional backgrounds ranged from being prepared to teach English as a foreign language to translators or professionals in other areas who knew English and had gained experience in teaching.

The initial target audience for the participants in this study were teachers of the new English program. However, since this program only began to be piloted in spring 2016 by adjunct faculty and instructors in tenure-track positions, the teachers invited to participate in this study were working at any of the programs of the FLTS. My interest in having *cátedra* teachers participating in this study lie on the fact that there will probably be a representative number of them serving the courses in the new English program and also because they represent a majority



(almost 74%) of faculty in the university whose needs and rights are visible in disadvantage in relation to those of faculty in tenure track positions.

Some of the characteristics of *cátedra* teachers is they are only paid for the number of classes they teach and are only hired for the months that the courses last. They usually do not receive any payment during four months of the year but receive some extra money at the end of the year that corresponds to some legal and extralegal benefits. During the time they have a contract with the university, they also have health care and pension benefits. The total number of *cátedra* teachers in the FLTS was 147; 81 of them (55.10 %) hold a degree in foreign language teaching; 55 do not have a teaching degree (37.42%), they are mainly translators or professionals in other areas who know English and have gained experience in teaching; and 11 teachers (7.48%), did not report any information about their professional backgrounds in the information provided by the person in charge of teachers' professional development in the FLTS. (See Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Number of *Cátedra* Teachers in the FLTS by Professional Backgrounds

<b>Professional Backgrounds</b>	<b>Number of <i>Cátedra</i> Teachers</b>	<b>%</b>
FLT	81	55.10%
No-Teaching Degree	55	37.42%
NA	11	7.48%
Total	147	100%

### **Programs of the FLTS where the participant teachers worked.**

Teachers who participated in this study worked in the following courses of the FLTS: Reading Comprehension, which main goal was the understanding of texts in English; the Foreign

Languages Program and the Communicative English Program that aimed to address the four language skills —listening, speaking, reading and writing— and which included project work. The reading comprehension courses lasted 80 hours and the foreign languages and communicative courses lasted 64 hours. There were four participants in this study, all of them lecturers from the FLTS. During the time the data for this study was collected, two of the participants –Oriana<sup>3</sup> and Angela<sup>4</sup>– also taught English courses at the Outreach Center. In addition to working at *UE*, Camila<sup>5</sup> worked at another private higher education institution in the city. Teresa<sup>6</sup> only worked at *UE* but in three of the programs of the FLTS. (See Table 3.4)

Table 3.4: Programs of the FLTS where the Participant Teachers Worked

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Programs</b>
Oriana	FLTP / EPA
Angela	FLTP / FLAP
Teresa	RCP / CEP
Camila	RCP

***The reading comprehension program (RCP).***

Camila and Teresa were the teachers that I observed in the Reading Comprehension I and II courses. The objective of the Reading Comprehension I course was to develop the reading comprehension ability using morphosyntactic and vocabulary structures and general terminology. The justification of the course lie on the great amount of scientific and cultural

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<sup>3</sup>This name is a pseudonym.

<sup>4</sup>This name is a pseudonym.

<sup>5</sup>This name is a pseudonym.

<sup>6</sup>This name is a pseudonym.

bibliography in English for which the acquisition of skills to understand texts was an essential tool for any student to be updated on the most recent advances in science, culture and research.

By the end of the course students should be able to extract explicit information from scientific and cultural dissemination texts, with accuracy and at an average speed. Some specific objectives of the course included: vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and reading. The following tables include the specific objectives explicit in the course syllabus and the contents proposed for each of the six units. In relation to assessment, the syllabus only proposed a midterm exam that corresponded to 25% of the course grade, a final exam with another 25%, and a follow-up component with a 50% that included: quizzes and worksheet exercises. It was also mentioned that the course lasted 80 hours with four hours of class per week. See appendix A<sup>7</sup> for a detailed description of the Reading Comprehension I objectives and the course contents.

The objective of the Reading Comprehension II course was to develop a greater reading comprehension ability and skill using morphosyntactic and vocabulary structures and general terminology. The justification of the course was supported on the great amount of scientific and cultural bibliography in English for which the acquisition of skills to understand texts was an essential tool for any student to be updated on the most recent progress in science, culture and research.

By the end of the course students should be able to extract explicit and implicit information from authentic scientific and cultural texts, with greater accuracy and average speed than in the first level, showing decoding, analytical and synthesis skills. Some specific objectives of the course included: vocabulary, discourse, and reading. The following tables include the specific objectives explicit in the course syllabus and the contents proposed for each of the five

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<sup>7</sup>UE, FLTS, Reading Comprehension Program (RCP).

units. Regarding assessment, the syllabus only included that it consisted of a midterm exam that corresponded to 25% of the course grade, a final exam with another 25%, and a follow-up component with a 50% that included: quizzes and reading exercises. It was also mentioned that the course lasted 80 hours with four hours of class per week. See appendix B<sup>8</sup> for a detailed description of the reading comprehension II objectives and the course contents.

***The communicative English program (CEP).***

Teresa was the only teacher who worked in this program. The Communicative English Program was created in 2013 as some departments of *Universidad Estatal (UE)* realized the need that their students developed not only reading skills in English but also writing, speaking and listening. Nowadays, this program is being implemented in five of the departments at the university. This program is considered a transition between the reading comprehension courses and the new program that began to be piloted in the spring of 2016.

The program follows a communicative approach and proposes project work as a way to encourage students to work collaboratively, promote autonomous learning, and the development of research skills through the learning of English. It seems to be that the course syllabus takes for granted that teachers of the Communicative English Program know what following a communicative approach and what working with projects in the class implies as there is not a definition of these methodological approaches, description of how they can be implemented in the foreign language classroom or references that teachers can access. It is understandable that course syllabi do not include this kind of information; however, noticing that this syllabus suggest activities and websites for teachers to use in their classes and having known the way the classes are developed, made me think about the inclusion of some definitions or sources of this

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<sup>8</sup>UE, FLTS, Reading Comprehension Program (RCP).

sort that can guide teachers' work, specially those who were not educated as language teachers and who have had few opportunities to continue developing professionally in the area of English language teaching.

The course syllabus recommends the use of Spanish in the classroom to facilitate students' understanding mainly in the first two course levels. It also states that the classes are student-centered and that the role of the instructor is that of a facilitator who organizes and supports students' learning. The program suggests the use of technological tools, the use of authentic and adapted audiovisual and reading materials that favor class interactions. Some suggested activities include: lectures, listening and reading exercises, dictation of short sentences, group workshops, presentations, role-plays, and class project developed in and out of class where language skills are integrated. Regarding the class project, some of the activities suggested include: Internet searches, content-specific expert queries, analysis of the readings, presentations. In addition to this, procedural explanations of the work assigned to students, discussions of cultural aspects, and the sharing of what students do individual as well as the difficulties they may have encountered are proposed.

The main objectives include: the creation of a space for students to develop linguistic and cultural elements that facilitate the development of their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and foster friendly spaces of critical reflection where different cultural representations can be compared using the target language. This is a face-to-face program composed of five course levels with four hours of classes per week for a total of 64 hours in the semester. Although the program does not require the use of a textbook, it includes some communicative, linguistic, socio-cultural objectives and strategic competencies to develop in each level. It also has course contents that follow some language functions in each level. The assessment is divided in three

components that the teacher can negotiate with students: a 40% of follow-up and a midterm and final exam that are worth 30% each.

I observed Teresa in a level one course. The introduction of this course level proposes a space for the learning of English and the development of communicative competences through interactions and the negotiation of knowledge in the classroom, the use of new technologies, collaborative and independent work, autonomous learning and learning strategies. Appendix C<sup>9</sup> describes the specific learning objectives and the grammar, thematic and linguistic contents proposed for the first level of the Communicative English Program.

The assessment is defined as formative, alternative and summative. The first one highlights students' learning process and is recommended that takes place before summative assessment. Self-assessment is proposed as a component of alternative assessment aiming to promote students' autonomous learning, it is suggested to do it through an individual interview with students or by using a written format, and it is clearly stated that the self-assessment does make part of summative assessment. Summative assessment is proposed for the follow-up that includes quizzes, portfolios and the same activities proposed for the class. It is stated that the midterm exam should include the assessment of reading and writing, listening and oral skills, giving 10% of weight to the latter and 20% to the other skills. For the final exam students are evaluated with the class project where 15% is given to the process and 15% to the product.

From what is stated in the course syllabus regarding assessment, it has to be said that self-assessment and portfolios are not identified as components of alternative assessment and its connection to formative assessment is unnoticed. There is not a weight given to self-assessment and more clarity should be made explicit in the course syllabus about how the process and the product of the class project should be assessed. In my opinion, knowing that almost a 38% of

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<sup>9</sup>UE, FLTS, Communicative English Program (CEP).

teachers in the FLTS were not educated as teachers, the explicitness of these aspects is of particular importance to guide the decisions they make to plan the evaluations and assess their students.

***The foreign languages program (FLP).***

The classes where I observed Oriana and Angela in the FL2 made up part of the Foreign Languages Teaching Section (FLTS). This program was created in 1997 as a strategy in the internationalization policies of *Universidad Estatal (UE)*. Its target population are undergraduate students, although professors, adjunct faculty, lecturers, administrative staff and retired personnel were also admitted to the program depending on the availability. The program does not have any cost for students who register voluntarily in them, these students only need to have a high GPA and pass a selection process. The mission of the program includes the teaching of foreign languages and cultures, fostering communicative competences and autonomous language learning with the help of technological tools. The languages taught in this program are: German, Chinese, French, English, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese and Turkish.

The design of the English courses in this program were used as the basis for the design of courses in the Communicative English Program that served as a transitional program for students from departments where the foreign language requisites demanded more than the reading comprehension courses and meanwhile the new English program were completely functioning.

The course contents for the levels four and five where I observed Oriana were taken from the last seven units of the American Headway textbook that were organized into lexical, grammatical, pragmatic, sociolinguistic competencies. See appendix D<sup>10</sup> for details of the course contents and the competencies of these two levels.

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<sup>10</sup>UE, FLTS, Foreign Languages Program (FLP).

***The English program for adults (EPA).***

Oriana was the only teacher from this study who worked at the English Program for Adults (EPA) from the Outreach Center. Some generalities of how this program was structured will be given to offer a description of the context in order to contribute to understand how Oriana's identities development was shaped by her work in this program. The EPA is focused on the needs of people who have pursued technical, technological or undergraduate programs and approaches English language learning through everyday and professional life current topics based on students' interests.

The EPA has a document that, in my opinion, represents one of the most important and useful tools in the program to guide teachers' work. This document includes some language learning and teaching principles, an overview of the contents, the methodological approach, the use of material design for the program, and the assessment. It has been said, however, that the success in the effective implementation of the program does not lie only on this document, but in a sum of components that include the leadership role that the program coordinator plays to guide, accompany, and support teachers' understanding of the program; her constant reflection and evaluation with teachers of what happens in the classroom; the organization, explicitness, and clarity of the course syllabi and its alignment with the assessment system; and the professional development support she offers, observing their classes, providing them feedback, and including their voices to make decisions in the meetings and the in-service professional development program.

***The foreign languages for adults program (FLAP).***

Angela was the only teacher from those who participated in this study who worked at the Foreign Languages for Adults Program (FLAP) from the Outreach Center of the Department of



Languages. I observed her in a level one and level two English classes. Appendix E<sup>11</sup> offers details of what is proposed in the course contents in these courses based on the textbook that is followed. The main purpose of this program is to “strengthen ties with a broad community through the exploration of different cultures and the appropriation of their languages” (FLAP, Outreach Center, Department of Languages, UE website). According to what is stated in the website, the program aims to provide students with the tools they may require to perform situations in social, professional and entertainment domains within “a motivating and effective learning environment”. The program claims to follow a communicative approach where the four language skills are integrated and where students apply and share their knowledge and experiences in significative ways. The program organizes some cultural activities such as: Summer solstice, movie club and reading aloud and offers some services to students like: conversation clubs, tutoring sessions, multimedia room with access to the Internet and learning software, and a small library where students can borrow printed and audiovisual materials.

### **Participants Selection**

The academic committee of FLTS was informed of the study at the moment of asking its representative for the letter of collaboration required to submit the proposal to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Once the IRB office approved the project, teachers of the English program received an email from the person in charge of teachers’ professional development. In the email they were invited to participate voluntarily in the study by contacting me if they were interested in becoming part of the study. The email with the invitation was sent to 43 teachers, and I obtained a response from six teachers. The four participants were selected as a representative sample of their practices and the information of one of the participant was discarded for being

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<sup>11</sup>UE, FLTS, Foreign Languages for Adults Program (FLAP).

too scarce, as the teacher worked in one of the satellite campuses of *Universidad Estatal* eight hours by car from the main campus.

As teachers accepted to be part of the study, I held individual informal meetings to explain to them what the project consisted of, respond to any questions they may have, and ask them to sign the consent form. The following is the information teachers received of the project: purpose of the study, how it will be conducted, how confidentiality will be established, what I observed in the classes, who reviewed preliminary findings of the study to verify the information, and who received the case study final document (Hays, 2004). The following table summarizes some key information of the four participants. (See Table 3.5)

Table 3.5: Participants' Professional Background

Teachers	Programs where Teachers Work	Years of Teaching Experience	Bachelor's	Graduate Education
Oriana	FLP, EPA	13	English, French Spanish Translation	Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages
Angela	FLP, FLAP	11	Translation and Interpretation in 2 FLs	Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages
Teresa	RCP, CEP	23	Professional in Languages	English Teaching Certificate ( <i>Especialización</i> )
Camila	RCP	10	English, French Spanish Translation	NA

## Participants

### **Oriana.**

The first participant was Oriana. At the moment of the study, she was in her mid thirties, held a bachelor's in English, French and Spanish translation, a master's degree in teaching and learning foreign languages, and a certificate (*Diplomado*) in teaching Spanish as a foreign language that she finished during her participation in this study. She self-assessed her proficiency in English as mid-advanced and her French in a low-intermediate level. She learned both languages when she pursued her bachelor's and made good use of some learning strategies she implemented.

She had 13 years of English teaching experience working at a private pre-school institution, a private school, a private language institute and at public higher education institutions. At *Universidad Estatal (UE)* she has worked at the Outreach Center teaching communicative courses to children and professionals and she has also worked at the FLTS teaching undergraduate students who learned English voluntarily. As part of her professional development, she reported participation in seminars, workshops, in-services, study groups, research projects and a couple of coaching sessions. Her contract in the university was as a lecturer. During the first semester of her participation in this study she worked 18.5 hours a week and during the second semester 26.5, and the monthly average income she reported in the questionnaire was the equivalent of USD \$ 570.

I observed two of her classes in the FLTP, one level IV course during the first semester of this study, and one level V during the second semester. English courses in this program gradually disappeared during the time this study was developed to transition to the new English program that would be mandatory for all undergraduate students. See appendix F for a summary of the key information Oriana provided in the questionnaire.

**Angela.**

The second participant was Angela. She was a native from a foreign Spanish-speaking country who, by the time of this study, had been living in the city for about five years. She was in her late 20s, held a bachelor's in translation and interpretation from her country of origin and during the time of this study she graduated from a master's in teaching and learning foreign languages. She had knowledge of English and a second foreign language (FL2) and placed her proficiency level in both languages as high-advanced. She reported having learned those languages in her home country, a country where the FL2 was spoken and two countries where English was spoken, where she also lived for some time. In addition to these places, she also had the opportunity to visit for tourism a country where the FL2 is spoken.

She had 11 years of teaching experience working at a private language institute and a public university in her country. She has worked at *UE* since her arrival to Colombia teaching the two languages she knows at the Outreach Center, the FLTS, and one of the undergraduate programs of the Department of Languages. In the questionnaire, she reported having participated in courses as part of her professional development. She reported 28 working hours per week during the first semester she participated in this study and 36 in the second semester. Her working contract was as a *cátedra* teacher and the monthly average income she reported was the equivalent of USD \$ 830.

During the first semester, I observed her classes in a level III of the second foreign language she taught at the FLTP and during the second semester I observed her in a level I and II English class at the FLAP. Students from the first course were undergraduates from *UE* and students from the second course were mainly people who were still in high school, had just finished high school or were looking forward to entering the university. Some other students in the English course included undergraduates from *UE* or other universities, working people,

retired persons, and young professionals. The English courses in the FLAP lasted 32 hours with classes two times during the week, whereas the courses in the FLTP course lasted 80 hours. In both classes students followed a textbook. See appendix G that includes Angela's information from the background questionnaire.

**Teresa.**

Teresa was the third participant. She was the last participant who accepted to be part of this study and she did it by chance. She had classes in a classroom where I had forgotten an umbrella. I went back to the classroom and waited for the classroom to be opened to look for my umbrella, she arrived and asked me if I was there to communicate something about any study. I said I was not there for that but told her that I was in fact trying to get participants for my study and this is how she began to be interested in participating in the study.

Teresa was in her early 50s. She reported knowledge of English and French at a high-advanced level, Japanese at a high-intermediate level, German at a mid-advanced level, and Portuguese, Italian, Chinese, Turkish, Russian, and Arabic at a high-beginner level. She held a bachelor's as Professional in Languages, but the program she pursued had a mix of translation, interpretation and teaching contents. She also had a English teaching certificate (*Especialización*) from a private university in the city. Part of her professional development investment included her participation in courses on teaching and didactics at the higher education level, pedagogy and didactics to teach at the Elementary and High School level, and pedagogy, didactics and assessment in higher education. She also reported having participated in seminars, workshops, in-services, study groups and research projects.

She had 23 years of teaching experience working at public and private schools, public and private higher education institutions, and private language institutions. At *UE* she has taught

Reading Comprehension courses to undergraduate and graduate students, listening comprehension courses to graduate students, and communicative courses to undergraduate students and university instructors. In the questionnaire she reported 22 working hours per week during the first semester she participated in this study and 36 in the second semester. Her contract was as a lecturer and her monthly average income reported was USD \$ 500. I observed her in two reading comprehension courses and a communicative course. For details of the key information Teresa provided in the background questionnaire see appendix H.

**Camila.**

Camila was the fourth participant teacher. She was in her early 50s, the proficiency level she reported in the questionnaire was of high-intermediate for English and high-beginner for French. She has had the opportunity to travel to a couple of cities in the United States for pleasure. Her bachelor's was in translation. She also studied English and French at private language institutes before and after her bachelor's and took some courses on pedagogy and didactics offered by *UE*. She registered in a teaching certificate (*Especialización*) but had to quit due to health issues. She reported having participated in courses and seminars as part of her professional development.

She has been an English teacher for 10 years working at a public school, a private language institute, and public and private higher education institutions of the city. At *UE* she had taught Reading Comprehension courses. In the questionnaire, she reported 34 working hours per week during the first semester of participation in this study and 27 in the second one. She was hired as a lecturer with a monthly average income of USD \$ 580. I observed her in two Reading Comprehension courses. Appendix I contains key information Camila provided in the background questionnaire.

### **Data Sources of Data Collection Procedures**

Given that the objective of this study was to explore and understand the relationship between teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices, a good way to do this was through the examination of their identities in their discourses and practices. The implementation of a background questionnaire contributed to obtain general information about the participant teachers' professional profiles and working experiences. The participant observations aim to identify the instructors' teaching and assessment practices including the analysis of the assessment instruments they used. The interviews were useful to explore in-depth how teachers constructed their identities from discourse. The analysis of legal and institutional documents was useful to frame the work of teachers in relation to the national linguistic policy for universities, the new English language policy and the English program in the university.

Regarding teachers' identities, the research questions intend to explore teachers' life histories in the construction of their identities as long-term language learners and language teachers. Also, part of the exploration of teachers' identities included inquiring about their ideologies about language, language teaching and learning, language assessment, and language teachers' learning. The research questions also had a focus on the connection between teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices.

#### **Participant-observations and fieldnotes.**

Classroom observations are an important source of information for an ethnographic case study because interactions and teachers' practices can only be understood through observation (Hays, 2004). For this study, participant-observation was done to keep track of teachers' practices and to compare them with their discourses of language learning, teaching, assessment and traits of their identities observed. In the observations I used thick description, which Geertz (1973) suggests as a tool to reconstruct events; in this case, it helped me see the classes that were

aligned to or contradicted what teachers expressed in the interviews or the language assessment instruments that they used.

In a study like this that aims to examine teaching and assessment practices to identify if there is any relationship with teachers' identities, fieldwork constitutes a means to "understand and appreciate action from the perspective of participants" (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011, p. 14). Fieldnotes were my companion during the time I spent in teachers' classrooms and other informal spaces after classes. As the participant teachers in this study were *cátedra* teachers, they did not hold planning meetings or have a faculty lounge where they could meet. At the beginning of the 2016 fall semester, teachers of the FLTS attended a course to prepare for the new English program. I attended this course to get in contact with the possible participants for this study and wrote fieldnotes that helped me see what teachers were facing; however, none of the teachers whose data are presented here were in that course.

Due to the time this study lasted, fieldnotes were the method I used to capture and preserve teachers' practices and my own insights of what I saw to be happening in the classrooms. I got as close to the participant teachers as the relationship of trust I developed with them allowed me and wrote about their activities in the classroom in an attempt to understand what they did and inquire about the connections with their identities (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). The description and writing of what teachers did during an extensive period of time (240 hours and 136 sessions in total) allowed me find out patterns that were characteristic of each of the teacher's practices as I developed observation skills to pay attention to what was important in relation to my research questions and subquestions and other practices that called my attention.

By writing fieldnotes, I kept track of my first impressions and personal reactions as I had positioned myself as a student, a teacher and a researcher in different moments of the class. From



the student perspective, I was able to place myself in the pupils' shoes and think about how they could have been feeling and assimilating the instruction; as a teacher, I constantly considered what I would have done or not if I were teaching the class; and as researcher, I learned to establish distance from my position as a teacher and be able to ask questions that helped me understand teachers' actions in the classroom.

The fieldnotes I wrote every day were organized as soon as possible and expanded with my reflections on what had happened, questions that emerged from the fieldnotes to ask teachers during the interview, or sometimes connections to readings that helped to clarify and understand what teachers were doing. These asides served as analytic writing that helped to clarify, explained, interpret and raise questions and sometimes, I also wrote commentaries that were more elaborate reflections on specific events that had impacted me or kept me thinking (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011).

### **In-depth interviews.**

Interviews are one of the richest and most important sources of data collection in a case study because they provide the researcher with a variety of perspectives (Hays, 2004). For this study, the objective with interviews was to inquire into teachers' identities from their discourses by encouraging them to elaborate on implicit knowledge of their teaching and assessment practices and to reflect on aspects of their teaching careers they may needed to think about more deeply.

In his book, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, Seidman (2006) refers to a phenomenological approach to in-depth interviewing. For him, interviewing is a way of seeing "stories and the details of people's lives as a way of knowing and understanding" (p. 1). According to what he says, gathering the stories of people through their stories is a privilege, as

is developing the profiles of those people through thematic connections. For Seidman, doing interviews is a way of being interested in other people's stories and these stories are a meaning-making process. Seidman sees interviewing as a basic mode of inquiry. He explains that recounting narratives of experience has been an important way through which humans have made sense of their history. Seidman claims that "understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (p. 9) is at the root of in-depth interviews.

Seidman (2006) refers to interviewing as having access to the subjective understanding of someone's behavior for which mere observation will not be enough. This claim is made on the assumption that "the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience" (Blumer, 1969 as cited in Seidman, 2006, p. 10). Then interviewing allows the researcher to contextualize a behavior and provides access to understanding an action. Interviewing can be an appropriate means to understand the meaning that people involved in education make of their experience, although that may not always be completely sufficient. As Seidman concludes, it is through understanding the experience of individuals that interviewing becomes a powerful way to gain insight into educational and social issues and that interviewing is the most consistent method of inquiry in understanding how people's ability to make meaning through language.

Seidman's (2006) phenomenological approach to in-depth interviews combines life-history and focused interviews. The interviewers use open-ended questions, with the objective of building upon and exploring the answers of the participants to the questions and the participants reconstruct their own experience in the topic addressed. The following are the series of three interviews that Seidman proposes: focused life history, details of experience, and reflection on the meaning of experiences. Despite the focus given to meaning in the third interview, meaning

is present in the three interviews because “the process of putting experience into language is a meaning-making process” (Vygotsky, 1987 as cited in Seidman, 2006, p. 19). The following chart shows how Seidman defines what is expected from the interviewer and the participants in the three interview series and how those were adapted to what I wanted to do in this study.

Table 3.6: Foci of the Three Interviews

	<b>Seidman (2006)</b>	<b>This study</b>
<b>First interview</b>	The interviewer situates the participant in context, asking him or her to tell as much as possible about him or her in relation to the topic of the study.	<b>Background and teachers’ life-histories</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two timelines with the most influential people and events in the participants’ lives as language learners and language teachers;</li> <li>• How teachers learned English;</li> <li>• How they were assessed as students;</li> <li>• How they became teachers;</li> <li>• How their experience was in their preparation as teachers.</li> </ul>
<b>Second interview</b>	The participants reconstruct the details of their lived experiences.	<b>Teachers’ current experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How they teach English and assess their students’ learning;</li> <li>• Ups and downs in their careers;</li> <li>• Their experience with the professional development offer in the university;</li> <li>• How teachers see themselves as English teachers in the university, in the city, in Colombia;</li> <li>• Who a good English teacher is for them;</li> <li>• What it means for them having been teachers for the time they have been;</li> <li>• What it means for them to be a teacher in the new English program of the university,</li> <li>• What it means to them to be a speaker of English in the city;</li> <li>• What they do to maintain their language proficiency in the language they teach; and</li> <li>• If they feel well paid as English teachers and professionals.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Third interview</b></p>	<p>The participants are encouraged to reflect on what their experiences mean for them and to make intellectual and emotional connections between their work and lives.</p>	<p><b>Inquiry and rationale of teachers' teaching and assessment practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class agenda writing</li> <li>• Grammar-translation approach to reading comprehension</li> <li>• Language skills development</li> <li>• Class interactions</li> <li>• Intercultural and critical topics</li> <li>• Connections between teaching and assessment</li> <li>• Assessment beliefs</li> <li>• Formative assessment</li> <li>• Alternative assessment</li> <li>• Democratic assessment practices</li> <li>• Assessment criteria</li> <li>• Instructions for assessment tasks</li> <li>• Prompt feedback and grading</li> </ul>
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Seidman's (2006) approach to in-depth interviews was a useful method to dig into the reasons behind teachers' teaching and assessment practices; these interviews represented a complementary source of information to validate what was observed in the classroom. While participant-observation offered a perspective into teachers' practices, interviews allowed me to gain insight into what was guiding teachers' practices in the classroom. The approximate length of each interview was between half an hour and two hours for a total of 13 hours and a half. They were conducted in Spanish and the excerpts included as evidences in this study were translated by me. See appendix J for the prompt teachers received via email to prepare their timelines as language learners and teachers, appendix K contains the protocol of questions used for the second interview, and appendix L has the questions in the third interview that were withdrawn from the analysis and memo writing in the fieldnotes.

**Background questionnaire.**

A background questionnaire was designed to collect general information from the teachers who accepted to participate in the study as this information was important to situate teachers' identities and work. It was administered via email and included questions such as: name, age, gender, languages the teachers know and level of proficiency in them, professional preparation in teaching or other areas, experiences out of Colombia including language learning and teaching, or tourism, and time of the experience; years of English teaching experience; participation in professional development programs (courses, seminars, workshops, in-services, study groups, research projects, coaching), current working places, weekly working schedule, monthly income, and contractual conditions (See Appendix M).

**Artifact collection.**

Teachers were asked to share samples of the evaluations they used with the students. Course syllabi of the levels where the participants taught, and some institutional documents were analyzed to situate and understand the context where their jobs took place.

Detailing the data collection procedures utilized in this study is as important as describing how the data was analyzed and interpreted. Fieldnotes were expanded and edited as soon as possible immediately after fieldwork to guarantee the reliability of the information collected. A preliminary analysis of the data was done at the end of the first semester of data collection; namely, fieldnotes from the classroom observations were expanded and a description of the evaluations was included in the fieldnotes. The pre-analysis of the classroom observations and the assessment instruments were useful to start seeing patterns and topics in the data conducive to complement the questions for the third in-depth interviews. In what follows, I detail the data analysis procedures that I followed in both the pre-analysis and the analysis of the data.

## **Data Analysis**

Atkinson and Delamont (2011) refer to the process of analysis as something that cannot be segmented and separated from the context where the data were collected, the social context, the representations of culture and the information that pictures, videos and what oral stories transmit. Following this definition, I made connections between the different sources of data collection to group the similarities, be aware of the different data obtained through different methods, and reconstruct the reality observed in a way that it could make sense to an outsider.

To do that, I used the different types of data coding that Charmaz (2006) and Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (2011) propose. I always had in mind the research questions as a thread to be followed, leaving aside data that were not related to the research questions in any way, since the objective of the case study is to answer the research questions and not to provide a complete picture of the site (Hays, 2004). In the next part, I will explain the procedures I used in the analysis of the data such as: coding, memo writing, and data interpretation. At the end, I include how the data were triangulated, and its trustworthiness and validation, including member checks.

### **Coding.**

Charmaz (2006) presents some methodological procedures for coding, explains its importance, and connects the analysis with the data collection process. For the analysis of data in this study I included the initial, word-by-word, line-by-line, and incident to incident coding that Charmaz proposes as well as *in vivo*, focused, axial and theoretical codes. *In vivo* codes helped me to maintain the participants' meanings of their views and their actions, and to use them as symbolic markers of the teachers' discourse and meanings. I used focused coding to select – among all the data— the most significant and/or frequent codes initially identified. Axial coding helped me to sort, synthesize and organize the large amounts of data analyzed to bring them together in a coherent whole. Finally, I utilized theoretical coding to see how the codes related to

each other in order to establish any possible relationships between the categories identified in the focused coding.

During this process, I also combined inductive and deductive analysis, or what Bulmer (1979) and Kartz (1988 as cited in Emerson *et al.*, 2011, p. 173) call “retroductive” analysis. I read all the data collected together just as Charmaz (2006) and Emerson *et al.* suggest and in order to have a reflective data analysis process, I used the integrative memos that Emerson *et al.* propose as strategies that helped me keep in mind emerging comments, questions or connections.

### **Memo writing.**

To contribute to the process of understanding, analyzing and coding data, I used the procedures, ideas and strategies to write memos, which Charmaz (2006) proposes. For instance, I used the clustering and free-writing strategies she suggests to facilitate the development of memos that were used to create explanations of what was happening in the data. For Charmaz, “memo-writing is the pivotal intermediate step between data collection and writing drafts of papers” (p. 72); memo-writing helped me to analyze data and codes in an early stage of a research, and writing memos helped to increase the level of abstraction in the interpretation of the data. Following these definitions of memos and also their characterization as personal, informal and spontaneous language forms that researchers use, I used the early and advanced memos that Charmaz proposes. The first ones helped me to keep track of what I began to notice in the data and the second ones helped me to identify beliefs and assumptions in the data. Finally, memo-writing helped me develop a writer’s voice, identify emerging patterns in the data, demonstrate connections between categories, discover gaps in the data, and link data collection to data analysis, as I tried to maintain the focus on the study for the writing stage of the process.

**Data interpretation.**

For the interpretation of data, I used the three key strategies that Charmaz (2006) suggests to help move qualitative researchers from the data analysis stage to the interpretation of data: theoretical sampling, diagramming, and saturation of categories. I used theoretical sampling during the pre-analysis process, to identify a focus on which I should collect more data to expand or clarify a hunch. Also, this was a process of gathering “more data that focus on the category and its properties” or “seeking and collecting pertinent data to elaborate and refine categories in [my] emerging theory” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 96). According to what Charmaz explains, the purpose of theoretical sampling is to obtain data that explicate categories and memo-writing that leads to theoretical sampling because it ensures the construction of categories that helps the researcher clarify the relationships between categories. In sum, I used theoretical sampling as a strategy to: narrow down my focus on emerging categories, develop and refine those categories, revise the boundaries of categories, specify the relations among the categories, and establish the properties of a category to define it.

Diagramming consists of having visual representations of the categories and their relationships. I used diagramming as visual forms to organize the data analyzed in a way that helped me understand what the data were telling me and to consider different forms of organizing the results. For this, I also used tables, charts and figures as strategies for diagramming. I also used saturation of categories when the gathering of new data “no longer sparked new theoretical insights, nor revealed new properties of [my] core theoretical categories” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 113). That is to say, saturation was helpful for me to recognize when there was nothing new happening or when I started to find the same pattern.



### **Triangulation.**

Mathison (1988) refers to the concept of triangulation and its usefulness in research because it provides more and better “evidence from which researchers can construct meaningful propositions about the social world” (p. 15). A historical reference to the definition of triangulation dates from Campbell and Fiske (1959 as cited in Mathison, 1988, p. 13) that later Webb *et al.* (1966, p. 13) coined, and of which Denzin (1978, p. 13) provided a detailed discussion about how to do it. In order to give validity to the analysis of the data collected, I triangulated the data using three of the types of triangulation that Denzin proposes, throughout the period of time the study lasted, through the individual interviews, and through the analysis of the artifacts collected.

From the moment when I began to conduct the participant-observations, I identified routines in each of the teachers’ classes that later on I connected to characteristics of language teaching methods. By contrasting the teachers’ practices, I found out differences and similarities. These events were recurrent throughout the analysis I made of the participant-observations that I also validated with questions in the interviews where teachers were asked to describe their approach to teaching and assessment. Also in the interviews, I asked teachers to explain the rationale and origin of their teaching and assessment practices and I analyzed the some artifacts collected during the classes such as: class activities, quizzes, exams, and rubrics.

During these data triangulation processes, I obtained outcomes of convergence, divergence and contradiction. The first one occurred as data were collected through different sources and methods providing evidences for the topics of the study; the second, when I did not find agreement among the different perspectives collected; and the third one, when the data showed opposing views of the phenomenon studied.

### **Trustworthiness and validation.**

Mishler (1990) refers to validation in qualitative research as a way to prove its reliability as it happens in quantitative research. He sustains that the way research is validated in the soft sciences is through sharing research results and discussing them within an academic community, which he asserts that in that way, there is a social construction of knowledge. Following Mishler's ideas, I used validation as a process to evaluate the trustworthiness of the participant-observation and interpretations of the data by applying member checking.

Preliminary analysis and interpretations of the data were shared with each of the participants as they were asked to add, change and corroborate any of the information that they felt did not represent them. For instance, in the third interview, the teachers were asked to read a description of their teaching practices to validate my initial interpretations (See appendix M). At the end of the study, two of the teachers read the chapter where their information had been interpreted. With the two other teachers, I sustained phone conversations for which I had prepared a script based on their findings. To validate the data analysis and interpretation I asked the four teachers to corroborate, correct, add, take out or omit any of the information written there.

In addition to this, the multiple methods (Hays, 2004) used to collect data in this study — participant-observation, interviews, questionnaire, artifacts— constituted also a tool to triangulate the information collected as well as the time validation with the data that were collected in different moments of the study.

## **Summary**

In this chapter I described ethnographic case study as the methodological approach that was followed in this study. I provided descriptions of the setting, participants, data collection tools and data analysis process. At the end I wrote about my positionality as I reflected on how I positioned myself in this study as a language learner, language teacher and researcher and how dealing with roles of insiderness and outsidersness guided me in the examination of how teachers identities shape and get shaped by their teaching and assessment practices. In the subsequent chapter, I present and analyze the data collected during fieldwork.

## **Chapter 4: Oriana: *La Traductora que Llego a Ser Profesora* (The Translator Who Became a Teacher)**

*“... Yo creo que lo que soy, ha sido debido ... I think that who I am, has been due to my a mi profesión, o sea yo he ido, yo le he profession, that is, I have shaped my impregnado a lo que mi ocupación, mi occupation, with my style, I guess that estilo, me imagino que mi personalidad, because of my personality, but my profession pero la profesión misma también me ha itself has also molded my personality and my moldeado mi personalidad y mi estilo...” style...*

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I introduce the first participant-teacher of the study and explain her identities as a language learner and language teacher. In the development of Oriana's identities as a learner, I refer to how she invested in her language learning and her experience learning and being assessed. In her identities as a language teacher, I present the transition process she followed from being a learner to becoming a teacher. Then, I describe how she began to invest in her identity development as a language teacher working at different programs and institutions where her continuous learning as a teacher led her to be identified with certain teaching approaches, where she also continued to develop her identities learning from her practice, designing material and working with colleagues.

I discuss Oriana's identity development through practice and how she continued to incorporate new routines into her repertoire as a teacher; how being a translator, she made sense of what happened in her classroom to promote interactions; and how beginning to include students' voices led her to the inclusion of critical topics in the class discussions. I also show how Oriana's reflective practices contributed to the evolution of her class activities and on the scaffolding of students' learning. This reflection on action also led her to combine formative and summative assessment practices as well as fair and transparent assessment practices.

I describe Oriana's identity development as a process that was influenced, not only by who she was, her teaching and assessment practices but also by her experience working at other programs, specifically the English Program for Adults (EPA) and how this experience seems to have shaped her identities in similar ways as her identities continued to inform her practices. At the end, I connect Oriana's identity development to the human, social and decisional capital she developed across different moments of her teacher career and the factors that had contributed to this development.

### **Identity as a Language Learner**

#### **The language learning experience.**

Oriana acknowledged her passion for literature as something that triggered her motivation to learn languages. It was in a private language teaching institution of the city where Oriana worked that she took advantage of the great variety of sources the library provided to read every kind of novels she wanted and sometimes where she also bought books. Her passion for music in English and the access she had to TV cable –where she watched TV series in English with subtitles in Spanish– were also among the events Oriana presented in her timeline as a language learner when she was an adolescent. She recalled in the interview how she had learned by heart the songs of an album by a U.S. music band, how she even prepared an activity with parts of that song, and had her classmates at school filling in the blanks as they listened to the song.

It was literature and music that Oriana considered to have helped her to maintain her English language proficiency; she considered herself a learner as she felt she was always learning something new and using the language to communicate. She mentioned that she watched videos on Youtube, TV series, movies, and looked for information to read in English all the time. Her language learning experience was about incorporating English into her life in a

natural way. She identified herself as a consumer of information in English more than in Spanish. She added that she felt her work was mainly a passion, what she liked to do.

*... Veo películas, veo series, leo mucho también en inglés, tanto literatura como noticias, como que, eh, como información, si voy a buscar algo, cualquier cosa, cómo cocinar algo en Youtube o unas instrucciones de cómo, yo hago muchas cosas en mi casa, cómo pintar, cómo dañar tal cosa, cómo arreglar tal cosa lo busco en inglés, siempre, se volvió un hábito y yo supe desde siempre que la única forma de aprender es no ver, no ver el inglés como una tarea, como un, como que tengo que practicar, si no como volverlo parte de mí. (Oriana's Interview 6-2-17)*

... I watch movies, I watch series, I also read a lot in English, not only literature but also the news, like, eh, like information, if I am looking for something, anything, how to cook something on Youtube or some instructions about how, I do a lot of stuff in my house, how to paint, how to break up something, how to fix something I look for it in English, always, it became a habit and I always knew that the only way to learn is not to see, not seeing the English language as an assignment, like a, like something that I have to practice, but turn it into a part of me.

Oriana's college education was as an English, French and Spanish translator but her classes were mainly focused on language acquisition in the basic courses. The advanced courses were oriented towards translation. Most of her language instructors were lecturers except one who did not really have a teaching method and who was never focused on grammar. Instead, he developed activities with idiomatic expressions and in his classes students held a lot of discussions and did oral presentations. A second very good instructor that Oriana recalled in her narrative did not focus a lot on grammar either. In his classes, students read texts and

summarized them. Oral activities consisted of asking students to read a text of their preference out of class that was then discussed in class, and they had to pay attention to idiomatic expressions that were then included in the assessment.

*...Mi único profesor de planta fue [...] que fue el de nivel uno, él me motivó demasiado, yo sentía que quería pues, eh, ¡no!, yo quiero seguir aquí esto es maravilloso, esto es delicioso pero no hubo método, nunca se trabajaba gramática, por ejemplo, él llevaba actividades de expresiones, cositas así, hablamos mucho, nos ponían hacer presentaciones, hacíamos como ese tipo de actividades pero yo nunca vi como realmente como gramática, gramática, pues, yo creo que como lo hago yo inclusive, un tema, lo conversamos... (Oriana's Interview 5-5-17)*

...The only professor in a tenure-track position that I had was [...] that was in the first course level, he motivated me a lot, I felt that I wanted, eh, no! I want to continue to be here, this is great, it is delightful but there was not a method, we never worked on grammar, for instance, he brought activities to class about expressions, things like that, we talked a lot, he assigned us to prepare presentation, we did like that type of activities but I never really saw like grammar, grammar, I mean, I think that it was even like I do it, a topic, we talk about it...

*...Un profe que me pareció muy bueno era, [...] me pareció muy bueno, pero tampoco se enfocaba mucho en gramática sino que leíamos textos, entonces sacamos las ideas, entonces resumamos, entonces una actividad oral va a ser que usted va a traer un artículo sobre el tema que quiera y lo vamos a discutir, entonces hablábamos, lo trabajábamos, utilizaba muchas expresiones idiomáticas, entonces en un texto*

*trabajábamos expresiones idiomáticas y después en un examen nos ponía a ver qué eran las expresiones idiomáticas...* (Oriana's Interview 5-5-17)

... A professor that I think was very good was, [...] I think he was very good, but he did not focus a lot on grammar either but we read texts, then we took out some ideas, then we had to summarize, then an oral activity that we had to do was bringing an article about the topic we preferred and we discussed it, then we talked, we worked, he used many idiomatic expressions, and then in an exam he asked us about what the idiomatic expressions were about...

The previous excerpts taken from Oriana's narrative gave an idea of how she was an invested language learner, practicing the languages she was learning listening to songs and watching videos and also reading literature. Her bachelor's was the formal component of her preparation where she began to be exposed to different models of what she had seen in high school of what teaching a language was.

### **The assessment experience as a language learner.**

Regarding Oriana's experience with assessment as a language learner, she referred to her English teacher in high school mentioning that the teaching was very grammar-oriented and that included the translation of texts as part of what he evaluated. In her bachelor's the assessment depended on the style of the instructors.

*... Del colegio el profesor realmente era muy gramatical ¿cierto?, entonces los quizzes generalmente eran, eh, conjugar verbos y cositas así y también calificaba mucho trabajos de traducción, nos daba un texto en inglés y había que traducirlo al español...*  
(Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)



... From high school, the teacher was in fact very grammar-centered, right? Then the quizzes were usually, eh, conjugate verbs and things like that and he also graded translation assignments, he gave us a text in English and we had to translate it into Spanish...

The first teacher Oriana mentioned included grammar aspects, asked students to read a two-page article of a topic of their interest and then asked them questions orally about the reading. He also asked students to do oral presentations of a topic of their interest and included the use of idiomatic expressions in context.

*... Recuerdo a [first university instructor] que nos decía que buscáramos un artículo de máximo de dos páginas o un texto de un tema que nos interesara, que le sacáramos fotocopia y que nos preparáramos para que él nos hiciera preguntas sobre eso, entonces uno iba y buscaba un tema que a uno le interesara y ese mismo, uno no le mandaba eso antes, ese mismo día uno le daba a él la fotocopia, él la miraba y entonces él empezaba a preguntar como a medida que eso iba surgiendo y esa era una forma como, que me gustaba... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

... I remember a [first university instructor] who asked us to look for a maximum two-pages article or a text which topic was of our interest, we had to bring a copy of the article and be ready for him to ask us about it, then one looked for a topic of one's interest and the very same day, we did not have to send the article in advance, the very same day one gave the copy to him, he looked at it and then he began to ask questions as they were coming out and that was a way like, I liked it...

Another teacher Oriana recalled assessed them with quizzes and gave students a text from which he asked them content and vocabulary questions.

*... Recuerdo a otro profe también, [a second university instructor] de inglés, nivel tres, él hacía muchos juegos en clase, eh, quizcitos, él nos daba francés pero nos llegó a dar inglés una vez y también recuerdo que su metodología era muy parecida en ambos, en ambos idiomas y hacía, él nos daba el texto, él nos daba el texto y eso sí lo explotaba hasta el máximo, nos hacía todas las preguntas posibles de vocabulario, de contenido, de ta, ta, ta, de ta, ta, ta, entonces uno se tenía que preparar así con el tema... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

... I also remember another teacher, [a second university instructor] of English, level three, he conducted many games in class, eh, quizzed, he taught us French but he also taught an English course once and I also remember that his teaching methodology was very similar in the two languages, and he did, he gave us a text, he gave us a text and he took advantage of it as much as possible, he asked us all the possible questions about the vocabulary, about the contents, about ta, ta, ta, about ta, ta, ta, then one had to be prepared with the topic...

A third teacher Oriana mentioned in the interview worked with more idiomatic expressions and complex structures always focused on a communicative approach to teaching English. He used comics or cartoons that he analyzed with students and assessed students afterwards with quizzes. Oriana did not recall her instructors using any rubrics to assess her, they just gave the instructions in class and clarified students' doubts with the questions they asked.

*... [A third university instructor] trabajaba, por ejemplo, muchas expresiones idiomáticas y estructuras complejas pero muy enfocadas hacia lo comunicativo ¿cierto?, y recuerdo mucho como de tag questions y cositas así, pero entonces él siempre buscaba, ¿sabes qué?, buscaba cómics o cartoons donde se reflejara eso, analizábamos el comic y*

*ya después se enfocaba como en la parte de la estructura y nos evaluaba con quizzes y cositas así.* (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)

... [A third university instructor] worked, for instance, many idiomatic expression and complex structures but very focused towards the communicative component right?, and I remember very well like some tag question and things like, but then he always looked for, you know what?, he looked for comics or cartoons where the idiomatic expressions could be seen, we analyzed the comic and after that he focused on the structure and he assessed us with quizzes and things like that.

Based on what Oriana explained in the interview, it can be said that her experience with assessment as a learner moved from translation and a grammar-oriented approach in high school to more communicative ways to assess her learning of English in the bachelor's program. Examples of the latter included asking students content and vocabulary questions from texts students chose and also presentations they were asked to prepare.

### **Identity as a Language Teacher**

#### **Transition process from not having been prepared as a teacher to becoming a teacher.**

In the same way that the relationship between teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices seems not to be linear, effective teaching and assessment practices do not emerge out of anything. As will be seen in Oriana's narrative, both processes occurred as part of a continuous process shaped and intertwined by her learning preferences that combined individual and collaborative work. Likewise, these two processes of identities and practices development in the classroom were shaped by the investment Oriana did in language and teacher learning, and by the learning she obtained by being engaged in communities of practice. These communities of practice, in her case, were offered through mentorship, in-service trainings, and

formative and continuous forms of program evaluation where teachers' experiences were taken into account to inform the decisions made in the program. In the excerpt below, it can be seen how Oriana developed her teaching practices asking other teachers and also attending teachers' conferences to inform the decisions she made in the classroom. This is evidence, not only in the ways she developed her teaching skills, but also shows how much she invested in learning to teach as when she invested time in preparing her classes.

*... Yo siempre tenía temor con manejo de grupo, motivación, evaluación también, definitivamente cómo evaluar, o qué enseñar o cómo enseñarlo ¿cierto?, todo, todo, todo para mí fue un experimento, todo para mí fue intuitivo y preguntándole a otras personas, eso sí, Internet fue mi mejor amigo en los momentos más difíciles, entonces yo buscaba actividades de todo tipo, de todo tipo y me demoraba mucho tiempo, mucho tiempo diseñando las, mis clases, mucho tiempo diseñando las clases de niños en el [Private language institution], por ejemplo, me demoraba mucho, pero también, pues, en la UE, pero no, eso siempre fue como una escuela, eso fue como un laboratorio para mí, yo siento que en la marcha aprendí muchas cosas, intuitivamente e investigando y preguntando, pero a la vez, obviamente yo empecé a tomar todo lo que podía, todos los ELT, iba a todos los ELT, había un curso, yo iba a ese curso, había una charla, yo iba a la charla, había un taller, yo iba al taller, y eso también me daba muchos, muchos elementos y los profesores que yo sentía que eran chéveres, yo, ve este profe es energético, se ve que le gusta lo que hace, preguntaba cositas. (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

... I always had some fears about classroom management, motivation, also assessment, definitely how to assess, or what to teach, right?, everything, everything, everything for

me was an experiment, everything for me was intuitive and asking other people, by the way, Internet was my best friend in the most difficult moments, then I looked for all type of activities, of all type and it took me a lot of time, a lot of time designing, my classes, a lot of time designing the classes for children at the [Private language institution], for instance, it took me a lot of time, but also, I mean, at *UE*, but no, that was also like a school, that was like a laboratory for me, I feel that in the process I learned many things, intuitively and investigating and asking, but at the same time, I obviously began to make use of everything that I could, all the ELT [some local conferences for English teachers] I went to all the ELT, if there was a course, I took that course, if there was a lecture, I went to that lecture, if there was a workshop, I went to that workshop, and that also gave many, many tools and the teachers that I felt that were cool, I said, it seems that this teacher is energetic, it seems that he likes what he does, I asked little things.

As it can be seen in the previous excerpt, in Oriana's case, being in contact with other teachers was fundamental in her process of learning to teach. It is clear that this process, demanded her time but this time represented an investment that she built little by little and complemented it with the contact she maintained with colleagues that were role models for her as well as attending workshops and conferences that nurtured her teaching practices. It seems that in the same way that language learning is a social practice supported in communities of practice, teacher learning also occurs within the context of communities of practice that Wenger (1998) proposed and that Norton (2000) defined as social practice.

### **The teacher as a learner.**

Based on Oriana's experience, it can be said that, at least in her case, it seems to be that it is more likely that teacher learning occurs when teachers work in a language program where they

feel identified with its teaching methodology. Feeling the freedom to work in these programs is appealing to teachers with some characteristics like the ones Oriana had. As it can be seen in the excerpt below, the teacher felt identified with the teaching methodology in the English Program for Adults (EPA), she enjoyed working there and experienced feelings of freedom working in it. Learning was one aspect Oriana identified as a component that triggered her motivation to work in this program, for instance, she commented that she got bored if she felt that she was not learning because she did not want to be repeating the same activities and classes over and over again.

*... Yo creo que el [EPA] ha sido como la escuela como más importante para mí porque ha sido con el programa con el que más me he identificado por la metodología, creo que me da mucha libertad, eh, eh, me parece muy interesante, o sea, lo disfruto, entonces mientras, yo siento que no estoy, si yo siento no estoy como aprendiendo mientras estoy enseñando me voy aburriendo, me voy aburriendo porque yo no quiero repetir la misma clase, la misma actividad siempre, que el papel amarillo ¿cierto?, como, no, entonces me daba como esa libertad y ahí aprendí a diseñar material, a buscar material... (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

... I think that the [EPA] has been like the most important school for me because it has been the program where with which teaching methodology I have been more identified with, I think that it gives me a lot of freedom, eh, eh, it is very interesting for me, I mean, I enjoy working there, so while, I feel that I am not, if I feel that I like learning while I am teaching I began to be bored, I get bored because I do not want to repeat the same class, always the same activity, the yellowish paper, right?, like, no, then [the program] gave me that freedom and I learned to design material there, to look for material...

The freedom Oriana had working in the EPA made her enjoy what she did and provided her with an opportunity to learn how to create material. She explained that she first began to think about material design for her classes when she began to work in the English Program for Children (EPC). It was in dealing with materials design in these two programs from the Outreach Center that she realized the difference between working with authentic material and working with a textbook. Thus, she found out other alternatives to design activities depending on her needs. It was by working on the design of materials for her classes in the EPA that she began to collaborate with other teachers and learned a lot.

*... Cuando yo llegué al [EPA] el material que ellos tenían, que era material auténtico, entonces eran lecturas y las tareas, entonces ahí empecé yo ¡ah! busco la lectura y hago este tipo de tareas, entonces empecé a mirar ese tipo de material y traer esas actividades a la clase ¿cierto?, entonces, una lecturita y entonces ¡ah!, vocabulario, las palabras, un video, preguntas sobre el video y así, entonces, ahí aprendí, porque con el libro es muy distinto, un libro, el [Private language institution] siempre fue un libro, entonces para adultos y para niños, en cambio ya con el [EPA] y con el [EPC] también empecé a mirar todas las posibilidades que uno tiene con material auténtico para diseñar actividades dependiendo de las necesidades que uno tenga, y vi el proceso del [EPA], cuando empezaron a, ¡ah!, y a mí me contrataron pero hace mucho tiempo con [a teacher] y con [another teacher] pa' rediseñar una de las fuentes de cada nivel y eso fue, pues, por primera vez lo hice, yo lo hice con [one of the teachers], aprendí mucho... (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

...When I began to work at [the EPA] the material that they had, that was authentic material, there were reading and tasks, it was there that I began ah! I look for a reading

text and I do this type of tasks, then I began to look at that type of material and to take those activities to the class, right?, then a little reading text and then ah!, vocabulary, the words, a video, questions about the video and things like that, then, there I learned, because with a textbook is very different, a textbook, at the [Private language institution] there was always a textbook, to work with adults and children, whereas in the [EPA] and the [EPC] I began to look at all the options that one has with authentic material to design activities depending on the needs one has, and I saw the process in the [EPA], when they began, ah!, and I was hired with [another teacher] to design the material for one task in each level and that was, I did that for my first time with that [teacher], and I learned a lot...

Not only working in the EPA Oriana developed her teaching skills, but she has also discovered relevant topics to address in her classes and learned from the topics that her students brought to class. Teaching, for Oriana, has become a means to access knowledge, which she considered an advantage in her profession as well as the opportunities to learn through her students. In Oriana's words, she was who she was due to her profession, her profession was shaped by her own style and personality, but at the same time, her profession shaped her.

*...Yo hasta por estrategia tengo mi estilo, porque yo aprendo demasiado, en mis clases, o sea, lo que sé del mundo, lo que sé del mundo siempre ha sido temas que yo he intentado buscar porque creo que son relevantes pero la mayoría son temas que han traído los estudiantes a clase, [...] yo soy una persona muy curiosa, me gusta leer mucho y bobadas y de todo, y leer y noticias y hablar con la gente, pero esto ha sido otro espacio que me ha dado eso que tanto me gusta que es como el conocimiento, o, o, y yo creo que eso es una ventaja que los profes tenemos, al tener tanta gente en una clase, tantas cabezas,*



*tantas cabezas con tanta información, [...] yo creo que lo que soy, ha sido debido a mi profesión, o sea yo he ido, yo le he impregnado a lo que mi ocupación, mi estilo, me imagino que mi personalidad, pero la profesión misma también me ha moldeado mi personalidad y mi estilo... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

...Even for strategic reasons I have my own style, because I learn a lot, in my classes, I mean, that is, what I know about the world, what I know about the world has always been because of the topics that I have tried to seek out for because I think they are relevant but most of them are topics that students have brought to class, [...] I am a very curious person, I like to read a lot, stupid things and everything, and read and news and talk to people, but this has been another space that has given me that that I like a lot that is knowledge, or, or, and I think that is an advantage that we teachers have, having a lot of people in a class, so many brains, many brains full of information, [...] I think that who I am, has been due to my profession, that is, I have, I have shaped my occupation, with my style, I guess that because of my personality, but the profession itself has also molded my personality and my style...

From the previous example, it is interesting to notice how it appears to be that shaping teacher identities is a bidirectional process, that is to say, it was not only what Oriana did in the classroom that shaped her identities but also what she brought to the classroom that continued to shape her practices. In Oriana's case, working in the EPA shaped her identity development through practice (Holland *et al.*, 1998) as she designed materials to teach. At the same time, who Oriana was, her preferences towards certain kinds of topics and her passion for knowledge, influenced what she did in her classes.

## Teaching Practices

### **The class agenda.**

Oriana was punctual to begin her classes, always wrote the day's agenda on the board at the beginning and explained it to students. As the main purpose of this study was to inquire if there was a relationship between teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices, I asked Oriana in the interview to expand on this practice of writing the agenda. She responded by saying that she had begun with this practice after one of the coordinators where she worked observed her and commented that another teacher had this practice and students liked the idea.

*Sí, era un coordinador, el que fue a observar y no me dijo que lo hiciera, si no que me dijo algo bacano que yo vi en otro, en alguna conversación me dijo y los estudiantes sabían que yo tenía mi agenda porque yo volví, yo siempre cogía mi agendita y la miraba, entonces yo decía pues qué más tenerla ahí, yo también la estoy viendo, entonces eso sí salió de un comentario como de alguien y me gustó mucho y desde eso pongo the agenda, y los estudiantes repiten the agenda of the day is. (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

Right, it was a program coordinator, the one who went to observe my class and he did not tell me to do it, but he told me about something cool that he had seen in another teacher, in certain conversation he told me that and the students knew that I had my class agenda because I went back, I always took my class agenda and looked at it, then I said what about having it there on the board, I am also looking at it, then that idea came out of a comment somebody made and I liked it a lot and from that moment on, I write the agenda on the board, and the students repeat, the agenda of the day is.

As it can be seen in this excerpt, the idea of writing the class agenda was something that became part of Oriana's teaching practices. It was something that began to be part of her identity construction through practice after the coordinator of a program where she worked suggested the

use of the class agenda. Then, she tried the idea out as a strategy that helped her to guide her work in the class and she continued to implement it as she saw it worked.

### **Classroom interactions.**

Oriana's classes were usually composed of activities where students had a lot of opportunities to interact. Her rationale to promote interactions was based on taking advantage of class time to sustain discussions, something students had few opportunities to do in other spaces, meanwhile they could work on grammar rules on their own. This teaching practice seems to be based on sociocognitive theories of language learning like the one proposed by Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) where language develops naturally as students interact with their peers. When Oriana had a whole class activity, she usually asked students for their background knowledge, introduced and developed the topic and had students working in pairs or small groups to discuss something related to the topic or to work on an activity.

*Que alguien saliera a hacer una exposición, es que una cosa, o sea, uno investigar un tema gramatical y eso puede que haya sido enriquecedor de alguna manera, pero yo decía, no, perder el tiempo en clase algo que puede llegar a la casa y mirar en Google cómo se conjuga una cosa, cómo se hace eso, ¡no!, la clase es para discutir temas, ¿cierto?, pa' otras cosas, donde, en las que uno no tiene oportunidades en otras partes, es el único espacio que se abre pa' eso, en la casa voy y miro en Google, cómo se, ¿sí o no?, cómo se conjuga un verbo en pasado... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

That someone went to present something, because one thing is, I mean, to investigate a grammar topic can be somehow enriching, but I said, no, losing time doing something in class that can be done at home and search in Google how to conjugate something, how to do that, no!, the class is to discuss topics, right?, for other things, that, one does not have

at other spaces, it is the only space open for that, I can go home and search in Google, how do I know?, right?, how to conjugate a verb in past...

The previous excerpt is an example of the language teaching ideologies that guided Oriana's practices. For her, the English classroom was a space for students to interact and communicate in the target language and language structures were a component that students could work on their own. This language teaching ideology can be determinant in the foreign language classrooms because for other teachers, language structures may be a priority and the communicative component plays a secondary place. In contexts where English is not used for everyday communication, what happens in the classroom may be fundamental for students' language learning, due mainly to the scarce opportunities to use the target language out of the classroom.

In addition to this, the excerpt also shows Oriana's tacit understanding of Norton's concept (2000) language learning as a social practice where the classroom serves as a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). It seems to be that the teacher was very aware that outside of the classroom students could have very little opportunities to use English to communicate that is why she provided students with situations where they could interact.

In every class, Oriana usually proposed an activity where students could interact and had one of the students presenting his or her Mini-Talk. Mini-Talks consisted of students briefly presenting (10 minutes is what the teacher told students in the instructions but they usually took longer) a topic that was usually controversial. The presenter had to take a position and prepare some questions for their classmates; sometimes the teacher summarized students' Mini-Talks before the presenter asked questions to her/his classmates. From this activity, several aspects called my attention. For instance, students used some notes to rely on as they were presenting.

As I saw this, I asked Oriana in the interview if this was something that she had suggested. She replied saying that in the instructions for the Mini-Talk students were told not to read but then she explained that students could have the information available just in case they needed to check something. She added that her idea with the Mini-Talks was more to have a conversation in which students could have their notes but should avoid reading. The following excerpt illustrates the conversational nature of the Mini-Talks Oriana proposed in her classes.

*... Yo sí les digo, por ejemplo, no quiere decir que no tengan su información ahí, la pueden tener porque muchas veces a uno se le va o si quieren hacer una presentación, eh, lo primero que les digo es que yo no voy a evaluar ni que sea bonito, ni que haya una presentación ni nada, que solamente la parte oral, por eso propongo más que sea una mesa redonda y conversadito... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

... I do tell them, for instance, it does not mean that you cannot have your information available, you can have it because it can happen that one may forget something or if you want to do a presentation, eh, the first thing that I tell them is that I am not going to assess aesthetics or something like that, only the oral component, that is why I rather propose a round table, something more conversational...

In this evidence it can be noticed that not only Oriana seemed to have clear the communicative purpose of language use in class, but in order to scaffold students' language learning, she also suggested that they use of some notes to rely on, without forgetting the main objective of the activity that was to sustain a conversation.

During Oriana's classes, when students worked on what they had been assigned, the teacher walked around the groups to monitor their work and to help them with whatever they needed, giving them recommendations or making corrections. After students worked in groups,

they usually shared their work with the class and offered them feedback. When I asked Oriana where this idea had come from, she explained that she had learned it from her experience working with adults and adolescents. According to her, asking them questions without having given students the opportunity to think or discuss with a classmate, made their participation more difficult because they could be shy or feel scared. In her opinion, students were more willing to take risks to participate in class when they first had the opportunity to discuss their thoughts with a partner. She added that this participation could also be enhanced when she gave students time to write their ideas and she corrected them as she passed by.

*Sí, yo creo que eso nace de, de, sobre todo con adultos bueno, y con adolescentes, que la estrategia de preguntar a quemarropa o hacer la pregunta y el que quiera responder casi, genera mucho temor, los estudiantes no se arriesgan a hablar o siempre hablan los mismos y cuando se hacen en parejas se arriesgan más a discutir con el otro y eso les da el tiempo de construir lo que quieren decir y la idea, inclusive les doy tiempo para que copien mientras van discutiendo y se corrige y ya en la socialización, todos participan, todos tienen una idea construida ¿cierto?, tanto el que es tímido o yo sé que el tímido no va a alzar la mano, pero yo sé que ya tiene una idea construida... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

Yes, I think that idea comes from, from, especially working with adults, well, and with adolescents, the strategy of asking direct questions or asking questions for students to answer voluntarily, generates a lot of tensions, students do not take the risk to talk or they always interact among the same ones and when they work in pairs they take more risks to discuss with another person and that gives them time to prepare what they are going to say and their ideas, I even give them time for them to write as they are

discussing and I correct, then we share, all of them participate, all of them have something prepared, right?, not only the shy student, or I know that the shy student is not going to raise her/his hand, but I know that s/he already has something to say...

### **The inclusion of critical topics in the EFL classes.**

A relevant aspect that caught my attention in Oriana's classes was the inclusion of students' voices in her classes and the critical topics that her students addressed in the the Mini-Talks. As it can be seen in the excerpt below, Oriana explained that she considered topics like national or international political events, national natural disasters, pollution in the city, or car circulation restrictions as a measure to decrease pollution were relevant and affected everybody; thus, students were part of her planning and the preparation of material and discussions for her classes.

*Diana: Bueno y cuando decís, eh, miro qué tema de actualidad y qué temas críticos puedo incluir ¿eso de dónde sale?*

*Oriana: Eh, de varias cosas, primero de temas que yo decido, ¿cierto?, obviamente, que yo pienso que son relevantes y lo intento sacar del contexto, entonces si hay un evento en el país, intento llevarlo para discutirlo y si puedo encontrar un texto, por ejemplo, el de la contaminación y del nuevo pico y placa y todo por la contaminación en [the city] lo llevo porque me parece que es un tema relevante [...] hay discusiones y hay cositas que me dan la idea de temas que, que a los estudiantes los mueve, les interesa, que hay opinión, entonces intento, exploro un poco más ese tema y buscar más y hacer como actividades que los lleven a discutir ese tipo de temas... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

Diana: Well and when you say, eh, I look at what current topics and critical topic I can include, where does that come from?

Oriana: Eh, several things, first topics that I decide, right?, obviously, that I think that are relevant and I try to take out of the context, so if there is an event in the country, I try to bring it to class to discuss it and if I can find a reading text, for instance, the one about pollution and the new car restriction and everything related to pollution in [the city], I take it because it seems relevant to me [...] there are some discussions and there are things that give me the idea about topics that, that are moving for students, of their interest, where there are opinions, then I try, I explore that topic a little bit more and I search more and plan to do activities that take them to discuss that type of topics...

In my inquiry about the origin of these critical topics in her classes, Oriana went back to the moment when she worked with children, as she always began her classes with a question about students' experiences, like their favorite color and what it represented to them. After this, she recalled her implementation of something that she named Famous Quotes where she included motivational statements (e.g. Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body) that students discussed in groups. Then, she began to ask students to bring their own Famous Quotes and later on she proposed questions about current facts such as political, economical or environmental events taken from the news in the local, national, or international context as well as gender issues. According to what she said, the idea was to include students' interests in the class, allowing them to bring their own material and to interact with their classmates, and releasing the teacher from being the only responsible for bringing in the class material. The following narrative describes how Oriana promoted participation and included their voices in the class.

*Oriana: Yo siempre, es que no siempre, estoy pensando en qué momento empecé, yo siempre tuve, casi que siempre al inicio de mis clases hasta con chiquitos empezaba con*



*una pregunta, ah! ¿sabes con qué empezaba?, con una preguntita, entonces, no necesariamente era crítico ni un tema de actualidad, pero yo siempre buscaba una pregunta que hablara de las experiencias de los estudiantes como, por ejemplo, ¿cuál es tu color favorito?, y ¿qué representa este color? ¿cierto?, una cosa así ¿cierto?, entonces siempre había una discusión de la experiencia de los estudiantes, lo que les gustaba, lo que no les gustaba, ¡ah!, qué piensas de tal cosa, ah, yo estoy de acuerdo, no estoy de acuerdo, ni siquiera pues era como algo crítico profundizar en algo, pero de ahí empezaba y luego yo empecé a utilizar una estrategia que se llama Famous Quotes, [...] y ya después empecé a hacer una pregunta sobre un evento de actualidad, [...] lo del Mini-Talk nace del Happy Activity, [...] como que los estudiantes ellos mismos traigan material, traigan sus intereses a clase y que por un momento ellos interactúen con los otros sin que el profesor sea el que siempre lleve el material y pasó de ser una actividad sólo dinámica para ser una actividad más crítica... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

Oriana: I always, what happens is that not always. I am trying to think when did I start that, I always had, almost always at the beginning of my classes, even with the little ones, I began with a question, ah! You know what I used to begin the class, with a question, then, it was not necessarily something critical or a current topic, but I always looked for a question that referred to students' experiences like for example, what is your favorite color?, and what does that color represent?, right?, something like that, right?, then there was always a discussion about students' experiences, what they liked, what they did not like, ah!, what do you think about such and such, ah, I am in agreement with that, I am in disagreement and then I began to use a strategy that is called a Famous Quote [...] and after that I began to ask a question about a current event, [...] the Mini-Talk comes from

the Happy Activity, [...] like from the idea that students themselves bring the material, that they bring their interests to class and that they interact with their peers for a moment without the teacher being the one in charge of taking the material to class always and this moved from being a dynamic activity to become something more critical...

Oriana added that it was asking students to bring topics of their interest to class that generated controversial opinions. According to her, the relevant and current characteristic of these activities was what turned them into something critical. Looking at what Oriana did in her classes and the organic trajectories of her teaching practices, it seems to be that the inclusion of critical topics in the EFL classroom occurs naturally when teachers are opened to including their students' voices, giving them a more participatory role, and sharing with them the power that has been traditionally entitled to teachers. It can be said then, that the characteristics of what Oriana did in her classes not only followed a student-centered approach to language learning but also included components of critical pedagogy as the teacher guided students to build on their learning based on their realities Freire (1970). The following excerpt taken from one of the classes, illustrates the kind of discussions that took place in Oriana's classes.

Oriana writes on the board what she said: "The characteristics or traits associated to female/male" and "it depends on the culture".

Oriana asks [Male student 1] in the first group too. He gives the examples of soldiers and school.

Oriana asks [Female student 1] if she has another example. She says mechanic.

Oriana asks students to give other examples different from professions.

[Female student 1] mentions sports, weight lifting and gymnastics. Then Oriana asks [Female student 1]. She says she is with the [students of the same name] today.

[Female student 2] (second group) the definition is very similar but gender roles are a social construction.

Oriana: What is the meaning? What is a social construction or a cultural construction?

[Male student 2]: It depends on the history (historic) moment.

Oriana: An example of historic, economic, social moment

[Female student 3]: Society without government, that don't have social roles

Oriana: An example of a society like this

[Female student 3]: In Papua Guinea (Tupac Macu)

Oriana: Group number three [Female student 4]

Oriana: In group number two some other genders were mentioned. Do you think that society accepts this?

[Female student 4]: No

Oriana: [Female student 6] (group three) Can you give me an example?

[...]

[Female student 4]: Target eliminated gender roles in their departments: Toys for girls and boys

Oriana: And what happened?

[Female student 5]: Some people supported the idea, others criticized it.

[Female student 6]:

Oriana: So you think the decision was very sudden.

[Female student 5]: I think the store shouldn't have consult (asked)

Oriana: Monique, what do you think?

[Female student 6]:

Oriana: You agree with the idea?

Oriana: ... What do you think about a non-gender roles store? Do you think that it should be a process or not?

[Female student 7]: Boy and girls should be able to choose toys

[Female student 6]: But conservative people don't agree with that (Oriana's PO, 8-23-16)

On this day, Oriana had proposed the topic of discussion for the class on gender roles and encouraged students to give their points of views. The inclusion of gender issues in the EFL classroom can be considered a critical topic as male roles have been traditionally entitled more power than females roles in society. The discussion of these kinds of topics in Oriana's classes could have operated in students' minds as a prompt that made them think about gender roles from different perspectives and that contributed to their reflection of what happens in society.

### **The reflective practitioner.**

#### ***Reflection on action and language teaching.***

Reflection and action were two strong components in Oriana's teaching practices as I could notice in the informal conversations that I sustained with her after the classroom observations. I could easily see how she was constantly reflecting on what happened in her classes. Sometimes she asked me what I thought about it. Some other times, when she felt she needed to improve an aspect of her class, she comment something like "Next time, I am going to change this or that". Oriana constantly reflected on what happened in her classes such as when she thought about the use of language in class for a purpose, which is something that I attempt to show in the following excerpt.

*...Para mí era hagamos algo interesante en inglés, ¿cierto?, como que el idioma es el medio para hacer algo interesante y eso se mantiene de alguna forma pero yo todo el*

*tiempo estoy cuestionando eso, no sé qué tan, qué tan apropiado sea, o intentando ser un poco más ecléctica...* (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)

... For me it was like let's do something interesting in English, right?, like, language is the means to do something interesting and that is somehow something steady but I am all the time questioning that, I do not know how much, how appropriate that is, or if trying to be more eclectic...

Another example of how Oriana reflected on what happened in her classes was evidenced in how she came up with the idea of having students interacting in pairs before the whole class interaction. She explained in the interview how she saw that students participated more when they had the chance to work in pairs before socializing something.

*Diana: Sí, pero ¿eso de dónde viene Oriana?, o sea, en qué momento tú dices, no, a estos hay que ponerlos a hablar porque no los puedo coger a quemarropa.*

*Oriana: Pues, eso es algo, es que yo no sé cómo identificarlo, yo, es algo que yo siempre hice, por ejemplo, en the EPA ¿cierto?, en the EPA, es que yo no sé si en algún momento reflexioné eso que estoy reflexionando en estos momentos, yo sé que, yo sé que en algún momento en parejas me daba cuenta que funcionaba más para después socializar y que todos con propiedad tenían algo para decir y eso ya generaba una discusión...* (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)

Diana: Yes, but where does that idea come from?, I mean, in what moment do you say, no, these students have to talk among themselves first because I cannot address them questions without giving them time to think.

Oriana: Well, that is something, I do not know how to identify it, I, is something that I always did, for instance, in the EPA right?, in the EPA, I do not know if there was a

moment where I reflected on that that I am reflecting on right now, I know that, I know that there was a moment in which I realized that it worked better when students worked in pairs and then we shared and all the students were more confident to participate with something and then that generated a discussion...

The reflection process that Oriana experienced seems to be aligned with Schön's (1983) concepts of reflection in action and reflection on action. Reflection in action occurred when Oriana was able to reflect in the middle of the class on the probability that students participated more in class when she first gave them opportunities to share and discuss in pairs. Reflection on action happened every moment Oriana continued thinking on what occurred in her class as she did it, for example, during the interview and she tried to explain how the idea of having students interacting had become a practice in her classroom. Case in point, Oriana continued reflecting on her practice when, during the interview, I shared with her a description of what I had observed in her classes to validate the data, she commented, for example, how she would like to give more structure to her classes and how she always ended up focusing on class discussions.

*...Yo tengo como un poquito de conflicto otra vez con lo de structure, con lo de structure of the class, porque eso es lo que quiero hacer siempre, pero por ejemplo, muchas veces, a veces siento que, no a veces siento que mi planeación necesita más, ligarse, no sé, como estructurar, porque a mí también me gusta trabajar mucha task-based, y muchas veces yo cojo el tema y digo listo, cómo voy a empezar a hacer una serie de task donde se trabaje también la parte lingüística, donde se haga un warm-up, del conocimiento previo, donde se lea un texto [...] siempre pienso hacerlo y casi nunca logro estructurar una cosa así porque muchas veces simplemente el tiempo... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

...I have a little conflict again with that of structure, with the structure of the class, because that is always what I want to do, but for example, many times, sometimes I feel that, no, sometimes I feel that the planning of my classes needs more, to be more connected, I do not know, like structure, because I also like to work task-based, and many times I decide on a topic and I say, how am I going to begin to do a series of tasks where students can also work the linguistic component, that it includes a warm-up, of background knowledge, where students can read a text [...] I always plan to do it and I rarely able to structure something like that due to the time most of the times...

The following excerpt also indicates the role of Oriana's reflective process with some of her class activities that evolved as she shared her experience with colleagues, and as she reflected on what fitted students' needs. This was the case of the Happy Activity that evolved from what a friend and colleague of her did, but as soon as Oriana started to implement it, she realized that more advanced students were doing very simple activities. She then thought about being more demanding with students and assigned them grammar topics from the course that they had to explain in a dynamic way. Nonetheless, Oriana considered that by giving this grammar focus to the activity was boring. She thought about a class activity where students could report on something they had read about and added that it should be a controversial topic that would generate discussion. This is how the Mini-Talk I observed in her classes was born. For the second semester of the class observations, Oriana also gave students the option to talk about their Life Motto as she thought students could also have the opportunity to develop a topic more centered on themselves.

*...Este Happy Activity está muy sencillo y ellos traen cualquier cosa, pues, un juego, un Hang Man, eso está bien para nivel uno, entonces cómo les exijo más a los estudiantes de*

*nivel quinto, pues, por el nivel, o cuarto o quinto o tercero y empecé, dándoles los temas gramaticales de los contenidos y que ellos tenían que explicárselos a los compañeros pero hacer una actividad dinámica y fue también muy bueno, pero yo ya después pensé como ¡ay, no!, eso gramatical tan maluco entonces de ahí nació el Mini-Talk y yo me lo imaginé como más bien que leyeran una noticia de actualidad, chang, y que lo llevaran a clase, pero ya después pensé que no sólo una noticia, sino, no, un tema que para ellos sea controversial o que genere debate... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

...This Happy Activity is very simple and students bring whatever, well, a game, a Hang Man, that is good for a level one, so how do I demand more from students in level five, well, depending of the level, fourth, fifth, or third and I began assigning them grammar topics from the course content and they had to explain it to their classmates but doing a dynamic activity and it was very good too, but then I thought like ay no!, that grammar topic is very boring then the idea of the Mini-Talk was born, chang, and they had to bring the topic to class, but time after that I thought that I could not only be a news, but, not, a topic that was controversial for students or that generated a debate...

Noticing how Oriana reflected on every aspect of the class she implemented, I asked during the interview about the process that she followed to plan her classes. She talked about the development of the project. She explained that she designed activities to scaffold students' skills development and help them accomplish a task for the class project. Then, she prepared workshops that guided students' writing and that helped them to practice. She also considered topics that called her attention and focused on grammar contents that she needed to address or that student needed to develop. She thought about the material she could use as when she used



the video where students identified some professions with certain female or male roles. As Schön (1983) defined it, reflection on action is the capacity to think back on an event that is already over.

To add to Oriana's process of reflection, the following excerpt exemplifies the ongoing capacity to reflect on her practices from the planning stage of her classes to the connection of students' skills development.

*Bueno, otra cosa que tengo mucho en cuenta para planear la clase que es muy importante que es el proyecto, entonces yo miro cuáles son las actividades del proyecto [...] yo también planeo qué se necesita o qué elementos se necesitan para llegar a esas actividades [...] entonces tengo que preparar un workshop para saber cómo se escribe un paper, entonces hacemos una práctica [...] yo me siento a mirar bueno, ¿cómo, digamos, cómo enfoco el tema? [...] y digo, ah puedo utilizar este video, si no tengo un video, entonces, o no tengo el material está la idea, entonces intento buscar material que se acomode [...] miro qué tema, desde muchas perspectivas... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

Well, another aspect that I consider to plan the class that is very important is the class project, so I take a look at what the activities of the project are [...] I also plan what is needed or the elements that students need to be able to do those activities [...] if I have to prepare a workshop for them to know how to write a paper, then we have some practice [...] I take a look at, well, let's say, how do I guide the topic? [...] and I say, ah, I can use this video, if I do not have a video, so, or if I do not have the material I have the idea, then I try to look for material that fits in [...] I look at the topic, from many perspectives...

As it can be seen in Oriana's narrative, reflective practice implied a cyclical process of thought that went from the planning stage of the classes to the moment where the class took place and the evaluation of what happened to consider for further planning. In line with Schön's (1983) definition of a professional, it can be concluded that it is teachers' reflective capacity what makes of their work a professional activity.

***Reflection on action and assessment.***

Reflection on action was a process that also made part of Oriana's assessment practices, for instance when she commented how, in spite of what she had learned in her master's about assessment, she thought more work was needed on it.

*...Todo lo que vi en la maestría fue completamente nuevo [...] aunque yo vi evaluación en la maestría, yo creo que el curso que vimos realmente fue un abrebocas, pero ahí fue donde yo me cuestioné realmente, como ¡juepucha!, es que la evaluación no es, yo siempre he tenido problemas con eso y yo digo ¡ay, no!, uno evalúa ahí, uno evalúa al estudiante y lo veía más formativo y ya, viendo, pues el curso de evaluación yo decía ¡ay, no!, es que esto sí es, se necesita más trabajo en eso. (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

Everything that I learned in the master's was completely new [...] although I studied assessment in the master's, I really think that the course that we took was an introduction, but it was there where I really questioned myself, like, juepucha!, assessment is not, I have always had problems with that and I say, ay no!, one assesses in a certain way, one assesses the student and I saw it more as a formative process and then, taking the assessment course I said, ay no!, this really needs, more work is needed on this topic.

Proof that Oriana was a reflective practitioner is how she described her assessment practices and continued thinking on them as she described them. There was a moment in the

interview where Oriana did some think-aloud explaining what she thought she could do to help her students use the corrections they received after their Mini-Talk. At the end, she added that students could communicate but they still had some fossilized errors they should work on by engaging in self-monitoring.

*...Yo en el Mini-Talk ni hablo, o sea, yo tomo nota y simplemente les mando ese – comentario– sí, entonces siempre les pongo la pronunciación, shun, shun, shun, yo siento que falta trabajo con eso, porque eso puede ir un poco más allá [...]*

*Diana: Pero si ellos miran eso, por ejemplo, eh, y están conscientes de que se equivocaron ahí y tienen que mejorar, eso les va a servir, por ejemplo, para la presentación final que también se le va a calificar.*

*Oriana: Es más, eso es lo que acabé de pensar, lo que debo hacer es, vuelvan a esa evaluación [...] vuelvan a esas notas y miren, miren esas estructuras, miren esas palabras y si eso hace parte de la presentación, por ejemplo, ya saben qué tienen que corregir todos esos aspectos*

*Diana: Estar más pendiente de que tiene que pronunciar la ‘s’ o la ‘ed’ o no se que.*

*Oriana: Pero, lo que te dije ayer es que me ha parecido muy tenaz, porque definitivamente hay cosas que es muy difícil cuando las fosilizan, mira que en el quiz, claro, es una evaluación y son muy conscientes, pero ya cuando están hablando de una manera más informal en clase, vuelven y no la, la utilizan ¿cierto?, entonces eso es algo, ya, ya lo que les tengo que decir es que eso ya, ya tienes que trabajar self-monitoring [...] (Oriana’s Interview, 6-2-17)*

*Oriana: ...During the Mini-Talk I do not even speak, that is, I take notes and I just send them that –comment– right, then I always make some pronunciation correction, shun,*

shun, shun, I have the feeling that more work is needed with feedback they receive, because that can go a little further [...]

Diana: But if they look at the corrections, for example, eh, and they are aware of their mistakes there and what they need to improve, that is going to be useful for example for the final presentation that is going to be evaluated.

Oriana: What is more, that is what I have just thought, what I should do is, that they go back to that assessment [...] that they go back to that feedback and look, look at the structures, look at those words and if that makes part of the presentation, for example, they already know what they have to improve

Diana: To be more aware of the pronunciation of 's' or 'ed' or things like that.

Oriana: But, what I told you yesterday is that it has been very difficult for me, because there are some aspects that are very difficult for them when they have already fossilized, look for example in the quiz, of course, that is an evaluation and they are very aware, but then when they are talking in a more informal way during class, they go again and do not use the structure, right?, then that's something that, I have to tell them that, that they have to work on their self-monitoring [...]

Connected to Oriana's reflective assessment practices, during the evaluative moments of her classes, I noticed that when students had to submit a writing assignment, Oriana assessed it formatively, that is to say, she corrected the text and gave feedback to students. However, the assignment was only scored once students made the corrections and turned in the assignment for a second time. As this practice called my attention a lot, during the interview, I asked the teacher for the rationale behind it and she responded saying that she had the impression that students did not take a look at the comments and corrections when she gave them the grade after the first

submission, but that giving them the grade after the second submission had a greater impact on them because they had to go back to their texts and make sense of the corrections.

*En algún momento pensé, listo, me estoy tomando tanto tiempo para hacer los comentarios, leo y doy una nota, entonces pa' qué estoy señalando, señalando y señalando si el estudiante lo va a leer y estoy cien por ciento segura de que no lo va a corregir, ni el más juicioso lo corrige y ¿qué quiero yo?, que el trabajo que me estoy tomando en leerlo, porque yo me tomo tiempo leyendo cada texto, incluso yo pongo, yo señalo, esto es literal, esto lo sacaste de aquí [...] porque es una forma también de valorar mi trabajo, el estudiante va a volver y a leer lo que yo le hice y lo que le corregí y es doble beneficio, yo sé que mi trabajo no fue en vano porque él sí va a volver a corregir y el estudiante se va a beneficiar porque alguna cosa va a sacar y va a entender y va a corregir de esa cosa y ya la segunda se la corrijo, ya la segunda, casi siempre ya la segunda es el texto muy bien corregido, ya con más consciencia ¿cierto?, con todo.*  
(Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)

There was a moment where I thought, ok, I am taking a lot of time to give students feedback, I read and I give them a grade, so what am I pointing out, pointing out and pointing out if the student is not going to read that and I am a 100% sure that s/he is not going to make the corrections, not even the most judicious student makes the corrections and what do I want?, that the work that it takes me to read, because I invest time in reading every text, I even point out, this is literally taken, this was taken from here, because that is also a way to value my work, the student is going to go back and read what I did and what I corrected and that is a double benefit, I know that my work was not in vain because the student is in fact going to make the corrections and the student is also

going to be benefited because s/he is going to gain something and s/he is going to understand and correct from that feedback and the second time that s/he submits the assignment I correct it, now with more awareness, right?, with everything.

Aligned with these reflections, I also noticed that when Oriana was giving her students the instructions for a written assessment task, she gave them a list of tips to help them prepare for the task such as checking their texts with anti-plagiarism online tools before they turned in the texts to her. Asking her where she had taken this idea from, she responded that it came out from her experience in helping students determine how original their texts were and that every semester she added a recommendation, strategy or tip.

*En los tips, como de la experiencia, yo creo que cada semestre se le va añadiendo alguna cosita, alguna recomendación, alguna estrategia o algún tip porque uno ve que, si uno no lo propone puede suceder ¿cierto?, digamos que lo de plagiarism, desde hace poquito lo uso, como que ellos, que ellos mismos después de escribir su texto por ejemplo, vayan y revisen qué porcentaje de originalidad es, que sí hayan, que no hayan copiado mucho, eh, eso a partir de la experiencia. (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

In the tips, from the experience, I think that every semester I add a little thing, a recommendation, a strategy or a tip because one sees that, if one does not include it, it can happen, right?, let's say for example plagiarism, that I use it since very little time ago, like they, they themselves after writing their text for example, they go and check what percent of originality their texts have, that they have, that they have not copied a lot, eh, that has been from the experience.

This type of strategies Oriana asked her students to follow also helped her to be practical in the grading of the papers. According to what she said, asking students to check the originality

of their texts was a way to clean up what she received and avoid turning the papers back for this reason, because copying, pasting and adding something of their own seemed to be a natural practice for students.

Oriana explicitly mentioned in the interview how she continuously reflected on how clear she needed to be in the instructions and recommendations she included in a written assignment. She explained how the first time she thought, she had included all the tips and recommendations for the written assignment, she had forgotten to include the word limit. As a consequence of this, some students wrote a ten-page text and others wrote two pages. Not including this information in the criteria implied a lot of work for her as she had to read all the papers for not having been clear in that aspect. Then she realized she needed to be more clear and include additional tips for students. The following semester she included the word limit for the written assignments from the very beginning.

Here it is interesting to see how when teachers, like Oriana reflected, on their practices, not only did she center more her teaching on students' needs but she also thought about facilitating their work. It is important to stress this, especially knowing how time-consuming assessment can be for teachers.

### ***Collective reflection on action.***

The individual reflection process that took place in Oriana seems to have been influenced also by some collective reflective practices in programs like the EPA where she worked. I understood this as the analysis of teachers' identity development which led me to look at the conditions or factors around teachers that could have influenced their current practices. One of the factors that I noticed that Oriana was the recurring and impacting role that working in the EPA had had on her. Case in point, not only did I notice Oriana was a reflective teacher but as I

talked to her in the interview, I perceived that there was also an ongoing reflective process taking place at the EPA that could have affected and stimulated what she did in all her classes.

In the EPA, decisions were made all the time on the basis of what was discussed with teachers throughout the semester during informal meetings, and in more formal meetings at the beginning and at the end of the semester. The teachers, under the direction of the program coordinator, reflected on the scaffolding process they had to follow to help students accomplish the tasks for the class project. These discussions led the coordinator of the EPA and its teachers to make decisions to reduce the number of activities and sources of information students had to include in the project, and the amount of rubrics that were used.

*En un curso de cien horas [...] los estudiantes necesitan un proceso para llegar allí, no es que ¡ah, listo!, las, once tareas, entonces la próxima clase escriba un párrafo, ¿cómo escribo un párrafo?, ¿cómo se escribe un párrafo?, ¿cuáles son?, ¿cierto?, entonces imagínate uno, eran como ocho, nueve rúbricas, porque habían otras actividades, entonces, se pasó de once a tres actividades donde cada profe tiene la capacidad de llevar al estudiante lentamente ese proceso ¿cómo escribir un texto?, ¿cómo hacer una presentación?... (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

In a course of 100 hours [...] students need a process to be there, it is not lie ah! Ok!, the, 11 tasks, then for next class write a paragraph, how do I write a paragraph?, how to write a paragraph?, what are?, right?, then picture me, there were like eight, nine rubrics, because there were other activities, then, we moved from 11 to three activities where each teacher has the possibility to guide the student slowly through that process, how to write a text?, how to prepare a presentation? ...



Details of how this reflective process was implemented in the EPA was explained by Oriana in the interview. She described how the coordinator sent teachers a chart to fill out with different aspects of the program to evaluate. Then the coordinator had a meeting with teachers from every course level and held a discussion based on what they had written. Then the coordinator put together the comments and suggestions and used that information as input to make decisions with the teachers during the meetings at the beginning and at the end of the semester.

For Oriana, these spaces of collective reflection were a way to develop professionally as they represented an opportunity to listen to what other teachers did. In her opinion, she learned when an argument for making a decision was explained. She compared her learning experience with one of an isolated teacher who could do all the activities and used all the material proposed without being listened to and without reflecting on what could be better for students. She acknowledged these meetings as a place where teachers could learn to work with projects in class, a way for teachers to understand how the program worked, and the ways in which students' learning could be influenced.

This collective reflection also included the assessment practices. Oriana commented, for example, what happened with the assessment of pronunciation that the program proposed in the rubrics. At the beginning, there were some phonemes included that teachers should assess. Then the teachers modified the phonemes to assess in each course level. After the implementation of this change, the teachers reflected that focusing on the phonemes they had defined limited the assessment and did not allow them to include other phonemes they had emphasized in class based on students' needs. At the end, they decided that the phonemes used to assess should be the ones students used the most for their projects.

*Y mira que al principio, que por facilidad, todos dijimos, no que de una vez que estén los sonidos ahí [...] entonces decidimos que ni los íbamos a poner para que ella los mandara, los evaluara, ni los íbamos a poner ahí, sino que simplemente el ítem se describía mejor, los sonidos más trabajados en clase y las keywords del proyecto de los estudiantes... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

Notice that at the beginning, to make our work easier, we all said, no, we prefer the phonemes to be included there [...] then we decided that we were not going to include the phonemes for the coordinator to take a look at them nor were we going to include them there, but that we were going to describe that criteria in the rubric as the most worked phonemes worked in class and the key words of students' project...

As it could be seen in the previous excerpts taken from the interview, Oriana's identity development seems to have been strongly influenced by her work in the EPA. According to what she said, she learned when decisions in the program were made as a group and when she listened to the experiences of other teachers and the arguments they had to make a decision. As Oriana affirmed, providing teachers a space to listen to each other, share experiences, and make decisions together seems to have been a space for professional development. It also seems to have been part of the culture of collaboration that Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) refer to as what is conducive to the development of professional capital. In addition to this, these spaces seem to have been part of Oriana's human, social and decisional capital, not only as an individual, but also as part of the group since reflection on the implementation of the curriculum was done collectively.

### **Giving a voice to teachers.**

As it has been exemplified, working in the EPA had a role in the development of Oriana's teacher identity when teachers of the program were given a voice to share their practices and when they were provided with a space to reflect as a collective of teachers. The facilitation of these reflective and collaborative spaces where teachers of the EPA discussed what they did in their classrooms, the collaborative practices the coordinator promoted, and the continuous evaluation of classroom practices constituted a professional learning opportunity for Oriana.

Giving a voice to teachers in the EPA seems to have contributed to Oriana's identity development. The fact that these teachers shared and listened to what others had to say to make decisions as a group seem to have helped Oriana to reflect on her own practices. This type of practices create a culture of reflection and collaboration that contributes enormously to teachers' identity development and that shaped what Oriana continued to do as a teacher. This culture of collaboration is what Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) explained when they referred to the development of professional capital among teachers. In what follows, I exemplify how giving a voice to teachers and propitiating collective reflection among them may help them to construct democratic and reflective based assessment practices.

Oriana narrated the story of how self-assessment began to be implemented in the EPA. In the development of the class project students had to do in groups, she had the feeling that some students were working more than others; thus, she designed some questions for students to talk about their contributions to the project. At the beginning, students had to answer these questions in English, but after Oriana discussed the idea with the coordinator, the coordinator suggested doing the self-assessment in Spanish and not in English as the main purpose of the activity was

to help students to reflect on their learning and not to use the target language. After Oriana shared this individual practice in the meetings, other teachers began to implement self-assessment and today it is an institutionalized practice.

*...Yo en un momento necesitaba que cada estudiante me hablara de su proyecto, [...] para poder saber que cada uno sí contribuyó, porque a veces yo sentía que un estudiante trabajaba más que otro, otro estudiante corregía más corto, entonces yo decía no, le voy a hacer como un examen, pero el examen son preguntas de cuéntame de qué se trata tu proyecto, en qué parte de tu, de tu proyecto participaste, en la discusión, negociaciones, escritura y así nació [...] pero se las hice en inglés para evaluarles también, y eso ya se quitó, antes era en inglés, entonces ya quitamos, que no, que fuera en español, que ya el objetivo de la autoevaluación no era practicar la lengua sino que realmente que ellos fueran conscientes del proceso... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

...There was a moment where I needed that each student talked about her/his project [...] to be able to know if everyone had contributed to it, because some times I felt that some students worked more than others, some students corrected more than others, so I said no, I am going to implement like an exam, but the exam were questions where students had to tell me what their project was about, in what part, of the project they had participated, in the discussion, in the negotiations, in the writing, and that was how self-assessment was born [...] I did it in English to assess them the language too, and that is already taken out, before the self-assessment was in English, then with took off that part, that it was in Spanish because the objective of the self-assessment was not to put in practice the target language but for students to be aware of the process...

The narrative above shows how a practice that emerged from Oriana's practice and reflection on action became an institutionalized practice for teachers of the EPA after she discussed what she had done with the program coordinator. This is an example of how human, social and decisional capital can be facilitated in a program and lead to the development of teachers' professional capital. As Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) state, teachers develop their human capital through the knowledge and skills they put in practice in their classroom; then, their social capital takes place when they share this knowledge with their colleagues; finally, their decisional capital is exerted when they make individual or collective decisions that impact their practices.

## **Assessment Practices**

### **Connecting teaching and assessment practices.**

This study initially proposed focusing on the development of teachers identities and their language assessment practices. However, after being in the field, one of my first realizations was that assessment could not be separated from the teaching. One of the class events that supports this claim occurred when students had to write a movie report. For the instruction part, Oriana showed them a model and explained how it was written, and students practiced with some exercises in class. For the assessment component, she gave students the assessment and scoring criteria. Then students had to write their texts and submit it for formative purposes, that is to say, the teacher revised them and gave them feedback but did not assign a score. The text was graded only after students made all the corrections and resubmitted the assignment. After this, the teacher gave additional feedback that students could correct for getting some extra credit.

*Ahí sí, ya lo evaluó de manera sumativa, pero vuelvo y les hago el comentario, les hago comentarios, eh, pero, ya, ya esos comentarios es para que ellos lo tengan en cuenta,*

*porque ya no recibo otra corrección, a menos de que el estudiante me lo pida...* (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)

It is at that moment that I assess the text summatively, but I give them feedback again, I write some comments, eh, but, at that moment, those comments are just for students to take them into account, because I do not receive more corrections, unless the students asks for it...

This practice shows the formative component of assessment and how it can be combined with summative assessment. The rationale underpinning this practice seems to be students' learning and the role that the teacher played in it was fundamental. For Oriana, it could have been easier to assess students summatively and assign them a grade the first time she received the assignment. Nonetheless, the fact that the students had to go back to the text to make the corrections added the formative component to the assessment, making of this opportunity, a learning event for them.

### ***Mistake correction strategies.***

In her classes, Oriana constantly corrected students' mistakes when they were working in groups or participating in class and she did this without interrupting the flow of communication. These mistake correction strategies made part of her teaching, but that also constituted formative assessment moments. Sometimes she used the board to write the correct structures students had misused; some other times, she used gestures to correct students' mistakes when they were participating in class. For instance, when students put the adjective after the noun, Oriana crossed her hands and students knew they should put the adjective first. When students forgot to conjugate a verb in the past tense, the teacher made a gesture pointing backwards with her hand

and students self-corrected conjugating the verb in past tense. Also, when students said ‘you’ meaning ‘his’ or ‘her’ the teacher pointed to herself for students to self-correct.

*...[The corrections] puede ser inmediato o puede ser ya al final o después, yo les pregunto, la mayoría dicen no, profe, de una vez, de una vez, entonces, yo ahí les digo, ustedes tienen que mirarme y me tienen que poner atención para yo no interrumpirlos todo el tiempo hay algunos gestos, si yo hago alguna cosa significa algo, algo ahí, necesito identificar algo ahí y la idea es que lo repitan y lo corrijan... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

...[The corrections] can be made immediately or can be at the end, I ask them, most of them say no, teacher, immediately, immediately, so I tell them, you have to look at me and you have to pay attention for me to not interrupt you constantly, there are some gestures, if I do something that has a meaning, something, you need to identify something there and the idea is that you repeat and you make the correction...

Asking Oriana where the idea of using gestures to correct her students mistakes had come from, she did not remember immediately but then mentioned that she had probably read somewhere about those behaviorists signs. It is interesting to mention here that although the teacher did not seem to be very clear about the origin of this practice, the fact that the strategy seemed to work allowed her to continue doing it and to make of it a usual practice in her classes. Also important to highlight here is the impact that the strategy could have had on students' learning since (1) it was something the teacher negotiated with students, (2) it was a way for students to receive prompt feedback on their language use, and (3) this practice was situated in communicative moments of the class.

### **Formative and democratic assessment practices.**

What Oriana did in her classes connecting her teaching and assessment practices is identified in the literature as formative assessment (Black & William, 1998, 2009). One of the characteristics of this type of assessment is that teachers constantly revise what students do during class time and give them prompt feedback. Observing students' performance became a way for Oriana to inform herself on the type of instruction that students still required.

*...Siempre hay una evaluación formativa en clase, yo siento que siempre hay una evaluación y, o mira la, yo intento, dependiendo de la actividad, yo siempre corrijo, o inmediatamente, y desde el principio yo les decía, vea, yo les enseñé los, mira, que hasta todo, todo conductista, mirá que yo hago así e inmediatamente ellos ya saben que, porque yo desde el primer día les digo, vea, hay varios tipos de correcciones, si de verdad yo veo al estudiante muy, yo en el Mini-Talk ni hablo, o sea, yo tomo nota y simplemente les mando ese —comentario— si... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

... There is always formative assessment in class, I feel that there is always an assessment and, or look at the, I try, depending on the activity, I always correct, or immediately, and from the beginning I told them, look, I taught them the, look, that is even so, so behaviorist, notice that I do this and they immediately know what I am referring to, because from the first day I tell them, look, there are several types of corrections, I in fact see the student very, I do not even talk during the Mini-Talk, that is, I take notes and I simple send them that —comment—yes...

When Oriana was asked in the interview for how she described her assessment practices, she explained that she corrected students all the time, using the board to revise some language structures and referring explicitly to them. She added that she was currently more clear on the assessment criteria, explaining the instructions in class, and preparing rubrics to assess the



activities for the project. Her purpose was that students could be very clear about what they had to do. This explicitness in the assignments and the assessment criteria is what Shohamy (2001) refers to as democratic assessment practices. One of the characteristics of this type of practices is transparency which is just what Oriana did when she showed students what they were going to be assessed on and how (Arias *et al.*, 2009).

*Yo creo que las tengo, [the assessment practices] todo el tiempo estoy consciente de ellas y temo, o sea, siempre estoy cuestionando si lo estoy haciendo bien o no, siempre busco que sean claras ¿cierto?, siempre busco que sean justas, que yo esté, que realmente esté evaluando algo que ellos sí hayan aprendido, que sea coherente con lo que he enseñado, eh, que ellos tengan muy claro lo que hay que hacer, [...] que sea más bien formativo, a pesar de que pueda ser sumativa [...] siempre busco ser muy clara en cómo los voy a evaluar y por ejemplo, tener en cuenta que se hicieron prácticas anteriores y que, y que no salga, pues, algo de la nada que no sea algo, pues válido, eh, qué más? ¡ah!, he intentado que sea democrático, por ejemplo, yo les he presentado la rúbrica de cómo hacer una actividad y les pregunto a veces si están de acuerdo con eso, si lo podíamos cambiar... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

I think that I have them, [the assessment practices] I am aware of them all the time and I am afraid, that is, I am always questioning if I am doing it right or not, I always try to be clear right?, I always try to be fair, that I really assess something that students had learned, that is coherent with what I have taught, eh, that they are very clear of what they have to do, [...] that is something more formative, despite it can also be summative [...] I always try to be very clear on how I am going to assess students and for example, to take into account that they have had practice on that before and that, that it does not end

up, well, something out of nothing, that is not something valid, eh, what else? Ah!, I have tried to be democratic, for example, I have presented the rubric of how to do an activity and sometimes I ask them if they are in agreement with that, if we could change it...

Oriana said that to assess her students she considered what students had worked on in class, included an example of what they were going to be assessed on, and offered them some practice before the evaluation. Not only were these types of practices formative and continuous, but they also had construct validity, which is referred in the literature of assessment as the relationship between what is taught and what is assessed (Arias *et al.*, 2009). When Oriana showed her students models of what they were expected to do in an assignment and offered them practice in alike activities, Oriana was addressing construct validity.

*...Creo que por lo menos ahora intento ser más clara con lo que estoy evaluando, por lo menos las actividades del proyecto todas, las cuatro son evaluadas y, y, y las instrucciones que doy en clase como para hacer una actividad digamos el movie review y todo eso, intento hacer rúbricas, explico en clase, intento dar ejemplos en clase y espero que sean lo más claras posibles para que el estudiante sepa qué es lo que tiene que hacer [...] que se evalúe lo que se está viendo, que se dé un ejemplo de lo que se va a evaluar, que se haga una práctica antes de ser evaluado... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

... I think that at least now I try to be more clear with what I am assessing, at least all the activities for the class project, the four of them are assessed and, and, and the instructions that I give in class to do an activity let's say the movie review and all that, I try to do rubrics, I explain in class, I try to give examples in class and I hope they are as clear as possible that the student can know what is what s/he has to do [...] that what is being

assessed is what students are learning, that an example of what is going to be assessed can be given, that there is some practice before being assessed...

When Oriana was asked about the origin of her fair and democratic assessment practices, she acknowledged the readings in her master's but she claimed that what theory proposes needed to be tested in practice. She referred to her reflective capacity to learn from her previous experiences, adding tips that students could take into account for the writing of their texts. Oriana's reflective practices played a role in the decisions she made regarding assessment when she considered how clear she needed to be with what she expected from students, when she designed the midterm exam, or included assessment tasks similar to the ones that had been worked in class.

*Diana: Bueno, y ¿eso de dónde viene?, o sea, de dónde viene que ser muy clara, que ser justa, que ser democrática.*

*Oriana: No, obviamente, obviamente todo eso lo leí en la maestría, yo no tenía ni idea de eso, yo pienso que intuitivamente algunas cositas se hacían, mirá lo que te decía que con la práctica, yo iba añadiéndole un tipcito más, un tipcito más porque me daba cuenta que en lo anterior no fui clara y la falta de claridad y en vez de decir es que el estudiante si es como bobo que no hace tal cosa, reflexionar es que yo no fui clara, yo eso no lo ¿cierto?, cómo, eh, castigar un estudiante por algo con lo que no fui clara, [...] el tipo de preguntas y actividades que hacía en esos, parecidas a las actividades que yo hacía en mis clases con las listening comprehension, eso digamos, que era un poco más intuitivo ahí, hace muchos años, hace mucho tiempo en el FLP, siempre procuraba que los temas de listening y de la lectura y de composición eran temas que se habían discutido en clase, que los estudiantes se sintieran familiarizados y en la composición les daba unas*

*posibilidades, que hablaran y les ponía varios temas que se habían discutido en clase, que eligieran el más cómodo, y, a lo último añadí, que el tema que escribieran puede ser el proyecto, que es un tema en que están empapados, que han leído, que han escrito y si al final lo escribían, eso tenía como mucha validez, entonces, eso les daba antes una motivación muy grande porque ellos ya tenían un montón de información, entonces, al inicio intuitivamente, [...] y ya la maestría leyendo como lo que logramos leer de evaluación y eso sobre ser democrático y que tenga validez, de constructo y todo eso, pues, ya uno intenta aplicarlo aunque conocerlo y leerlo no significa que uno lo pueda como implementar inmediatamente, eso es prueba y error, prueba y error... (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

Diana: Well, and where does that come from?, that is, where does the idea or being very clear come from, being fair, being democratic.

Oriana: No, obviously I read about all that in the master's, I did not have any idea about that, I think that some things were done intuitively, look at what I told about the practice, I was adding one tip more, one tip more because I realized that I had not been clear before and that clarity was missing and instead of saying that the student was dumb for not being able to do something, I reflected that I had not been clear, I did not right?, like, eh, punishing a student for something in which I had not been clear, [...] the type of questions and activities that I did in those, were similar to the ones that I did in my classes with listening comprehension, let's say, that it was a little bit more intuitive there, many years ago, long time ago in the FLP, I always tried that the topics of listening and readings, and composition were topics that had been discussed in class, that the students were familiar with them and in composition I gave them some options, they could talk

and I gave them several topics that had been discussed in class, they could choose the one they felt more comfortable with, and, at the end I added, that the topic they wrote about could be about the class project, that is a topic that they were familiar with, that they have read about, that they have written about and if they chose it at then, that was very valid, so, that even gave them a great motivation because they already had a lot of information, so, at the beginning intuitively, [...] and reading in the master's like what we could read about assessment and the part of being democratic and that it has validity, construct validity and all that, well, one tries to implement it although knowing it and reading about it does not mean that one is able to implement it immediately, it is about try and failure, try and failure...

As it can be seen in Oriana's narrative, theory played a role in the construction of fair and democratic practices, but theory was not enough; trying, failing and continuous reflection on what had happened in practice instead of blaming students, seems to have been the process that led Oriana to assessment practices that included construct and systemic validity (Arias *et al.*, 2009). This could be evidenced when she mentioned that it was important that to include in her assessment what she had taught in class and that previous to the evaluative moment, students could have been exposed to samples and practice of what they had to do.

### ***Self-assessment.***

As part of the formative and democratic approach to assessment that Oriana followed in her classes, she also promoted self-assessment among her students and asked them to participate in the definition of the assessment criteria. This practice was specifically done to assess students' participation in the class project. She promoted self-assessment among her students, and asked

them to hold individual conferences at the end of the course to talk about their performance in the project presentations and in the course in general.

### **Summative assessment.**

The summative assessments Oriana implemented in her classes were also characterized by the transparency her formative assessment practices had. For instance, previous to an oral evaluation, she presented students the assignment with detailed instructions of what she expected students to do —regarding content and linguistic aspects— and with the assessment criteria she was going to use. This information was presented and explained to students in class and then sent via email. This summative assessment continued to have a formative component as at the end of the evaluation, she gave students individual feedback using the notes she had taken of students' performance (and mistakes) during the oral assignment.

In these courses students also had a midterm written exam. For the listening part of the written exam, the teacher asked students to go to the computer room and gave them 30 minutes at the end of the exam to play the audio as many times as they preferred in order to complete the listening exercise. As this practice was completely new to me, I asked Oriana about it and she explained that it was something she did in the EPA.

This practice began to be implemented in the EPA after the teachers discussed with the coordinator how they approached the listening exercises in class and realized that they usually played the audio for more than three times in order for all students to understand the material. Then, they considered that if this was what they did in class, the least they could do in an exam was to allow students to listen to the audio as many times as they needed within the limits of a reasonable time that they defined in 30 minutes. To be able to implement this idea, the procedure to take the exam had to be changed from having students taking the exam in the classroom to

taking it at the computers room where they could also use headphones to facilitate students' understanding of the audio.

The explanation of this assessment practice seemed to be reasonable to me. However, as I still was concerned about the reliability of the exam if students could listen to the audio as many times as they wanted, I interviewed some of Oriana's students about this initiative and their responses could have not surprised me more. They said that even listening to the audio as many times as possible, it could be possible that they did not understand everything. Then I was concerned about how listening to the audio all the times they wanted could affect their preparation to face real-life opportunities and understand spoken English. To this, students responded that in real life they had the chance to ask for repetition and clarification. The explanations students gave made sense to me, I realized that allowing students to listen to an audio recording as many times as they needed within a slot of time was a fair assessment practice that could impact students' learning positively and that was not in contradiction with the development of their listening skills in real-life situations.

Adding to students' perspectives, it is important to remark, first, how this practice has informed Oriana's assessment practices in the FLP as well as her teacher identity, and second, the importance of sustaining reflective and democratic practices with teachers as this may also lead teachers to implement fairness in their classroom assessment.

### **The use of rubrics.**

A key component of Oriana's summative assessment was the use she made of rubrics to assess students' performance. The use Oriana made of rubrics in the FLP also came from what she did in the EPA, although, as she commented in the interview, the rubrics she used in the FLP were very simple.

*...Mi rúbrica es más simplificada, es más sencilla, por ejemplo, vea esto, por ejemplo este semestre que les llevé ensayo informativo, decidí yo, sin hacerlo democráticamente que ese iba a ser, y todos, yo creo que todos se sintieron muy contentos porque lo vieron sencillo, porque les dije que tenían qué hacer ¿cierto?... (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

...My rubric is much more simplified, much simpler, for example, look at this, for example this semester that we used an informative text, I decided that, not democratically, and everybody, I think that all of them were very happy because they saw it simple, because I told them what they had to do right? ...

The FLP where I observed Oriana did not include a set of rubrics for teachers to assess students' performance. Oriana's practice of using rubrics to assess her students seems to have been influenced by her work in the EPA where all the rubrics had been designed when the curriculum had been restructured. However, the rubrics Oriana designed for her classes in the FLP were simpler, probably because there was not a curriculum to align the rubrics with as it happened in the EPA. It is important to notice here that Oriana's construction of her identity through practice seems to have been informed by her experiences in other programs of the university where she worked.

### **The Role of the Curriculum in Teacher Identity Development**

Based on the information provided by Oriana in the interview and what I observed in her classes, it seems to be that the structure and organization of the curriculum played a role in her identity development. The Foreign Languages Program (FLP) where Oriana was observed did not have a course program developed based on students' needs, the course contents had been basically taken from a textbook that teachers were suggested to follow but that they did not



always did. Nevertheless, it seems to be that Oriana's work in the EPA where the curriculum had been redesigned taking into account students' needs had an impact on her practices in the FLP.

Oriana explained that in the EPA she read the learning objectives with students at the beginning of the semester and kept track of what could be missing in the course material to complement it in class and add a critical pedagogy component. According to what she said, she mainly helped students to accomplish the course objectives and guided them in the implementation of the task-based approach and project work followed in the program. The following two excerpts taken from the interview show how descriptive was the narrative was when Oriana talked about the implementation of the curriculum in the EPA and how it drove her to the development of more structured and integrated activities than the ones that she developed in the FLP.

*...El currículo en [the EPA] es muy claro ¿cierto?, entonces tiene unos objetivos comunicativos muy claros, eh, objetivos, eh, comunicativos, lingüísticos y del perfil del profesional ¿cierto?, como de las habilidades o las estrategias que el estudiante debe conseguir allá, entonces, uno al inicio del semestre lee con los estudiantes eso, esos objetivos y los temas que se van a ver, [...] uno tiene que estar pendiente como de que eso suceda porque muchas veces el material no está tan alineado con esos objetivos, entonces cómo los une uno, lo más importante del currículo o de la propuesta del programa son los objetivos comunicativos ¿cierto?, como el primer nivel es describir, nombrar, el, el segundo es narrar, el tercero es relatar, el cuarto es, eh, problematizar, argumentar y el nivel quinto es argumentar y proponer ¿cierto?, entonces, yo creo que en lo que más me enfoco, es en cómo lograr ese objetivo comunicativo en todas las actividades o si el material no lo presenta, entonces, qué hago, qué más llevo para que el*

*estudiante logre hacer eso, si tengo nivel cinco en estos momentos, entonces siempre tiene, siempre llevo preguntas, propuestas por pedagogía crítica porque es que no solamente es argumentar o problematizar, si no también, proponer, proponer, qué acción, qué hacer, qué se debe hacer, bueno, otra cosa muy importante son las tareas reales, entonces, cómo hacer que la tarea, a veces las tareas no son tan reales en realidad. [...] el estudiante al final debe hacer una tarea ¿cierto?, como ir a investigar algo, compartir con los estudiantes, como prepararse para cierto tipo de actividad que harían en la vida real, entonces, como, cómo lo llevo a clase, intento siempre cubrir con esos logros, con el objetivo comunicativo, ya sea, un material que yo misma llevé porque siento que es un tema interesante... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

...The curriculum in the [EPA] is very clear right?, so it has some communicative objectives very clear, eh, objectives, eh, communicative, linguistic and of the professional profile right, like the abilities or the strategies that the student should achieve, so, at the beginning of the semester one reads that with students, those objectives and the topics that will be seen, [...] one has to take care that that happens because many times the material is not aligned with the objectives, so how one should put them together, the most important of the curriculum or of the proposal of the program are the communicative objectives right?, like in the first level is to describe, to name, the, in the second is to narrate, in the third is to relate, in the fourth is, eh, to problematize, to argue and in the fifth is to argue and to propose right?, so, I think that what I focus the most on, is like in achievement that communicative objective in all the activities or if the material does not include it, so, what do I do?, what else can I take to the class to help the student to achieve that, if I have level five in this moment, so it always has, I always prepare some

questions, proposed in critical pedagogy because is not only to argue or to problematize, but also, to propose, to propose, what action, what to do, what should be done, well, another very important thing are real tasks, so, how to do the task, sometimes the tasks are not very authentic in fact. [...] at the end the student should do a task right?, like to investigate something, share with students, like be prepared for certain type of activity they would do in real life, so, like, how do I take it to class, I always try to work on those goals, with the communicative objective, it can be, a material that I prepared because I feel that is an interesting topic...

The way the curriculum was implemented in the EPA influenced Oriana's practices in the FLP when she tried to follow the linguistic objectives in the first levels and tried to identify class activities and materials that helped her students achieve the objectives proposed. In the last course level of the program where the book proposed a review of verb tenses, what Oriana did was to include students' interests in the class discussions that she organized under the name of Mini-Talks. Her role here was to guide students towards the accomplishment of the learning goals proposed adding a critical component.

*... Yo más o menos digo este, el libro en realidad me está proponiendo que el estudiante hable en pasado, te da cosas ¿cierto?, o que hable en futuro y así, así, entonces empiezo a pensar yo qué temas pueden poner al estudiante a hablar del futuro que se conecten con su vida, de todo eso, a veces los temas que llevo son artificiales, me parecen charros, dinámicos o la única forma de trabajar como algo que me parece importante y lo he llevado, [...] yo no me guío mucho por, eh, tengo que ver todos estos, lo que sí vi que trabajé mucho fue en realidad presente y pasado porque me parecen que son estructuras*

*muy importantes para ellos, para narrar historias, para, para hablar, para describir...*

(Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)

... I more or less say, what the textbook is in fact proposing to me is that that the student can talk in past, the textbook gives you something, right?, or that the students speaks in future and things like that, then I think about what topics can take the student to talk in future that are connected to her/his life, all that, sometimes the topics that are take to class are superficial, they seem funny to me, dynamic or the only way that I find to work on something that I think is important and I have taken it to class, [...] I guide myself pretty much by, eh, I have to work in all these, what I did noticed that I worked a lot was in fact the present tense and the past tense because I think those are very important structures for students, to tell stories, to, to speak, to describe...

The above excerpts from the interview showed some similarities between how Oriana approached the implementation of the curriculum in the EPA and the FLP. In both programs she guided herself by the course objectives proposed. Although the course objectives in the FLP were taken from the textbook and were not the product of a curriculum constructed based on students' needs and interests, Oriana complemented the implementation of the curriculum in the FLP with class activities and materials she designed to help students achieve the course goals. In the same way, being the Mini-Talks an activity that had been born in the EPA, she took it to the FLP as a way to connect the grammar structures students needed to review with class discussions of students' interests.

### **The Influence of Teacher Identity Development in the Curriculum**

Something that can be learned from Oriana's experience is how the organization and structure of the EPA curriculum, the alignment of its assessment system, the offer to teachers'

professional development, the mentorship of teachers' work, and the inclusion of teachers' voices seem to have influenced her identity development. This may lead me to think that when these characteristics are not given in a program, teachers' identities play a stronger role. As it can be seen in the following excerpt, it appears to be that not only the EPA shaped Oriana's identities but her identities also influenced the implementation of the curriculum in the FLP.

As it has already been mentioned, the EPA did not propose the use of a textbook and the course contents were organized around students' interests and learning needs. Oriana tried to orient the course contents of level five in the FLP based on students' interests. The way she developed the learning goals in the FLP simulated the way the learning goals were oriented in the EPA. That is to say, once Oriana decided to include the topics chosen by students, she defined the types of texts that could be worked as well as the structures that could help students to write the texts.

*... En nivel cinco yo tengo toda la libertad posible, en realidad, porque el, el digamos que el nivel uno yo soy un poquito más fiel a los objetivos lingüísticos ¿cierto?, porque ellos sí tienen que tener ciertos, se tienen que cumplir ciertos objetivos pero lo que yo hago es, digamos, ellos tienen que trabajar en forma, adjetivos de descripción, ta, ta, ta, ta, ta, entonces no utilizo el libro si no que miro qué actividades me pueden servir, o una lecturita, o un vídeo, intento utilizar material auténtico para seguir con esos objetivos, el nivel cinco sí tengo mucha más libertad, eh, ¿qué pasa en el nivel cinco?, el libro propone, o el syllabus propone repasar todo, pasado simple, present, los simple tenses, [...] en realidad lo que yo hago es intentar mirar los intereses de los estudiantes, casi que ellos van proponiendo las discusiones de clase, con sus propios Mini-Talks, temas de interés, entonces yo intento coger de esos temas, y ya planear y buscar discusiones,*

*debates o actividades, o lecturas o videos que los encaminen a eso, eh, buscando que sean temas de actualidad, que sean críticos, que cuestionemos cosas, entonces ya de contenido, realmente casi no sigo el libro, o sí lo sigo ¿cierto?, porque es que mira que el libro plantea repasar todos los temas gramaticales y ese tipo de cosas y ya los objetivos lingüísticos, los objetivos que me propongo dependen del tipo de textos que estamos viendo, si por ejemplo, si yo decido, porque esta vez no fue democrático, escribir un artículo informativo entonces ¿cuál es la estructura que...?, entonces preparo esas actividades ¿qué tipo de vocabulario se utiliza?, qué transition words son necesarias, se utilizan más o menos, entonces eso es lo que llevo a clase, pero es más desde lo que, desde lo que se va proponiendo... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

... In level five I have the freedom, in fact, because the, let's say that in level one I am a little bit more loyal to the linguistic objectives right?, because students do have to have some, they do have to accomplish some objectives but what I do is, let's say, they have to work on structures, adjectives to describe, ta, ta, ta, ta, ta, so I do not use the textbook but I look at what activities can be useful for me, a reading, a video, I try to use authentic material to accomplish those objectives, in level five I do have more freedom, eh, what happens in level five?, the book proposes, or the syllabus proposes a review of everything, simple past, simple present, simple tenses, [...] in fact what I do is to try to look at students' interests, it is almost like they are the ones who propose the class discussion, with their own Mini-Talks, their topics of interest, so I try to use those topics, and then I plan and I search discussions, debates or activities, or readings or videos that guide students towards that, eh, trying to use current topics, that are critical, that we question things, so regarding the contents, I really do not use the textbook, or I do use it

right?, because notice that the textbook proposes a review of all the grammar topics and that type of things and then the linguistic objectives, the objectives that I propose depend on the types of texts that we are working on, if for example, if I decide, because this time was not democratic, to write an informative text then what is the structure that...?, then I prepare those activities what type of vocabulary is used?, what transition words are necessary, are more or less used, so that is what I take to class, but is more from what, from what is being proposed...

As it can be seen in this excerpt, Oriana's identities were defined by how the curriculum was implemented and the fact that the curriculum in the FLP was less structured moved Oriana to project the identity of the language teacher she had developed in the EPA. This can be noticed when she complemented what was proposed in the FLP with class activities that followed a communicative goal and where the structures were worked based on what it was necessary for students to perform those activities.

## **Teaching Investment**

### **Preparing classes.**

The time Oriana devoted to prepare her classes constituted time she invested in her identity development. There were two moments during the interview when Oriana emphasized the time she invested in the preparation of her classes and the search of sources on the Internet that contributed to her learning.

*... Eso sí, Internet fue mi mejor amigo en los momentos más difíciles, entonces yo buscaba actividades de todo tipo, de todo tipo y me demoraba mucho tiempo, mucho tiempo diseñando las, mis clases, mucho tiempo diseñando las clases de niños en el [the private language institution], por ejemplo, me demoraba mucho, pero también, pues, en*

*la UE, pero no, eso siempre fue como una escuela, eso fue como un laboratorio para mí...* (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)

... In fact, the Internet was my best friend in the most difficult moments, so I search activities of all kind, of all kind and it took me a lot of time, a lot of time designing the, my classes, a lot of time designing the classes for children in the [the private language institution], for example, it took me a lot of time, but also, well, at *UE*, but not, that was always as a school, that was like a laboratory for me...

This excerpt extracted from Oriana's interview shows how, in her case, the time she invested in searching for materials and preparing her classes was a way to invest in her own teacher learning. Although this did not represent formal learning, it was a process that she began at the beginning of her teaching career when she worked in the private language institution and that she continued to develop working at the English Program for Children (EPC) and in the most recent years when she worked in the EPA.

### **Investment in graduate education.**

Oriana also decided to invest on her teacher learning by pursuing master's studies after not wanting to be seen as the translator who only taught. According to what she said, teaching was an area where she felt she still needed to learn and she made the best of this experience. In addition to her willingness to obtain graduate education, the university supported her by paying for half of the tuition.

*Yo decía, pues esto es lo que voy a hacer y lo que voy a seguir haciendo, yo quiero estudiar algo, [...] yo dije ¿por qué no?, pues si yo ya estoy haciendo eso, yo todavía, yo no quiero seguir siendo la traductora que enseña, por qué no estudiar la maestría en enseñanza si es algo que yo ya decidí hacer, es algo que me gusta, que todavía siento que*



*necesito mucho trabajo en eso, entonces, decidí tomarla [...] no es que yo, sí, yo estudié Traducción, bien, pero, pero yo esto es a lo que me dedico y tengo una maestría en eso, pero por otro lado yo quería hacerla, yo también quería aprender, quería sollármela...*  
(Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)

I said, well this is what I am going to do and what I am going to continue doing, I want to study something, [...] I said why not?, well if I am already doing that, I still, I do not want to keep being the translator who teaches, what if I study the master's in teaching if is something that I have already decided to do, is something that I like, where I still feel that I need a lot of work in that, then, I decided to do it [...] it is not that I, yes, I studied Translation, well, but, but this is what I do and I have a master's in this, on the other had I wanted to do it, I also wanted to learn, I wanted to enjoy it...

This excerpt shows how Oriana identified herself as a translator based on the professional preparation that she had received in her bachelor's and on the work she occasionally performed as a translator, that she also combined with teaching. However, she decided to pursue a master's in teaching because she did not want to be identified as the translator who taught. Here it must be said that in the context of *UE*, many of the people who study for being translators and end up working as teachers are seen by the latter as people who "stole" their jobs. In the same way, teachers who occasionally work as translators are seen by the latter as playing a role that does not correspond to them. This social construction of teachers and translators in the working field seems to be a cultural aspect related to the development of teachers' identity development (Holland *et al.*, 1998) and also connected to the social factors in identity development that Norton (1995, 1997, 2000, 2012) refers to. This cultural and social construction of a teacher or a translator identity seems to have played a role when Oriana said that she did not want "to keep

being the translator who teaches” and then she made the decision to invest in her self as a teacher pursuing graduate studies.

### **Communities of Practices**

In Oriana’s case, the people by whom she was surrounded played a role in the construction of her identities. From the beginning of Oriana’s academic preparation, she began to be involve with classmates in her cohort to study and speak in English. This could even be noticed by their professors who commented the good students that cohort had.

*...Yo creo que esa cohorte de traducción para mí fue la mejor del planeta, y hasta los profes decían como que ¡ay, no!, tan bueno este grupo porque eran gomosos, gomosos, éramos un montón, estudiábamos mucho, eh, leíamos mucho, hablábamos todo el tiempo en inglés. (Oriana’s Interview 5-5-17)*

...I think that that cohort of translation was the best of the planet for me, and even the teachers said something like ay, no!, that group is so good because we liked to practice a lot, we were a lot, we studied a lot, eh, we read a lot, we talked all the time in English.

The beginning of Oriana’s labor life as a clerical assistant in the EPC from the Outreach Center continued to be part of her identity development as an English teacher when she began to see those teachers as “*muy bacanos y muy tesos*” (Very cool and smart). Although at the beginning she did not want to be a teacher, she liked the idea as she began to teach.

*Oriana: Sí, claro, como yo trabajaba de secretaria, yo estaba trabajando como, yo estaba trabajando como auxiliar [helping the secretary], ahí empecé a ver a los profes.*

*Diana: Mm, sí.*

*Oriana: Y la influencia, como que me empezó a cambiar la idea de qué era un profe, y, y ya, el ánimo que me dieron, como no, presentáte, para niños.*

*Diana: Sí, pero hablamos también de cómo escogiste, no, tu entraste a Traducción y ahí fue que siendo monitora ya te enganchaste.*

*Oriana: Yo tenía claro que no quería ser profesora pero que me gustaban los idiomas [...] pero obviamente sí cambié la idea de lo que era enseñar viendo a esos profes y ya, ya empecé, mi experiencia fue muy buena, mi experiencia fue con niños, entonces me empecé a encarretar y ya lo vi desde otra manera... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

Oriana: Yes, of course, as I worked as a secretary, I was working as, I was working as an assistant [helping the secretary], there I began to look at the teachers.

Diana: Mm, ritght.

Oriana: And the influence, like I began to change my mind of what a teacher was, and, that was, they encouraged me, like no, apply, to teach children.

Diana: Yes, but we also talked about how you chose, no, you began to study Translation and there being an assisstant you got engaged with teaching.

Oroana: I was clear that I did not want to be a teacher but I liked languages [...] but obviously I did changed the idea of what teaching was looking at those teachers and then, then, my experience was very good, my experience was with children, then I got engaged and I saw it in a different way...

It was by working in this program that she had the opportunity to receive “*acompañamiento*” (mentoring) from the coordinator. That *acompañamiento* consisted of conversations with the coordinator where the development of trust was fundamental for Oriana to feel able to ask all types of questions regarding the teaching practice. Oriana identified the first English program where she worked as a laboratory where the approach to teaching was communicative and content-based, the teaching material was already designed, there was certain

freedom to teach, and where she did her first attempts to design an evaluation. She reported this experience working with children as one that she enjoyed.

By the same time Oriana was working in this program, she had the opportunity to teach English classes to two-year old children in a private nursery home of the city. There she faced an unknown reality because she had to work with very little children who did not master fine mobility yet. To deal with this, she highlighted the help she received from teachers from the nursery home and the role the Internet played in the searches she did to learn how to work with little children and the type of activities that best suited them.

*...Yo siento que en la marcha aprendí muchas cosas, intuitivamente e investigando y preguntando, pero a la vez, obviamente yo empecé a tomar todo lo que podía, todos los ELT, iba a todos los ELT, había un curso, yo iba a ese curso, había una charla, yo iba a la charla, había un taller, yo iba al taller, y eso también me daba muchos, muchos elementos y los profesores que yo sentía que eran chéveres, yo, ve este profe es energético, se ve que le gusta lo que hace, preguntaba cositas. (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

...I feel that I learned many things by doing them, intuitively and researching and asking, but at the same time, I obviously began to take as much as I could, all the ELTs (local conferences), I went to all the ELTs, there was a course, I went to that course, there was a lecture, I went to the lecture, there was a workshop, I went to the workshop, and that also gave me many, many elements and the teachers that I felt that were cool, I, thought that teacher was energetic, it seems that s/he likes what s/he does, I asked questions.

Then Oriana broadened her social networks when she moved from working in a small program to working at a binational and bicultural private institution of the city where, not only

the number of teachers was much larger, but also had teachers who were native speakers of English, and where the bibliographical resources in English were the best in the state (*departamento*). It was in this institution where Oriana began to be in contact with teachers who spoke in English most of the time and was exposed to a type of professional development at a greater scale: an induction where teachers had to observe a class before beginning to teach, meetings with a mentor to hold academic discussions that lasted up to three hours, a whole-day paid training that was more practical than theoretical where teachers shared their experiences, and the participation in local conferences where workshops for teachers on specific topics and skills were implemented.

It was working at this institution that Oriana began to teach adults. At the beginning, she felt she was not ready and was a little bit scared. To work there, she had to study grammar structures on her own because the institution was more demanding in this aspect and there was a stronger emphasis on grammar. It was working here where Oriana found her first tension between her communicative teaching beliefs and the grammar-oriented way two of her students preferred to learn English.

Oriana's identity as a teacher developed along different life moments through communities of practice in the different academic and working spaces where she had been. This also applies when in her master's she was all the time sharing and working with two of her classmates.

*...Leslie fue mi compañerita de tareas, mi compañera de todo, todo lo discutíamos, escribíamos juntas, hacíamos trabajos juntas, todo [...] y Tania, que fue una compañerita que conocí, que siento que con Tania todo el tiempo tengo un trabajo, con Tania discutimos todo el tiempo actividades, cómo hago esto, tengo este estudiante,*

*tengo este grupo [...] Tania, por ejemplo y Leslie, en este momento son, y Nestor, también en estos momentos, está trabajando en el EPA, son profes, pues, son personas con las que, yo digo, es que uno solo no, es que uno solo se cierra ¿cierto?, aunque uno lee e intenta buscar, pero una persona con otra perspectiva, con otras ideas [...] con otras experiencias, ayuda mucho o, y otros materiales, inclusive ve mira, yo hice esto para ese, ah bueno, buenísimo, yo nunca me hubiera encontrado ese video tan bacano, o sea, todo el tiempo discutiendo cosas... (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

...Leslie was my partner to do homework, mi partner in everything, we discussed everything, we wrote together, we did assignments together, everything [...] and Tania, that was a partner that I met, I feel that with Tania I have a work to do all the time, with Tania we discussed activities all the time, how do I do this, I have this student, I have this group [...] Tania, for example and Leslie, in this moment they are, and Nestor, also in these moment, he is working in the EPA, they are teachers, well, they are people with whom, I say, because when you are by yourself, you get trapped right?, although one reads and tries to look for, but with another person with another perspective, with other ideas [...] with other experiences, that helps a lot or, and other materials, notice for example, I did this for that, ah ok, very good, I had never been able to find that video so cool, that is, all the time discussing things...

Continuing with the professional spaces where Oriana developed her identities within communities of practice, she referred to an in-service training in the FLP where she learned a lot because teachers had the opportunity to share what they did. It can be said that Oriana constructed her identities through communities of practice when her teaching practices were enriched by other teachers and by her work in different institutions. In the interview, Oriana

narrated how one of the activities she implemented in the classes migrated and mutated from the Happy Activity that a colleague and friend of hers did and that was then implemented in the EPA under the name of Sharing Activities, that Oriana adapted to her classes in the FLP with the name of Mini-Talks.

*The [Happy Activity] empezó en the EPA y eso no lo empecé yo, lo empezó una compañera, Katherine, con la que yo trabajé en [the private language institution] que trabajó un semestre en the EPA y ella y yo éramos así, y ella es super dinámica, ella es así una super profe y un día ella se ideó que los estudiantes, pues, que ella no iba a llevar todo a clase, si no que los estudiantes iban a llevar algo a clase y se diseñó un Happy Activity, el Happy Activity es lo que ya se llama Sharing Activities... (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)*

The [Happy Activity] began in the EPA and I was not the one who began that, it was began by a colleague, Katherine, with whom I had worked in the [private language institution] and who also worked a semester in the EPA and she and I were like this, and she is super dynamic, she is a super teacher and one day she thought that students, well, that she was not going to be preparing everything for the class, but that the students were going to prepare something for the class and she designed a Happy Activity, the Happy Activity is what we call now Sharing Activities...

To sum up the impact that participating in communities of practice seems to have had on Oriana's teacher identity development, the following excerpt exemplifies how Oriana learned from the spaces where she had opportunity to share materials and activities with different teachers. In her case, the ways in which her teacher identities were shaped by the communities of practice could have worked as an approach to professional development. The informal spaces she

sustained with colleagues and friends from the same field of knowledge, seem to have played a role of communities of practice where she learned and this experience was reflected in her teaching and assessment practices.

*Eh, totalmente, yo creo que yo sola no hubiera llegado, yo creo que hay unas cosas que uno, la personalidad de uno ayudan a, yo en mi clase, cuando antes no tenía como esa posibilidad de discutir con otros profes o de tener desarrollo profesional en, pero es que yo siempre he tenido esa oportunidad, hasta en el [the private language institution] siempre teníamos seminarios, de ir a cositas, yo creo que todo ha contribuido a ser lo que yo hago ahora, eh, conversar con profes, eh, intercambiarnos material, [...] pero claro, el desarrollo profesional que he tenido sobre todo en el EPA ha sido increíble [...] pero todo ha contribuido, los compañeros, el desarrollo profesional ha sido lo más importante, la maestría obviamente me ha ayudado mucho a, por lo menos a cuestionarse, ¿cierto?, porque uno no, uno no nace aprendido, ni leyendo ya sabe, lo sabe todo, pero aprender a cuestionarse es muy importante y saber que uno solo no se puede hacer, que es con, con, desarrollo profesional es esencial, pero también, el espacio, tener la oportunidad de hablar con otros profes y mirar qué es lo que están haciendo y por qué lo están haciendo y cómo les funciona y ya, y yo creo algo también muy importante es estar uno abierto, abierto a cambiar, abierto a modificar, abierto a siempre replantearse cosas. (Oriana's Interview, 8-23-17)*

Eh, absolutely, I think that by myself I would have not been able to be, I think that there are many things that one, one's personality helps to, in my classes, before when I had the possibility to discuss with other teaches or to have professional development in, but what happens is that I have always had that opportunity, even in the private language



institution we always had seminars, opportunities to attend to events, I think that everything has contributed to be who I am nowadays, eh, talking to teachers, eh, the exchange of materials, [...] but of course, the professional development that I have mainly had in the EPA has been incredible [...] but everything has contributed, the colleagues, the professional development has been the most important, the master's has obviously helped me a lot to, at least to question myself, right?, because one is not born knowing everything, nor reading you can know, know everything, but learning to question oneself is very important and knowing that one cannot be made by oneself, that is with, the professional development is essential, but also, the space, there has to be the opportunity to talk to other teachers and look at what they are doing and why they are doing it and how it works for them and that that is it, I also think that is very important to be opened, opened to change, opened to modify, always opened to reconsider things.

As Oriana concluded, being in contact with her colleagues, involved her in professional development. Investing in her master's and questioning what she did was among what she considered has contributed to be the teacher she is today. It is interesting to notice here how in her definition of professional development, Oriana included not only what she learned in her graduate studies but also her personality (human capital); the opportunities to attend seminars, to share with other colleagues, to exchange materials, to look at what other teachers do and how that works (social capital); and her ability to reflect, to be opened to change and to reconsider things (decisional capital). In Hargreaves and Fullan's (2012) words, these have been ways in which Oriana has developed her human, social and decisional capital that are components of professional capital. At the same time, this professional capital seems to have contributed to Oriana's identity development.

### **Teacher identity development working at other English programs.**

For Oriana, working in a program like the EPA shaped her professional identities but at the same time, these professional identities were shaped by the language learner identities Oriana brought to the classroom. In the interview, Oriana mentioned that the EPA helped her to grow in many aspects, to realize who she was, what she liked to do, and her teaching methodology.

*Diana: Dices que el proceso en el EPA te ha ayudado a crecer como profe.*

*Oriana: Sí, como en todo sentido, en eso, en darme cuenta, pues que, como quién soy, o sea, qué es lo que me gusta hacer, como la metodología, eh, yo no sé si yo en otro programa me hubiera sentido tan cómoda y si hubiera seguido como profe... (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

Diana: You say that the process in the EPA has helped you to grow as a teacher.

Oriana: Yes, absolutely, in that, in realizing, that, like who I am, I mean, what is what I like to do, like the [teaching] methodology, eh, I do not know if I would have felt so comfortable working at another program and if I would have continued as a teacher...

From Oriana's experience, it can be concluded that finding a program or an institution to work is not a search that teachers do consciously, but something that seems to occur more by chance. In the interview, Oriana mentioned that being the kind of person that she was and having learned English in the way she did it, it would have been less probable to be the kind of teacher that she was; if she had worked, for instance, in an institution that followed a grammar-oriented approach to teaching English. She added that, it was where one started to work what shaped one's perspectives of the world to decide on what teaching was or not and how to do it.

*... Si yo hubiera empezado en un, con mi personalidad, con la forma en que yo aprendí inglés, si yo hubiera empezado en una institución de esas, ¿me gustaría tanto mi trabajo?, ¿dónde estaría?, ¿qué tipo de profesora sería?, ¿qué estaría haciendo? ¿me*

*entendés?, yo probablemente no, porque yo creo que donde uno empieza es lo que le da las perspectivas del mundo, entonces uno está ahí, uno dice ¡no!, esto no es enseñar, enseñar es esto, así se enseña, ¿no?* (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)

... If I would have started in a, with my personality, with the ways in which I learned English, if I would have started in one of those institutions, would I like my work so much?, where would I be?, what type of teacher would I be?, what would I be doing?, do you get me?, I probably no, because I think that where one begins is what gives you the perspectives of the world, so there you are, one says no!, this is not teaching, teaching is this, this is the way to teach, no?

Not only was the teaching approach of a program or institution where Oriana worked what continued to shape her teacher identity development and to widen her perspectives, but also the different professional development opportunities she had access to share with her colleagues what they did in their classroom and attend conferences. In line with this, Oriana considered that the EPA was the program where she had nurtured the most her self as a teacher and what permeated her work at other places.

*Yo siempre me he alimentado desde lo que me ha dado el [EPA] y yo siento que eso me permea donde yo trabaje, pero definitivamente yo siento que eso yo no lo tuve en the FLP, o sea, eso apenas ha habido, un proceso que empezó, es un proceso que empezó...* (Oriana's Interview, 6-2-17)

I have always nurtured myself from what the EPA has given me and I feel that that permeates me wherever I work, but I definitely feel that I did not have that in the FLP, that is, there has just been, a process that began, is a process that began...

The learning Oriana obtained in the EPA permeated her practices at other working places. An example of this is how she implemented rubrics in the FLP based on the experience she had with rubrics in the EPA.

*...Mi rúbrica es más simplificada, es más sencilla, por ejemplo, vea esto, por ejemplo este semestre que les llevé ensayo informativo, decidí yo, sin hacerlo democráticamente que ese iba a ser, y todos, yo creo que todos se sintieron muy contentos porque lo vieron sencillo, porque les dije que tenían qué hacer ¿cierto?, mirá que la otra vez nos tomamos hasta tres clases para mirar los tipos de, qué tipo de texto había y analizamos. [...] pero uno todo el tiempo va modificando esas cosas. (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

...My rubric is much more simplified, much simpler, for example, look at this, for example this semester that we used an informative text, I decided that, not democratically, and everybody, I think that all of them were very happy because they saw it simple, because I told them what they had to do right?, remember that in the other course it took us up to three classes to look at they types of, the type of text and we analyzed. [...] but one is all the time modifying those things.

The previous excerpt shows how Oriana took the idea of implementing rubrics in the EPA to design her own rubrics to assess in the FLP. She also adapted the rubrics to the type of texts she worked in the FLP. These were decisions that came from her learning and experience in the EPA because the FLP did not have any parameters defined with respect to what type of texts should students write and how to assess.

### **Professional Capital Development Shaping Teachers' Identities**

Oriana identified the EPA as a place where she had learned a lot. For her, this was a program that gave teachers freedom but that at the same time invested in them as it had invested

in its structure: evaluating the curriculum, offering advising sessions to students to support their learning, highlighting the role of the teachers, their beliefs about teaching, redesigning the assessment component, and constantly evaluating what was done to adjust it to what better worked for teachers and students.

*No, en el programa, entonces debido a todos esos cambios, pues, me he dado cuenta de muchas cosas que el programa, eh, ¿cómo ve el programa a?, ¿cómo un programa puede ver a los profesores?, ¿cómo un programa ve a los estudiantes?, ¿cómo ve un programa el aprendizaje de lenguas?, pero, yo a veces pienso y habiendo trabajado en otras instituciones [...] aquí yo creo que a los profesores nos dan mucha libertad, pero a la vez es un programa que invierte, [...] cualquiera, no pagaría tanto por una reestructuración y por un rediseño de material y eso lo hicieron dos veces, eh, no le daría como tantas posibilidades a los estudiantes, por ejemplo, esos supporting sessions, no le darían tanta importancia a los profes y a lo que ellos piensan de la enseñanza, y mirá que todo lo que se ha reestructurado en el programa, un cambio de rúbrica, una, la decisión de quitar o no una actividad de un curso, eh, ideas para cambiar por ejemplo, las fuentes...*  
(Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)

No, in the program, then due to all those changes, well, I have realized many things that the program, eh, how does the program see?, how can a program see the teachers?, how does a program see the students?, how does a program the learning of languages?, but, sometimes I think and having worked at other institutions [...] I think that the teachers here are allowed to do what they want, but at the same time is a program that invests, [...] it is not easy for any program to pay for restructuring the program and for redesigning the material and that has been done twice, eh, not any program would give so many

possibilities to the students, for example, those supporting sessions, they would not give a lot of importance to the teachers and to what they think of teaching, and notice all what has been restructured in the program, a change of a rubric, one, the decision or taking out or not a class activity, eh, ideas to change for example, the sources [that students used for the project]...

It seems to be that the investment the EPA made in its teachers and its different curriculum components fostered Oriana's identity development. In the interview, she explained how the different components of the EPA were continuously evaluated by the program coordinator in collaboration with the teachers of the program. That is to say, the EPA followed a formative approach to program evaluation (Scriven, 1967 as cited in Popham, 2008, p. 3). Although there was also a summative approach to the evaluation of the curriculum components such as: the theoretical foundations, the course contents, the materials design, the assessment system and the professional development. The coordinator offered guidance and clear instructions to teachers at the beginning of every semester, accompanied teachers' work along the semester, sustained informal conversations with them whenever they needed it, observed teachers in the classroom at least once every semester and gave them feedback afterwards, held meetings with teachers at the end of the semester where she evaluated with teachers what worked and did not, and the made decisions together on what was necessary as is illustrated below.

*... No sólo el material, aparte del material doce tareas del proyecto, la lectura de un libro, eso lo piloteamos y lo logramos hacer todo, pero dijimos no, esto satura mucho al estudiante, pero, que casi diría que cada semestre es un pilotaje, porque cada semestre en una reunión entonces cómo vimos esto, cómo vimos lo otro, deberíamos hacer esto,*

*esto y se hace, entonces el programa va a avanzando también de acuerdo a las experiencias.* (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)

... No only the material, apart from the material 12 tasks of the project, the reading of a book, we piloted that and we did everything, but we said no, this saturates the student a lot, but, I would almost say that we are piloting everything every semester, because every semester in a meeting we comment on what we think about this, how did we see other aspects, we should do this and this, and that is what we do, then the program evolves also based on the experiences.

*...Entonces el programa, el programa cada, en cada reunión, la reunión es de cuatro horas con refrigerio y casi siempre se toma una decisión que afecta el programa de curso, entonces los profesores tienen una, una gran influencia ahí, se tienen en cuenta las experiencias, de los profesores, además, porque se ve, desde la coordinación, se ve, se entiende que los profesores, son los que más conocen las necesidades de los estudiantes...* (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)

...In each meeting, is a four-hour meeting with a snack and almost always we make a decision that affect the syllabus, then the teachers have a, a great influence there, the experiences of the teachers are taken into account, in addition, because, you can see, from the coordination, you can see, it is understood that the teachers, are the ones who know the most students' necessities...

From Oriana's words, it can be inferred that all these were characteristics of the EPA that fostered an environment rich in professional capital where she could develop her identities favorably, bringing who she was to the program but also contributing to it. As Oriana mentioned, the university gave her opportunities for professional development, supported her with her

master's studies, and offered her possibilities to belong to a study group and to grow professionally. For her, these were opportunities that other types of professionals do not have.

*...La universidad me da la oportunidad del desarrollo profesional, la universidad me pagó el cincuenta por ciento de mi maestría ¿cierto?, la universidad me da posibilidades de entrar a un grupo de estudio de formarme e informarme ¿cierto? y crecer más como profesional, entonces, específicamente como profesional creo que me da muchas oportunidades que otros profesionales no tienen... (Oriana's Interview, 5-5-17)*

...The university gives me a professional development opportunity, the university paid 50% of my master's right?, the university gives me possibilities to be part of a study group to be prepared and informed right? and to grow more as a professional, then, specifically as a professional I think that [the university] gives me many opportunities that other types of professionals do not have...

According to what Oriana said, it can be concluded that working in the EPA of *UE* can be seen as a context that favored the development of her professional capital because both entities invested in teachers' human, social and decisional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). This was done when teachers received guidance to do their work, when meetings were held whether to sustain informal conversations or to make important decisions for the implementation of the curriculum in the program.

### **Summary**

Teachers like Oriana invested in their language learning as a way to increase their cultural capital (Norton, 1997, 2000). This cultural capital was represented by the knowledge she acquired learning English to be able to teach it. In Oriana's specific case, learning English was a



means to access knowledge, to relate to the world by accessing music and literature. This represented a way in which she constructed her identity as a language learner. Then, Oriana began to invest in her teaching persona when she began her teaching career and had to search for information to deal with classroom situations she had not been prepared for. The time she invested in the preparation and the search of materials for her classes contributed to her cultural capital as a teacher, something that began to represent economic resources for her.

Being involved in communities of practice since Oriana was a language learner was a characteristic of her teacher identity, another way through which she invested in her language learning. Communities of practice were also a means through which Oriana continued to develop her identity as an English teacher (Wenger, 1998). Not only did she look for opportunities to learn from people who made part of the community of teachers to which she belonged, but she was also offered opportunities to be involved with other teachers in programs and institutions where she worked. A specific program that contributed to her identity development as a teacher was the EPA where, in addition to her continuous strategies to engage in collegial dialogue, the program offered her different spaces where she continued to learn as a teacher, sharing and reflecting with her colleagues.

Another way in which Oriana invested to develop her teacher identity was her teaching practice (Holland *et al.*, 1998). These practices were situated in her classroom and evolved through her reflection on action, when she shared with other teachers, and when the EPA coordinator mentored her. Finally, Oriana's identity development through investment, communities of practice and practice align with the concept of professional capital that Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) define and that is composed by human, social and decisional capital. By investing in her knowledge of English and working towards the improvement her

teaching practices, Oriana became an invested language learner and teacher and developed her human capital; by being involved in communities of practice where she learned from the experiences of her colleagues, Oriana contributed to her social capital; and by continuously reflecting on her teaching and assessment practices whether by herself or in the community of the EPA, she developed her decisional capital.

## **Chapter 5: *Entre la Industrialización y la Interculturalidad en la Enseñanza del Inglés* (Between the Industrialization and Interculturalism in the Teaching of English)**

*...La manera de dar la clase en [...] a mí me* ...The way of teaching a class in [...]  
*influenció muchísimo, no es que yo crea que* influenced me a lot, not because I think  
*es la mejor ni nada, pero, por ejemplo, yo* that is the best approach, but, for  
*en [...], veía cómo los estudiantes se* instance, in [...], I could see how  
*soltaban y se desenvolvían radicalmente* students developed their language skills  
*mucho más rápido que en la mejor clase,* much faster than in the best class, then I  
*entonces me parecía un buen método de eso* thought it was a good method to  
*de animar a la gente a que hablara y todo.* encourage people to talk.

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I describe the selves as a language learner and teacher that I put together to unveil Angela's identities development. In her identity as a language learner, I narrate her experience with two foreign languages and how, despite having being educated as a translator and interpreter, she also learned about the culture of the countries where those languages were spoken. I refer to the approach to the writing she was exposed to, that was mainly oriented towards the translation of texts. I also comment on the autonomous language learning approach she implemented to continue in contact with the languages she knew and on her language assessment experience as a student.

In the development of Angela's identity as a teacher, I explain how she became a teacher, at a very young age, working in the Outreach Center of the university where she studied her bachelor's. This teacher identity continued to be developed in the Private Language Institution (PLI) where she worked and where she learned about the benefits of teaching with the direct

method. I show how despite Angela constructed her identity as a teacher from practice, working at different places, it was only until she pursued a master's degree that she officially felt like a language teacher.

In the description of Angela's teaching practices, I include how she developed her students' language skills and promoted classroom interactions following how she had taught in the PLI; she also added an intercultural component to her classes based on and her learning experience being exposed to the cultures of the languages she had learned. I narrate how Angela's teaching and assessment practices were woven when she monitored students' work, revised the homework assignments, and gave students class time to prepare oral assignments. I mention how Angela's identities as a language learner and language teacher were intertwined when, in her classes, she implemented similar teaching practices to the ones she had been exposed to as a language learner.

I explain how Angela's work in the PLI and her involvement in teachers' professional development such as lectures, appear to have functioned as a community of practice that helped her learned and construct her teaching and assessment practices. At the same time, these practices seem to have been influenced by how the curriculum was defined in the two programs where I observed her. Meanwhile in the Foreign Languages for Adults Program (FLAP), Angela's identities were restricted to a rigid structure of the curriculum; in the Foreign Languages Program (FLP), Angela's identities were more easily exercised due to the flexibility of the curriculum that facilitated students' situated learning practices and their learning pace.

## Identity as a Language Learner

### Language and culture learning.

Angela was a native of a Spanish-speaking country other than Colombia. To learn English, Angela had the opportunity to travel to a Country where English was Spoken as a Native Language (CESNL) when she was a teenager. In the description she offered of her English language learning process, she said it occurred following an intercultural approach because she was in a context where English was taught as a second language. There, she was in contact with people from Asia, Europe and Latin America, and learned not only about food of students' countries, but also from other customs of the CESNL.

Angela was educated as a translator and interpreter in two foreign languages in her home country. When she described the learning of those two foreign languages in her bachelor's she referred to a cultural component that was taught altogether with the language during the first three years, then the focus on translation and interpretation took place during the last two years of the program. In the case of English, she took exams to validate the courses as she had already learned English. She did all the courses for the second foreign language (FL2) she studied. For her, learning these two languages was a process of learning about the cultures where those languages were spoken. Due to the focus of her bachelor's on interpretation, the orientation of the languages she learned was in authentic contexts as one of the roles of an interpreter is to be able to talk about current topics and be aware of what happens geopolitically.

*... En esa carrera los primeros tres años, son de idiomas, de idiomas y cultura, y los últimos dos años es cuando te especializas en traducción o traducción-interpretación, [...] ahí, fue el primer proceso de aprender el idioma, al tiempo de aprender sobre la cultura, sobre todo de [the country of the FL2] y luego con lo de la interpretación fue más como usar el idioma en un contexto más auténtico para los intérpretes, que es*

*hablar de actualidad y estar al tanto de qué está sucediendo geopolíticamente.* (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)

... In that bachelor's the first three years, is about languages, languages and culture, the last two years is for you to go deep into translation or translation and interpretation, [...] there was the first process to learn the language, at the same time learning about the culture, about everything of [the country of the FL2] and then with the interpretation was more about using the language in a more authentic context for the interpreters, that is to talk about current facts and be updated of what is happening geopolitically.

During this language learning stage at the college, Angela mentioned two of her professors who were very important for her. One was her teacher of simultaneous interpretation in English from whom Angela learned to use the language to be updated with what happened in the world and to use the language for authentic purposes. A second professor she recalled, was one with whom students talked about books they had read.

*... En inglés tuve dos profesores bastante importantes, uno [name of the professor ...] él nos daba, él daba inglés cinco, o sea, el último inglés y para mí fue muy importante esa materia porque era mucho más libre, era como, bueno, vamos a hablar de libros y vamos a, a hacer debates y eso, eso era chévere, y otra profesora también fue importante, esa profesora ya era de interpretación simultánea e inglés, [... name of the professor], [...] con ella, aprendí [...] como a usar el inglés para estar actualizados, o sea, para saber –Ver qué pasaba en el mundo– Sí, exactamente, para discutir también y para, usarlo como más auténticamente que en las clases normales de idiomas.* (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)

... I had two professors in English who were very important, one [name of the professor...] he taught is, he taught English five, that is, the last English course and that course it was very important for me because there was a lot of freedom, it was like, well, let's talk about books and to, to have debates and things like that, that was cool, and another professor who was also important, that professor taught simultaneous interpretation and English, [... name of the professor], [...] with her, I learned [...] like to use English to be updated, that is, to know –To see what happened in the world– Yes, exactly, to discuss too and to, use it like more authentically than in the regular language classes.

As it could be noticed above, Angela's language learning experience was intertwined with the learning of the cultures where those languages were spoken. It also seems to be that having been educated as an interpreter exposed Angela to an authentic approach to learning, where English was used for communicative purposes and where the discussion of current topics were part of her preparation as an interpreter. However, Angela reported that the approach to learning the FL2 was more academic and less authentic.

### **The learning approach to writing.**

The fact that the teacher was educated as a translator and interpreter also influenced how she was taught to write in English, that was mainly through the comparison of translation texts. As she explained in the interview, this happened because in her bachelor's they were taught not only to translate from English to Spanish but also from Spanish to English. Thus they developed the ability to write in English with a translation purpose in mind. They were exposed, for example, to parallel texts, that is to say, texts about the same topic, with the same argument where they took care of the structure and the vocabulary used.

*...Nosotros nunca escribimos con el propósito único de simplemente escribir en inglés sino de traducir. [...] los modelos de nosotros, pues eran textos paralelos que, textos paralelos son textos sobre el mismo tema, con el mismo argumento, pero en el idioma en que estás traduciendo, o sea, textos de lo que estás haciendo, inclusive en el idioma original o en el idioma que estás traduciendo, para tú fijarte cómo están esos textos, el vocabulario que usa, algo de la estructura, aunque eso nunca, nunca fue como tan importante sino más bien el vocabulario y los términos. (Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)*

...We never wrote with the only purpose of just writing in English but to translate. [...] the models we had, were parallel texts that, parallel texts are texts about the same topic, with the same argument, but in the language that you are translating, that is, texts about what you are doing, even in the original language or in the language that you are translating, for you to focus on how those texts are, the vocabulary they use, some structures, although that was never, it was never as important as the vocabulary and the expressions.

The way Angela was taught to write in English is brought to the discussion because it seems to be that not having been educated as a teacher, left room for other influences such as the one Angela experienced with the direct method, teaching at a private language institution as it will be explained in the section of teaching practices.

### **Autonomous language learning.**

During the interview, Angela referred to an independent way of learning the languages she knew and to a continuous way of practicing them, being in contact with the “external world through the languages [she] knows” and not only to plan her classes.



*... Yo siempre mantengo una formación continua, independiente en el sentido de que no es, no hago solamente lo que necesito para preparar las clases en los idiomas que uso, sino que todo el tiempo estoy en contacto con el mundo exterior a través de los idiomas que manejo, y a pesar, yo siento que yo aprendo como constantemente de los idiomas.*  
(Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)

... I always keep learning, by myself in the sense that, I not only do what I need to prepare the classes in other languages that I use, but all the time I am in contact with world abroad through the languages that I know, and despite that, I feel that I am constantly learning about languages.

Some of the activities the teacher performed to be in contact with the languages she knew and taught were: reading the newspaper, watching videos, talking to friends who were natives of the languages she knew, and doing glossaries when she had time, which was a translation-related practice, and translating itself that became a way of learning as well.

*Yo todo el tiempo estoy leyendo prensa en los idiomas que manejo y todo el tiempo trato de hablar con mis amigos, nativos, en los idiomas que manejo, eh, algunas veces, o sea, depende del momento y de lo ocupada que yo esté hago glosarios, que es una práctica muy traductológica, voy haciendo glosarios y eso me ayuda.* (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)

I am all the time reading the newspaper in the languages that I know and all the time I try to talk with my friends, native speakers, in the languages that I know, eh, some times, that is, it depends of the moment and of how busy I am I do glossaries, that is translation practice, I do the glossaries and that helps me.

As it was shown in the previous excerpt, language teachers like Angela, continue to invest in their language learning, as when she put into practice the languages she had learned in

her bachelor's not only through her job, translating, interpreting and teaching, but also using the language to communicate with her friends and working on her own vocabulary improvement, composing glossaries.

**The assessment experience as a language learner.**

Angela did not recall details of how she was assessed as a language learner but she mentioned presentations and tests in her experience in the CESNL. From the experience at college, she remembered the exercises and verb conjugation exams in the first semesters, as well as the talks and discussions held about books, the participation in debates, and some assignments such as summaries and literary analysis.

*... En the CESNL, ah bueno, ¿cómo me evaluaban en the CESNL?, yo creo que con algunas exposiciones, tal vez, eh, la verdad en the CESNL no me acuerdo de test escrito. [...] En inglés cinco en la universidad me acuerdo que hablábamos, o sea, participábamos en debates y sobre libros y esas cosas y nos evaluaban así, en the FL2 también nos evaluaban mucho con esos debates, muchísimo, pero también los, en los primeros años nos hacían muchos ejercicios, muchos exámenes de conjugación, muchos exámenes de conjugación, eh, desde la carrera siempre tuvimos que entregar trabajos, trabajos escritos de distintas índoles y esos también eran evaluados como, análisis literarios y ese tipo de cosas o resúmenes y así, eso fue aprendiendo los idiomas... (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

... In the CESNL, ah well, how was I assessed in the CESNL? I think that with some presentations, maybe, eh, in fact in the CESNL I do not remember a written test. [...] In English five at college I remember that we talked, that is, we participated en debates and about books and those things and we were assessed like that, in the FL2 we were also assessed frequently with those debates, a lot, but also the, in the first years we were aksed

to work on exercises, many conjugation tests, many conjugation tests, eh, in the bachelor's we always had to turn in assignments, written assignments of different types and those were also assessed like, literary analysis and that type of things or summaries and things like that, that was learning languages...

The ways in which Angela was assessed as a language learner ranged from drills as when she had to do exercises of the type of verb conjugation, including more communicative tasks such as presentations and debates, and more academic assignments like summaries and literary analysis, and assessment practices that included the testing component.

## **Identity as a Language Teacher**

### **How Angela became a teacher.**

Angela began to teach English after the head of the Department of Languages in the university where she pursued her bachelor's knew she had been in the CESNL and offered her to start working at the Outreach Center on Saturdays. Angela referred to the head of the Department of Languages as someone who had trusted and encouraged her to teach. As teaching was something new for her, she devoted a lot of time to it; for her, this was a context where she learned and where she could begin to see that her students were learning because what she did was working. At the beginning, she was a little scared because all of her students were older than her but she gained confidence after seeing how the head of the Department had believed on her.

*... Mi línea de tiempo como profe de idiomas comienza en [...] el año en que yo empecé a estudiar en [the university of her home country], ese mismo año empecé a dar clases, em, como los cursos de extensión, digamos, daba clases los sábados y, me gustaba muchísimo, era un aspecto de mí al que le dedicaba, mucho tiempo porque era, era algo nuevo para mí, estaba aprendiendo, aprendiendo en ese contexto, pero veía que lo que yo hacía*

*funcionaba porque las personas aprendían, entonces, eh, en ese primer acercamiento con la enseñanza del inglés tuvo mucho qué ver, la, que era directora en ese momento de the Department of Languages [...], que creyó en mí en ese sentido y me impulsó a hacerlo, llegó un momento en que tenía como algo de temor de que, porque todas esas, todas esas personas eran mayores que yo, [...] y yo ah bueno, si ella es la directora confía en mí, yo también tengo que confiar en mí y lo hice, y me gustó mucho... (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

...My timeline as a language teacher begins in [...] the year that I began to study in [the university of her home country], that same year I began to teach, em, like courses from the outreach center, let's say, I taught on Saturdays and, I liked it a lot, it was an aspect of me to which I devoted, a lot of time because it was, it was something new for me, I was learning, learning in that context, but I saw that what I did worked because people learned, so, eh, in that first approach to teaching English was very influenced by, the, who was the director of the Department of Languages in that moment [...], she believed in me in that sense and she encouraged me to do it, there was a moment in which I was a little bit afraid of, because all those, all those people were older than me, [...] and I ah ok, if she who is the director trusts me, I also have to trust in me and I did it, and I liked it a lot...

As it could be seen in the excerpts above, Angela was invited to teach English, after the head of the Department of Languages in her home country knew she had been abroad learning English and was being prepared to become a translator and interpreter, and not necessarily because Angela had received any preparation to teach. It can be said then that, for Angela, there was not a transition between her experience as a language learner and as a language teacher.

Continuing with her labor journey experience, Angela began to work at a Private Language Institution (PLI), currently a worldwide language teaching institute created in the 1870s whose teaching approach evolved from the grammar-translation method to an immersion approach or what is known in the literature of language teaching methods as the direct method. In this method, students are exposed as much as possible to the target language and encouraged to perform short communicative and prepare short dialogues or conversations. It was working at this institute that Angela learned to teach following the PLI method that she would use later on at other contexts. For her, this was a job that allowed her to continue studying, have some income, and did not demand a lot of extra class time preparation. Not only did Angela learn from the PLI method but also from the different type of students with different backgrounds she had the opportunity to meet there.

*... Empecé a trabajar en el PLI [...] en el PLI a mí me gustó muchísimo trabajar, porque aprendí una manera totalmente diferente de dar clases que es el método of the PLI que, funciona en ese contexto y que me dio a mí además muchas otras herramientas para también aplicarlas en cualquier otro momento, era un trabajo flexible que me permitía estudiar y trabajar al mismo tiempo, no me exigía tiempo extra de la clase, eh, y una de las cosas que a mí siempre me ha gustado más de dar clase, la tenía mucho ahí, y es como tener contacto con una infinidad de personas que llegan en tu clase y algunos son de esto, algunos son de aquello, todos se pueden complementar y todos tienen una manera distinta de ver la vida y eso se ve mucho en la clase, a mí siempre me ha como enriquecido mucho eso... (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

... I began to work in the PLI [...] I liked to work a lot in the PLI, because I learned a completely different way to teach that is method of the PLI that, works in that context

and that gave me additionally many other tools to apply them also at any other moment, it was a flexible job that allowed me to study and work at the same time, it did not demand me a lot of extra-class time, eh, and one of the things that I have always liked the most about teaching, I had there, and is like to have contact with a vast number of people that go to your class and some come from this field, some come from that other field, all of them can complement each other and all of them have a different way to see life and that can be seen in the class very often, I have always been enriched very much by that...

Although Angela had already finished the coursework stage of her master's in foreign language teaching and learning, where one of the courses offered an overview to teaching approaches and methods, it seems to be that her practice learning to teach with the direct method at the PLI had a stronger impact on her teaching practices. This could be seen not only in her discourse during the interview but also when I observed her classes as it will be seen in the description of her teaching practices.

### **The official initiation as a language teacher.**

It can be said that Angela's experience working at the PLI plus the experience she had previously had in the Outreach Center of the university of her bachelor's prepared her as a language instructor; nonetheless, the moment Angela considered as her professional access to teaching was when she began her master's degree. She mentioned, for instance, that the master's helped her to manage some situations that she did not know how to handle before.

*..Aprendí muchas cosas y, sobre todo, me siento mucho mejor como profe desde que hice esa maestría, antes, antes se podían llegar momentos en que tenía bastante estrés, por no saber abordar algo y en la maestría conseguí herramientas para desarrollar de mejor manera, incluyendo la evaluación... (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

...I learned many things and, over all, I feel much better as a teacher since I did the master's, before, before there were some moments in which I was pretty stressed, for not knowing how to address something and in the master's I got some tools for further development, including the assessment...

From how Angela narrated her access to teaching, it can be said that she enacted the teacher identity from practice (Gee, 2000). However, being recognized as a teacher by her supervisor and from her practice in the class was not enough for her to feel like a teacher due in part to her education as a translator and interpreter. It was only when she pursued graduate studies on language teaching, that she could see herself as a teacher and feel prepared enough to perform as such. This sense of entitlement helped her to make more informed decisions in the classroom that she did not feel confident to deal with before the master's.

## **Teaching Practices**

### **Language skills development.**

Angela usually began the class checking homework with students since she always assigned one in every class. An example of the homework in the FL2, she was asking students to choose a news article from a newspaper where the language was spoken and focus on a political aspect that could affect Latin America; in this same assignment, students had to identify structures studied in class. Another type of homework assignment included searching information about a specific topic such as Colombian legends and their origin. Simpler homework assignments included writing sentences or doing exercises from the textbook that later on the teacher had students reading aloud in class to make corrections. Another example of a homework assignment was to write a paragraph using the language structures explained in class.

Every class, the teacher usually gave a grammar explanation of the type of verb conjugations, something about vocabulary use, or pronunciation rules. For explanations of language structures in the FL2, it was frequent that the teacher relied on some worksheets she had prepared herself with information that was not in the textbook such as verb conjugations or accents. During her explanations, she usually asked students if they had any question and sometimes she also gave students some advice they could use for their language learning. Just after the grammar explanation was given, the teacher frequently asked students to work in pairs or small groups to prepare a short dialogue where they had to put into practice the structures explained and they then read aloud or performed the dialogue in class. Sometimes, students just had to give some examples of sentences conjugating certain verbs the teacher had explained after she had given them an example. It was also possible that Angela asked students to write some sentences or lines where they used some vocabulary expressions or verb tenses based on what she had explained in class. Some vocabulary strategies such as explaining the meaning of an unknown word in the target language were also used by the teacher in class.

The idea of asking students to write a paragraph after the explanation of a grammar structure or a vocabulary expression was something that came out of the teacher's initiative, it was "something that she thought she would like to do herself", she said, a way to conclude an activity, a way to learn how those structures or expressions were used, to help students put in practice what they were learning.

*... Pues, creo que es para que haya una conclusión de la actividad, porque es como bueno, aprende que eso existe y ahora aprende cómo se utiliza porque si nada más aprendes lo que existe luego nunca más se utiliza. (Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)*



... Well, I think that is a way to conclude the activity, because is like good, learn that that exists and now learn how to use it because if you only learn what exists then that can never be used again.

It is worth highlighting how Angela made the decision of asking students to write a paragraph after a grammar or vocabulary explanation based on what she herself would like to do. After having observed this practice in her classroom and listened to the rationale the teacher had for it, I kept thinking about other ways in which students could learn grammar structures and vocabulary expressions in a more “natural” or authentic-like form that fitted communicative or academic-related situations and not just for the sake of practicing those structures. Those thoughts led me to consider Angela’s preference for the direct method which was one of the first methods to teaching languages after the grammar-translation method (Celce-Murcia, 2014). I also considered how Angela’s teaching approach could have been different if she would have been educated as a language teacher or if she would have worked in a program with a more postmethod approach (Kumaravadivelu, 2006) to language teaching where she could have also received mentorship on her teaching practices.

### **Class interactions.**

During the classes, the teacher provided a lot of opportunities for students to practice speaking using the target language. She asked them to prepare dialogues and role-plays where they simulated situations similar to the ones they could face in real life. The preparation of these activities implied interaction among students not only during the activities development, but also during the performance, as students supported each other working in groups. These communicative situations students performed were not developed based on a task the teacher had designed but on something that the teacher asked students to prepare. The idea of this practice

was shaped by the teacher's experience working at the PLI, where 90% of the class was conducted orally and students were highly encouraged to speak as spontaneously as possible. This could be seen in what Angela expressed in the interview.

*Sí, sí, como te digo, si, la manera de dar la clase en the PLI a mí me influenció muchísimo, no es que yo crea que es la mejor ni nada, pero, por ejemplo, yo en the PLI, veía cómo los estudiantes se soltaban y se desenvolvían radicalmente mucho más rápido que en la mejor clase, entonces me parecía un buen método eso de animar a la gente a que hablara y todo. (Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)*

Yes, yes, as I am telling you, yes, the approach to teaching in the PLI influenced me a lot, it is not that I think that is the best teaching approach or something like that, but, for example, in the PLI I, I saw how students were able to speak and were radically able to speak much faster than in the best class, so I thought that idea of encouraging people to speak and all that was a good method.

Class interactions were also promoted even when the teacher asked students to work on the writing of a text. These writing moments occurred for example just after students had read aloud a text and the teacher asked them some reading comprehension questions. The teacher also used videos in her classes and recommended students to watch them again out of class to reword the story in the video and then write their own story.

Sometimes, Angela asked students questions or gave them language tips to help them identify a grammar structure. She then asked students to do exercises in class from their textbook that could be drills or filling the gap exercises, completing sentences or changing verb tenses. A common practice I noticed in her classes was to dictate students sentences from where they had to identify grammar structures; other times, the dictation was about the uses of a language

structure. Angela explained in the interview that the practice of dictating in class was something that she had begun to implement in the last three or four years, probably after one of her students suggested it and she considered it a good exercise. For students, this was a good practice because they worked on their orthoepic competence or the ability to relate sounds with words, as one of the students that I had the opportunity to interview said.

Other forms of approaching writing in class was through involving students in the writing of a story as a class where the teacher also participated. Sometimes audios with images or videos were presented in class and students were asked to get information based on this material or answer questions using the grammar structures explained in class. Students were frequently asked to search for content information about a specific topic to be prepared to talk about it in class or to get ready for an oral assessment evaluation.

#### **The intercultural component.**

Sometimes, the teacher addressed topics like the culture of the target language contrasted with the local culture such as: holidays, legends, food and food dishes. Angela acknowledged her FL2 classes as the context where she included the intercultural component the most. She usually compared the local context with the context of the target language to highlight the differences that could be advantages and disadvantages. In doing this, she aimed to help students be aware of their contexts as they sometimes complained of what they had without realizing they also had some privileges. Not only did Angela include topics of the target culture but also from the Latin American and the world context where other languages were spoken. In her opinion, these are cultural aspects that can contribute to a wider perspective of the world.

*... Creo que es en el contexto que más trato de hacer interculturalidad, trato, o sea, no sé si lo logre, pero, trato de, de siempre estar comparando una cosa, con un contexto con*

*otro, no para que sea bueno o malo uno o el otro, sino para simplemente para ver diferencias y ventajas o desventajas y es que también muchas veces pensamos que tenemos un contexto muy horrible pero es porque no tenemos ni idea de qué sucede alrededor, entonces es eso, no es que vean que es malo sino que vean que tampoco están tan mal, incluso en [the FL2] algunas veces trato de incluir cosas que no sean necesariamente relacionadas con [one of the FL2 countries] o con los países que hablan francés sino otras cosas de Latinoamérica también y el resto del mundo, que puedan aportar aspectos culturales que abran más la visión. (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

... I think is in the context where I am more focused in the intercultural approach, I try, that is, I do not know if I can do it, but, I try to, to be always comparing one aspect, with a contest, with another one, not because is good in one and bad in the other, but simply to see the differences, advantages and disadvantages, because many times we think our context is very horrible but that happens because we do not have any idea of what happens around us, so that is, it is not for students to see it as something bad but that they can see that they are not that bad, even in [the FL2] sometimes I try to include aspects that are not necessarily related to [one of the FL2 countries] or with countries where French is spoken but also with other aspects of Latin America and the rest of the world, that can contribute with cultural aspects for them to open their perspective.

When Angela was asked in the interview how she had learned English, she mentioned her learning experience in the CESNL and referred to the opportunity she had had to learn about the culture of that country and other world countries where her classmates were from. In addition to this, she also commented on the focus on culture that her bachelor's on translation and interpretation included. As these intercultural experiences were part of Angela's identity

development as a language learner, following the apprenticeship of observation that Lortie (1975) proposes, it could have been possible that she learned from those experiences to incorporate them into her teaching practices.

### **The inclusion of critical topics in the foreign language classes.**

In class, Angela usually introduced and encouraged students to discuss current topics that included a critical component such as pregnant women in jail and the right of their children to be with their mothers in jail or for the children to be free, the Peace Plebiscite and the post-conflict era in Colombia. Curious about the introduction of this type of topics in her FL2 classes, I asked Angela in the interview how she prepared to include those topics. She said that students were basically spontaneous in these conversations and that she did not ask students to prepare them in advance, at least no more of what they could be hearing everyday.

*... Yo siempre he contado como con la preparación que la gente recibía, todos los días en la calle caminando y hablando del tema como para ver qué pensaban de eso y también para incentivarles que si no tenían idea pero que era algo demasiado actual se buscara... (Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)*

... I have always relied like on the preparation that the people had, everyday walking on the streets and talking about that topic like to see what they thought about it and also to stimulate them that if they did not have any idea about that that was very current they could search...

The inclusion of this type of topics in the foreign language teaching classes was of my interest because I firmly believe in the power of education to transform the world with small actions that go from understanding the reality to making informed decisions that may affect people in the day to day life. In addition to this, it called my attention during this study that not

all the teachers followed this approach in their classes, although out of class, I could notice that all the participant-teachers had something to say about political, economic or social issues.

Despite Angela's including topics with this critical component in the FL2 class, she rarely did the same in the English classes. When I inquired about this in the interview, she attributed it to time pressure because the courses in the Foreign Languages Program (FLP) where she taught the FL2 consisted of 80 hours whereas the courses in the Foreign Languages for Adults Program (FLAP) consisted of 32 hours.

*... Ese tipo de cosas, para mí era muy difícil dejarla de hablar, porque son muy graves, pero no, pero, pero, pero, me es más difícil llevar el tema porque me parece que podría extenderme toda la vida y no sé, no sé, me siento más presionada por el tiempo.*  
(Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)

... That type of things, it was very difficult to stop talking about them, because what is happening is very worrying, but not, but, but, but, it is more difficult to address that topic because I think that we could be talking about that forever and I do not know, I do not know, I feel more pressure on me because of the time.

Analyzing what happened in the other courses where critical topics were not discussed, I found out that in those classes students had less opportunities to participate and their voices were less heard. I discarded the explicitness in the curriculum as a reason why teachers included these topics or not, as all of the course programs, except the English Program for Adults (EPA), where I observed classes, were not very clear regarding contents, skills and language structures. However, comparing Angela's experience in the two programs where she worked, drove me to conclude that time limitations could really be a factor in offering students the possibility to engage in critical topics.

### **Weaving teaching and assessment strategies.**

Angela constantly evaluated students formatively, monitoring their language use when they worked in groups, and correcting students' mistakes when they participated in a class activity. She usually asked students to perform short dialogues in pairs or small groups in class following the model from the textbook and putting in practice a taught structure. These activities were not graded but assessed formatively. A strategy that Angela frequently used to correct the homework at the beginning of the class was asking students to go to the board and write sentences she had asked them to prepare, then she read the sentences aloud and made corrections. Some other times, she asked students to write short texts (12 lines) in class and then asked students to read them aloud and corrected grammar and pronunciation mistakes.

To help students prepare for an oral evaluation, Angela assigned a topic in advance and asked students to search information. Then, in class, she checked what students had found and offered them opportunities to practice speaking. Later on, she connected this search and practice activities to what students were going to perform in the oral evaluation, letting students know this preparation was going to be part of the evaluation. She also let students know that the evaluation was going to be in groups and allowed them to rehearse before the evaluation.

Another example of how the teacher combined teaching strategies with assessment strategies occurred in the English class where she paired students to peer-correct what they had done for homework as it can be seen in the following two excerpts taken from the fieldnotes. Since there were only 12 students in this course, all of them had the opportunity to go to the board to write their sentences. The emails students had written followed the model the teacher had showed them and this facilitated the corrections.

...She numbered students from 1 to 12 and told them that in pairs they were going to correct the emails they had prepared for homework...

She gave them five minutes to do the activity time after which she asked students to give her one of the sentences they had read from their partner's emails and she wrote it on the board. She asks students if there is something they don't understand from what is written on the board. (Angela's PO 3-7-17)

As it could be seen in these excerpts, asking students to peer-assess their homework, asking them to read the sentences aloud, writing them on the board, and asking students if there was something they did not understand, were teaching strategies Angela used to assess her students formatively, that is to say, she was not giving them a grade but she was offering them prompt feedback on activities that had been designed for a teaching purpose.

With these practices, correcting exercises assigned to students, allowing students to prepare for evaluations in class and encouraging peer-correction of homework, the teacher was working on teaching and assessment simultaneously. This connection is very connected to the purpose of formative assessment because by making corrections, promoting peer-corrections, and allowing students to prepare for an evaluation in class, she was monitoring students' learning and identifying aspects where students could need more help and support as Black and Wiliam (1998, 2009) suggests should be done in formative assessment. In addition to this, the teacher was promoting democratic assessment practices since students were taking a participative role in the class corrections and the preparation of the evaluations (Shohamy, 2001).

### **Assessment Practices**

Angela's assessment practices in the classes of the two programs where I observed her followed a similar approach. She proposed assessment tasks that were as authentic as possible that "students could probably use them out the assessment" context. For her, the emphasis on the oral component was very important as she understood how frustrating this could be for students



to be learning a new language and not able to express their ideas orally. She mentioned how language learners were first able to write than to speak and how difficult speaking and pronunciation could be for them.

*...Lo que yo he notado que pasa, pues, no tanto en mis cursos, pero sí que se quejan mucho los estudiantes es que, saben escribir pero no saben hablar o que les da como demasiada lidia atreverse a hablar o que no tienen ni idea de cómo pronunciar, pero sí saben escribir, es como no, o sea, eso me parece muy frustrante, te metes a un curso de idiomas y no poder expresar lo que quieres decir, yo trato de hacerlo, trato de enfocar las cosas oralmente. (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

...What I have noticed that happens, well, not very often in my classes, but students do complain a lot because they know how to write but they do not know how to speak or is very difficult for them to dare to speak or they do not have any idea about how to pronounce, but they do know how to write, it is like, no, that is, that is very frustrating for me, you are enrolled in an English course and you cannot express what you want to say, I try to do it, I try to focus the classes towards the oral component.

Other than the midterm and final evaluation students had, I barely saw the teacher implementing other traditional assessment instruments such as quizzes. However, there were some oral assessments that were implemented. For instance, in the FL2 course, students had a one-to-one oral evaluation with the teacher where students had to compare information from the local culture and the target language culture. At the beginning of the evaluation the teacher gave feedback on the grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and pronunciation mistakes students had had in their previous oral evaluation. During the evaluation, the teacher listened to the student, nodded in signal of approval of what the student had said, and took notes. In this individual assessment,

students were allotted between three and 15 minutes. It was frequent that the teacher congratulated students for their work at the end of the evaluations. The teacher also appeared to be flexible with students when they had not done the oral evaluations on the due date.

During the second oral evaluation students had with the teacher, I also noticed that the teacher read from her notes to give them the corrections of the previous oral evaluation. Since this was not prompt feedback, there is not certainty of how it could have impacted students' learning. For the second oral evaluation, the teacher had previously given students a list of questions based on a movie they had seen out of class time. Then, the teacher asked them some questions at random from the list. For this assessment students had between two and five minutes to respond the questions.

For the midterm oral exam in the FL2, the teacher wrote some topics on the board for students to look for information about them and announced that they had to work in groups to prepare a radio program. The teacher gave them time in class to prepare the evaluation, monitored their work, helped students to find someone to work with, gave oral instructions of what they had to do, checked students had understood the instructions, and gave them feedback on what they had prepared. The teacher explained that it was important for her "to read what students were planning and help them with grammar, take a look at the vocabulary and help them with the pronunciation in case they had any doubt". (Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)

For the midterm oral evaluation they performed a radio program where they played different roles such as actors, presenters and journalists, and combined real and fictitious information. The oral assessment was implemented in a class session before the written exam. The midterm written exam included a listening comprehension section, in which the audio was played three times. Once students finished the written exam, the teacher gave them oral feedback

on the vocabulary, verb conjugation and pronunciation mistakes they had had in the oral component of the midterm exam.

The final oral evaluation was also set up in the context of a radio program that students performed in a very creative way. There were three small groups and a main presenter before the class. The students permanently interacted with each other, the main presenter referred to each of the groups for them to do their part and some interviews took place within the small groups. One of the students was dressed up as a nun and performed one of the characters mentioned in some of the information her group had presented. This group also included phone calls to the audience (the class) to ask for information they had given during the radio program. Students' performance in the presentations for the midterm and final oral evaluations were creative and funny. During this summative assessments the teacher listened to students, took notes, nodded in signal of approval, and congratulated students for their work.

The assessment criteria in the radio program included: grammar structures students had studied, not only in the current course level, but also in the previous ones; the use of vocabulary in what students presented; preparation that included being able to speak in a conversation and fluid-like way and avoiding reading; sometimes, the interactions between the students performing the assignment and the audience; and pronunciation occasionally.

For the written part of the final exam in the FL2, the teacher read the instructions of the listening part saying that the audio was only going to be played twice, a first time for an overview and a second one to take notes of details and answer the questions. As students were taking the exam, the teacher walked around to give oral individual feedback to students about their performance in the final oral exam that included details of their pronunciation mistakes.

During the time that I spent in Angela's classroom, I noticed that there was an assessment aspect that seemed to be influenced by the curriculum. It consisted of time allotted to the courses in the two programs where Angela worked. According to what the teacher commented, time limitations for instruction in the FLAP seemed to affect students' performance in the exams. In her opinion, students of the FLP were more prepared to face what the exam included, whereas students from the FLAP could be more stressed if they were not prepared in the instruction to answer what was on the test.

*...No sé, yo de alguna manera siento que, que los estudiantes de inglés del FLAP, se van a sentir un poco más estresados en los exámenes si no han tenido de alguna manera contacto con el tipo de cosas que puedan salir en los exámenes, mientras, que con los de FL2 probablemente también porque son alumnos brillantes, puedan tener, como esa capacidad de relación, de que bueno, no vimos esto exactamente como sale en el examen, pero tienen capacidad de resolverlo también... (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

...I do not know, I somehow feel that, that students of English from the FLAP, they are going to be more stressed in the exams if they have not had somehow contact with the type of items that can be included in the exams, meanwhile, students of the FL2 they, those students are brilliant, they may have like that capacity to connect things, like well, we did not see this exactly as it is in the exam, but they have the capacity to solve it too...

Exams in the FLAP were not totally prepared by the course teacher. It could be that the design of the exam was divided among the teachers who were teaching the same course level or that the exam had already been designed by teachers from a previous semester, then teachers from the current semester revised it and suggested changes.

*... Algunas veces, los profes participamos, o sea, si hay cinco o 10 profesores dando un nivel, eh, eso ha pasado como dos veces, como que se dividen las partes del examen y entonces las proponen, y, lo otro que puede suceder es que el examen esté hecho, lo dejan en la biblioteca y nosotros lo revisamos y le hacemos como comentarios. (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

... Sometimes, the teachers participate, that is, if there are 5 or 10 instructors teaching the same course level, eh, that has happened a couple of times, like the components of the exam are divided and each teacher proposes something, and, another thing that can happen is that the exam is already designed, the administration leaves it at the library and we revise it and give feedback.

This exam design practice led me to consider how teachers are entitled a power when they have the opportunity to design their own exams and how they are disempowered when they do not do it. Not only this, but this administrative decision of implementing exams designed by other teachers could be against the connection between teaching and assessment that is proposed in formative assessment, then I wondered who else than the course teacher could best know students' learning process to decide or construct with them what they should be evaluated on as it is proposed in democratic assessment.

### **Intertwined identities as a Language Learner and as a Language Teacher**

#### **The apprenticeship of observation.**

Wenger (1998) says that we define who we are as we participate with others. In Angela's case, it seems to be that these others began with her trajectories as language learner and the way she was taught continued to influence what she did as a teacher. In what Lortie (1975) defines as the apprenticeship of learning, there is implicit learning in teachers when they are situated in a

classroom. This is what seems to have happened to Angela with the knowledge of didactics she learned from her former teachers when she was a learner. She recognized this is something she does in her classes.

*...[Learning English in the CESNL] tuve, en especial, dos profesores que le hicieron bastante bien a mi proceso, el primero se llamaba, se llama [...], él me dio clases y eran unas clases muy didácticas para mí en ese momento, ahí aprendías, o sea, vi algo como estudiante que toda la vida he aplicado como profe y ha sido trabajar con canciones, fuera de la primera vez que yo trabajaba con canciones como llenando las letras y tal y me gustaba mucho, entonces, nunca dejé de hacerlo y todavía lo hago como profe.*  
(Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)

...Learning English in the CESNL I had, especially two instructors who were very beneficial for my [learning] process, the first one was named, his name is [...], he taught me and his classes were very didactic for me in that moment, there you learned, that is, I learned something as a student that I have applied my entire life as a teacher and that has been the use of songs to teach, that was the first time that I used songs like filling the blanks and things like that and I liked it a lot, so, I never stopped doing that and I still do it as a teacher.

What Angela mentioned in the interview regarding the use of songs to teach that she had learned from one of her first language instructors was corroborated in one of the English classes that I observed.

Then the teacher moves to a song by the singer Madonna that has 18 blank spaces. She asks students to write from 1 to 18 in their notebooks. The song lyrics are projected on the TV. The teacher plays the song.

After the first time of playing the song the teacher asks how many words students got, then she plays the song for a second time. Once the teacher played the song a second time, she asked students again how many words they had gotten, she remarked students had improved on the number of words they understood and played the audio a third time, then she checked with students the words they understood. (Angela's PO 3-30-17)

Another teaching practice that Angela seemed to have learned from her learning experience, occurred with one of her professors in the bachelor's program. According to what Angela commented, this teacher had some class rules that ended up being very motivating, such as asking late comers to the class to bring candies for their classmates the following session. Not only this, but this professor also frequently interacted with students out of the classroom, something that became very important for Angela as these spaces became opportunities for her to know about the city where she lived.

*...La otra profe [...] que era la profe del último nivel y su clase siempre era, la clase más divertida de todo el instituto era esa clase porque ella tenía unas reglas todas, mm, como todas motivadoras, así como si llegas tarde tienes que llevar un dulce para todos y yo de hecho todavía hago eso en clase confieso, [...] era una profe que, que socializaba mucho con nosotros fuera del aula también, eso, eso fue importante para mí, porque también conocí como la ciudad, además del instituto y donde yo vivía ... (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

...The other instructor [...] who was the last course level teacher and her class was always, the most enjoyable class in the institution because she had some rules that were very, mm, like very motivating, like if you arrive late you have to bring candies for everybody in the class and in fact, I still do that in my classes, I have to confess, [...] it

was a teacher that, she socialized a lot with us out of the classroom, that was also important for me, because I could also know the city, in addition to the institution and where I lived...

When Angela talked about sharing out of class spaces with students, I recalled the last class she had with her students of the FL2 class. This class was held at the botanical gardens of the city and all the students where Angela taught the FL2 were invited to a picnic and to prepare a plate to share.

This was the end of course celebration for which the teacher had prepared a picnic at the botanical gardens of the city with all the [FL2] courses she had taught this semester. For this day, each of the students had committed to take to the picnic a plate they had prepared. (Angela's PO 12-06-16)

From what I had the opportunity to experience in Angela's class during the time that I spent with her, the connections between what she did in her classes and the experiences she herself had had as a student were very evident. This led me to conclude that as a teacher, she had undoubtedly learned from what she had experienced as a pupil. This fact was particularly relevant in teachers who, like Angela, were not initially educated as teachers. The apprenticeship of learning in which teachers like her were involved appeared to have been determinant in shaping her teaching practices and as such, it should be acknowledged in the preparation process of teachers at the graduate level, as well as in in-services for teachers who do not continue their preparation in the field of teaching.

### **Communities of Practice**

When I asked Angela in the interview for people or events she considered had influenced who she was as a teacher, she mentioned the working experience at the PLI. This comment was



aligned with the practices I observed in her classes such as a major focus on the oral component and class assignments where students could develop this skill putting in practice some vocabulary and grammar structures explained in class. It is in this sense that Angela's experience working at the PLI could have operated as a community of practice where she developed teaching skills during the training process and through the teaching practices she carried out there.

Another situation that influenced the teacher's life occurred when Angela attended an academic event and a teacher introduced a platform where students uploaded radio programs. With time, she adapted this idea to the courses in the FLP where she assessed students adapting the idea of the radio program using the course contents.

*...La temática, que es de los estados de [a country of the FL2] sí está instituido en el programa, pero el formato no, el formato viene de, bueno, realmente eso se parece mucho a una presentación. [...] cuando empecé a dar clases [...] hubo un evento [...] en ese evento hubo varias charlas, y discusiones, coloquios, [...] yo fui a uno, que, a uno de esos que la profe nos presentó una plataforma que era un programa radial que se llama Ibox [...] desde que yo fui a esa charla, empecé a hacer eso en clase, [...] luego adaptado a [the FLP]... (Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)*

...The theme, that is around the states of a country of the FL2 is proposed by the program but not for the assessment task, the assessment task comes from, well, it does not really look very much to a presentation. [...] when I began to teach [...] there was an event [...] in that event there were several lectures, and discussions, colloquia, [...] I went to one, that, one of those where the teacher introduced us to a platform for a radio program that is

called Ibox [...] since I went to that lecture, I began to do that in my classes, [...] I then adapted it to the FLP...

Angela acknowledged that the influences of what she did as a teacher “had not only been a person but all the teachers with whom she had taken classes, the people from whom she had always learned something”. Academically speaking, Angela considered her advisor in the master’s program as someone from who she received a lot of support academically speaking. Regarding her teaching experience trajectory, Angela mentioned a couple of persons in administrative positions at *UE* who have trusted and supported her. Being that Angela is a citizen of another Spanish-speaking country, the support she received from one of these administrators was fundamental to access an adjunct faculty position in the Department of Languages. The second person was key in her adaptation to the city as it was precisely with this second administrator with whom Angela developed a relationship of trust to the extent that she felt free to talk to him about the wide curriculum disparity of the courses in the FLP and the FLAP programs.

From what Angela narrated of how she has developed her teacher identity, it was clear the sense of belonging to a group that she developed working at the PLI, how this experience shaped her future teaching practices, and how she negotiated the learning from that experience to the new teaching and assessment practices she continued to develop and adapt at *UE*. As Wenger (1998) claims these are ways in which we define who we are.

### **How the Curriculum Shapes Teacher Identity**

The fact that Angela worked in two different programs of the Department of Languages allowed me to perceive some differences that led me to understand how the curriculum and design of a language program may contribute to define teachers’ identities. The components of

the curriculum that shaped teachers' identities included: students' population, the teaching method, the role of the textbook, the time allotted to the course programs, the shaping of the teaching by the curriculum, assessment and testing, and the way the communicative, cultural and critical components were addressed.

When I asked Angela for the differences of her teaching in the two programs, she referred to the students in the FLP who were all undergraduates and that really enjoyed learning a foreign language as much as their academic education. The population of students in the FLPA was more diverse though. It included adults that wanted to make use of their free time to learn a new language, young adults who were in the program on their own will, adolescents whose parents had pushed them to be there, and some other professional adults that studied English as a requisite to access better job opportunities.

Despite the differences in the two programs, one commonality was that neither of the two programs had a clear teaching method, the teacher affirmed. It could rather be said that the contents of the two programs were determined by the textbook, being the textbook at the FLAP more oriented towards the development of oral skills than the textbook at the FLP, and the contents of the latter were much more comprehensive, said the teacher. Adding to this, Angela commented that teaching English at the FLAP was very efficient or what she called much more "industrialized", although the teacher tried to connect the contents to students' interests, or what she also called more "intercultural".

*...En el FLAP, pues, como es, como te digo, mucho más eficiente, mucho más industrializado con algunos ejemplos, trato en algún momento también de hacerlo intercultural desde que ellos se sientan incluidos en lo que puedan decir, no solamente que estén hablando de cualquier otra cosa que no tenga nada que ver con ellos, donde*

*puedan expresar sus sentires, o sus inquietudes o sus intereses en el idioma, entonces, trato de hacerlo intercultural desde ese punto.* (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)

...In the FLAP, well, like it is, as I am telling you, much more efficient, much more industrialized with some examples, I also try in some moments to do it more intercultural if students feel included in something that they can say, not only that they can talk about any thing that does not have to do with them, where they can express what they feel, or their doubts, or their interests in the language, then, I try to do it intercultural from that point of view.

The idea of the industrialization in the teaching of English was a term Angela used to refer not only to how efficient teaching at the FLAP could be but also to how the instruction could be more limited by time because the courses only lasted three months.

*...A mí, a mí lo de las clases del FLAP así trimestrales, en serio, me parece la industrialización así del inglés, y como que salchichas que va saliendo ahí...* (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)

...For me, for me the classes in the FLAP that are every three months, I really, think that are the industrialization of English, and like sausages that are coming out...

Angela basically referred to this industrialization in the teaching of English as a factor that determined the amount of contents to be taught. Meanwhile in the FLP there was more flexibility to address the course content because there was more time, in the FLAP everything had to be done during class time. With the metaphor Angela used about the production of sausages, she intended to explain that teaching English classes in periods of time of three months was a fast way to produce learners of English.

To my understanding, and based on what I noticed in Angela's classes, I felt a kind of pressure on teaching the contents of what the textbook proposed, especially because the exams could be taken from the textbook or designed by a group of teachers who taught the same level. As it was explained in the description of Angela's assessment practices, this was a way to disempower teachers and learners of what both parts could consider that was appropriate to teach, learn and assess. Not only this, but this industrialization of the learning of English also seems to oppose situated practices as the textbook used in the FLAP was designed by foreign companies who showed little knowledge of the realities of English language learning in Colombia.

*..Yo diría que la enseñanza o mi manera de abordarlo, por lo menos en el FLAP, está mucho más regida por lo que dice el programa que se tiene que cubrir en ese corto tiempo, mientras que en el FLP, pues también trato de cubrir todos los objetivos pero tengo un poco más de libertad con el tiempo, entonces, no tiene que ser así tan rigurosamente uno tras de otro para llegar a hacerlos todo, pero, más allá de eso, mm, creo que los chicos en, precisamente por el tiempo también en FLP tienen más tiempo o, tengo más tiempo para preparar evaluaciones con ellos, mientras que en el FLAP todo es como en la clase si es posible y si no pues no... (Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)*

I would say that teaching, or my way to address it, at least in the FLAP, is much more ruled by what the program says that has to be taught in that short period of time, meanwhile in the FLP, I also try to cover all the objectives but I have a little bit more of freedom with the time, then, it does not have to be so rigorous one after the other to be able to do everything, but, further than that, mm, I think that the students in, due exactly to the fact that in the FLP they also have more time or, I have more time to prepare the

assessments with them, meanwhile in the FLAP everything has to happen in the class if it is possible and if not, well, no...

The time allotted to develop the course contents also meant more time for students to assimilate what they were learning and time for the teacher to prepare the evaluations as Angela commented at the end of the previous excerpt taken from the interview. In fact, time was one of the first differences Angela identified between the two programs where she taught. Whereas in the FLP the course contents and class activities could be more extended because there was more time, in the FLAP the time was very tight.

Time was a limitation not only affected the instruction but also the assessment. Angela mentioned that sometimes the exams were already designed in the textbook that was used in the FLAP, then all the course contents to be assessed had to be taught. Not only this, but it also seemed to be that the time allotted in each course program gave more opportunities to the teacher to address critical topics in the classroom which seemed to be a characteristic of the teacher's identity. As I explained in the teaching practices section, the teacher included more critical topics in the oral practice of students in the FLP than in the ones in the FLAP. During the interview, I had the opportunity to dig in more into what I had observed in this regard, and it happened to be that one important reason for this was how the two programs were structured. Case in point, the teacher explained those controversial topics could take a lot of time, which was not problematic in the FLP, but could be in the FLAP.

*Pues yo creo que es básicamente el tiempo, o sea, esos temas controversiales pueden llegar a extenderse mucho, dependiendo del grupo, pero en realidad pueden extenderse mucho y en the FLP no sería problemático pero en el FLAP eso sería muy problemático, por el tiempo, creo que es básicamente eso... (Angela's Interview, 9-6-17)*

Well I think that is basically the time, that is, those controversial topic can be very extensive, depending on the group, but in fact they can be very extensive and that would not be problematic in the FLP but in the FLAP that could be very problematic, because of the time, I think is basically that...

Looking at this panorama, I began to understand that the curriculum and what it determined regarding course contents to be covered in a period of time and the assessment that was derived from this content, defined how Angela taught and the extent to which she could project her identities in the classroom. In other words, it seemed to be that depending on how a program, the curriculum and the assessment were defined, influenced and gave more or less room to Angela to bring who she was into the classroom.

In line with this, the inclusion of the communicative, cultural and critical component in the EFL classes seemed to be a clear example of how the curriculum could facilitate or impinge the projection of teachers' identities in the classroom. For instance, I noticed that in the FL2 classes there were conversations about news, politics and cultural aspects of the target language country such as geography, customs or food; but in the English classes, it was basically what the textbook proposed such as greetings and introductions. It had to be said though that students from the FLP were on level three and students in the FLAP were on level one, meaning that the oral ability in the latter ones was less developed than in the former. Nonetheless, the teacher explained that the cultural component was more addressed in the FLP than in the FLAP and that one of the reasons for this was that in the FLAP, it was important that people understood the most efficiently possible, but in the FLP the pace was more accommodated to students' learning process, including the role that their classmates played in it to ask questions.

*...A mí me parece incluso que the FLP abre mucho más espacio para el conocimiento cultural que, que en el FLAP, o sea, en el FLAP, podría hacerse pero no lo veo tan fácil, como tan fácil de incluir, además que, en el FLAP es muy importante que las personas entiendan, lo más eficiente, expeditamente posible porque tampoco hay demasiado tiempo para todas las explicaciones que podrían surgir alrededor de un aspecto cultural, en the FLP puede que unas personas entiendan esto hoy, puede que lo entienda un poco más mañana y de repente otro día más con la ayuda de los compañeros o tienen más chance de preguntar... (Angela's Interview, 4-21-17)*

...It seems to me that even the FLP opens much more space to intercultural knowledge than, than the FLAP, it could be done but I do not see it as something very easy, like very easy to include, in addition because, in the FLAP is very important that the people understand, in the most efficient way, as soon as possible because there is not a lot of time either for all the explanations that could emerge around a cultural aspect, it can be possible in the FLP tht some people understand that today, it can be that they understand a little bit more tomorrow and probaly in one more day with the help of the classmates or they have more opportunities to ask...

Based on what the teacher commented upon, it can be inferred that more flexible curricula allow more spaces for the inclusion of critical and intercultural contents that happen naturally in communicative classrooms, that is, where the courses are not limited to teaching language functions but go beyond to include contents. It cannot be denied that the curriculum gives structure, guidance and organization to what teachers teach and in that sense, it should be as clear and theoretically-supported as possible. By this I mean that, the curriculum should be clear about the evolution of language teaching methods and situated-learning practices that do



not exclude students' local realities or the global context of learning a language. At the same time, the EFL curriculum should not favor the dissemination of colonial ideologies like the ones reproduced in texts sold by multinational book publishers. Based on what Angela commented, it can be concluded that her practices in the FLAP were guided by market and external-oriented practices that led her to have less room to project her own critical and intercultural identities to teach English and this seems to have affected the ways in which students of both programs learned.

### **Summary**

In this chapter I described how Angela's identities were intertwined as a language learner and teacher, the role that the apprenticeship of learning played in her current teaching practices, and how the investment she did in her professional preparation led her to become a teacher. I also showed how she constructed her identities from practice, learning from the places where she worked and participating in professional development that worked for her as communities of practice. I identified the curriculum as a factor that may facilitate or restrict the projection of Angela's identities in the classroom.

## Chapter 6: Teresa: *Entre historias e historia, una historia para contar* (Between stories and story, a story to tell)

*“...Uno también es, resultado de lo que uno lee, de lo que uno estudia, eh, de lo que otras personas le cuentan, otros compañeros y obviamente de lo que ha vivido...”*      “...One is also, the result of what one reads, of what one studies, eh, of what other people tell you, other partners and obviously what one has lived...”

### Introduction

The broader goal of this study was to explore EFL teachers’ identities and the connection with their teaching and assessment practices. In this chapter, I present the kinds of identities Teresa has developed across moments of her life, namely her identities as a language learner and as a language teacher, and how these two types of identities intertwine at the moment of performing in the classroom. I also present how Teresa has constructed these identities from practice in collaboration with others from her position as a language learner. I describe other factors that could have influenced her identity development such as: the learning from her former instructors, the need to reflect on her classroom practices, and her limited involvement in communities of practice. Framed in sociocultural theories of learning like identity investment, identity development through discourse, identity as a social practice, and communities of practice, I conclude that there is not a bidirectional relationship between teachers’ identities and their classroom practices; instead, identity development is a complex structure influenced, in Teresa’s case, by her individual trajectories, her language learning and teaching ideologies that have prompted her to develop her own agency in some facets of her professional identity, for instance when she defined who she was by differentiating herself from who she did not want to be.

This chapter begins with a description of Teresa’s identities as a language learner and as a language teacher, and how she moved from her language learning experience to the

construction of her own identity as a teacher. In the development of her identity development as a teacher, I refer to her professional preparation and how she became a teacher. Then, I describe her teaching and assessment practices, how she became an invested teacher preparing herself in content area knowledge, and how she learned working at other institutions. After this, I explain that despite Teresa's involvement in communities of practices was limited, collaborations she sustained with some of her colleagues seem to have contributed to her identity development. At the end, I analyze the influence of the apprenticeship of observation in Teresa and refer to the importance of becoming reflective practitioners, especially to be aware of how the ways teachers learned may affect the ways they teach.

### **Identity as a Language Learner**

The first contact Teresa had with languages was when she was an adolescent and a friend of her father, who explained mathematics to her, offered to give her a subscription to some magazines in five different languages where she could access to scientific contents and compare what she read in different languages.

*... Yo leía un poquito de la una y entonces leía en un idioma y leía la otra y leía, y señalaba por parrafitos que leía de la una y qué leía de la otra [...] yo el inglés lo estudiaba al mismo tiempo con los otros, ¿por qué?, porque yo leía, por ejemplo, un tema científico en alemán, lo miraba en los dos, o sea, yo miraba los cinco idiomas, eso se llama hacer un trabajo contrastivo, así hacía yo. (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)*

... I read a little bit from one [magazine] and then I read in a language and read in another one and read, I highlighted paragraphs of what I read from one [magazine] and the other [...] I studied English at the same time with the other [languages], why? Because I read, for example, a scientific topic in German, I looked at it in two, that is, I

looked at the five languages, that is what is called doing a contrastive work, that is what I did.

It is important to note how from the very beginning that Teresa began to learn other foreign languages, she did it by contrasting one language with the other and mainly through reading. When, in the interview, she was asked for how she had learned to read in English, she recalled one of the teachers in her bachelor's program when she became engaged with reading literature and poetry, and she also mentioned translation as part of that reading learning process.

*...Pues en la carrera, obviamente mi carrera es traducción [...] con la profesora [...], que nos ponía a leer poesías, de todo tipo de literatura, yo pienso que a través de la literatura me fui, encariñando, como qué rico leer, y a través de la traducción misma...*  
(Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)

...Well in the bachelor's, obviously my bachelor's is translation [...] with professor [...], that asked us to read poetry, all type of literature, I think that I was through literature that I began, to be in love, like how nice to read, and through translation itself...

When Teresa was asked in the interview about how she had been taught to read in her bachelor's, she referred to some reading strategies, the identification of main and secondary ideas, and vocabulary that she described as "the classic approach that is still used nowadays". She explained that they were first told to have a quick reading to see what they understood and to speculate a little bit, writing for example, what was the reading about based on the title, using the dictionary to compare, and then translating the text.

*¡Ah, bueno!, primero, nos ponían como de, léanlo todo a ver qué captan, como especulación, ¿cierto?, a ver que es de especulación, y después, y nos hacían como anotar, por ejemplo, este título, usted cree de qué es, anote eso, y después, al abordar ya*

*con el diccionario y eso, uno hacía una comparación, entre lo que yo pensaba que decía ahí al principio y lo que realmente después de trabajar el texto decía, y había veces que concordaba y otras veces que uno se alejaba, entonces, era divertido, uno decía ¡wow!, yo pensaba que era una cosa y resultó otra, sí, fue como a través del reconocimiento, de estrategias de lectura. (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

Ah, ok!, first, they asked us like to, read everything to see what you can understand, like specultaing, right?, to see what could be speculated, and then, they asked us to take noes, for example, this title, what do you think it is about, write that, and then, at the moment of using the dictionary and that, one made a comparison, between what one thought that the reading was about at the beginning and what the text was really about after working on it, and there were times that there was a match and some oter times there was not, so, it was fun, one said wow!, I thought that it was one thing and it ended up being another one, yes, it was like through identifying, of reading strategies.

Reflecting back on the teaching approach that Teresa followed in her reading comprehension classes, it is interesting to notice that her teaching techniques seemed to be more similar to the individual approach to reading she followed than to how she described that she had been taught to read. For instance, in her classes, she usually asked students to translate from English to Spanish as it will be described later, but I rarely remember her asking students to speculate on what a reading was going to be about, something that is considered a common practice in the Foreign Language (FL) classroom.

### **The autonomous language learner.**

Teresa began to learn to read in English autonomously, contrasting what she read in Spanish, in English and other languages she came in contact with, as will be seen again in the

following excerpts. The contrastive language learning mode Teresa referred to was connected to autonomy as it was a process that came initially from herself.

*Sí, de mi cuenta, antes de la carrera y, eso fue a través del amigo, que él me inscribió a Skala en diferentes idiomas, y, entonces yo leía contrastivamente, o sea, yo leía español, el mismo segmento lo leía en español, lo leía en inglés, lo leía, pues, en portugués, por ejemplo, y, y entonces yo leía, contrastivamente [...] pues, esa fue una forma como yo empecé a leer de manera contrastiva. (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

Yes, by myself, before the bachelor's and, that was through a friend, the one who subscribed me to Skala in different languages, and, then I read in a contrastive way, that is, I read in Spanish, I read the same segment in Spanish, I read it in English, I read, well, in Portuguese, for example, and, and then I read, in a contrastive way [...] well, that was the way how I began to read in a contrastive way.

In the description Teresa offered of her contrastive approach to reading at the beginning of her foreign language experiences, it is interesting to see the individual and cognitive nature of her approach to reading. This seems to be a factor that influenced her teaching approach as in her classes she mainly asked students to work individually and to translate texts. It could be possible that her own language learning experience could have had a stronger impact in her teaching practices than her experience learning from teachers.

When Teresa finished her bachelor's, she continued studying other languages on her own. She looked for material to read in those languages and she also exposed herself to the language by listening to audio recordings in the different languages she was learning.

*... Yo una vez me puse a pensar y yo dije, yo dije, yo ahora no estoy haciendo maestría ni doctorados, o sea, estudios pues, de alto nivel, yo me voy a dedicar a lo que dice ese*

*título [...] ¿cuántos?, entonces me dediqué, me dediqué autónomamente a buscar los recursos para estudiar los idiomas... (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)*

...I once thought and I said, I said, now I am not doing a master's or a Ph.D., that is, studies I mean, at the graduate level, I am going to devote my time to what my bachelor's degree says [...] how many?, then I devoted my time, I devoted my time autonomously to look for resources to study languages...

When Teresa was asked about what she did to maintain her proficiency in English, she mentioned watching movies and her fascination with dubbing, she commented how she autonomously analyzed idiomatic expressions in the movies of Alfred Hitchcock. She also referred to her preference for literature in combination with poetry and she emphasized on the importance of studying archaic language. She mentioned how she brought her education as a translator into every thing she studied as she had been educated with the idea that a translator had to know of diverse themes.

Knowing that Teresa continued learning other foreign languages autonomously after her bachelor's, shows not only her preference for this approach to learn but also an absence of more sociocultural approaches to language learning. Although learning is undoubtedly a cognitive process, its social nature cannot be denied. It seems to be that teachers' approaches to language learning shape their teaching practices. This is why it is necessary to examine teachers' language learning and teaching beliefs (Posada Ortíz & Patiño Garzón, 2007).

### **From the Language Learning Experience to the Construction of her Own Identity as a Teacher**

Teresa defined who she wanted to be as a teacher based on what she did not want to experience again as a student. She identified two types of teachers, one of them was the person

who wanted their students to suffer as they had experienced it and for her, this was a selfish attitude.

*...Ahí fue donde surgió la idea, no, yo que ya que estoy al otro lado tengo que corregir cosas, no incurrir en los errores de otros, porque yo he notado una cosa Diana y es que, pues, yo me atrevería a decir que hay como dos corrientes, hay una corriente que dice ¡ah, no!, así como me trataron a mí de estudiante y todo, así los voy a tratar yo, entonces, ese tipo de profesor es el que le dice de pronto al estudiante ¡ah, no!, así como yo me quemé las pestañas mijito, usted también, entonces yo decía no, yo no quiero ser así, ¿uno por qué va a ser tan egoísta?, no, uno, no, listo, yo me quemé las pestañas, yo padecí muchas cosas, pero yo no quiero seguir siendo así, ¡qué pereza!, no, yo quiero, yo digo que, modestamente aparte, la palabra innovadora yo me la aplico porque yo andaba siempre, como yo padecí tantas cosas, yo andaba siempre buscando no ser así...*

(Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

...There it was where the idea came from, no, knowing that I am already in another position I have to correct certain aspects, do not commit the same mistakes of other people, because I have noticed something Diana and is that, well, I would not dare to say that there are like two tendencies, there is a tendency that says ah, no!, in the same way that I was treated as a student and all that, I am going to treat students in the same way, so, that type of teacher is the one who can probably say to the student ah, no!, in the same way that I burnt the midnight oil my dear, you also have to do it, then I said no, I do not want to be like that, why is one going to be selfish?, no, one, no, right, I burnt the midnight oil, I endured many things, but I do not want to keep being like that, how



nasty!, no, I want, I say that, modesty aside, I take for me the word innovating because I was always, like I endured so many things, I always tried not to be like that...

When the teacher was asked how she saw herself as a teacher in the university, she replied “*aprendiendo constantemente, así me veo yo, como una aprendiz constante [...] pero me veo también innovadora [...] el cómo usted presenta la información es un acto de estar cambiando...*” (learning constantly, that’s how I see myself, as a constant learner [...] but I also see myself as someone who innovates [...] how you present the information is an act of being changing). When she said she saw herself as someone who innovated, she used the metaphor of a traditional book to teach algebra where the classic contents remained but the information presented changed.

In her narrative of how she was assessed, Teresa commented about some teachers she had in her bachelor’s whose classes were very didactic but as she said, at the moment of evaluating “there was not coherence between what they had taught and what they evaluated”. This incoherence is what is identified in the literature as a lack of construct validity, a quality of assessment that not only gives coherence to what is taught and assessed but that also makes part of fair assessment practices (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

Regarding assessment practices, Teresa also recalled an instructor in her bachelor’s who did not give her the opportunity to make up a grade when she was sick. Based on what she experienced, she referred to this teacher as someone who “*tenía el poder en el lapicero*” (had the power in the pen) as students used to say to refer to the power entitled to teachers to make decisions and assign a grade. According to what Teresa said, this was why, as a teacher, she has tried to change that, being more flexible with students when they had any difficulty and accommodating her planning to unexpected events in the class.

The experiences Teresa had as a student were not enough though to construct her teacher identity as an evaluator. Talking about how she had been assessed in her English classes, she referred to what a teacher had told her about assessing with open questions or with multiple choice questions and how the system favored the latter and avoided the former as it implied confronting students. Teresa also talked about a teacher in one of the foreign languages program she has studied, who assessed her learning taking a look at the notes and exercises she had in her notebook. She admitted that, as a teacher, she has used some of the strategies of teachers with whom she had taken classes. A second teacher she mentioned allowed her to take the evaluations using her books, searching for information on the Internet, talking with students, asking them how they felt, and negotiating the grade with the students. As can be seen, Teresa moved from her experience as a language learner and what she thought should not be done, to construct her teacher identity as an evaluator who was flexible.

It seems to be then that Teresa constructed this teacher identity as an evaluator by the influence she had from other teachers she had been exposed to as a language learner in the other foreign languages she learned and from instructors in her bachelor's who she considered she could learn something from. Lortie's (1975) framework of the apprenticeship of observation can be brought here to explain the identity Teresa developed as an evaluator. This identity was enacted by the assessment practices of some of the teachers Teresa thought she could learn something from. However, as Smagorinsky and Barnes (2014) claim, the apprenticeship of observation does not operate in the same ways as teachers can also distance from the models they were exposed to as learners. This is what happened in Teresa's case with the instructor who held unflexible assessment practices, then it can also be said that Teresa constructed her identity despite that role model.

## Identity as a Language Teacher

### Professional preparation.

Teresa's academic and professional preparation was in an undergraduate program that combined elements of teaching, translation and interpretation. The training she received in these three areas of knowledge can be seen as an advantage but also as a drawback since there was not a specific focus that allowed her to go deep into at least one of these branches. Based on the analysis of what Teresa said in the interview and what I observed in her classroom, it can be concluded that her professional preparation was more oriented towards translation. Although she mainly worked as a teacher, being prepared as a translator played a relevant role in her identity development as it will be seen in her teaching practices.

### How Teresa became a teacher.

Teresa began to work at *Universidad Estatal (UE)* by chance when a friend of her told her about a job opening for lecturers. According to what Teresa narrated in the interview, her friend launched her into that job offer and told her about it when she had the interview. The interview was in English with four instructors from the Department of Languages. Teresa was called for the job to substitute the English instructor from another department who had passed away. As at that time she had to teach reading comprehension with a focus on content, she had to study the topics students were reading about with the former instructor.

*Cuando él me dijo, [...] dízque Teresa prepárese que la entrevista es pa' tal fecha, y yo entrevista de qué y me dijo, y yo ¿¡y usted por qué hizo eso!?, yo no le di permiso para que usted hiciera eso, ¡ay, no Teresa!, usted es capaz, [...] llegó el momento de la entrevista, yo recuerdo que en esa entrevista me preguntaron cosas como por ejemplo, cómo daría usted clases para un grupo pequeño, para un grupo de tanto, o sea, en la entrevista me dijeron el número de estudiantes y que yo cómo daría una clase para ese*

*número de estudiantes, entonces me pusieron a hablar, pero no en español, en inglés tooodo el rato.* (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

When he told me, [...] so Teresa get ready for the interview on this date, and I was interview to? and he explained it to me, and I was and why did you do that?, I did not allowed you to do that, ay Teresa!, you can do it, [...] the moment for the interview came, I remember that in that interview they asked things like for example, how would you teach in a small group, in a group of, that is, the told me in the interview the number of students and how I would teach a class for that number of students, then they asked me to speak, but not in Spanish, in English the entiiire time.

Based on how Teresa began to work as a teacher, it could be said that the professional preparation in teaching seems not to be a determinant factor to enact the identity of a teacher. On the contrary, it seems that in Teresa's case, she enacted her identities from practice. This could be seen when Teresa became a teacher even though she had mainly been educated as a translator. It appears to be that the way some cátedra teachers at *UE* became teachers made part of a cultural component in a historical moment of the Foreign Language Teaching Section (FLTS) since teachers were chosen to work just because they hold a bachelor's in languages although this did not include a strong component in teaching. This was true not only for Teresa but also for Oriana and Camila who narrated similar experiences when they began to work in the courses of the FLTS.

## **Teaching Practices**

### **The class agenda.**

Teresa's teaching practices included the writing of the agenda at the beginning of each class. When I asked her about this practice, she explained she thought it was a good strategy for

students to know what the class was going to be about and to help them prepare for the class activities. From the teacher's perspective, writing the agenda was also an organization tool as she could follow an order for the class and track the development of the topics studied.

*...Esa estrategia es buena porque cuando el estudiante llega, el estudiante sabe, a qué llegó, pues, o sea, que es lo que se va a tratar y evita que le esté preguntando a uno profe, ¿qué va a ser la clase hoy? [...] en cambio con eso, usted enseña al estudiante que siempre hay como una agenda, que siempre va a encontrar qué es lo que vamos a ver en el día de hoy y también porque lo va como mentalizando a él sobre las actividades que hay que hacer, ya se va ubicando ¿cierto?, él llega de otra área del saber, para ubicarse en inglés ¿cierto?, por ejemplo en lectura, o en cualquiera curso de inglés, entonces lo contextualiza [...] también por el orden ¿cierto?, el orden para el profesor, porque uno también anota eso y uno va mirando ¡ah, sí! Ya sigue el tema tal, sigue tal... (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

...That strategy is good because when the student arrives to the class, the student knows, what s/he is going to do, well, that is, what is what the class is going to be about and s/he avoids to be asking the teacher, what is the class going to be about today? [...] with that strategy, you can teach the student that there is always like an agenda, that s/he is always going to find out what is what we are going to learn today and also because s/he begins to be mentally prepared for the activities that will be done, s/he situates her/himself right?, s/he comes from another field of knowledge, to situate her/himself in the English class right?, for example in a reading, or in any other English course, so [the agenda] gives him a context also for organization right?, organization for the teacher, because one also

writes the agenda and one checks it ah, right! Now we are moving to this topic, this is the next topic...

When Teresa was asked when she had begun with this practice, she referred to some trainings she had received at *UE* about the use of the board where she learned how it should be divided and to avoid having it as a mixture of everything.

*...Yo aprendí en ese entonces, cómo dividir el tablero ¿cierto?, ¿cómo segmentarlo?, y no llegar como un reguero que uno va a veces, cuando está de afán, escribe allá, escribe aquí... (Teresa's Interview Int, 8-25-17)*

...I learned in that moment, like to divide the board right?, how to divide it?, and not having a mess because sometimes, when one is in a hurry, one writes there, writes here...

### **The planning of the classes.**

When the teacher was asked about how she planned her classes, she mentioned the calendar, the dates for the midterm and final exam, the contents, the objectives, and the course level. In addition to this, she also referred to the type of materials and the different kinds of topics that went from more serious and scientific to more trivial such as recipes. Teresa added that she also included the institution for who she worked and the different types of activities such as movies, songs, poetry, and some learning strategies that fitted students' ages. According to what she explained, before her attention was focused on the teaching, but today she is also focused on how students learn.

*...Uno primero se centraba en cómo lo enseña, ¿cómo enseña el curso?, y hoy en día, yo también me estoy centrando en cómo ellos aprenden, porque es que mira que, una cosa es como tú enseñas y otra cosa es cómo el estudiante lo percibe... (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

...One was first focused on how one teaches, how to teach the class, and today, I am also focusing on how students learn, because notice that, one thing is how you teach and another thing is how the student perceives it...

Despite this, Teresa explained that she focused on how students learned. Going through her interview accounts, it was interesting to see that she did not mention students' skills development in what she planned for her classes. This perception was aligned with what I observed in her classes where little interactions among students were promoted and when these interactions took place, they were limited to vocabulary practices such as numbers or pre-designed questions where students had to respond with short answers. Addressing grammar structures was another main characteristic of Teresa's classes that emerged naturally in response to how she planned for each class, she narrated how she looked for material that had certain grammar structures and then designed some exercises.

*...Toca un audio que contenga tiempo perfecto, entonces, yo me pongo a hacer un rastreo, ¿cierto?, en Internet sobre, cómo hacer un ejercicio de audio que contenga esas estructuras, entonces ya, hago ejercicios de completación, por ejemplo, o de subraye, ¿cierto?, en fin, uno mira qué diferente estrategia aplica para que el estudiante haga el ejercicio de reconocimiento... (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

...It is time for an audio that has perfect tense, so, I begin to search, right?, in the Internet about, how to prepare a listening exercise that includes those structures, then, I prepare fill-in the blank exercises, for example, or exercises to underline, right?, you know, one takes a look at the different strategies that can be used for the student to be able identify [the structures]...

Looking at the aspects that were important for Teresa in the planning of her classes, it can be seen that she basically followed a grammar-oriented approach. Although it was clear from her discourse that her focus was on how students learned, in her practices, there seemed to be that language structures determined the use of language instead of being communication what determined language use.

### **The teaching approach.**

What I identified in the interview with Teresa regarding her grammar-oriented approach to teaching corresponded to what I noticed it was a pattern after having attended two reading comprehension courses and a communicative course she taught for about one year. It needs to be said that the teacher was knowledgeable of the structures she explained in class, and that she even offered useful tips that I have never heard about. Teresa's classes reflected three teaching characteristics outlined by Celce-Murcia (2014): little use of the target language for communicative purposes, a focus on grammar forms and inflections of words, and typical exercises such as translating sentences from the target language to the mother tongue.

In Teresa's reading comprehension classes, for example, I noticed that her main teaching approach to help students understand the reading texts was through translation. Curious about this practice and trying to understand the teacher's rationale for doing this, I asked her in the interview about it. She responded by saying that the main reason why she asked students to do this was to help them focus on details because otherwise the understanding of the text was very general.

*...Porque, cuando uno le dice al estudiante que simplemente lea, intente, más o menos decirme qué hay ahí, con la estrategia, pues, si el estudiante lo hace, pero cuando ha sido un ejercicio de traducción, es un poquito más de detalle [...] porque es que, la*



*comprensión lectora, uno va a un texto, ah no, si lea ahí por encima, más o menos de qué trata y sí, la gente más o menos de qué trata, pero, cuando se le pregunta de detalles, hay momentos en que ¡ay, no!, profe, yo sinceramente ese detalle yo no lo tuve en cuenta, entonces ahí es donde yo pienso que la traducción, [...] pero por lo menos, ellos están leyendo de una manera más detenidamente, ¿cierto?, con más detalle, entonces yo pienso que ahí, si queda, encaja bien la traducción, con la comprensión. (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

...Because, when one asks the student just to read, that s/he tries, more or less to tell me what it says there, using the strategy, the student can do it, but when it has been a translation exercise, it a little bit more of detail [...] because, in reading comprehension, one goes to the text, ah no, right, you can skim, to know more or less what the text is about, they get know more or less what the text is about, but, when you asked them for details, there are moments in which ay, no! Teachers, honestly I did not take into account that detail, then there is where I think that translation, [...] but at least, they are reading with more attention, right?, in more detail, then I think there, it fits, translation fits well, with the understanding.

Teresa's rationale for her grammar-oriented approach seemed to be based on the belief that in order for students to fully understand a reading text, they needed to translate it. Asking students specific questions about the reading to check that they had understood details of the text or even asking students for the intention of the author, the main idea of the text or some supporting ideas, seemed not to be strategies of which Teresa was aware in her classes to check students' full understanding of a text. It seemed to be that students' understanding of the reading texts was unclear and not really addressed.

During the interview, I had the opportunity to ask Teresa about how she described her teaching practices. To answer this, she first focused on the use she made of English and Spanish in her classes, explaining that in the first level of the communicative courses, she used between 80% and 85% of English. Then for the reading comprehension courses, she referred to lecturing, giving examples, giving students exercises to practice, sharing at the end to make corrections, and closing with the assessment component that included self-assessment.

*...Yo procuro, en este inglés I de [the Communicative English Program], un 80% inglés o un 85%, y el resto en español, pues, es un nivel uno y en realidad hay veces que hay que explicar cosas, se pierde tiempo explicando... (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)*

...I try, in this English I course of [the Communicative English Program], an 80% or 85% in English, and the rest in Spanish, well, is a level I course and in fact there are times where more things need to explained, you miss time explaining...

In the description of her classes Teresa also mentioned the inclusion of the topics proposed in the course syllabus. Regarding the use of class material, she mentioned how she encouraged students to hold conversation using videos from the Internet where they could take risks talking, feeling free to make mistakes, and without focusing on grammar.

*...En comprensión lectora teórico-práctico, la clase magistral, los ejemplos, los ejercicios guiados, ejercicios guiados, eh, ejercicios, para que el estudiante haga, luego la socialización de la respuesta, luego, por qué no, una evaluación y una autoevaluación, en estos otros cursos procurar seguir los parámetros de un programa dado si hay que ver saludos entonces, eh, con el favor de la Internet, obviamente, que eso ayuda mucho, pues, buscar, rastrear como los mejores vídeos, digamos, o los que apunten más a lograr un objetivo y procurar ponerlos a conversar, pues, es decir, que el estudiante no sea tan*

*gramatical si no que no, atrevase a decir, a cometer errores, el error...* (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

...In [the Reading Comprehension Program], theoretical-practical, the lecturing class, the examples, the guided exercises, guided exercises, eh, exercises, for the student to work on, then sharing the answers, then why not, an assessment and a self-assessment, in the other courses [I] try to follow the parameters given in certain program if greetings have to be taught then, eh, with the help of the Internet, obviously, that helps a lot, well, searching, tracking the best videos, let's say, or the ones that are more address to achieve a goal and to try to have students talking, well, that is to say, that the student is not very grammar-oriented but that he, dares to speak, to make mistakes, the mistake...

From her discourse, Teresa tried to do as a teacher who combined theory and practice, lectures with hand-on activities, and activities where students could interact, and the use of resources to help students achieve the communicative goals proposed in the syllabus. However, her practices seemed to relay more on the traditional and grammar-oriented approach to teaching and learning a language. One question that emerges under these circumstances is what can be done to help the teacher reflect on her practices and move from what she does to what she claims to do.

### **Class materials.**

In her teaching, Teresa also included some videos in English about grammar structures or videos of songs proposed by her or by students apropos to an expression mentioned in class when translating the reading texts. In the reading comprehension classes she also played some movies. When I asked her about this practice in the interview, she referred to the close captioned option and how that could be used as an exercise for students to recognize, for example, a

grammar structure that she highlighted later on for students to translate and recognize the structure.

*...La parte de la lectura visual, eh, lectura visual, porque las películas tienen closed caption ¿cierto?, entonces, ejercicios de reconocimiento, por ejemplo, estamos viendo, por decir algo, la voz pasiva ¿cierto?, entonces, les voy a presentar un segmento de una película que tenga voces pasivas y primero vemos la película sola ¿cierto?, primero vemos la película sola, pero después, ya les muestro de pronto, esos segmentos, en donde en la película se ve la voz pasiva, entonces ya ellos que la traduzcan o que la reconozcan. (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

...The visual reading component, eh, visual reading, because the movies have closed caption right?, so, the exercises to identify, for example, if we are taking a look at, to give an example, passive voice right?, then, I present them a segment from a movie that has passive voice and we first watch the movie right? We first watch the movie, but then, I maybe show them, those segments, where the movie includes passive voice, then students can translate or can identify [passive voice].

The previous excerpt continues to exemplify how Teresa's belief of teaching the language on the basis of the grammar structures shaped the selection and the use of materials that she made in class.

### **Reading material selection.**

One practice that called my attention in Teresa's reading comprehension classes was that students selected and brought to class some reading texts. At the beginning I thought this was a good way to include students' interests in the class but as I saw how the texts were used in class, I was worried about the extension and level of difficulty. In the interview, Teresa confirmed my

first impression about this practice as a way to motivate students towards reading in English if they had the opportunity to choose something of their interest. Regarding the length, Teresa said half page or maximum two pages was the criterion for first level students, and from two to five pages for level two. In relation to the level of difficulty, Teresa's answer was limited to say that *“las dificultades se van superando en el proceso”* (difficulties are overcome during the process).

### **Assessment Practices**

The evaluation in the reading comprehension classes included a follow-up and a midterm and final exam. The assessments in the follow-up included an oral report of a book students had to read in Spanish. During the book reports, the teacher asked students questions of how reading in Spanish could help them to read in English. In the first reading comprehension course I observed, all students said it helped them, but in the second course a couple of students said it had not helped them at all.

As an EFL teacher myself, I remember this strategy of having students reading books in Spanish in an English course generated conflicted feelings in me. On the one hand, it was clear for me that a solid literacy development in the first language could work as a predictor of an easier language learning of English, although in my own experience, I had also noticed that students strengthened their knowledge of Spanish in the English class. On the other hand, it seemed unfair for me that instead of working on their English language learning in these classes, students were working on their reading skills in Spanish, something that they could do in other courses or on their own. However, as a researcher, I refrained myself of this position and adopted a non-judgmental attitude to dig into the rationale of this practice.

In the interview, Teresa explained that, at the beginning of her courses, she always inquired students about how good readers they were and if they preferred to read on paper or

electronic formats. One of the reasons Teresa had for this practice rested on the belief that if students “were not lazy to read in Spanish, they were not going to be lazy to read in another language”. She admitted that looking into students’ reading habits had driven her to conclude that if students did not have a reading habit in their mother tongue, it was going to be more difficult to have this habit in English. Then her purpose in asking students to read books in English was to contribute to students’ reading habits and to provide students with background knowledge for them to use at the moment of reading in the target language. In my opinion, it is probable that the teacher needs to work on more teaching strategies to help students develop reading comprehension skills in English. At the same time, there seems to be a need to deconstruct students’ deficit perspectives to learn to read in a foreign language.

*...Yo digo, ¿cómo van a pretender leer, ¿cierto?, tener el hábito en inglés sino lo tienen en español, entonces, por uno, el hábito, como por formar el hábito de lengua materna, por el otro, por los saberes previos, porque a veces si yo he leído en español algo, cuando yo voy a leer un texto con ese tema relacionado, yo inmediatamente, mi mente hace como la parte contrastiva [...] básicamente por eso, o sea, por crear el hábito y por, los saberes previos. (Teresa’s Interview, 8-25-17)*

...I say, how are they going to read, right?, to have the habit of reading in English if they do not have it in Spanish, so, one reason, the habit, like create the habit in the mother tongue, another reason, for the background knowledge, because sometimes if I have read something in Spanish, when I am going to read a text connected to that topic, I immediately, my mind plays the role of contrasting [...] that is the reason why, that is, to create the habit and for, the background knowledge.

There is no doubt that, as EFL teachers, we should rely on students' knowledge of their first language as this facilitates the learning of the foreign language. However, exposing students to reading books in Spanish in the English class may be complicated as time for instruction for the course contents may be reduced and the assessment can lack construct and systemic validity. This was what occurred in Teresa's classes when time for teaching English was reduced and at the moment of the assessment, there was also an incoherence or lack of construct and systemic validity because what was assessed did not correspond to what had been taught. For instance, in the midterm and final exam, students were asked to read a short reading text in English where they basically had to answer reading comprehension questions, something for which they had not been prepared in class because they were either translating texts from English to Spanish or presenting reports of the books they had read in Spanish.

Assessment was among the components that Teresa mentioned in the planning of her classes. According to what she said, she liked to include students' voices and the date for the midterm exam in the negotiation of the assessment percentages. For Teresa, it was important to include not only teacher assessment but also self- and peer-assessment. With respect to this practice, it needs to be said that it addressed a democratic approach to assessment since other actors than the teacher were taken into account when students had for example the opportunity to self-assess (Shohamy, 2001).

*...Tan rico contar con la opinión del estudiante, niños, ¿cuándo quieren el parcial?, les parece bien veinte, veinticinco, ¿cierto?, estar, entrar como a tener en cuenta al usuario, me, me gusta eso y también me encanta que en la evaluación haya como las tres, o sea, coevaluación, heteroevaluación y la, autoevaluación, que, la evaluación resultante tenga esos tres procesos... (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

...How good is to include students' opinion, children, when should we have the midterm exam?, do you think is ok 20, 25, right?, to be, be able to include the student, I like that and I also like that the assessment include the three, that is, peer-assessment, assessment by the teacher and the, self-assessment, that, the final assessment includes those three processes...

Teresa's practices of self-assessment included a conversation with students at the end of the course during a conference she held in or out of class time. During these conferences she reviewed whether students had all the exercises and class activities proposed by her along the course and gave them a grade for that. Teresa commented in the interview that in the self-assessment, she asked students to give themselves a grade and the final grade was the average of student's grade and the score she assigned. During informal talks with the teacher at the end of the classes, Teresa told me she also evaluated students' attendance.

To complement my perceptions of Teresa's assessment practices, I also asked her to describe them. She responded that she tried to "*encontrar un equilibrio, entre el sistema, lo que el sistema pide, lo que el estudiante hace, eh, dice que aprende, y lo que uno como profesor enseña, y, espera haber, logrado, pues, objetivos a nivel de grupo...*" (find a balance among what the system requires, what the student does and reports as learning, what one as a teacher teaches and expects to have achieved and the objectives) (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17). Listening to the description Teresa provided of her practices allowed me to understand that she saw assessment as a balance among the system, the students and the teacher. A perception that was aligned with the democratic approach to assessment she followed when she included students' voices. Although sustaining a democratic approach to assessment can be an empowering tool for students' learning, giving students' participation in the decisions made in the classroom is not



the only and most important reason of this kind of approaches. Democratic approaches to assessment allow students to develop their metacognition and when this occurs, their learning is boosted (Picón Jacome, 2012, 2013; Pineda, 2014).

It seems to be that Teresa's beliefs about reading habits were accommodated to what she brought to the classroom as she also incorporated forms of assessment that included students' perspectives. From the description of her practices, it can be concluded that the concepts of construct and systemic validity need to be incorporated into her assessment literacy or the knowledge she has on the best ways to assess her students (Popham, 2009, 2011). However, it also needs to be said that more knowledge of assessment also implies reflection on the teaching practices as these two components are interrelated.

## **Teaching Investment**

### **Content area knowledge.**

In the same way that learning a new language implies investment (Norton, 2000), teachers also invest in learning thematic content that complements the teaching of a language and through this practice they invest in their own identity. The first time Teresa worked as an English teacher at *UE* was as a substitute for an instructor who had passed. As this course was addressed to Hard Sciences students and had a focus on teaching English for specific purposes, Teresa affirmed in the interview that she had to study topics related to nebulae and cosmic dust. It was for this course that she studied for about one or two months and reviewed contents of physics and mathematics to prepare the course syllabus. This was at a time when the Internet did not exist; thus, the search was in the library.

*...Acuérdate que para entrar a Ciencias Exactas que fue mi primera facultad, eh, preparándome en ese saber específico [...] me enclaustré como un mes o dos meses a*

*estudiar, pues, a repasar [...] me enclaustré a estudiar, a repasar cosas, de pronto a repasar inglés, entonces cotejaba inglés con los materiales de, de, de física, de matemáticas y tratar como de armar un programa, de armar un programa, eh, pues en ese entonces no había Internet, entonces el esfuerzo era totalmente investigación en biblioteca...* (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

...Remember that to begin to work in the Hard Sciences Department that was the first department where I worked, eh, being prepared in that specific area of knowledge [...] I set myself apart for about one or two months to study, well, to review [...] I set myself apart to review English, so I compared English with the materials of, of, of physics, of mathematics and I try like to prepare a syllabus, to prepare a syllabus, eh, well at that time there was not Internet, so the effort was completely searching in the library...

Not only did Teresa have to be familiar with topics from the Hard Sciences field to teach in the reading comprehension program, but she also had to be familiar with topics of geography and history when she was offered to teach at another department of the university. Learning about these content areas represents an investment of time that shapes teacher identity development because language learning and knowledge are mediated my language (Gee, 1996; Moje, 2008).

### **Working at other institutions.**

Analyzing what Teresa said in the interview, I found out that being a *cátedra* teacher and having the opportunity to work at diverse institutions of the city constituted an enriching opportunity for her as she considered all those institutions had contributed to who she was and how she saw herself as the result of all the learning she had gained working at those places. On the one hand, the learning Teresa acquired working at other institutions of the city made part of

institutional identities as the practices learned in those places have contributed to her professional repertoire (Gee, 2000). On the other hand, Teresa's acknowledgement of learning from working at other institutions may function as a symbolic power that contributes to increasing her cultural capital across time and space, marked by a larger social structure of power that is defined by the contractual conditions *cátedra* teachers have (Norton, 2000). This repertoire of experiences that Teresa has accumulated may represent learning and knowledge that positioned her at *UE* as someone who is aware of effective and ineffective practices at other worksites. This knowledge may also work as cultural capital she acquired and that may help her move across spaces and time because she is familiar with different approaches to working and this can give her the power to decide where to work.

*...Profesor de cátedra, que como yo, hemos tenido, tienen y tendremos, no sé, demás que sí, la oportunidad de estar en diferentes espacios, uno se enriquece muchísimo, uno se enriquece muchísimo y ¡claro!, uno sabe de administraciones, y es nece, la administración aquí, estas son las bondades allí, las falencias ¿sí me entiende?, y a veces uno como docente ¡claro!, con toda esa experiencia uno dice ve, aquí voy a aprovechar lo que aprendí de aquella entidad... (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)*

...An adjunct faculty, that like me, we have had, have and will have, I do not know, probably we will have the opportunity to be at different spaces, one gets very enriched, one gets very enriched and of course!, one knows administratos, and is neces, the administration here, those are some benefits there, the weaknesses do you understand me?, and sometimes one as a teacher of course!, with all that experience one says, you know, here I am going to take advantage of what I learned in that other institution...

## Communities of Practice

As Teresa was a teacher who had been working in the context of the study for many years, it called my attention when she narrated how former bosses of her promoted strategies among teachers where they discussed together teaching content and received material to read. Teachers were invited to sustain meetings once or twice a month and this was a means to accompany their work and to complement somehow the preparation that some of them had not had.

*...El profesor Director en ese entonces [...] con otro grupo de profesores, nos reunían a los profesores de cátedra, eh, nos reunían por ahí una vez al mes o dos veces al mes para darnos libros, nos regalaban libros, de cómo entrenarnos para dar comprensión lectora, entonces nos, o sea, nosotros, ellos con nosotros formaron grupos de estudio y en esos grupos de estudio uno hacía preguntas profe, entonces y sí yo explico esto, o sea, era muy bueno [...] lo que ellos hacían con nosotros era que nos reunían, ellos no nos dejaban por ejemplo, vea, este es el curso que usted tiene que dar y chao, no, ellos siempre nos reunían mínimo dos veces al mes y nos decían [...] ellos lo estaban entrenando, uno se iba a estudiar eso, libro que, libros que eran fascinantes para uno porque uno en la carrera vió otra cosa y ya uno ver que uno que tenía que dar una clase, y que para dar una clase uno tenía que saber una teoría, ¡caramba!, ¿qué más tocaba?, póngase a estudiar ¿cierto?, porque delante del estudiante usted no puede salir con cualquier cosa. [...] eran muy, bueno... (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)*

...The professor who was the Director in that time [...] with another group of teachers, they asked the adjunct faculty to meet, eh, they asked us to meet probably once or twice in a month to give us book, they gave us books, about how to learn to teach reading comprehension, so we, that is, we, they and us created study groups and in those study

groups one asked questions teacher, so if I explain this, that is, it was so good [...] what they did with us was that they asked us to meet, they did not let us for example, look, this is the course that you have to teach and that is it, no, they always asked us to meet minimum twice a month and they told us [...] they were training us, one went to study that, a book, books that were fascinating for one because one in the bachelor's had studied other things and then when one realized that one had to teach a class, and that to teach a class one had to know a theory, caramba!, what else did we have to do?, let's put on work right?, because before the student you can not do whatever. [...] that was very, good.

Going deeper into what Teresa expressed, the opportunities to meet and discuss the material teachers received could have worked as a Community of Practice (CoP) because they had the opportunity to exchange their ideas (Wenger, 1998). The approaches Teresa had to CoP as a teacher were limited to when she began to work at the FLTS. Other approaches she had came more from her experience as a learner of other languages and the people from other areas of knowledge with whom she interacted in those courses. She relied, for example, on some of her classmates from the Hard Sciences she had met when she had to design a reading comprehension course for that department. Teresa commented that it was an instructor from this department who recommended some bilingual material to use in her classes.

*...En matemáticas hay gente, actualmente gente amiga, que, de esa época, estudiaron conmigo también, por ejemplo, lengua japonesa, en ingeniería también, en un momento dado yo iba y los visitaba, ve, fulano vení, yo tengo que dar un curso aquí y aquí, dónde, en que, qué bibliografía, en la biblioteca central, dónde me voy, y de hecho un profesor muy querido, él me dijo “ve, Teresa”, me llevó a la biblioteca, fuimos y me dijo mira, te*

*muestro este diccionario que define todo lo de física, lo de física está aquí y en la, y en la, en la, eran dos partes, me dice, uno de física y otro de matemática, lo que tú no encuentres ahí no lo vas a encontrar y está en inglés contrastado con español...* (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

...In mathematics there are people, currently friends of mine, that, in that time, they had studied with me too, for example, Japanese, also in engineer, in a given moment I went to visit the, such and such, come here, I have to teach a class here and here, where, in what, what bibliography, in the main library, where can I go, and in fact a very nice professor, he told me "you know, Teresa, he took me to the library, we went and he told me look, I going to show you this dictionary that defines everything about physics, the part of physics is here and in the, and in the, in the, there were two parts, he tells me, one of physics and another of mathematics, what you do not find there you are not going to find it anywher and it is in English contrasted with Spanish...

These experiences seem to have been more part of a collaborative approach with peers than engagement with CoP and its social nature of learning and these collaborations seem to have been more connected to Teresa's identity as a learner rather than as a teacher. When these interactions took place with other teachers, it was more to address the language proficiency component than the teaching component. In the interview, talking about what Teresa did to maintain her English proficiency, she mentioned a colleague of hers with whom she decided to read a book in English and then reported what she had read to him in French as he asked her questions in English. This was the way they found to use the languages they had learned.

*...Yo me preparo, mira, con películas, leyendo, escuchando música, eh, a veces me encuentro con colegas, por ejemplo, con [...] él me llamó hace como cinco meses y me*

*dijo, cuando él estaba aquí, mire el ejercicio que hacíamos, Teresa, nos vamos a sentar, leíamos el capítulo de una novela, pues, de un cuento en inglés, bueno, usted me va a contar eso a mí en francés y yo se lo voy a preguntar en inglés, ¡pilas!, que usted no me puede contestar en inglés, usted me tiene que hablar en francés, pero yo le pregunto en inglés... (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)*

...I prepare myself, look, with movie, reading, listening to music, eh, sometimes I meet with colleagues, for example, with [...] he called me like five months ago and told me, when he was here, look at the exercise that we made, Teresa, we are going to work, we read the chapter of a novel, well, of a tale in English, well, you are going to tell me that in French and I am going to ask you in French, be attentive to that!, because you cannot reply to me in English, you have to talk to me in French, but I will ask you in English...

The only collaborative example in her experience as a teacher occurred with one of the professors from her graduate studies. According to what she described in the interview, the interaction with him seems to have influenced her teaching practices in relation to the use of Spanish in the English class when students were communicating an idea.

*...Como me decía mi profesor, uno de mis profesores de la especialización vea, Teresa, nos decía, vea muchachos, que el estudiante, al estudiante hay que ponerlo, al estudiante hay que ponerlo a que se, a que se ponga un, invierta un tiempo, hasta que dé con la palabra, ¡por favor!, y el tiempo corriendo, es muy difícil que usted le diga, mire, se dice 'house' y siga derecho, muchachos, es más práctico que usted como profe diga 'house', no se pongan a perder tiempo ahí y a desgastar al otro, yo comparto lo de ese profesor, o sea, cuando, cuando uno tiene clases medidas, donde hay que ir a pedir llaves,*

*calendarios, cuando hay ciertas cosas, optimice tiempo, porque es que el tiempo es un recurso que no vuelve...* (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

...Like my professor said, one of my favorite professors in the especialización (teaching certificate) you know Teresa, he told us, you know guys, the student, the student has to be asked to, the student has to be asked to, to work, to invest some time, until he find the right word, come on!, and time is going on, is it very difficult that you tell her/him, look, it is said 'house' and keep going, guys, is more practical that you as the teacher say 'house', do not waste time there and get the others tired, I share the opinion of that teacher, that is, when, when one has very limited classes, where you have to go to ask for the keys [of the classroom], calendars, when there are certain things, make the best of time, because time is a no-renewable resource...

When Teresa was asked for study groups for professional development she has attended, she mentioned some hours she had certified with the public school system of the city. She also referred to a friend from the area of education with whom she had agreed to exchange English and contents of education material; nonetheless, the meetings for this exchange have never taken place.

Again, the contact Teresa maintained with others was more with people with whom she had studied other foreign languages than with colleagues with whom she could share and discuss issues related to her classroom and her teaching practices. It can be said then that, more than involvement in CoP, her exchanging experiences with colleagues were more similar to participation in professional communities and peer learning. This was evidenced when, in the interview, she expressed how she had kept in touch with people with whom she had studied other languages but in the field of English teaching, she just mentioned one opportunity when she did



a little coaching exercise with a colleague of hers. Also, the plan to exchange English lessons and theories of education with a teacher she had met at a training was never carried out.

*...Yo estuve con Secretaría de Educación y fueron 604 horas, eso fue mucho tiempo y de ahí quedaron unos amigos y uno, uno se comparte cosas, de hecho, hay una profesora en la actualidad que hicimos un pacto, ella y yo hicimos un pacto hace como ocho meses más o menos, yo le enseño inglés y contigo, vamos a repasar todo lo de educación y en esas estamos, entonces nos vemos y nos da risa, porque cuando yo he podido, ella no ha podido y cuando ella ha podido yo no puedo... (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)*

...I was with Secretaría de Educación and 604 hours, that was a lot of time and there are some friends from there and one, we share things, in fact, there is a teacher with whom I agreed on something, she and I made an agreement like eight months ago more or less, I teach her English and with her, I was going to review everything related to education and that was the idea, so we see each and we laugh, because it has not been able for us, she has not been able to and when she is available I am not...

At the end of the interview, I asked Teresa for people and events she thought had influenced her life as a teacher. She responded mentioning three aspects of her professional life, but none of them included her colleagues. She mentioned that she wanted to be a teacher since she was a little girl, that she has tried not to be with her students as her teachers were with her, and her interest to share knowledge and learn with students was something that came from the values she brought from home.

*Yo desde niña quería ser profesora, ja, ja, ja (risas), bueno, ese es un factor, un querer ¿cierto?, un querer ser, otra, el padecimiento como, estudiante, pues, ya que estoy al otro lado, procurar no ser como fueron, esos, profesores conmigo, entonces, procurar no ser*

*yo con los estudiantes de esa forma, y tercero, darme cuenta que, que, finalmente, lo que interesa realmente, es, compartir un conocimiento, más que ser, o sea, más que mostrarse arrogante porque uno tiene un saber X o Y, es más bien, eh, tener una actitud de compartir con los estudiantes y a la vez de que comparte, aprender con ellos, yo pienso, que, de pronto, esa forma de, de querer compartir y aprender, y, pienso que en la casa, o sea, en la casa siempre, la casa le infundan a uno ciertos valores y ahí ve uno en la casa esos valores de compartir, entonces, compartir, ayude al otro... (Teresa's Interview, 8-25-17)*

Since I was a little girl I wanted to become a teacher, ja, ja, ja (laughter), well, that is one factor, a desire right?, a desire to be, another one, how one endures as, a student, well, now that I am at another position, try not to be as they were with me, those, teachers with me, so, try not to be with the students in the same way, and third, realized that, that, finally, what it really matters, is, to share knowledge, more than to be, that is, more than appearing arrogant because one has X or Y knowledge, it is rather, eh, to have an attitude to share with students and as you share, learn with them, I think, that, maybe, that is a way to, to share and learn, and, I think that at home, that is, at home, at home one receives like some values and there at home one sees those values to share, so, sharing, helping the other...

The scarce interactions Teresa had with colleagues led me to conclude the little impact communities of practice have had in her identity development as a teacher and the need teachers have to be more involved in working with others since these spaces constitute an opportunity to listen to what other teachers in the same context face and to learn from those experiences.

## The Reflective Practitioner

In the same way that I noticed that there was a little impact of CoP in Teresa's identity development, I identified one instance where she referred to herself as a self-reflective person based on what she did. She specifically referred to the end of her courses where she always did an evaluation with students asking them about their experience in the class.

*...Yo soy muy autocrítica, yo todavía sigo siendo, yo moriré siendo autocrítica, yo por ejemplo, siempre al terminar un curso yo hago evaluación, entonces, yo les pregunto a los estudiantes en una hojita, les hago unas preguntas y les digo que de manera anónima expresen todos sus pensamientos y yo también sin ver lo de ellos yo me analizo y digo bueno, de uno a cinco cuánto me pongo en esto, en esto, en esto, en esto y sobre eso saco mis propias reflexiones, entonces, yo siempre he sido autocrítica... (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)*

...I am very critical of myself, I still continue to, I will die being self-critical, I for example, always at the end of a course I assess the course, so, I ask the students in a sheet of paper, I ask them questions and I ask them to express all their thoughts in an anonymous way and I also, without looking at they wrote I analyze myself and I say well, from one to five how can I grade myself in this, in this, in this, in this and over all I draw my own reflection, so, I have always been self-critical...

No need to say that asking students for their opinions denoted an open attitude from the teacher but there were not more moments in the interview where she showed samples of a reflection process of what happened in her classes and how she made decisions based on those reflections to improve her practice. Thinking back on this fact, I remember two moments where we sustained informal conversations after class about events where it would have been good that the teacher reflected more. The conversations were about the nature of having students

translating texts from English to Spanish and having them read books in Spanish for the English reading comprehension class. In the second conversation, I basically asked Teresa how she thought encouraging students to read in Spanish could help them to read in English. When the teacher responded to this question, I perceived a close-minded attitude as her response was limited to saying that she had evidence from the literature that supported this practice. The following excerpt, taken from my reflection when I expanded the fieldnotes, gives a snapshot of what happened.

As I was observing, I self-asked a question about what research said about reading in Spanish to support the reading process in English, maybe I asked this as a way to have a less partial position of what I was seeing.

At the end of class, when most of the students had already left, the teacher approached me and asked me for what I thought. I told her it was very good or something like that and I couldn't remain quiet to tell the teacher I was still wondering how encouraging students to read in Spanish could help them to read in English. I added that it was very clear that it could help them in terms of background knowledge.

The teacher added something on this and then I mentioned I would like to know what research says about that because I was not so sure. The teacher said she had evidence of that in the literature and that she was going to share that information with me.

I added, I just would like to see how, because maybe there are ways in which having students reading in Spanish helps them to read in English, but I just wanted to know how.

The teacher emphasized there were ways to support that. (Teresa's PO 9-23-16)

As it can be seen in the two excerpts taken from the data for this section, no matter what teachers do in the classroom, it is important to make informed decisions using support from

theory and research and to maintain a reflective attitude listening to students' voices on their learning experiences. At the end of the class where Teresa's students were reporting the book they had read in Spanish, she asked them about how that experience had helped them to support their reading comprehension process in English. Most of the students referred to having background knowledge that could help them to understand what they could read in English. Only one student expressed this had not helped him a lot because the reading comprehension processes in the two languages were very different and he needed other type of activities to develop his reading comprehension skills in English. In reply to this, the teacher just said that was a different opinion.

### **Intertwined Identities as a Language Learner and as a Language Teacher**

In contrast with the little impact of CoP in Teresa's identity development and the few reflective practices shown in the data collected from her classes during almost a year, there was a clear interconnection between her identities as a language learner and as a language teacher. In Teresa's opinion, teachers continue being very strict with the due dates for the assignments as happened when she was a student. As it can be seen in following excerpt, her experience as a student contributed to defining what she did not want to do as a teacher, to adopting a more flexible attitude when students had issues with turning in an assignment on time, to asking students to set up a date, and to accommodating herself to the due dates to turn in the grades to the administration.

*...¿En qué sentido he tratado yo de cambiar? Que cuando yo pongo un trabajo y el estudiante me explica a mí mira, tuve estas dificultades, no he podido pues yo le flexibilizo ¿cierto?, yo no soy es que yo le dije a usted que era para tal fecha, sino que yo le digo ¡ah, bueno! ¿cuándo crees que me lo puedes entregar?, le doy siempre al*

*estudiante la prelación no yo [...] yo ¿cómo procuro en mi enseñanza manejar eso?, por ejemplo si yo tengo que entregar notas un treinta al sistema, entonces yo antes, yo antes, corro, yo prefiero intercambiar como la clase...* (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

...In what sense I have tried to change? When I assign something and the student explains to me, look, I had these difficulties, I have not been able to, well, I am flexible right?, I am not, I told you that it was for this date, but I tell her/him ah, ok! When can you turn the assignment in?, I always give priority to the student [...] I, how do I try to manage that in my classes?, for example if I have to turn upload the grades to the system the 30th of the month, so before that, before that, I hurry up, I prefer to move the class...

One of the memories Teresa brought to the conversation during the interview, connected to her desire to teach others was when she played being a teacher, was when she promised herself of not doing to others what some teachers had done to her, referring to the experience with the teacher who gave her a bad grade when she was sick. According to what she said, in that situation, there was a power issue related to gender as the instructor was a man.

*...Cuando yo jugaba de niña como, como profesora, [...] yo misma hacía el rol como de explicarme a mí misma las clases que me interesaban, pienso que ahí surgió como el deseo de enseñarle a otros, cuando me sucedió eso, mi mente voló allá y también dije si algún estoy en el otro lado procuraré no hacer lo que hicieron los profesores conmigo, porque es que no solamente este cero-cero, son muchas otras cosas que uno siente que el profesor hizo con uno, pero obviamente eso del cero-cero fue muy desagradable para mí, porque, de por sí, podría haber sido de muchas formas, él era hombre, yo mujer...* (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

...When I was a little girl and played to be a teacher, [...] I played myself the role to explain to myself the classes that were of my interest, I think that it was there where my interest to teach others emerged, when that happened to me, my mind moved to that moment and I also said if am one day at the other side, I will try not to do what teachers did to me, because it was not only the zero-zero, there were many other things that one feels that the teacher did with one, but obviously the zero-zero experience was very uncomfortable for me, because, in fact, it could have been in many other ways, he was a man, I was a woman...

### **The Apprenticeship of Observation**

#### **Translation across the language learning and teaching experience.**

Teachers like Teresa define her identities from discourse and sometimes they also develop their own agency as when she decided not to be as one of the teachers she had had. Some other times, they tend to imitate what they learned from their teachers. Lortie (1975) claims that students learn implicitly from what they observe from their teachers as students. In Teresa's case, the use of translation was a component that remained unchanged in her transition from a language learner to a language teacher. Despite her bachelor's including teaching, translation and interpretation, I noticed in the interview that she identified herself as a translator and this could have been a reason for the use of translation practices in her classroom. When she was asked about her experience of being prepared as an English teacher, she mentioned translation as one of the components of the courses she had taken.

*...Yo he tomado estos cursos, por ejemplo, la enseñanza del inglés bajo el punto de vista, también, traductivo, o sea, la traducción, yo he como unificado entre, entre, eso sí, más o menos los puntos de vista traductivos, al interior de un curso, más las estrategias de*

*lectura, obviamente que no tienen nada que ver con traducción...* (Teresa's Interview, 5-11-17)

...I have taken those courses, for example, teaching English from a point of view, also, translating, that is, translation, I have like unified between, between, that yes, more or less the translation perspectives, in a course, in addition to the reading strategies, that obviously do not have to do anything with translation...

Listening to Teresa frequently referring to the role of translation in her language learning experience drove me to understand the grammar translation approach she followed in her classes. In addition to this, knowing that there was little evidence of Teresa's reflective practices and few interactions with other teachers from whom she could have learned more communicative approaches to teaching a language, led me to infer the strong influence that her individual language learning experience had had on her.

### **Summary**

Some of the ways in which individuals define their identity is through discourse (Discourse Identities) and Institutional Identities Gee (2000). As in the findings of a study by Gu and Benson (2017) with pre-service teachers in Hong Kong and Chinese mainland, teachers' identities are discursively constructed. In Teresa's case, her identities were defined through discourse when she identified herself as someone who was innovative in the classroom. Also when she admitted to be flexible with her students in opposition to who she did not want to be. But individuals also define who they are through practice (Holland *et al.*, 1998), Teresa's teaching and assessment practices also contributed to define who she was as a teacher. Based on the observation of her classes, it can be said, for example, that Teresa was a teacher who followed a grammar-oriented approach and who favored the use of translation to help students understand reading texts in English.



According to Norton (1997, 2000) identities are contradictory, and this may explain the gap between teachers' identities construction with what they say and what they do. An example of this occurred when Teresa exposed her students to the translation of reading texts in class, but in the assessment component, she asked students to answer reading comprehension questions. Her discourses and practices, however, were aligned when she talked about other ways to assess her students and when, in fact, she used alternative approaches to assessment such as self-assessment and student-teacher conferences.

The concept of identity investment that I used for this study as defined by Norton (1997, 2000) helped me understand the ways in which teachers constructed their identity by the use of language, individual experiences and social power. According to Norton, identity investment is based on the concept of cultural capital and she sees language learning as the investment in symbolic and material resources that contribute to continue increasing cultural capital. In this study, I built on the concept of identity investment to understand teachers' identity development through their investment in teacher learning. Individual and social practices, and formal education can be seen as economic and symbolic resources that teachers use to invest in their learning as when teachers invest time, effort and dedication to continue their professional preparation. In Teresa's case, it can be said that she was an invested teacher when she dedicated effort and time to investigate content-area information that she used in her English classes, when she learned from the practices held at other institutions where she worked, and when she invested time and money in pursuing graduate studies.

Findings of this study, like the ones described in Teresa, reveal that it is important that research on teachers' identities be done not only from methodological approaches like interviews and teachers' narratives, but also from classroom observations. These approaches can help teachers, administrators and professional program developers to guide teachers' work based on the reflection of their practices. Second, professional development programs should be based not only on the learning needs teachers' express but also in what their everyday practices show. Professional development programs should give teachers spaces where they can reflect on their

teaching practices and also offer them opportunities to become members of communities of practices where they can share and learn with their colleagues.

## **Chapter 7: Camila: *La Profesora que Aprendió a Enseñar Siendo Estudiante* (The teacher Who Learned How to Teach by Being a Student)**

Camila even mentioned something like “because we are *cátedra* teachers and we are like islands, it was very important to be together and to share and learn from each other and to find out about our identities and discover that it is not possible to teach without being ourselves”. (PO fieldnotes, 5-17-17)

### **Introduction**

The broader goal of this study was to explore EFL teacher’s identities and the connection with their teaching and assessment practices. In this chapter, I present the kinds of identities Camila developed across moments of her life, as an autonomous lifelong language learner, and as a language teacher, and how these two types of identities are interwoven when she performs in her classes. I present how Camila, has become an invested teacher, learning from teachers with whom she continued to take classes with after her bachelor’s program. I also describe the role that agency has played in her identity development, her hunches –although not theoretically supported– of situated learning to teach English, and how sustaining conversations with her teachers has contributed to the formation of criteria to assess her students and to be closer to students affectively speaking. Framed in sociocultural theories of learning like identity investment, identity development through discourse, and identity as a social practice, I conclude that there is not a bidirectional relationship between teachers’ identities and their classroom practices; instead, I uncovered some of the intricacies of identity development. Camila’s identity construction, for example, has been influenced by her autonomous language learning, by learning from teachers from whom she continued to learn, and by developing her own agency through her own experiences and the conversations she has engaged with other teachers.

This chapter begins with a description of Camila's identities as a language learner and as a language teacher, and how she continued to construct her identity as a teacher from her position as a language learner. In the development of her identity development as a teacher, I refer to the imposed-like form in which she became a teacher. Then, I describe her teaching and assessment practices, how she continued to invest in her teacher identity learning from the teaching techniques of her colleagues as a student. At the end, I explain how she has moved from her beliefs about teaching and assessment to develop her own criteria and establish affective relations with students, the role of agency to make her own decisions in the classroom, and the influence of working at other institutions.

### **Identity as a Language Learner**

#### **Identity as a language learner across moments of life.**

In the timeline where Camila had to sketch people and events who have influenced her life as a language learner, she mentioned her father as someone who was a good and curious reader. She also mentioned her interest in reading the newspaper as what could explain her inclination towards language. Among the people who played an important role in Camila's life, her oldest sister came out of the narrative as the person who was in charge of looking for schools for her seven siblings because her parents were very busy; their mother was a peasant and their father was in charge of a family business. Camila referred to her big sister as the person who instilled in them to study.

*..Bueno, lo que pasa es que nosotros fuimos ocho hijos, todos seguidos y entonces mi mamá, pues, campesina y mi papá en el negocio, entonces el no tenía casi tiempo de nada, de, de encargarse como de los estudios ni de nada, entonces mi hermana mayor fue la que, digamos que de alguna manera, nos inculcó también ese deseo por estudiar –*

*mm– estudiar, estudiar y estudiar, ¿cierto?, entonces ella se encargaba como de buscarnos escuela. (Camila’s Interview, 5-3-17)*

...Well, what happens is that we were eight children, one after the other and then my mom, well, she was a peasant and my dad worked in his business, so he rarely had time, to be in charge of our studies and things like that, so my big sister was the one, in charge of instill in us the desire to study –mm– study, study, and study, right?, then she was the one in charge of looking for a school for us.

Then appeared Camila’s French teacher in the last two years of high school, although she did not really recall how his classes were, she just mentioned that his classes were dynamic. When teachers of the context of this study mentioned that their former teachers were dynamic, they referred to very active classes, classes that were not boring but entertaining. After high school, Camila continued studying French for two years at a private language institution in the city. During this time she was also working with her father and earning money to pay for her French courses by herself. Camila recalled that she liked the teacher in the institution where she continued studying French because the teacher was enthusiastic and her classes were dynamic. She continued studying French after high school because she had taken the admission test to study at *Universidad Estatal (UE)*, but had not passed it and she wanted to continue studying something.

*Me fui a estudiar francés allá porque cuando ya terminé todo el bachillerato entonces me presenté a la universidad y no pasé, entonces dije: “yo no me puedo quedar sin estudiar”. Entonces me metí a estudiar francés. (Camila’s Interview, 5-3-17)*

I went to study French there because when I finished high school, I took the university admission test and I did not pass it, then I said: “I cannot remain without studying”. So I began to study French.

During this time, Camila kept taking the admission test to study at *UE* and pursued computers and accounting studies at the technical and technological level. Then she passed the admission test and was accepted to study languages at a professional level at *UE*. The bachelor's degree from this institution did not prepare students either as a teacher or as a translator, students were just educated on languages (English and French). Before the end of the second semester of her academic program, Camila decided to travel to another major city of the country to work in a store with a relative of hers and asked the university for a leave of absence. She wanted to continue her studies at her return. Camila stayed working with her relative for five years and during this time she decided to start studying English at a private language institution where she took two courses.

Then she went back to her city of origin to continue her bachelor's. However, by this time the bachelor's degree offered at the Department of Languages had changed and they only offered Translation or Foreign Language Teaching. Camila opted for translation because she did not want to be a teacher. The teacher continued her studies, always with a purpose in mind of studying to make some progress in life, committed to continue learning and to finish her bachelor's.

*Yo dije, Licenciatura, ¡qué pereza, yo no quiero ser profesora!, (risa) entonces dije, no, Traducción (Camila's Interview, 5-3-17)*

I said, a bachelor's in teaching, how boring, I do not want to be a teacher!, (laughter) then I said, no, translation.

Camila narrated how during the time she was a student, she also worked as a baker. To do this, she stayed studying until one in the morning and sometimes she had to get up at three to bake the bread and be ready to go to class at six in the morning.

*Yo era panadera, allá en la panadería. Entonces yo me quedaba estudiando hasta la una de la mañana, y a veces me tocaba levantarme, tres de la mañana, acostándome a la una, me levantaba a las tres de la mañana para trabajar –asar el pan–, hacer adelanto y para tener clase a las seis de la mañana.* (Camila's Interview 5-3-17)

I was a baker, there at the bakery. So I stayed studying until one in the morning, and sometimes I had to get up, three in the morning, having gone to bed at one, I got up at three in the morning to work –to bake the bread– to leave everything ready and to class at six in the morning.

As Camila's father saw her working and studying this hard, he used to tell her "Why do you study so much? Don't kill yourself that much. You have to work", to which she always replied "Let me do it because I like it".

One of the motivations she had to study English in specific was her will to leave the country. Indeed, she went to ask for the visa to travel to the U.S. twice but after being rejected, she realized she needed to continue studying. All this time, Camila repeated to herself "I have to study, I have to study". Camila continued studying her bachelor's until she finished. Nonetheless, she continued studying on her own and working in a small business she owned.

The life moments Camila narrated in the interview show the construction of her identity across different moments of life (Wenger, 1998). At the beginning of Camila's life story and identity construction as a language learner, members of their family appeared as the closest people to her when she began to have a passion for learning. As her social circles began to grow

when she went to school, it was usual that some of her school teachers, especially a language teacher, appeared in her life to initiate or continue the passion for learning a new language.

Likewise, an investment in their language learning (Norton, 1995, 1997, 2000) could also be noticed when she continued studying French after finishing high school, when she was persistent to take the admission test to enter the university to study languages, then she began to study English at a private language institution when she stopped attending college for a while, and then she re-started her studies at the university. Camila was very clear about the investment she was making in her language learning; the investment she was making as a language teacher was not very clear though.

### **Identity as autonomy and lifelong language learner.**

When I was observing Camila's classes, I noticed that she once commented to her students how she had learned English autonomously after graduating from her bachelor's. In the interview, she was asked to expand on this idea. She explained that she began to teach after two years of having finished her bachelor's and that when she received the course program she saw some topics that she thought she needed to review, then she began to study and to read. When she knew about the English courses offered for instructors at *UE*, she began to combine her autonomous language learning with what she saw in the courses and to learn from what the teachers did in their classes.

*...Cuando ya empecé a, a dar clases, yo llevaba dos años de haberme graduado –uhum– entonces claro, yo decía: Bueno y entonces ¿yo ahora qué? qué, me pasaron el programa y entonces, eh, al ver el programa y yo dije: Bueno ¿y esto?, ah, este tema, ah fuemama, este tema, tengo que recordarlo, ¿cierto? Entonces, claro, me tocó sentarme a estudiar –uhum– a averiguar, a investigar, a leer, a, todo, y entonces cuando me di cuenta lo de*



*los, lo de los cursos for [university instructors], entonces hice las dos, la combinación – uhum– siempre de sentarme a estudiar, a estudiar, a estudiar, a averiguar, a leer, a, a mirar, a esto, y también entonces con lo de los, con lo de las clases, eh, de [for university instructors], a tomar elementos que los profesores daban y yo a preguntar –uhum– pero sí, la mayor parte en realidad fue autónomo. (Camila’s Interview, 5-17-17)*

...When I began to teach, there had already been two years since I had finished my bachelor’s –uhum– so of course, I said: well so now what? They gave me the course program and then, eh, taking a look at the program and said: Well, what is this?, ah, this topic, ah *fue mama*, this topic, I have to recall it, right? Then, of course, I had to study – uhum– to search, to investigate, to read, to, everything, and then when I realized about the courses for university instructors, then I did both, I combined –uhum– always trying to study, to study, to study, to search, to read, to, to take a look at, and also with, with the classes, eh, for university instructors, to take elements from those classes and I asked – uhum– but, most of my learning was in fact autonomously.

Camila has continued this autonomous language learning up to now. In the interview she also referred to how she began to work on her listening skills in English. She said she considered herself “absolutely deaf”, meaning that she was unable to understand spoken English. She then narrated how for the past two years, she has listened to something in English everyday. She said that she listened to the CNN channel before going to bed and that when she was studying or reading something in English she also listened to music in English. She watched a TV channel where videos of classic songs in English were played. She said that she paid the TV cable service to be able to watch CNN in English and sometimes she also watched a science channel. She

commented that her TV was programmed to watch programs that were originally in English and some music channels, and that all this was what has helped her to develop her listening skills.

Talking about ways to practice the language one teaches, we arrived to the topic of Pen Pal programs that are worldwide communities of language learners (Maples, Groenke & Dunlap, 2005). To this, the teacher commented that she had had a couple of bad experiences and that she was currently blocked towards this type of initiatives, that she only maintained a language exchange with a French guy she had met online. However, with this language exchange, Camila practiced the other language that she had learned in her bachelor's but not English. What Camila shared with me led me to think that she did not really have some people to interact with in English, which seemed to match the exposure to music, videos and TV channels she had mentioned to be exposed to English.

Camila continued to invest in her language learning after she finished her bachelor's. One of the ways in which she did this was by paying for a TV cable service, setting up a daytime to be exposed to listening to English. Nonetheless, her investment to work on other language skills such as speaking and writing seems to not have been very effective due to bad experiences she has had with language exchange programs.

Some of the characteristics of autonomous language learners are that they identify their language learning needs, set up goals, design a plan, implement it, monitor it and evaluate it (Benson, 1997). This is what seems to have occurred in Camila's case when she narrated that she was "absolutely deaf" referring to her difficulty to understand spoken English. According to what she explained, there have been two years since she decided to pay a TV cable service and she makes use of it everyday to listen to videos and songs in English as well as TV programs that are originally in English, news or science channels. It seems to be that she has not found ways to

work more on her interactional skills though, since she has had, for example, some bad experiences interacting with other language learners online.

From Camila's autonomous language learning experience, it can be concluded that is important that teachers become aware on the ways in which they work on their English language skills. Reflecting and explicitly talking about their learning may be a step to guide their students to also learn autonomously. However, teachers might also know that promoting autonomous learning among their pupils does not mean letting students work on their own. On the contrary, it is in learning autonomously where students need more guidance and the teacher takes the role of a facilitator to help students organize their learning, develop criteria to choose materials, set up studying schedules, and look for learning opportunities.

It seems to be that the way teachers learned the language they teach shapes the way they teach, as if their identities as language learners shaped how they teach. Camila was asked in the interview if she considered that she promoted autonomous language learning in her classes and she responded saying that she always gave her students websites that she liked, that she considered could be useful for her students, and that sometimes she taught them how to use them.

*...Yo siempre les doy páginas, ¿cierto?, entonces les doy páginas que yo he trabajado, que me gustan, que he visto que pueden ser útiles o para ellos –uhum– siempre, siempre les doy páginas para que ellos, y les digo, en algunas ocasiones les enseño cómo usarlas, ¿cierto?, que hay páginas que requieren, de pronto de –uhum– cómo buscar, cómo mirarlas, pero sí, claro, total, siempre. (Camila's Interview, 5-17-17)*

...I always give my students websites, right?, I give them websites that I have used, that I like, that I have noticed that can be useful or for them –uhum– I always, always give

them websites for them, and I tell them, sometimes I teach them how to use them, right?, because there are some websites that may require –uhum– like looking for, like looking at them, but of course, I always do that.

In this sense, it can be said that more than teaching how teachers were taught (Lortie, 1975), they tend to teach in the way they learned. Because of this, it could be said that a way for teachers to reflect on their practices is to reflect on their learning preferences and the ways in which they learned. By also exploring also the ways in which students learn, teachers could find ways to mediate between two different approaches to learning or find similarities that facilitate their teaching. Reflection on these aspects could also drive teachers to consider the role they have as facilitators of students' learning, providing them with resources and metacognitive strategies such as planning their work and looking for learning opportunities. In addition to teacher reflection to mediate students' learning, reflection on the teachers' role in the classroom, based on their experiences as students, can shed light on aspects like how models are shown to students, how feedback is provided, and what classroom learning opportunities are given to them in class. Regarding assessment, reflection can be generated on promoting students' capacity to self-reflect on their learning process, self-correct, self-assess and peer-correct language use.

## **Identity as a Language Teacher**

### **How Camila became a teacher.**

In the second timeline that Camila had to outline, some aspects of her teacher identity were unveiled as well as the people and events who had influenced the construction of her identity as a teacher. The very first story she remembered as a teacher was with a vigilante at the entrance of the *UE* campus who called her “teacher” since she was a student, every time she got on campus he said, “*Buenos días profesora*” (Good morning teacher).

*..Lo del celador, ¿te acordás? (risa), “Buenos días profesora”, “profesora, chao profesora”, “cómo está profesora”, y yo, tan charro. (Camila’s Interview 5-3-17)*

...The event with the vigilante, do you remember? (laughter), “Good morning teacher”, “bye teacher”, “how are you doing teacher”, I was, so funny.

Teachers’ identities seem not to come from their inner being all the times. In Camila’s case, she did not identify herself as a teacher, but people like the vigilante identified her a teacher. This is aligned to how Gee (2000) defines identity: being recognized as a certain kind of person. In Camila’s case, it was clear that she began to be identified as a teacher when a vigilante began to call her “*profesora*” every time he greeted her.

Then it was through the French teacher that Camila had as her advisor in the translation practicum that she transitioned into being a teacher. One day Camila’s advisor told her “*Venga y enseñe que usted es profesora*” (Come to teach because you are a teacher). Camila began to work feeling a great responsibility to do her job well so she continued studying to prepare her classes. Today, she acknowledges that she is not a know-it-all and that she is still in that language learning process. From what Camila said, it can be inferred that she still sees herself as a learner and this may apply to both, the language and the teaching component.

As it can be seen in this excerpt from the interview, Camila received somebody else’s call to teach as if this were an imposed identity that teachers humbly accept because they have a passion for learning although this passion may not be exactly put into teaching at the beginning. What could have happened here was that once Camila graduated from her bachelor’s it was taken for granted she already belonged to the group of people who could teach the language she had learned although she was not exactly prepared for teaching it.

Here it is important to clarify that despite the high growing demand of English teachers in Colombia, due mainly to the implementation of the National Bilingual Program 2004-2019 (*Plan Nacional de Bilinguismo-PNB* in Spanish), getting qualified English teachers has become everytime more and more difficult; thus, it is frequent to see that other professionals who know the language are hired despite the fact they may not have the preparation to teach. Due to these circumstances, it seems to be, that in the context of the university where this study was implemented, the mere fact of graduating from a language program entitles professionals as language teachers or as Gee (2000) calls it, they began to develop their identity through an affinity group to which they are invited to participate.

The implication this imposed identity has is that teachers who did not think of themselves as teachers may not be ready to teach. Then, it can happen that some programs where teachers begin to work do not count on a selection process where the preparedness of teachers to do their work is identified. Not only this, but it seems to be that once teachers are working in a program, there is not individualized follow-up to their work to identify areas where they might need support and guidance. It is in these cases that listening to teachers to identify the areas where they need improvement is crucial as well as designing in-services where the topics of their interest and needs are included. When these opportunities are not given, having at least a space to meet with other teachers, listen to each other and share ideas can make the difference in teachers' professional learning.

### **Teaching Practices**

In the classes I observed, Camila usually exposed students to reading in English and some of the instructions she gave to students were in English. Just after she gave the instructions to students in English she frequently asked them “¿*Qué dice ahí?*” (What does it say there?).

The teacher asked one of the students to read one of the definitions on religion that were projected on the board. Each of the students read one at a time and after they did the teacher said “¿*Qué dice ahí?*” (Camila’s PO 9-19-16)

In her classes, Camila mainly followed a translation approach to teach reading. She usually used translation in different ways to help students understand the content of the texts. It could be that the teacher read sentences aloud and students translated into Spanish or that students read aloud, then the teacher asked them for the meaning of what they had read, and then the teacher translated. Some other times, segments of the readings were read with a focus on grammar explanations or students were asked for the meaning of a keyword to help them understand the meaning of a sentence.

The student to my left read in English, then started to explain (translate) what it said in what she had read. She asked the teacher for the meaning of some words in Spanish. Then the teacher read in Spanish all the text. (Camila’s PO 9-19-16)

The slides are in English, the teacher reads sometimes in English and sometimes in Spanish. When she reads in English she then translates into Spanish. (Camila’s PO 10-3-16)

The female student began to present about Deism, she was reading from some of the slides in English and then she explained in Spanish what she had read in English. (Camila’s PO 10-10-16)

Another female student goes to present about Hinduism. In her slides she has information with some bullets and some images. After she reads the information in the bullets in English she explains in Spanish. (Camila’s PO 10-10-16)

A male student goes to present about Pastafarianism. He reads from his slides in English, then he explains in Spanish with the help of some notes he has on a small paper. (Camila's PO 10-10-16)

...The teacher asked students to read a text they had. Students took turns to read aloud in English, immediately after a student read a sentence in English, the teacher asked *¿qué dice ahí?* And students said it in Spanish, if what students said in Spanish was not accurate, the teacher asked questions to clarify. (Camila's PO 5-3-17)

When I asked Camila in the interview for her *¿qué dice ahí?* strategy, she explained it in terms of helping students to learn new vocabulary and for not using the same vocabulary all the time and because sometimes students could support each other to understand the meaning of a sentence that was not clear.

*Al principio, muy especialmente, me parece útil, porque, porque de todas maneras el vocabulario, o sea, si uno no tiene, si uno no tiene mucho vocabulario, digamos que eso es una manera de ayudarles a adquirir vocabulario. [...] Entonces hay palabras que para ellos no están claras o no las saben o no las tenían, entonces ahí mismo llegan y anotan, ¿cierto? Entonces es una manera, digamos, de no usar todo el tiempo el diccionario y e, y a, y no sólo eso, sino de entre todos, eh, eh, saber qué dice ahí, ¿cierto? Entonces uno dice: "ay, no profe, es que no sé esta palabra, o esto", entonces yo: "Bueno, y ¿quién la sabe?, a ver quién le ayuda", eso, entonces otro si la sabe o en fin; entonces entre todos se construye, o se, o se logra interpretar, que es lo que dice esa oración que para algunos no está clara. (Camila's Interview, 5-17-17)*

Specially at the beginning [that strategy] seems very useful to me, because, because anyways the vocabulary, that is, if one does not have, if one does not have a lot of



vocabulary, let's say that is a way to help students learn vocabulary. [...] Then there are words that are not clear for students or they do not know them or they did not have them, then they take notes right away, right? So it is a way, let's say, of not using the dictionary all the time, and not only that, but trying among all, eh, eh, to know what it says there, right? So one of them says: "Ay! No teacher, I do not know that word, or that", so I: "Well, and who knows it?, let's see who can help", that, then another student does know or something like that; then we construct among all of us, or we, or we can interpret, what a sentence means if it is not clear for someone.

From the understanding Camila made of her *¿qué dice ahí?* strategy it can be inferred that on the one hand there is a valid spirit of collaboration in the rationale of her strategy when she mentioned that translating a word can help other students to understand or that they can construct meaning among all. On the other hand, this strategy may also indicate a need to learn other vocabulary teaching strategies such as: keeping a personal dictionary where they can write the translation of new words, draw pictures, write a synonym, an antonym, a sentence in English where the new word is used, or group words with a pattern in common. What the teacher did, seemed to be her personal construction of learning vocabulary, probably from her own experience as a language learner, a construction that could have been expanded if she had been educated as a teacher, had received mentorship in her teaching practices or were involved in communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) where she could learn from other teachers' strategies and techniques to teach vocabulary and reading comprehension.

The grammar translation approach Camila followed was also evident when in the interview she was talking about her teaching approach in the reading comprehension courses and

she referred to interpretation just after she mentioned translation. It seems to be that for her the reading comprehension process is understood through translation.

*...Desde el primer momento es ya, o sea, la clase de inglés ya es, en inglés, y así sea primer nivel y que no sepan nada, lo que sea, yo ya los pongo a leer en inglés y empiezo con ese Power Point –uhum- entonces, ¿qué es la lectura? Entonces ya los pongo a que, a que, a que lean y los em, a leer, a que traduzcamos, interpretemos, a que, a que hagamos uso de los cognados ... (Camila's Interview, 5-17-17)*

...From the first moment is right away, that is, the English class is already in English, even if it is a first level course and students do not anything, whatever, I asked them to read in English y begin with that Power Point –uhum– so, what is reading? So I asked them to, to, to read and, to read, to translate, to interpret, to, to make use of cognates...

In addition to the translation of the texts, the teacher used readings and exercises from reading comprehension and vocabulary textbooks and emphasized on grammar structures. In the classes, the teacher also used movies that students watched with closed captioned in English. Despite the emphasis student from the course where I observed Camila were expected just to learn to read, the teacher asked students to prepare presentations in English. In these presentations students basically read information they had searched and prepared.

Camila used some grammar teaching strategies when she was correcting exercises students had done for homework. These strategies included asking students how to identify verb tenses, asking them to check the list of irregular verbs after they had conjugated incorrectly an irregular verb in past, or asking students to use the conjugation chart she had provided them with. The following two excerpts exemplified the teacher's approach to teaching grammar in the reading comprehension class.

...She then asks students how they know if the verb in the sentence should be in past or past participle. Nobody responds. The teacher explains they know it because of the context, that it would include 'have' if it were a perfect tense. After a student completed one of the sentences with 'goed' the teacher asks students to look in the Internet a list of irregular verbs. [...] When one of the students was reading another question, the teacher checked some students' answers, since they were all wrong, she asks them to look at 'The 12 verb tenses' and revise the structure of simple past. (Camila's PO 4-6-17)

As students read aloud in English the teacher asks if the sentences are in active or in passive voice. (Camila's PO 5-3-17)

The previous excerpt shows Camila's approach to teaching grammar as part of reading comprehension which is a characteristic of the grammar translation method. It must be said, however, that some autonomous learning beliefs seem to be underpinning this practice when she asked a student to look for the past tense of an irregular verb and to look at the 12 verb tenses list they had. At the end of Camila's last class that I observed, I had a conversation with her that led me to conclude the need for some teachers, who had not been educated as teachers, to be knowledgeable of some principles of language acquisition for them to understand their students' learning processes of a foreign language and be able to guide their teaching and assessment practices. In the conversation I sustained with her, I could infer a belief that in order for students to perform a communicative task it was necessary for them to first incorporate grammar structures in their repertoire. It was at that moment that I understood her approach to teaching reading comprehension following a grammar translation method. It is possible that first, this belief lies on the way she learned or was taught English and second, there is a need of teachers like her to inform their practices relying on some theory.

Part of Camila's approach to reading texts in class consisted of asking students for the pronunciation of a word which she could have used during class time. She also used some teaching strategies to correct students' pronunciation. For instance, one day when she was correcting some Wh-questions exercises, the teacher mentioned she had heard a traveler pronouncing /ben/ for 'been'. In the same class, one student pronounced /bu:t/ (boot) meaning /bʌt/ (but) and the teacher pointed out to her boot, then the student pronounced /bʌt/.

...When one of the sentences was completed with 'been' the teacher commented a traveler she recently met pronounced it /ben/. [...] When a student was reading another answer from the worksheet she pronounced /bu:t/, the teacher asked how that word was pronounced pointing out to her 'boot' to show what /boot/ meant. The student corrected saying /bʌt/. (Camila's PO 4-6-17)

Despite Camila was not educated as a teacher, this teaching strategy gives account of the teacher's resourcefulness to correct and explain pronunciation to students. Based on this, it could be thought that although sometimes teachers' practices in the classroom need to be enriched with the experiences of other teachers or expanded with what theory proposes, teachers can also exercise their own agency to perform in the class. Other examples of Camila's agency happened when she explained students vocabulary or reading strategies that were not proposed in the course syllabus. An example of the first was when she helped students to find out similarities between words in English and Spanish. An example of the second was when students were reading a text in class and the teacher emphasized to read the whole text and avoid looking for the meaning of unnecessary words.

## Assessment Practices

### **From assessment beliefs to assessment practices.**

There were some beliefs about assessment that could be identified in the interview with Camila. First, that assessment is a process centered in students' learning; second, a belief that if students do not study if they are not assessed; and third, a belief that the assessment should be of what one learns for life and not just for a grade. The following excerpts taken from the interview illustrate these beliefs.

#### **Assessment as a process centered in students' learning**

*Lo otro de la evaluación, es que, todos, todos, todos le tenemos mucho miedo a la evaluación –hum– y he tratado también como de, de quitar ese miedo –uhum– en el sentido de que, que finalmente, finalmente el, la evaluación es de mi mismo, de mi aprendizaje, de mi. (Camila's Interview, 5-5-17)*

The other aspect of assessment, is that, we all, all, all are afraid of assessment –hum– and I have also try like, to free that fear –uhum– in the sense that, that finally, finally the, the assessment is about oneself, of my learning, of me.

This excerpt shows how Camila identified assessment as something that can be scaring. However, it seems to be that she passed through a reflection process that led her to conclude that assessment was about reflecting on one's own learning process. The move Camila made from the fear students may experience being assessed to a self-reflection process, represents two aspects of her teacher-learner identity. On the one hand, she seems to have transformed a general, probably also a personal belief, that assessment is something scaring and as such, this can be taken as a sample of her own reflection process on assessment that can be taken to other aspects of her teaching. On the other hand, this reflection process, seems to have moved her from the

position of a learner to a position as a teacher to facilitate the guidance of students' assessment process.

**Students do not study if they are not assessed**

*Entonces, entonces yo procuro porque, porque, por no ser muy estricta con lo de la evaluación, o sea, y yo en realidad les digo a ellos, pero claro que digamos que de alguna manera, la evaluación es necesaria en el sentido de que, de que muchos es que si no, si no nos evalúan, no estudiamos.* (Camila's Interview, C 5-5-17)

Then, then I try because, because, for not being very strict with the assessment, that is, I in fact tell students, but of course in certain way, the assessment is necessary in the sense that, that many of them, if they are not, if we are not assessed, we do not study.

This second example of Camila's beliefs, exposed assessment as something that had to occur to push students to study and not as a part of learning process that can inform the teachers' practices and that can be alternated with teaching as Black and Wiliam (1998, 2009) suggest.

**Assessment should be of what one learns for life and not just for a grade**

*...Entonces eso hay que hacerlo, pero, pero darle un enfoque diferente en el sentido de que, de que uno no aprende para, para una nota, sino que aprende para la vida.* (Camila's Interview, 5-5-17)

...Then that has to be done, but, but giving it a different approach in the sense that, that one does not learn to, for a grade, but one learns for the whole life.

This last excerpt fits Camila's definition of her assessment practices when she said that in the past it was just about the grade because that was a responsibility. Then she explained that she really cared about the learning, because the grade is a requisite to graduate but what really stays with a student is the learning.

*Entonces, eh, lo de la evaluación también es, anteriormente era simplemente también en la nota, ¿cierto?, tenemos que cumplir con las notas, entonces; ya no, yo ya estoy mirando la evaluación también como parte del aprendizaje. Y como parte del aprendizaje, es que, que no sólo importa la nota, de hecho siempre, siempre les digo porque muchos están es por la nota para poderse graduar, obvio. Entonces yo les digo “no, es que la nota no es importante”, o sea hay que aprender, hay que aprender porque tenemos que aprender para que nos quede para la vida, ya la nota, pues sí, es un requisito. (Camila’s Interview, 5-5-17)*

Then, eh, the part of the assessment is also, before it was just the grade too, right?, we have to accomplish with the grades, then; but not now, I am now looking at the assessment also as part of the learning. And as part of the assessment, is that, that it is not only about the grade, in fact I always, I always tell the students because many of them are there for the grade to be able to graduate, obviously. Then I tell them “no, the grade is not what is important”, that is you have to learn, you have to learn because we have to learn for the whole life, the grade, well, is a requisite.

Then she continued explaining how she has humanized her approach to assessment helping students to *quitar el miedo* (free their fears).

*..La enfoco también en el sentido de que le pierdan el miedo, el miedo a la evaluación, el miedo; yo les digo, por ejemplo: “vea, ¿perdió?, listo, tranquilo”, yo vuelvo y se lo hago, le repito, o, o le hago otro, o sea, no se estrese por esa nota –uhum– no se estrese por esa nota, si quiere, yo vuelvo”, en fin, yo trato de, de ayudarles en el sentido de que, de que la nota no es lo importante, lo importante es que sea capaz de, de, de responder, de*

*enfrentarse a un texto, de cualquiera de esas cosas, para mí digamos que es como lo más importante.* (Camila's Interview, 5-5-17)

...I also guide [the assessment] in the sense that they can free the fear, the fear of assessment, the fear; I tell them, for example: "you see, failed, no worries", I can assess you again or I can do another assessment, that is, do not be stressed because of the grade –uhum– do not be stressed for the grade, if you want, I can do it again, anyways, I try to, to help them in the sense that, that the grade is not the most important, what is important is that the student be able to, to, to respond, to face a text, any of those things, let's say that for me that the most important.

However, this practice seems not to be something well established in Camila's practices as it could be noticed when she gave the example of a student she had who was very judicious and had a good performance in class but who had suddenly had a bad score in an exam. At the beginning, Camila expressed her concern because the student had not responded with any correct answers in the exam. She then commented that when she asked the student for an explanation of her performance in the exam, she said she had had some problems. It was in this moment that Camila said "*por más problemas que uno tenga ... uno sabe*" (even if one has many problems... one knows). Then she corrected "*también es verdad, uno a veces tiene problemas y se bloquea*" (but is also true, sometimes one has problems and gets stuck).

These questions and answers generated by the teacher in the interview, may mean that she needs to reflect more on the concepts of summative and formative assessment and the impact of tests on students. Some readings on these concepts and conversations with colleagues on these topics could be of great help to Camila and contribute to a more coherence elaboration of her assessment discourses and practices. Regarding her conceptualization of assessment practices, it



was interesting to see that even though Camila did not receive formal education as a teacher, some implicit knowledge of performance assessment was found in her discourse of assessment practices when she gave the example of a physician, saying that when one goes to the doctor, one takes care of what the doctor knows not about the grades s/he obtained at college.

During Camila's classes, she usually corrected exercises assigned to students to do in or out of class. Sometimes she also corrected the exercises out of class time and brought them graded. When a student had been absent to correct the exercises, the teacher asked her/him to self-correct after the exercises of one of her/his classmates that were already corrected. In class, the teacher shared websites with the type of texts and exercises that could be included in the exam to help students get familiar and prepared for the exam.

In the first course that was observed, the final exam had been taken from a website with reading comprehension activities. The day of the final exam, the teacher gave students some recommendations to take into account like reading the questions in advance, reading the text from the beginning to the end, highlighting unknown words but just searching for the meaning of those that were necessary to answer the questions.

*...Van a recordar las recomendaciones, primero lean las preguntas, luego lean el texto de corrido, van señalando las palabras desconocidas y luego buscan solamente las que necesitan para responder... (Camila's PO 12-13-16)*

...Remember the recommendations, first, read the questions, then read the text without stopping, underline the unknowns words and then look only for those that you need to respond...

After the exam, the teacher corrected the exam with students and asked them to self-grade it. She explained to them how they could grade the exam since the scoring method was not explicit.

The final exam for the second course observed was taken from a textbook. First there was a six-short-paragraph text and five key vocabulary components of the reading which students were told to pay attention to as they read. Then there was a true and false exercise with six items which purpose was to check reading comprehension. The rest of the exam consisted of a vocabulary section where students had to identify the ones that were new for them. Then students had to work on a sentence completion exercise where the same words were used in two different contexts. Finally, there were three columns where students had to find the paragraph where the six words had been taken from, write the words and match them used with the definitions given.

As it can be seen in the description of this exam implemented in one of the classes, its focus was mainly on the assessment of students' use of vocabulary and the assessment of the reading comprehension was limited to the true and false exercise that can be seen as not very reliable because even if students did not know the correct answer they had 50 percent of probability to answer correctly. Tying up the teaching and assessment practices, it can also be seen that whereas the focus of the class was on the translation of texts and grammar structures, in the exam the focus was mainly on vocabulary and a little bit on the reading comprehension process.

This fact speaks to the importance of working on systemic validity or the relationship between what is taught and what is assessed. This description is in opposition to what Camila said in the interview when she was asked to describe her assessment practices. There she contended that despite the fact that grammar was taught the focus was on reading

comprehension, that even though prefixes and suffixes were taught what mattered was how everything was applied to the reading comprehension because that was the main objective. This leads to consider the importance of having reflective practices where what teachers do can be aligned with the description of their practices from discourse, especially on aspects where students' learning are playing a role.

It can be then said that in the same way that there is a relationship between the teacher's teaching practices and the way she learned English, there also seems to be that there is a relationship in the way the teacher said she was assessed and the way the teacher assessed her students. When Camila was asked about how she was assessed as a student, she responded that with quizzes, worksheets to do at home that were graded and returned later on, and with readings. Then she added questions and answers, reports, essays or translations were the type of assessments she was asked to do as a student.

Summing up, it can be said that Camila's philosophy of language teaching relies on the grammar-translation approach where a focus on vocabulary and grammar structures was emphasized just like Celce-Murcia (2014) states. Their language teaching and learning beliefs or ideologies seem to have slowly evolved based on a reflection process and agency that she has followed from her own initiative and that have been very little informed by theory. Her teaching practices seem to be shaped by her own language learning experience as an autonomous and long life-long learner, by her experience being educated as a translator meanwhile she worked and had very little time to be part of a community of learners whether in face-to-face or virtual spaces. This former experience learning individually, seems to continue influencing her current exposure to English, now probably due to her contractual conditions as an adjunct faculty.

## Teaching Investment

### **Investing in language teaching and becoming a teacher learning from others.**

Once Camila graduated with her bachelor's in translation, she registered in the English courses offered to instructors of all departments in the university. Camila mentioned a classmate of hers –Amalia– who had graduated before her and who had been her first instructor in these courses. Camila said Amalia was very good at English and that she had been the person who had helped her to from break her mental block with her learning of English when she had failed an English course as a bachelor's student. According to what Camila explained, it was during the class that she took with Amalia that she learned a lot from her teaching methodology, how she taught, and how she used songs in her classes.

*Entonces claro, ya con ella, su metodología, ver qué hacía, cómo lo hacía, lo de las canciones, por ejemplo las canciones, yo siempre procuro poner canciones en las clases, y si por ejemplo, hay que casi no tengo material, yo se los mando al correo pa' que ellos vayan escuchando, ¿cierto? (Camila's Interview, 5-3-18)*

Then of course, with her, her methodology, seeing what she did, how she did it, what she did with songs, for example the songs, I always try to play song in the classes, and if for example, if it happens that I have very few materials, I sent them to students via email that they listen to them, right?

As Camila recalled this, she explained that she always tried to use songs in her classes because she had learned many things from Amalia that she had not learned during her bachelor's, Camila commented that one thing is to learn as a student, but that teaching is another story. Camila described Amalia's classes as dynamic, where the teacher asked them to read, asked them to have conversations, to listen to songs and understand what the songs said.

Then Camila referred to a second instructor in the English courses –Oscar– from whom she had also learned a lot. She said that his classes were cool (*chéveres*), dynamic, and active. Ricardo was a third instructor Camila mentioned in the interview from whom she said she had liked the classes a lot. She affirmed that she has continued to have some of the practices she learned from the teachers with whom she has taken classes.

When Camila was asked in the interview for the objective of taking English courses after having finished her bachelor's in translation, she replied she wanted to learn about pedagogy and didactics and how to explain grammar. Camila also commented that she had taken these English courses as a way for her to practice English.

*Diana: Pero hay una cosas que no entiendo Camila, si tú te habías formado en la lengua, ¿cierto?, en inglés, en la, en traducción, ¿qué era lo que estabas buscando al meterte a estos...?*

*Camila: Pedagogías y didácticas –ah–, porque como yo estudié traducción –no era el idioma, era mirar de los– no, y también el idioma en el sentido de qué, de cómo dar las explicaciones de la gramática –ah– de todas esas cosas, porque es que una cosa es uno aprender las cosas, y uno como estudiante es una cosa, o sea –hm–, uno aprende lo que tiene que aprender y cumple con la tarea o en fin –mm– pero ya a la hora de, de ofrecer la materia, de decir las explicaciones, es algo muy distinto. (Camila's Interview 5-3-17)*

Diana: But there is something that I do not understand Camila, if you had already learned the language, right?, the English, in the, in translation, what were you looking for when you registered in these...?

Camila: Pedagogy and didactics –ah–, because as I had studied translation –it was not the language, it was about the– no, and also the language in the sense that, of knowing how

to explain grammar, one is something as a student, that is –hm–, one learns what one has to and does the homework or whatever –mm– but at the moment of, of teaching a class, give an explanation, is something very different.

Camila emphasized that one thing is to learn something as a student but that teaching and explaining is another story. Camila was reiterative to affirm that she owned much of what she knew to those English courses, that she has learned in every semester she has taken a course and that she continues studying. Not only did Camila take pedagogy courses, but also professional development courses offered by the university as well as courses offered by the College of Education about the use of movies and education.

Thinking about the impact that teachers of the English courses Camila took after her bachelor's, I asked her if she considered those teachers had been roles models for her and she replied that was “absolutely” right. She explained that as a translator her preparation had been basically on written texts and that her oral skills had been basically null. Thus, what she had in mind was that she had to develop her speaking skills. She said this had been one of her reasons to attend the English courses, but also for the pedagogy and didactics components.

She commented that she had not been able to take any courses during the second semester of her participation in this study; however, I knew she was registered in the training course for teachers who will be teaching in the new English program. As I reminded this to her, she also mentioned a short –40 hours– neuroeducation course she was taking offered by *UE*. Camila narrated an anecdote of how she once asked for a certificate of all the courses she had taken a *UE* and how the secretary was impressed on the number of sheets that she had had to use to print the certificate.

There was a moment in the interview with Camila that she said she continued “*en la lucha*” (in the fight). When she was asked to expand on what she meant by “*una lucha*”, she explained that it was because she has had to be continuously studying, preparing and updating herself. She said that it was something that she liked to do, but that it was “*una lucha*” anyways.

*Es una lucha, por ejemplo, para mí en el sentido de que, bueno, yo yo he sentido la necesidad de, por ejemplo, hacer una maestría, hacer una especialización, pero no he podido, no he podido, no he podido, entonces para mí digamos que es una lucha porque, porque de todas maneras, bueno el est, tener que estudiar a toda hora, ¿cierto?, estarse eh, estarse –formando– formando, actualizando. No, a mí me gusta, a mí me gusta, pero no deja de ser una lucha. (Camila’s Interview 5-3-17)*

In the fight, for example, for me in the sense that, well, I I have felt the need of, for instance, to do a master’s, an *especialización*, but I have not been able to, I have not been able to, I have not been able to, then for me let’s say that is a fight because, because anyways, well, having to study all the time, right?, to be eh, to continue beign –prepared– preparing, updated. No, I like it, I like it, but is a fight anyways.

Camila also referred to her wish to complete an *especialización* or a master’s but that she has not been able to do it. When Camila was asked about the reason for this, she responded that it had been very difficult due to economic and family issues. She explained that she was the head of her family, responsible for her mother and a sister who were unable to fend for themselves and she added that a master’s was very expensive.

Talking about graduate education and how difficult it was to pay for it, Camila mentioned that a colleague of hers had told her about an *especialización* that they had began to study together, but that Camila had had to quit. She explained that she had done so because she was

sick. The doctor told her the illness was related to the nervous system and that she could have developed it for being stressed. When Camila was asked if she would like to continue her studies, the same economic and family factors emerged as impediments to do so. She insisted that she was economically responsible for her family and that she also had to take care of her mother. Despite her difficult situation to continue her studies, Camila kept thinking that is something that she would like to do.

Seeing all this investment in the learning of English and teaching Camila made, I asked her if she had ever thought she should have studied in the teaching foreign languages program instead of translation and she said it could have been a good idea but that she had never thought she was going to be a teacher. She added that as life had led her to teaching, she had had to find ways to do it well.

The development of Camila's identity was not only done through what she invested in her teaching but also by sharing and learning from other teachers that belonged to her affinity group and that became a community of practice for her (Wenger, 1998). This could be seen, for example, in how Camila was learning from her teachers' pedagogy, didactics and teaching methodology. However, her participation in these communities of practice seem to have been more from the periphery.

It was only after Camila graduated from her bachelor's that she began to invest in her identity development as a language teacher. This can be seen when she registered in the English courses to learn about pedagogy and didactics, as well in the professional development courses offered by the university, and the courses offered by the College of Education. Not only this, but she also began to study an *especialización* that she had to quit due to health issues.



Looking at the ways Camila has searched to invest in her language and teacher learning and her economical limitations to study an *especialización*, draws attention to issues of language, identity and power as Norton claims (1997, 2000). Camila felt the needed to improve her language teaching skills and tried in many ways to work on them. Studying an *especialización* was a formal way to learn and certify her qualifications; however, she was not able to do it due to monetary reasons. It seems to be then that there was a kind of power emerging here that did not allow her to leave a vicious circle: she could not do an *especialización* because she needed to work, but it was being better prepared what could have allow her to improve her teaching and earn more money.

### **The Role of Agency in Teacher Identity Development**

#### **Agency and the intertwined identities as a language learner and as a language teacher.**

In the interview Camila referred to what she did in her classes: having students reading aloud, teaching them pronunciation and sending them songs and audios to help them to be familiar with the language. Then Camila recalled what she thought about reading aloud in a language with which pronunciation one was not familiar with. She connected this to how she had learned the part of reading aloud in one of the English courses she had taken. She recalled how in that class they had to read aloud and how she had been very ashamed because she did not know how to pronounce correctly. She compared herself to how her current students read aloud. She explained that in the class she had taken, they had to choose a book to read and that one day when the teacher was checking their progress with the reading of the books, he had asked them to read a paragraph aloud. It was in these classes that Camila realized that she had to learn how to read aloud, making some pauses, taking care of punctuation, and pronouncing correctly.

Camila even commented that she recently thought of hiring a private teacher to help her to read aloud and to correct her pronunciation.

Being a learner and teacher of English as a foreign language myself, one of the first realizations that I had during the data collection process when I was observing the participant-teachers classes was that teachers seemed to be teaching in the way they had learned. This could be validated when in the interview, Camilia explained how she was exposed to reading aloud in one of the English courses she had taken. It was in this moment that the connection between her experience learning to read aloud and the reason why she had her students reading aloud most of the times, and how she explained some pronunciation rules became clear to validate my initial hunches.

From the way Camila experienced her language learning and how she took it to her own classroom it could also be inferred that she has constructed her identity as a teacher learning from her colleagues' classes. The learning experience with her colleagues allowed her to take some ideas and exert agency in her own classroom as it could be seen when she mentioned how important it was to include other language skills besides reading in her classes.

**Agency: Of how a belief is constructed and the impact in classroom practices.**

Talking to Camila in the interview about the teaching of English, she commented that she did not agree with the idea of learning English in the American or British context but that her idea was more about learning English in “our context” because she thought that was more meaningful. She expanded on this by saying that this was what she has tried to do with her students when she asked them to compare for example what they were reading and put it “*en los contextos de nosotros*” (in our contexts). However, this seems to be a belief that has not moved

yet to her practices yet as it was shown in the description of her teaching practices and as it could be seen in the following excerpt when she said:

*...La competencia lectora yo trato también de ponerla en contexto, de hecho yo he tenido, he pensado, he pensado mucho, y tengo pues como el proyecto, falta es organización y falta tiempo; y, entre otras cosas, por ejemplo, no estoy de acuerdo que nosotros aprendemos inglés con contexto americano, con contexto británico, con contexto, ¿cierto? –mm–. No, la idea mía es que aprendamos inglés en nuestro contexto –uhum– o sea, aplicando la, todo el conocimiento pero en nuestro contexto... (Camila's Interview, 5-10-17)*

...I try to put reading comprehension in context, in fact I have had, I had thought, I had thought a lot, and I have like the project, but I need time and organization; among other things, for example, I am not in agreement with the idea that we learn English in the American context, in the British context, in a context, right? –mm–. No, my idea is that we learn English in our context –uhum– that is, applying, all the knowledge but in our context...

This excerpt is indicative of Camila's intuitive knowledge of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Despite the gap between the teacher's discourse and practice, this belief could be used as a foundation to build on, support it with some readings and find ways to take it to action to the classroom.

An example of a belief related to Camila's assessment practices, that seems to have been shaped by some conversations with teachers of hers, occurred when she commented in the interview how at the beginning of her career she was very demanding with students. To support this, she shared two experiences she had, one with a female student who did not pass the

course and one with a male student who passed the course after she assigned him some extra work. After Camila mentioned how demanding she was at the beginning of her career, she mentioned a conversation she held with one of her English teachers with whom she became very good friends. In the conversation, the teacher inquired about how the right English teachers, for instance, had to affect a student's profession when they failed a course that was not really going to be relevant for their careers. Camila said she thought a lot about this issue and concluded that the teacher was right. She added that this conversation took place about seven years ago when English did not have the relevance that it has today.

*...Conversando, pues, nos hicimos buenos amigos y conversando, conversando, una vez me dijo que qué derecho teníamos nosotros los profesores, por ejemplo de inglés, de dejar a un muchacho o a una muchacha por una materia que puede que no tuviera ninguna incidencia en su profesión –uhum– ¿cierto? Entonces se, pues, que cuál era la la el objetivo ahí, ¿cierto? Y yo en realidad me puse a pensar. (Camila's Interview, 5-3-17)*

...Talking, well, we became very good friends and talking, talking, he once asked me for the right we had, as English teachers, of not allowing a student to pass an English course that was a class that did not have a lot of impact in his/her profession –uhum– right? So, well, he asked for what the objective of that decision was, right? And I in fact began to think about it.

Not only Camila's practices were shaped in conversation with other teachers but also her attitude towards her students was shaped. Case in point, she commented that before she was not very demanding. Justifying her change about being less demanding with her students, she referred to a lecture she had attended at a private university of the city where the topic of being flexible in education was discussed. Camila mentioned that it was in this moment that she began

to be more affectionate with students to understand the conditions of every student. However, she said that this depended on what she saw, that she was more demanding with a student who did not work and more understanding with a student who showed interest in learning.

*...A partir de ahí digamos que empecé a ser más afectuosa, digamos, o más comprensiva con la condición de cada estudiante, de todos los estudiantes, en la medida pues de lo posible y depende de lo que vea, pues si yo veo que es un vago que no hace nada soy más estricta con él. Pero con las personas que yo veo que tienen interés, que muestran interés, pero que tienen dificultades, muchas veces de aprendizaje, por ejemplo las personas de edad... (Camila's Interview 5-3-17)*

...From that moment on, I began to be more affective, let's say, more understanding of each student's conditions, of all the students, as much as it was possible and depending on what I see, if I see that a student does not do anything I am more strict with him. But with people that I see that are interested, that they show an interest, but that they also have difficulties, many times learning difficulties, for instance elderly people...

In line with how Camila became a more affective teacher, she shared one of the experiences she had with a 60 year old individual for whom it was very difficult to learn English, who thought that he could not learn, but at the end he was enthusiastic about the idea of continuing to learn. She also shared the experience with a student to whom she called "a rebel" because he did not want to learn, did not do homework, did not want to be in her class and just did it because he had to. When she approached him, he said he did not want to learn the language of imperialism, thus Camila told him that in order to be able to fight the enemy one needed to know it better and that one way to do that was knowing the language. Then the student thought she was right and changed his attitude in class.

Camila commented that it was through these experiences with students that she began to be more understanding and to take a look at the particularities of students, helping them to overcome their fears to learn and motivating them towards the learning of English. To add to the good results that she had with this more understanding attitude, Camila shared the story of a student who had hired her for private classes because she was going to begin a master's and needed to pass an English test. At the beginning, the student told her she did not know anything of English and that she did not like it. However, before taking the exam, the student emailed the teacher mentioning that whether she passed the exam or not, she was very thankful with Camila because it had been thanks to her that she had understood that English was not that difficult. It was in this moment when Camila was sharing her experiences with these students that she first mentioned these stories were what have encouraged her to keep fighting (*"en la lucha"*).

Teachers who end up in this profession without having been prepared for it, may develop their criteria to assess their students based on the learning they create through their own experiences and the conclusions they draw from what they listen from other teachers or at other academic spaces. Then teachers begin to turn these experiences into practices that end up forming their criterion to make decisions in the classroom such as that of promoting a student or not. In doing this, it may occur that the criteria teachers have to assess their students overlap with the understanding and affectionate attitudes they may maintain with their students. This is what seems to have happened to Camila when she referred to how at the beginning of her profession she was very demanding and gave the example of the two students she had.

After these two experiences with her students, the idea that a student's career should not be interrupted for failing a course that was not really fundamental, started to resonate with Camila when she heard it from a teacher of hers. Later on, this idea was validated when she

attended a lecture where the idea of being flexible in education was presented and she made the connection with what she had previously concluded. As a consequence of this, Camila drew conclusions about how she should be more considerate with students and willing to understand their conditions. It seems that a criterion was created based on the conclusions that the teacher drew. Camila added that she was more demanding with students who did not work and less demanding with students who worked more. Despite the fact that this criterion seems to be something that is part of the teacher already, it seems that it is still ambiguous or not clearly supported. For Camila to validate this belief in favor or against, it would be necessary that she reflects more on it and that she can have access to other people or spaces where the idea can be more discussed or theoretically supported.

In the end, Camila connected this understanding and affectionate attitude with how she had helped some of her students to overcome their difficulties to learn English and move towards an attitude that allowed them to continue learning. Although developing an understanding attitude with students is part of the teachers' work, developing clear criteria to assess students' learning is also a duty.

### **Agency and practices that mediate identity development.**

Camila narrated how she became good friends with Teresa, a teacher of hers who was also her colleague at *UE*. Teresa was the person who recommended Camila to work at another public higher education institution in the city where she began to teach communicative courses. From Teresa, Camila has memories of when she asked her how she taught her classes and she even observed one of her classes, paying attention to how she taught, how everything worked in her class, and what she was supposed to do.

It was working at the other institution that Camila had the opportunity to maintain conversations with Teresa and share, for example, activities that she implemented in class. Camila expressed that she owned that learning to Teresa and added that it was based on this experience that she had realized that teaching reading comprehension at *UE* was not enough and that students needed to be exposed to other language skills.

*Entonces con ese aprendizaje también allá de las cuatro habilidades empecé a ver la necesidad de que aquí la comp, pues, de que la competencia lectora necesitaba algo más, pues que no era solamente leer, o en fin, y entonces empecé a a aplicar cositas de las cuatro habilidades en la competencia lectora, que es lo que yo hago por ejemplo ahora, que vos ves, los pongo a leer, les enseño pronunciación, pues, lo poquitico que sé –mm– o sea, cosas como esas, les mando canciones, audios para que se vayan familiarizando.*

(Camila's Interview 5-3-17)

Then with that learning of the four language skills, I began to see the need that here [at *UE*], well, that reading comprehension needed something else, because it was not only about reading, or something like that, then I began to to to implement little things of the four language skills in the reading comprehension classes, which is what I do now for example, what you see, I asked students to read, I teach them pronunciation, well, the very little that I know –mm– that, things like those, I send them songs, audios that they can begin to be familiar with.

Based on what Camila shared in the interview, it is clear that when teachers are not offered what they need, they may start looking by themselves. This is how Camila began to exert her agency, finding ideas of what to do in her classes, how to teach, learning from their colleagues that became her teachers because her bachelor's had not prepared her in English oral



skills or teaching. Here, Camila's agency came through the initiative and resourcefulness she had to look for learning opportunities by herself, and in doing this, she began to continue to construct her identity as an English teacher.

From what Camila did in her classes and from what she affirmed in the interview, it is evident that she has continued implementing the practices she learned from the teachers she took classes with after her bachelor's. For instance, the practice of sharing songs with students as Amalia did it in her classes, the implementation of reading aloud, and the realization of the need to do something more communicative in the reading comprehension courses.

### **Institutional identities that shape teachers' practices and their teacher identity development.**

Camila usually wrote the class agenda on the board. When I asked her about this practice in the interview she said it was something that she had learned at another institution where she had worked. She said the objective was to let students know what the class was going to be about. From that moment on, Camila said she liked the idea as she thought that it was something practical. She added that she asked students to write it because it was something that allowed them to keep track of the topics studied. Having this conversation with Camila, she realized it was something that she should also start to do.

*Esa estrategia la aprendí en [another higher education public institution of the city]. [...] ellos, tienen unos formatos [...] el objetivo ahí era eso, la agenda, o sea, qué es lo que se va a leer durante la clase y, nos lo pedían que lo pusiéramos en el tablero para que los estudiantes lo supieran qué era lo que se iba a ver en la clase. Entonces a partir de ahí me gustó, me pareció práctico, que los estudiantes, y además, porque también así yo le pido también a los estudiantes que siempre lo anoten, porque eso nos permite, digamos,*

*llevar un registro y a ellos, yo debería también hacerlo, inclusive voy a empezar a hacerlo, llevar en un cuaderno esa, ese derrotero...* (Camila's Interview, 5-17-17)

That strategy I learned at another higher education public institution of the city. [...] they, have some forms [...] the objective was that, the agenda, that is, what the class is going to be about and, they asked us to write it on the board for students to know what the class was going to be about. Since there I liked the idea, I thought it was practical, that students, and also, because I can also ask student to write it, because that allows us, let's say to have something written and for them, I should also do that, I am going to begin doing that, have notebook, that guide...

It is interesting to see how this teaching practice emerged from one of the institutions where Camila has worked and how it is something that she was asked to do in a mandatory way but that she then incorporated into her teaching practices at other places. The practice became part of her teacher identity thanks to the contribution that working at another institution made in her identity. She incorporated this practice to her teaching repertoire as soon as she saw that she had liked it and considered it practical. (Holland *et al.*, 1998)

### **Summary**

Camila's identity development seems to have been influenced by her past learning and teaching experiences. Her teaching practices in the classroom came mainly from her experience as a student and from what she learned from teachers with whom she continued to take classes. Among other influential aspects of her identity development is the institutional culture of the Foreign Language Teaching Section (FLTS) at *UE*, where *cátedra* teachers tend to work in isolation due in part to their working conditions and to the kind of follow-up they receive from the administration.

These findings are aligned to what Duff and Uchida (1997) found in their study examining teachers' sociocultural identities in a language institute in Japan. According to them,

teachers' identities and ideologies also depend on the institutional and interpersonal contexts in which individuals find themselves, the purposes for being there, and their personal biographies. This relationship was clearly seen in how Camila's discourses and practices seemed to be shaped by her personal biography as an autonomous language learner and as a teacher in a continuous process of learning, her desire and decision of becoming a teacher from practice, and the interpersonal relations she built with people from the teaching field.

As Fajardo Castañeda (2014) claims, teachers construct professional identities through their participation in a teacher community and through the relationship between beliefs and classroom practice. Camila's beliefs on language learning and teaching showed the emerging process of thought she followed to understand classroom-related facts. For instance, when she began to move from the fear students experience with assessment to seeing assessment as a component of one's own learning process. However, she may still need to move a step forward on how teaching and assessment can be articulated and to be involved in communities of practice can be as factors that boost her language and teacher learning.

More than identities shaping and being shaped by teachers' teaching and assessment practices, it could be said that teacher identity formation is complex, relational and experiential, reificative and participative, individual and social (Tsui, 2007). From the data presented in this chapter, it could be seen how Camila's identity development was more oriented towards the identity of a teacher-learner, both in the linguistic and teaching aspects. Her language learner identities were truncated from the moment she had to work and study simultaneously. Then, as language teacher, her identity development passed through several struggles that began with the enactment of an identity as an English teacher who had been basically prepared to translate. All of these characteristics enhance the complex modes in which foreign language teachers like Camila develop their identities through experience and by connecting to others –or not.

## **Chapter 8: Findings and implications for Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice**

### **Introduction**

This study explored whether and how EFL teachers' identities are shaped or get shaped by their language teaching and assessment practices in the context of a public university of a major city in Colombia. Following a sociocultural perspective approach to language learning, I looked at Norton's (1995, 1997, 2000, 2008, 2013) concept of identity investment in the field of language identity and learning and Gee's (2001, 2014) definition of identity through discourse. To align these concepts to the field of language teaching, I incorporated Hargreaves and Fullan's (2012) definition of professional capital, which helped me to put all the pieces of what happened in the study together including Wenger's (1998) communities of practice and Holland *et al.* (1998) concept of figured worlds. As for understanding the connection between teachers' identity development as language learners and as language teachers, I included Lortie's (1975) apprenticeship of observation. These lenses helped me understand that teachers' identity construction is not a linear or bidirectional process, but one that is constructed through multiple perspectives, personal and professional ideologies of language learning and teaching, taken to practice in the everyday classroom.

This final chapter presents a discussion of the main findings of this study organized mainly around two of the sub-questions of the study: what kinds of identities do EFL teachers construct and how do they construct those identities? These two sub-questions helped me to organize the discussion connecting: (1) EFL teachers' intertwined identities as language learners and language teachers; (2) identity construction in communities of practice; (3) teachers' identity construction through practice; (4) identity construction and the influence of the curriculum; and (5) the role of professional capital in EFL teachers' identity construction. At the beginning, I

include graph 8.1 that summarizes what happened in the study, I explain how the graph is the product of a constant reflection process throughout the study that materialized during the data analysis and interpretation stage for the sake of my writing and the organizations of the ideas. By organizing the discussion of the findings in this way, I will answer the overarching research question of this study, concluding that the relationship between teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices, far from being bidirectional, are as complex as identities themselves are. In this section, I also discuss the implications of these findings to research, theory, policy, and practice.

## **Findings**

The following graph summarizes the findings of the study. It represents the analysis of the data guided by the research question and sub-questions and other aspects that appeared to be relevant during the data analysis process. The result of the graph was part of my understanding of the data. When I began the data collection process with participant-observation, I first realized that the teachers' assessment practices could not be separate from their teaching practices. Then, I noticed that teachers were being positioned as language learners in the classroom as sometimes the design of the activities seemed to fit what and how they had learned or how they would like to be taught. Later on, I identified some patterns such as: classes routines, the scaffolding of students' learning through class activities, the presence and absence of class interactions and critical topics, and the influential role that the curriculum and the structure of some programs where teachers worked seemed to have in their practices.

As I continued to develop relationships of trust with the participant-teachers, sharing more time with them and holding informal conversations, I realized that some of the teachers seemed to have more effective practices than others. Thus, I asked myself what were some of the things that some teachers doing to have effective classes that others seemed not to be doing. Since my starting point for the study had been the assessment practices, I noted that teachers

whose assessment practices were more clear, organized, transparent and fair were aligned with teaching practices where students' learning was scaffolded, more opportunities were given to them to participate in class, and their language skills development was more enhanced.

By the end of the first semester of data collection, I began to organize, re-read and do a pre-analysis of the fieldnotes I had kept. This analysis helped me to be more confident, to have evidences supporting my hunches, and to prepare the questions for the third in-depth interview. During the second semester of the study and as I continued the fieldwork, I conducted the interviews that led me to add new components to the study trying to understand the relationship between teachers' identities and their classroom practices. For instance, I began to see that teachers who had more effective classes were more involved in networking and communities of practice, sharing with colleagues and friends their difficulties in the classroom and learning from the colleagues' ideas and tips for class activities and use of materials.

Conducting the interviews, I began to delve deeper into teachers' identity development as language learners, how they had been taught and how they had continued to learn. Here, I mainly found out that teachers who referred more to their former teachers grammar-translation approach, also tended to emphasize this teaching approach in their classes. I also discovered that teachers who had learned the languages they taught following an independent language learning approach, promoted less class interactions than teachers whose exposure as language learners had been more mediated by the communicative language teaching and interactions in and out of the classroom. These realizations led me to connect with Lortie's apprenticeship of observation (1975) and Norton's identity development through language learning investment (1997, 2000, 2008, 2013).

The combination of fieldwork and the information obtained from the interviews also helped me see that teachers who constantly reflected on what happened in their classrooms had more effective practices than teachers who reflected less. I also understood that in the same way that teachers had invested and continued to invest in their language learning, they did for the teaching component. This was relevant because none of the participant-teachers in this study had

been educated as a teacher, although three out of four had pursued graduate studies in foreign language teaching and learning.

In the end, the concept of professional capital appeared to complete my understanding of what had happened in the study. Drawing on Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) definition of professional capital, teachers' investment in their language and teacher learning and the construction of the their teacher identity from practice made part of their human capital development. Social capital was identified in teachers' identity development through involvement communities of practice and some beginning collaboration initiatives. Finally, I could identify reflection as a component that guides teachers to make judgments and decisions and this was evidence of teachers' decisional capital development. For professional capital to occur, these three components need to be interlocked, encouraged and facilitated not only by teachers, but also by the work environments of which they make part.

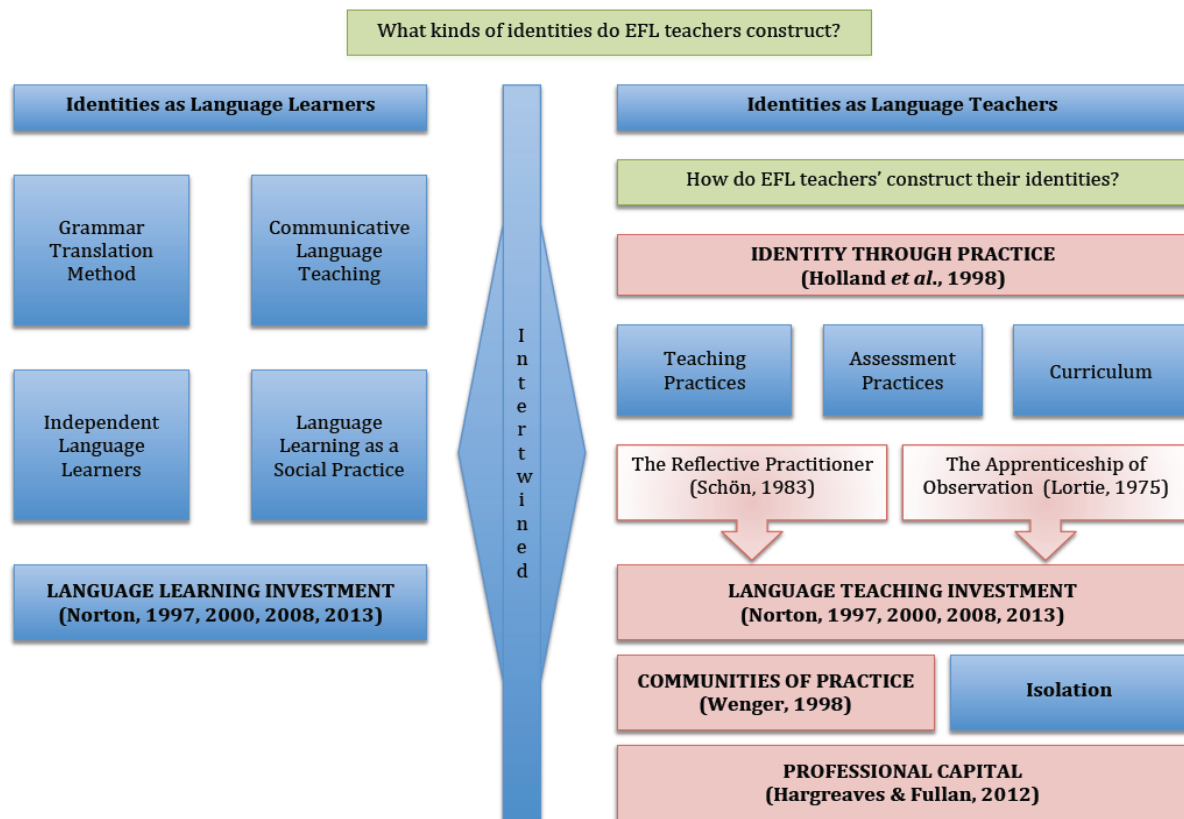


Figure 8.1: Understanding of the Findings of the Study.

### **EFL Teachers' Intertwined Identities**

From the design of this study, I was guided by my own experience as an EFL teacher when I decided to do research on teachers' identities, including their identities as language learners. What I never imagined was how the personal, institutional and social conditions given to teachers facilitated the reproduction of the ways they had been taught as well as their agency to distance themselves from that learning. Three of the teachers who participated in this study, Oriana, Angela and Camila, were educated as translators and the fourth teacher, Teresa, had a bachelor's that combined translation, interpretation and teaching. It must be said that each teacher represented a particular case and within those particularities there were still similarities that require more examination. The language learning experience of each of the participants was influenced by an autonomous approach (Benson, 1997), although Camila and Teresa's cases had a stronger component of autonomous learning and Oriana and Angela's cases were more inclined towards a sociocultural approach supported by their friends, classmates or colleagues.

Oriana's case was remarkable, given her passion for literature and music and her networking approach to language learning and teaching that she began as a student with her classmates and that she continued to develop with her friends and colleagues throughout her trajectory as a teacher. Angela's trajectory of language learning was more intercultural and influenced by an independent approach to language learning that she still uses today as a long term language learner. In Teresa's case, the most remarkable feature of language learning was her autonomous and contrastive approach to reading and in Camila's case, her determination to study on her own was very evident.

The identity construction that these teachers did as language learners is relevant because it seems to be that there is certain influence of this identity when they perform in the classroom. For instance, the learning opportunities that Camila promoted were mainly for independent work



and small interactions among students were observed. The fact that she had to work during the time she pursued bachelor's studies, her autonomous language learning experience after the graduation, plus the investment she did in taking other English courses not only to practice the language but also to learn teaching strategies and techniques from the teachers, seem not have been effective enough to develop teaching practices aligned with communicative approaches to language teaching. This investment in her teacher learning could have also been affected by natural and social conditions like her difficulties to pursue graduate studies whether for health issues or for economic reasons.

In the description Teresa shared of how she learned to read in English, there were many similarities with how she was taught to read. Angela's combination of an intercultural and independent approach to learning a foreign language was also very similar to how she had been taught. Finally, what Oriana seemed to have learned implicitly, the incorporation of English into her life in a natural way was also very similar to the class activities she developed. It is clear then that as Lortie (1975) and Borg (2004) stated, there is implicit learning in the context of a classroom that we incorporate into our repertoire as teachers.

The apprenticeship of observation that Lortie (1975) refers to could also be seen in this study between the methodological approach the participant teachers experienced as language learners and the ones they implemented in their classes. In Oriana's case, despite being educated as a translator, it could be seen in her data how language was used for communicative purposes in a similar way to what she did when she exposed her students to class discussions. Angela's classes also seem to have been guided by the intercultural approach she was exposed to as a student and, in a similar way, it was frequent to see her students talking about cultural aspects of the Colombian culture and the target language culture, especially in the FL2 courses she taught.

In the English classes she taught, there seems to be more influence from the curriculum as will be explained later. Teresa and Camila's teaching approaches in their classes seem to have been more influenced by the grammar translation method that was used with them when they were students.

Despite the apprenticeship of observation that seemed to have played a role in teachers' identity construction from their language learning experience, it also has to be said that the four teachers seemed to possess the agency to construct their own identity as language teachers when, for example, they were able to reflect back and distance themselves from those experiences as students that they would not like to repeat as teachers. This was what occurred with Teresa in the assessment component when she remembered her experience as a student and her decision of being more flexible with the given dates to assess students. In this case, Teresa constructed her identity as a language teacher to distance herself from what she had experienced as a student. It can be said that, from this experience, she built up part of her teacher identity through sustaining a more dialogic way of assessment with her students.

### **Identity Construction through Practice**

Teaching and assessment practices are two processes that are interconnected and that cannot be separated as I initially intended in this study. Formative assessment seems to be the best way to connect these two processes, since as Black (1998, 2009) claims, the assessment teachers make of students' learning informs teachers' practices. In doing this, the inclusion of construct validity Brown (2004) as the connection between what is taught and what is assessed is conducive to having systemic validity (Arias *et al.*, 2009). Teaching and assessment practices can be connected when teachers use mistake correction strategies such as gestures during the target language use in class as Oriana did it and when teachers monitor students' group work

whether to prepare a class activity or an assessment task, as happened in Oriana and Angela's classes. This connection was also enhanced when Oriana combined formative and summative assessment in the development of her students' writing skills, when she gave them feedback on the first draft of their written texts but only gave the score the second time students turned the assignment corrected. In Angela's case, the way to connect teaching and assessment was making use of peer correction to help students correct their homework. Graph 8.2 illustrates the connection between teaching and assessment practices and how when they are connected, not only teachers' expectations are fulfilled, but also students' learning occurs.

Nonetheless, the connection between teaching and assessment practices is not something that can be taken for granted. This alignment between teaching and assessment or systemic validity as Arias *et al.* (2009) call it did not occur often or at all in Teresa and Camila's practices. Case in point, whereas in their classes they mainly focused on the translation of reading texts, some morphosyntactic and grammar structures, and vocabulary, the exams included reading comprehension questions that students had to answer. Based on what I observed in the participants' classes, I would say that it is likely that the alignment or mismatch between teaching and assessment practices may be influenced by teachers' personal backgrounds, their professional preparation, the opportunities they have to continue developing professionally in the programs they work, their agency and their capacity to reflect on their practices.

Teresa's example of identity construction from language learning to language teaching occurred through the agency that she developed over time by distancing herself from the inflexible assessment practices she experienced as a language learner and by assuming more flexible procedures with students' assignments as an English teacher. In Oriana's case, her practices seem to have been greatly influenced by her reflection on her practice, or what Schön

(1983) calls reflection on action, and her experience working in the English Program for Adults (EPA). A clear example of how Oriana developed this type of reflective practices occurred when she realized that giving students opportunities to share in pairs or write their ideas before sharing, allowed them to feel more confident and guaranteed their participation in class. Some other practices like giving students written instructions of an assessment task, its instructions, and presenting the assessment criteria and scoring method seem to have come not only from the practices followed in the EPA, but also from her recent preparation in the master's.

The development of teachers' identity through their own agency also occurred during the implementation of communicative, challenging and critical activities in Oriana's EFL classroom where she projected language teaching ideologies such as favoring class time for discussions and letting students work on their own on grammar structures. The practice of addressing critical topics in her classes seems to have evolved over time; from the discussion of famous quotes she implemented as a novice teacher to the discussion of current facts that affected students' lives. The evolution of this practice in Oriana's class seems to be factor constituent of her identity development as a teacher and, at the same time, this practice has allowed her to become a teacher who gives students a voice and more participation in the design of her classes.

An example of Angela's identity construction through agency occurred when she asked students to write a paragraph after the explanation of a grammar structure or a vocabulary expression, as this was something that came from her own initiative, as she put it, "something that she thought she would like to do herself." A second example was the idea of asking students to search for content information to present and discuss in class or as part of assessment activities, which could have come from Angela's intercultural approach to learning languages. In this example it can be seen that, although the intercultural approach to language learning that she

experienced as a student was given in a real and authentic context, asking students to search for information seems to have been a decision from her own initiative to simulate a real-life-like intercultural language learning approach.

The way Oriana and Angela developed their identities through practice and agency following a sociocultural approach differs from the more isolated ways in which Teresa and Camila developed the identities through classroom practices. In their cases, it can be said that there was an influence from the practices they developed through the apprenticeship of observation in their language learning experiences, namely the grammar-oriented approach they followed, whether by how they were taught as in Camila's case or by the autonomous and contrasting approach to reading that Teresa followed. The development of these practices constituent of their identity could have also been influenced by their own sociocultural contexts that included their life histories and possibilities, and the need of more agency in the teaching component.

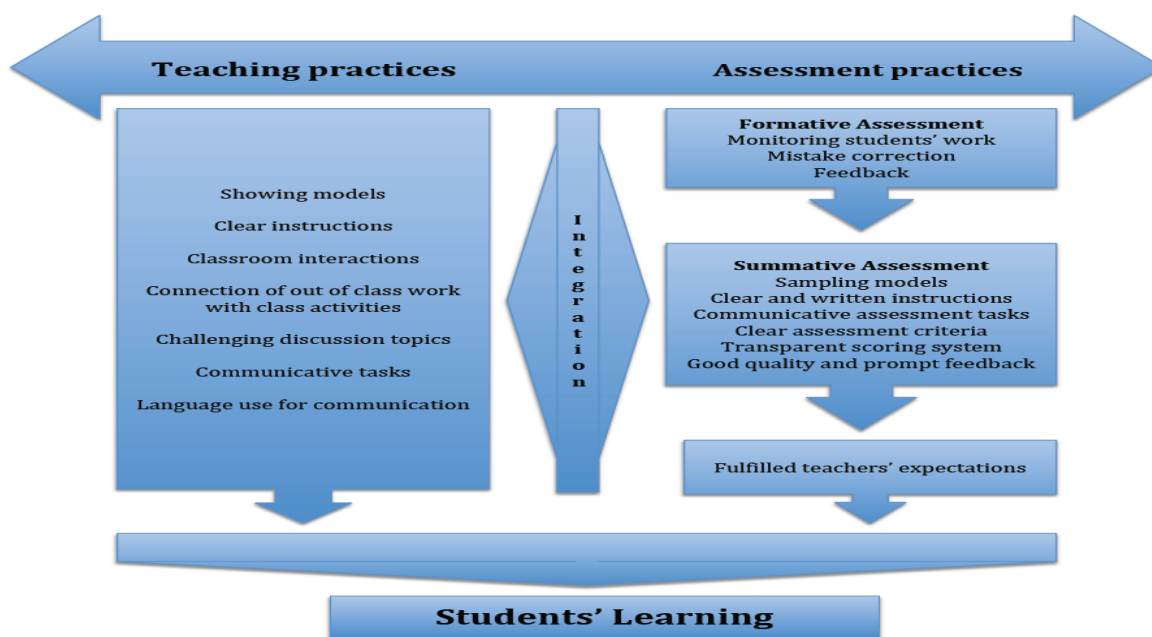


Figure 8.2: Teaching and Assessment Practices Conducive to Students' Learning.

## **Identity Construction through Communities of Practice**

Teachers construct their identities through practices in the classroom (Gee, 2001; Holland *et al.*, 1998) and these practices are at the same time constructed through the Communities of Practice (CoP) in which they participate (Wenger, 1998). In Oriana's case, the idea of writing the class agenda came after a coordinator of a program where she had worked observed her class and suggested writing the class agenda as a strategy that could work. In Teresa's case, the writing of the agenda was an idea that she began to implement after a training she had attended to at *UE*. For Camila, the use of the class agenda was a practice that she ha learned working at another institution. These examples indicate that the practice of writing the class agenda became part of teachers identities as they participated in the CoP of the in-services, programs and institutions where they worked.

Oriana's participation in CoP seems to have been very influential in their identity development as a language learner and as a teacher. Her participation in CoP was evident from her language learning experience when she met her classmates and engaged in practices of language use. Later on, when she became a teacher, she relied on the knowledge and experience of teachers with whom she worked, asking them questions and listening to their advice about the best ways to approach her teaching. The in-services and local ELT conferences she began to participate in when she worked at the private language institution constituted also spaces of CoP where she learned. One of the most significant CoP that she belonged to was the EPA that offered her diferent opportunities to work with colleagues of the program and learn from their practices. Some of these opportunities included meetings with teachers from the same course level during the semester, meetings at the beginning and at the end of the semester with all the teachers of the program, and the in-services of the program that were designed based on teachers' needs and suggestions.

In Angela's case, her participation in CoP began when she was learning English outside of her home country. As a language teacher, one of the first experiences she had working at a private language institution seemed to have influenced her practice of having students preparing short dialogues or role-plays to encourage their development of oral skills. Also, the inclusion of dictation in Angela's classes appears to have emerged from the CoP she developed with her students every time she listened to them and included their suggestions in her classroom decisions.

Different from Oriana and Angela's participation in CoP, a sociocultural approach that seems to have shaped their identities development from their language learning experience to their teaching practice, Teresa and Camila's involvement in CoP was more limited. In Teresa's case, her language learning experience was more influenced by an autonomous approach. Interactions with other people from the communities that she belonged to were limited to some language exchange opportunities she engaged in. These experiences seem to have been part of collaboration experiences rather than of learning experiences from the communities Teresa was part of. Examples of CoP in which she participated were limited to a research project in translation where she worked, the engagement in discussions of readings when she began to work in the FLTS, and some training courses organized by *UE* where she heard, for example, about the writing of the class agenda.

In Camila's case, her participation in CoP was even more limited than Teresa's. For instance, she fruitlessly attempted to become part of two research projects and an online community where she wanted to use English as means of communication. It could be thought that she could have been involved in some CoP from the countless courses she took after her bachelor's; however, there was little evidence of that in the data collected for this study. On the

contrary, she repetitively expressed feelings of isolation during the interviews as well as the isolation character of *cátedra* teachers' work.

From the teaching practices patterns that I observed in the classes of these four participants, I can conclude that teachers with more effective teaching and assessment practices had had more involvement and participation in CoP. It can be said then that the more teachers access or are provided with opportunities to participate in CoP, the greater is the gaining they have in knowledge, teacher learning, and teacher identity development. This finding corresponds to Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning through CoP as its members learn from others when they have a common practice and share their experiences.

### **EFL Teachers' Construction and the Influence of the Curriculum**

In addition to teachers' sense of agency and involvement in communities of practice, the curriculum also seem to have contributed to shaping their identities, especially in Oriana and Angela's cases. In both cases, these teachers affirmed to have taken into account the course objectives for the design of their classes, but the time allotted in the program and how the curriculum was defined in other programs where they worked, especially in Oriana's case, seems to have influenced how their identities were exercised in the classroom.

According to what Angela reported in the interview, she felt more time pressure in the Foreign Languages for Adults Program (FLAP) to teach the contents proposed in the course program that basically followed the textbook. Part of this pressure was due to the 40 hours that the course lasted but also because the exams were designed based on what the textbook proposed. As a consequence of this, Angela did not spend as much time in the FLAP discussing critical topics as she did in the Foreign Languages Program (FLP). In Angela's opinion, it was



easier for students in the FLP to prepare for the exams because the courses lasted 80 hours and this also allowed her to spend more time in the discussion of critical topics.

In Oriana's case, the way the curriculum was structured in the EPA mirrored what she did in the FLP as she basically used class material and developed activities to help students accomplish the course objectives. She carried out the Mini-Talks in the FLP, that were discussion activities implemented in the EPA. According to what she said, this was the way she thought students could develop the review of the verbs tenses that the course program of the FLP proposed for the last course level where I observed her in the second semester of data collection for this study.

For Oriana, working at the EPA is what seemed to have exerted a great influence on her identity construction since much of what she did in the FLP appeared to come from what she did at the EPA, especially with respect to assessment and the implementation of rubrics, which was more clearly stated in the EPA than in the FLP. The same could have happened with the critical topics that were addressed in Oriana's classes, although here Oriana's own agency as a human being has to be acknowledged as much as the influence of her experience in the master's. The influence of the EPA in Oriana's identity construction could have also been due to the mentorship role the coordinator of the program played and the structure the curriculum the EPA had.

In the EPA, the redesign of the curriculum included students' needs and interests. In addition to the linguistic component, the EPA curriculum included traits of critical pedagogy that were transversally addressed in the course program through project work. More important than this was the role that the coordinator played in accompanying the implementation of the curriculum, sustaining constant dialogues with teachers to evaluate the program formatively and

making decisions based on the teachers' experiences in the classroom. The way these components of the EPA were implemented led me to conclude that the Oriana's identity construction could have been influenced by the communities of practice in which she was involved in from her bachelor's experience to the relationships she continued to develop with her friends, colleagues, and the coordinator of the EPA in her experience as a teacher.

The influence of the curriculum in teachers' identities construction seems to be a bidirectional process as teachers' identities also seem to influence the curriculum. This could be noticed, for example, in Oriana's case at the FLP where the curriculum was less structured and this seems to have given her more freedom to include students' interests in what she did in class and also to make decisions on the type of written texts she wanted to expose students to. At the same time, Oriana also shaped the curriculum through the assessment practices that made part of her teacher identity and that she had developed working at the EPA. In Angela's case, it was clear how the course hours and the contents defined by the textbook at the FLAP determined her practices in that program, differently from how the course hours in the FLP allowed her to have more flexibility and to address critical topics in her classes that were part of her own identity. In Teresa and Camila's cases, their identities as autonomous language learners seemed to influence their teaching identities mediated by their grammar-translation practices and little interactions promoted in the classroom. The influence of the curriculum in their teacher identity seemed to have been limited to covering the course contents.

### **The Role of Professional Capital in EFL Teachers' Identities Construction**

Findings of this study showed that teachers developed their identities through their practices, agency, participation in communities of practice, and the influence that the curriculum may play in their practices. In addition to these factors, professional capital is a concept that also

shapes teachers' identities. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) define professional capital as the economic value of knowledge and skills that people can develop through education and training. These authors explain that education and teaching are two forms of capital investment that bring economic returns after some time. They identify three kinds of capital within professional capital: human, social, and decisional. Human capital is defined as the economic value of knowledge and skills that people can develop through education and training. Based on the focus of this study on EFL teachers' identity development, it can be said that the participants' professional capital began when they were learners of English, whether taking classes formally in their bachelor's or by studying the language by themselves. This learning did not stop, as the teachers continued being long term language learners when they looked for forms to practice the language they taught in their everyday life. Regarding their investment in teaching, it seems to be that all of the participants in this study –except Camila– invested in graduate education like the teaching certificate (*Especialización*) in the case of Teresa, and the master's in Angela and Oriana's case. It must be said, however, that according to what data analysis of this study showed, teachers' development of professional capital was not limited to the investment they had in their teaching or the learning of the knowledge and skills required to teach. The development of teachers' professional capital comprised part of the teachers' identity construction, as can be explained by the social and decisional capital identified in this study.

Social capital is a resource for people that exists in the relations among them and that contributes to a productive activity (Bourdieu, 1997; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). It refers to how access to knowledge and information is affected by the quality and quantity of interactions and the social relationships among people. Findings of this study showed that not only did teachers develop their identities by investing in their language teaching and learning whether

formally or informally, but they also showed that teachers' involvement in communities of practice played an important role. In fact, it could be said that teachers who were more involved in these communities through friendship and collegial ties they sustained with former classmates, workmates and program coordinators, had better teaching and assessment practices than teachers who were not part of these communities. As Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) said, social capital increases knowledge and gives access to other people's human capital. It seems to be that even the so-called inefficient one-shot trainings (Sierra Piedrahita, 2016) have a role in teachers' development of social capital because they become spaces where teachers –especially those who are *cátedra* (adjunct faculty) as the ones who participated in this study– get to know each other, get acquainted with what others do, and develop relationships of trust to share their ideas and learn from their peers' practices. Here it is important to highlight the importance that teachers' professional development design be a dialogic construction where teachers' voices and needs are taken into account and where a process of mentorship to teachers' work gives continuity to the one-shot trainings. In this sense, it can be affirmed that the effectiveness of the support teachers receive may come from an investment in their professional capital development rather than from professional development itself. Figure 8.3 shows how professional capital occurs when there is teaching investment, reflection on action, participation in communities of practices and when the teaching and assessment practices are more effective.

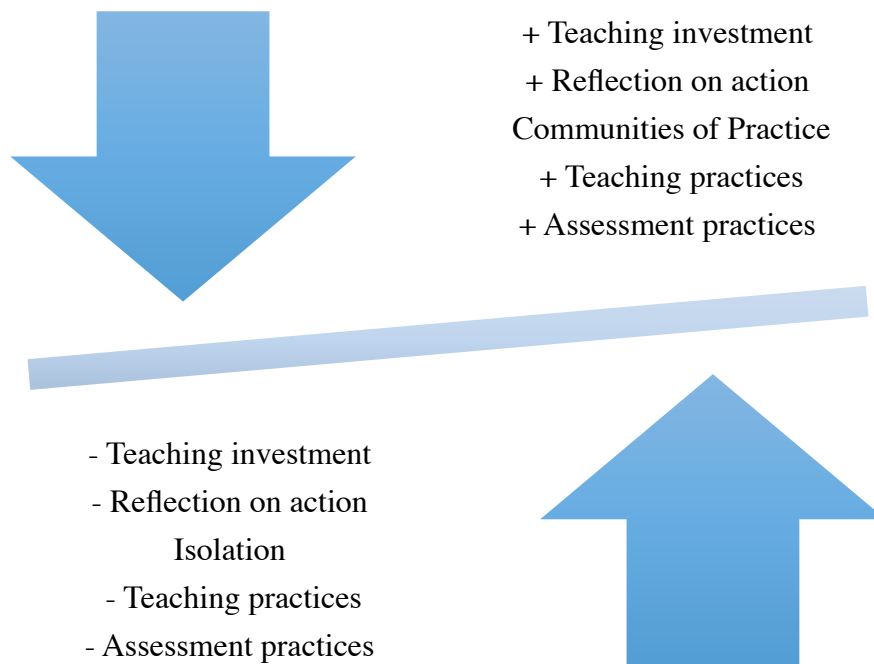


Figure 8.3: Representation of How Professional Capital Intersected with Identities.

#### **Isolation and collaboration.**

Teachers in this study frequently reported feeling isolated. According to what Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) say, when teachers work in an institution but are not part of a community with social capital, they may feel isolated. Teachers from this study who possessed better teaching and assessment practices also had more access to social capital whether formally or informally through the professional development options they had at the programs they worked and/or through the networks they had with their friends and colleagues. Aligned with what Hargreaves and Fullan expressed, that concentrating in the group accelerates learning, in this study, I noticed that when teachers did not have access to any form of social capital, their practices seemed to lag behind in comparison to what happened with teachers who accessed social capital by belonging to one or several groups.

Not only this but an imbalance in the social and human capital dyad can be one of the reasons why teachers of this study reported feelings of isolation. Teachers of this study who reported more feelings of isolation, had less access or looked for less opportunities to belong to communities of practices whether formal or informal, than teachers with more social capital. At the same time, teachers with more access to social capital, had more effective, reflecting and socially situated teaching practices that seemed to impact their students' learning more.

In summary, it can be said that it was evident in the study that some teachers were short of professional capital when: they felt or expressed feelings of isolation, did not get feedback and support from colleagues or program coordinators, and when they were not connected to other teachers in their work sites. It can be said then that the call for program coordinators, professional program developers, and administrators is to provide teachers with time, space, and options where they can share and reflect together on what happens in their classrooms and develop a professional community. This is justified on what professional capital claims that identities are shaped by our surroundings and that being exposed to others helps us see other perspectives and to be more open to change.

Decisional capital is the ability to make discretionary judgments, something that is acquired through the accumulation of structured and unstructured experience, practice, and reflection. Using this definition of decisional capital, it can be said that reflection is fundamental in the construction of identities that teachers of this study made through their practices. In fact, using the analysis of data in this study, it could be said that teachers' practices are better when they reflect on what happens in their classroom. Case in point, not only were Oriana's teaching and assessment practices coherent and aligned, but she constantly reflected on what happened in the classroom as it could be seen in the findings section of her reflective practices.

### **The reflective practitioner.**

MacDonald and Shirley (2009) proposed in their book that a lack of mindfulness and reflection occurs when there is a heavy workload and not because teachers themselves are mindless. Teachers in this study were lecturers whose working conditions oscillated between 18.5 to 36 hours of classes per week, without including the time for class preparation and evaluation having this amount of working hours implies. Although the working and contractual conditions of all the participants of this study were not as favorable as those of faculty in tenure-track positions, the influence of these conditions in their reflection capacity needs to be further examined. For instance, being the four participants *cátedra* teachers, there is not enough evidence from this study to explain why Oriana showed more proof of her reflective practices than the other teachers. It can be that reflective teaching is a personal disposition, but it can also be possible that this disposition can be enhanced as teachers belong to spaces where reflection is encouraged.

By observing Oriana's practices in the classroom it was clear that one of the reasons why she may have been successful was her ability to reflect on action and about action. During the time I spent with her after classes, she frequently asked me what I thought about certain action she had taken and at the same time, she reflected on what could have been done better, why she had done it in that way, and what she would do next time based on what had happened. Being that Angela is a more straight forward person, it was difficult for me to identify her reflective capacity and I also have to say that she was the teacher with whom I spent less time sharing in informal spaces. Teresa's reflective practices were evidenced through the examination she performed of her teacher's inflexible assessment practices and how this event served to differentiate herself as a teacher from that type of practice. In other occasions, I tried to question

her in very subtle ways about her grammar-oriented approach, but she just responded supporting her actions with her own understanding of this practice.

In Camila's case, I remember for example, her preoccupation when, in the training course for the new English program, she had been told to design a learning task. Her main concern was how students were going to be able to perform communicatively if they did not master the language structures required to communicate. From that day, I remember her face when I explained the role of language structures in communication, it was as if that had been the very first time she had heard that. Nevertheless, I also remember that in the last interview we had, she mentioned how her participation in this study had made her reflect on what she did and who she was, and she also mentioned a couple of things she had learned from the study that were unexpected for me.

Being this the reality of what I experienced with teacher reflection and based on the findings of this study, I can suggest that teachers' reflection on action can be encouraged by inviting them to participate in communities of practices where they can see the thought processes other teachers engage in. These communities of practice can be study groups or research projects but again teachers' time management and economic needs to be covered could be problematic. As these necessities are factors that cannot be solved from institutional and social structures, I could say, that for teachers' encouragement of their reflective practices is important that they develop their own agency and make the decision to invest in their own teacher learning.

### **Professional culture and communities.**

For Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) what one believes is the substance of a culture and is profoundly affected by the form of a culture or the relationships with who does or does not believe it. They argue that if these relationships among people or form of a culture are changed,



there is a good chance of changing the content of the culture. The claim these authors make about a professional culture is aligned with the concept of identity development through practice that comes from beliefs or ways of seeing and understanding the world that Holland *et al.* (1998) propose. As can be seen in the findings of this study, teachers' language learning and teaching ideologies are embedded in their practices. This is where the importance of studying teachers' identity development lies, since it is only through understanding what shapes their practices that actions can be taken to examine the possibilities in which the professional culture can be shaped. As Hargreaves and Fullan propose, it is necessary to engage teachers in the development of professional capital, strengthening the forms in which teachers' human, social and decisional capital can be supported.

The culture of English teachers and adjunct faculty at UE can be described first as one where there are power relations exerted on teachers that begin with their contractual conditions, then by a generalized idea that *cátedra* teachers invest little in their teaching knowledge. An examination of their practices to understand what they do from who they are, helps shed light on some of the intricacies of teachers' work, especially when they are not part of a community that supports each other as Hargreaves and Fullan propose in professional capital.

### **Implications of Findings**

In the previous section I presented the five major findings that emerged from this study: (1) EFL teachers' intertwined identities as language learners and language teachers; (2) identity construction in communities of practice; (3) teachers' identity construction through practice; (4) identity construction and the influence of the curriculum; and (5) the role of professional capital

in EFL teachers' identity construction. In this section, I discuss the implications of these findings for research, theory, policy, and practice.

### **Research and Theory**

In this study, the concept of professional capital developed by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) was very illuminating to understand teacher's identity development in the context of ELT in Colombia. It served to put some of the pieces of identity, language and teaching together and to shed light on further approaches to follow regarding teachers' professional development, pre-service teachers' education, teachers' ideologies and students' identities in the EFL classroom. The concept of professional capital helped me see, for example, that teachers who have learned languages in more collaborative ways, tended to also develop their teaching skills in collaboration with others, promote more classroom interactions in their classrooms, be more reflective teachers, and have better teaching practices. In sum, there was a direct relationship between their development of their human, social and decisional capital, which constitute professional capital, and their teaching and assessment practices. The analysis of teachers' practices led me to understand how they were positioning themselves as language learners in their teaching and how they have also developed their identities through the practices they have learned from former professors and colleagues.

The combination of ethnographic methods with sociocultural frameworks tied to the concept of professional capital allowed me to understand the complexities of teachers' identity development in an EFL context like Colombia. The interviews with the four participants helped me to understand the rationale of their practices and some of the language teaching and learning ideologies which is a topic for further study in this context. The interviews also helped me to understand the limitations of teachers imposed by their contractual conditions, the strategies that

some of them have developed to navigate in the world of *cátedra* teachers, and the ability to invest in their teacher learning, as they attempt to break the vicious circle that the system imposes on them. I also noticed the need *cátedra* teachers who were not educated to teach had to understand the learning and acquisition processes students experience when they are learning a new language, as well as the importance to reflect on action as a key component of teacher learning and the uncovering of their own identities as English teachers.

Had it not been for the ethnographic component of this study, it would have been more difficult to identify all the intricacies of teachers' identity development as I saw, for example, that who teachers are shapes what they do in the classroom, but these practices are also shaped by their language learning experiences, their participation in communities of practice, their teaching investment, their professional capital development and their practices as a way to construct their identities.

Findings of this study have implications for professional development scholars and practitioners. It is only by knowing who teachers are that their education can be reconsidered, rethought and reformulated (Cruz Arcila, 2018). Teachers' preparation is more likely to be effective if the manner in which their identities are constructed are included in the design of professional preparation whether for pre- or in-service teachers. Teachers need to be provided with spaces where they can reflect on their practices and learn from the experiences of their colleagues. It is also important that teachers get involved in communities of practice from their preparation stage and throughout their professional lives since teacher learning, like language learning, involve social practices (Norton, 2016). Findings of this study revealed the differences among teachers when they developed their identities in isolation and in collaboration. These ways of collaboration, however, can be complicated for *cátedra* teachers due to their contractual

conditions; then, other alternatives like more personalized approaches to teachers' professional development, such as mentorship, should be considered. Due to the experience with mentorship that teachers like Oriana had in the EPA, it might also be considered that administrators do not play merely a logistics role but their responsibilities should include accompanying and supporting teachers' work. This can be done by observing their classes and giving them feedback, by including teachers' voices, their ideas and needs in the planning of in-services, and by following a formative evaluation approach to the implementation of language teaching programs and curricula.

### **Policy and Practice**

In Usma's (2015) study of language policies in Colombia, he explained that policy discourses in the country have suffered from externalization and internalization, which have disregarded local knowledge when full responsibility was given by the national government to representatives of foreign organizations such as The British Council to exert the National Bilingual Plan (*Plan Nacional de Bilingüismo-PNB* in Spanish). Usma also identified the standardization and marketization of foreign language teaching and learning in the *PNB* concluding that this rendered a deficit view of schools and teachers. In line with this deficit view of schools and teachers, different research studies in Colombia (e.g. Sierra Piedrahita, 2016) on the topic of professional development focused on the needs teachers have and what they lack from their preparation through their everyday practice.

In a review of the literature of EFL teachers' identities in the country, few studies were found on the relationship between the origin of teachers' practices and how they continued to construct them, how they had become teachers and the challenges they faced every day in their classroom trying to respond to: the constantly changing educational policies, the pressure exerted

over them from administrators, the hard working conditions they face, and the little acknowledgement of their work in society (Quintero Polo & Guerrero Nieto, 2013). Reflecting on this reality highlights the need to take a look back at the essence of educators and the importance of rekindling the spirit of teachers who may love or not their work and try their best to accomplish their role. One of the main implications for policy in this study is situated in the design of professional development at the institutional, local and national level for in-service EFL teachers. Before the great amount of articles on language policies in Colombia and its implementation, and the urge to design professional development programs according to teachers' needs, it would be good that more research be conducted on the specifics of teachers' classroom practices and its grounds to contribute to stakeholders' informed decisions about teachers' continuous preparation needs. Given that studies on teachers' identities like this may be used to inform professional development programs, more research on teachers' identities needs to be done.

The role of administrators in language learning programs should also be redefined in terms of supporting teachers' work. As it was shown in Oriana's case, the role that the program coordinator of the EPA played in her identity development seems to have a direct relationship with the quality of her teaching practices. Actions like including teachers' voices in the implementation of the curriculum listening to their experiences, and analyzing together what worked and what did not, seem to be an effective process to evaluate the curriculum formatively and to identify possible topics for teachers' professional development. Mentorship procedures such as class observations, teachers' self-assessment, formal or informal meetings with teachers, meetings with teachers that teach the same course level, and continuous in-services informed by teachers' needs, also seem to be means to provide teachers with spaces of communities of

practice where they can support each other and create a culture for teachers' identity development as professionals. Important to mention here is that all language learning programs from the FLTS of the Department of Languages in *UE* should learn from the effective practices that take place in the EPA from the Outreach Center.

The university may be a place with low social capital or this social capital may be centered on some instructors who have been involved in social/academic networks where they have developed social capital. This could mean that in order to help teachers develop better teaching and assessment practices it is necessary to help them develop their social capital or provide a collaborative social environment where they can be engaged.

Not only the different language programs from the FLTS should learn from the effective practices in the EPA but the university should also provide funding for teachers to develop action research projects as a means for them to grow as reflective practitioners. From the four participants in the study only Oriana showed evidence of her reflection on action that continuously informed her teaching practices. These are skills teachers need to learn, especially when they have not been educated as teachers. A good way to achieve this is through action research projects; however, due to *cátedra* teachers' working and contractual conditions, providing funding for them to do this type of research projects would allow them with time for it and free them from the need to teach a course they would need to make their living money. Action research could also allow teachers to find theories that support their practices and inform their classroom procedures, as this was something they did not receive in their professional education. In addition, action research projects could contribute to the creation of local knowledge in the EFL teaching field.

*Cátedra* teachers may be overwhelmed with many responsibilities, then teachers and leaders should be engaged in reflection about action in order to be more focused on what teachers do in the classroom and what happens around the classroom that affects their work. This reflection on action should also lead to more teachers' participation in the decisions made at the institutional level and the conditions for this participation should also be given in their context, for instance when there are changes in the curriculum or in its design.

Teachers participation in research projects may be a way to facilitate the development of their reflective practices. At the end of one of the interviews I held with Camila, when I was walking her to the next class she had, she mentioned that it had been very interesting to think about issues that she had never thought about. It can be said that Camila had the opportunity to listen to herself during the interview and think about aspects of her professional life she had never thought about. It seems to be that her involvement in this research situated Camila at the beginning stage of inquiry. However, in order to develop this reflective capacity more, it would be good that she get more involved in practices conducive to develop their reflection in and on action. This could be done through mentorship programs the university should offer or teachers' involvement in research project of the type of action research or teacher inquiry where teachers like Camila can participate more actively.

At the curriculum level, the design of English language programs should be locally situated and include students' voices as a factor that contributes to their identities development as language learners. In addition to this, Critical Language Awareness (CLA) is another element that should be included in the teaching of English. As Wallace (2003, p. 200) wrote, there is a "necessity of critical work with second and foreign language learners of English [since] it is in fact discriminatory not to provide the tools and resources which allow them access to powerful

uses of language and literacy”. According to her, CLA is a means to work against the domesticating discourses in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language. As it could be seen in Oriana and Angela’s classes where critical topics were addressed, this practice not only provided communicative situations to use the target language, but also challenged and informed students on what was happening in their contexts.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined how EFL teachers’ identities shape or were shaped by their teaching and language assessment practices in a Colombian public university. It was through ethnography that I was able to enter the teachers’ classroom and be a participant-observer of their everyday work to understand the role that their identities played in their professional lives and where I could see that language learning as language teaching is a social practice (Norton 2013). Exploring this relationship allowed me to see teachers in their humanity, with all their histories and trajectories that have shaped who they are and who they continue to be. Through inquiring teachers for what they did in the classroom, I could understand the rationale of their practices and uncover the intricacies of their identity development as language learners and teachers. In this study, I could see that teachers projected their identities in the classroom from a position as language learners but also from the identities they constructed through the apprenticeship of observation. I understood that in the same way that teachers invest in their language learning, they may do it in their teacher learning, and that these two learnings depend on social practices that occur at the institutional, local, national and global level.

Although this ethnographic research allowed me to study in-depth the practices of four teachers, the current number of teachers in the Foreign Language Teaching Section (FLTS) is



147 and almost 40% of them (55 teachers) are adjunct faculty. The limited number of participants in this study may be seen as a limitation but this was at the same a strength as it allowed me to understand aspects of their identity development that I am uncertain I could have understood using a research approach that included a more comprehensive number of teachers. Another limitation of this study was that none of the participants was educated as a teacher; thus, the study shed little light on what happens with professionals who went to school to become teachers.

Approximately, from the middle to the end of this study, there were some ideas that emerged as possibility to continue exploring the topic of EFL teachers' identities and to intervene their realities. First, it would be good to explore how language teaching and learning ideologies shape teachers' practices and how teachers can move from action to reflection and theory to see themselves in the classroom. Second, it would be appropriate to design and implement a course, where teachers who were not educated as such, can work on their reflective practices learning about principles of language acquisition, teaching methods, and teaching language skills. Third, based on the first-hand experience of seeing the impact that reflective practices, mentorship, and the engagement in communities of practice had on teacher learning, I look forward to proposing an action research project where these three components are combined. Finally, proposing a teaching certificate (*especialización*) for teachers like the ones who participated in this study could be a way to intervene what I found here. The *especialización* should not last more than a year and teachers who participate in it can do it with the option of continuing the master's program that the Department of Languages of *Universidad Estatal* offers. With the creation of the teaching certificate, teachers could be benefited not only by investing in their education, but also by making use of the 40% tuition discount *UE* currently

offers its teachers when they pursue graduate studies in the institution; in addition to this, after the completion of the degree, teachers could receive a raise in their salary.

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## Appendix A: Reading Comprehension Program (RCP) Level I Specific Objectives and Course Contents

Reading Comprehension I Specific Objectives	
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quickly identify the meaning of an unknown word in a specific context through its morphological components and the correct use of the bilingual dictionary.</li> <li>● Identify synonym expressions in a specific context underlining them, establishing connections, choosing them from several options or expressing their meaning in oral or written form, responding to questions that show their meaning has been identified.</li> <li>● Answer general reading comprehension questions in a given text that have unnecessary textual elements.</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify parts of a sentence in a given text, underlining and classifying them or expressing, in oral or written form, and answering questions that show understanding of their syntactic role in the sentence.</li> <li>● Simplify sentences that can be difficult to understand by: making a subject-verb connection, putting relative and opposition clauses in parenthesis, underlining nouns, and answering questions that show understanding of simplification.</li> <li>● Answer reading comprehension questions that imply a correct time location in discourse, making use of verb tenses and time expressions.</li> <li>● Identify the elements, criterion, and type of comparison in a sentence or paragraph by reporting them in oral or written form and answering questions that show the identification of these elements.</li> </ul>
<b>Discourse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify referents in a text by underlining them and connecting them, and answering questions that show the referents have been identified.</li> <li>● Answer reading comprehension questions that imply the completeness of a text where ellipsis has been used.</li> <li>● Identify and order sentences in a paragraph that have the role of: definition, generalization, supporting, explanation, exemplification, and conclusion.</li> <li>● Answer reading comprehension questions that imply the identification of relations of: comparison, contrast, cause and effect, and chronological sequence in a text that has explicit and implicit discourse markers.</li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be able to identify the main idea of a paragraph that is explicit by underlining, expressing it in students' own ideas, or choosing from several options.</li> <li>● Quickly identify the topic of an article making use of the title, subtitle, graphics, or skimming, expressing the topic in oral or written form or choosing it from several options given.</li> <li>● Ask questions from an article based on the information that appears in the</li> </ul>



	<p>text and making use of the title, subtitle, graphics, to formulate the questions in oral or written form or choosing from several options given.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Validate the hypothesis formulated from an article based on the support found in the text, determining if the questions formulated have an answer, and reporting in oral or written form the support given and the answers.</li> </ul>
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<b>Course Contents</b>	
<b>Unit 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sentence structure, verb tenses, possessives, modal verbs, comparatives and superlatives, passive voice, sentences with main and subordinate clauses, markers of cause, contrast, etc.</li> <li>● Readings where these structures can be identified and implemented.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dictionary use, information that can be found in a dictionary.</li> <li>● Exercises to identify the meaning of a word or an expression.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Word meanings based on morphology aspects: roots, prefixes and suffixes.</li> <li>● Exercises where these structures can be used.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Referents.</li> <li>● Exercises to identify sentences, paragraphs and readings.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identification of topics and main ideas in paragraphs and readings. Use of skimming to identify parts of a reading text that have the main idea, and scanning for specific information.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● General and supporting sentences, relations of comparison, contrast, and cause and effect.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B: Reading Comprehension Program (RCP) Level II Specific Objectives and Course Contents

Reading Comprehension II Specific Objectives	
<b>Vocabulary</b>	By the end of the course the student will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deduce the appropriate meaning of word based on the context, choosing from several given options or expressing it in the student's own words.</li> </ul>
<b>Discourse</b>	By the end of the course the student will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Report the rhetorical organization of a text.</li> <li>● Transfer the information of a text into an outline, choosing from several outlines offered or defining an own outline.</li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	By the end of the course the student will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Answer reading comprehension questions that show the information displayed in an outline, drawing logical conclusions.</li> <li>● Infer the possible options for the implicit main idea in a paragraph or express it in her/his own words.</li> <li>● Answer information questions that imply a logical inference of implicit information in a given text.</li> <li>● Write the summary of a text relatively long.</li> </ul>

<b>Unit 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cause and effect relations.</li> <li>● Chronological sequence.</li> <li>● Readings where these patterns can be identified and applied.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use of clues: contextual, definition, examples contrast, inference, and synonyms or antonyms.</li> <li>● Exercises.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strategies to predict or infer information.</li> <li>● Use of markers and the context to make predictions.</li> <li>● How to infer information.</li> <li>● Readings to identify and implement these elements.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bar, lineal, and circle graphics, tables, and diagrams.</li> <li>● Readings where these elements can be applied.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Distinction between facts and opinions.</li> <li>● Identification of generalizations.</li> <li>● Identification of an author's tone, purpose and prejudices.</li> <li>● Critical synthesis of texts.</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: Communicative English Program (CEP) Level I Specific Learning Objectives and the Grammar, Thematic and Linguistic Contents

**Communicative objectives** that students should be able to perform by the end of the course students

- Introduce her/himself and introduce a classmate or friend
- Describe her/his family
- Describe some daily activities
- Talk about hobbies
- Describe her/his house and the house of her/his dreams
- Talk about her/his strengths and weaknesses

**Linguistic objectives** that students should be able to perform by the end of the course students

- Acquire vocabulary and morphology and phonetic competences required to communicate effectively in contexts and situations given in class
- Use simple sentences using verb to be and other verbs in simple present
- Perform short conversations that include short and complete questions and affirmative and negative statements
- Make descriptions that include the use of there is and there are and prepositions
- Use of can and cannot to talk about abilities

**Socio-cultural objectives** that students should be able to perform by the end of the course students by exchanging

- Formal and informal greetings and farewells
- Personal information
- Daily activities and hobbies
- Information about time and seasons
- Information about food and its prices
- Analyze and describe differences and similarities among the Colombian culture and other foreign cultures addressed in class that address greetings, landmarks, and family structures

**Strategic competences** that students should develop along the course

- Verification of information, interlocutions and spelling
- Reading strategies like scanning, prediction and the use of the dictionary
- Use of self-assessment, collaborative work and planning oriented towards autonomous learning
- Use of technological tools to develop autonomous language learning

**Grammar Contents**

- Personal subject pronouns
- Possessive adjectives
- Simple present of verb to be and other verbs in yes/not and information questions, short answers, affirmative and negative statements, and third person conjugations

- Adverbs of frequency
- Saxon genitive, there is and there are, prepositions of place, some and any, can and can't

### **Thematic Contents**

- Formal and informal farewells
- Countries and languages
- The alphabet
- Numbers (cardinal and ordinal)
- Household objects
- Family members
- Occupations
- The time
- Daily activities and schedules
- Leisure activities and hobbies
- Foods and drinks
- Days, months and seasons
- Shopping slang and prices
- Community places

### **Linguistic Contents**

- Grammar categories: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun
- Singular and plural nouns
- Common opposing adjectives
- Connectors: and, so, because, but, then
- Homophone words: eye/I, no/know, peace/piece

## Appendix D: Foreign Languages Program (FLP) Level 4 and 5 Course Syllabi

### Level 4 American Headway 2 B

#### UNIT 8 Dos and Dents

LEXICAL	PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjectives: advice, successful, satisfied, overweight, sick, slave</li> <li>Nouns: illness, symptoms, diarrhea, food poisoning, flu, glands, cold, temperature, doctor, clinic, pharmacy, doctor's office, appointment, prescription, medication, traffic light, hair dryer, rush hour, earthquake, gang, wear, argue, smoking, toothache, problem, training, employer, employee, boss, babysitter, infection,</li> <li>Verbs: swollen, swallow, sneeze, ache, keep, throw up, examine, feel, long, worry, support, earn, recommend, suggest, miss, stand, hurt,</li> <li>Collocations: have to be cruel to be kind, act your age, stop being silly, live abroad, get into trouble, work indoors, work outdoors, work long hours, go on a diet, get a license, stay healthy, come to an agreement, make a decision, give explanation,</li> <li>Phrasal verb. Throw out, drop out, get up, give up, move out,</li> <li>Idioms: runny nose, sore throat, see a doctor, get the prescription filled</li> <li>Professions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functional Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguishing between dos and don'ts of the professional life.</li> <li>Giving and asking for advice.</li> <li>Describing health conditions</li> </ul> <p><b>Discursive Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a dialogue to describe what is right or wrong in a profession.</li> <li>Understanding a problem and using modals to provide suggestions</li> <li>Providing information medical condition and understanding medical prescriptions and suggestions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about your duties as a professional.</li> <li>Discussing everyday familiar and social problems and giving suggestions.</li> <li>Going to the doctor, describing your health condition and getting your description and suggestion.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have got to.</li> <li>Modal verbs: should and must</li> <li>Compound nouns:</li> </ul>		
<p><b>PHONOLOGICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Past pronunciation of regular verbs.</li> </ul>		

## UNIT 9 GOING PLACES

LEXICAL	PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjectives: scientific, exciting, big, rich, glorious, dramatic, traditional, shocking, concrete, story, huge, wealth,</li> <li>Nouns: megalopolis, advances, answering machine, speed, change, place, boundaries, buildings, skyscraper, dozens, superhighway, , countryside, reservation, lobby, a double room, message, forget, DNA, gust, receptionist</li> <li>Verbs: will, disappear, spend, commute, leave, expect, flight back pick up, hurt, water,</li> <li>Verb phrases: get sick, get too old, get lost, take care of, stay in touch, take a pill, take a photo, do a favor, do some shopping, get angry, get along well with someone, get back , make a reservation, make a complaint, make up your mind, make sure,</li> <li>Adverbs: safely, probably, slowly,</li> <li>Conjunctions of time: when, while, as soon as, after, before, until</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functional Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about real probabilities</li> <li>Stating probable results in the future</li> <li>Giving and receiving information about quantities, numbers, prices, etc.</li> <li>Understanding the difference between future and future probabilities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discursive Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing what will be done as soon or when an activity is finished</li> <li>Forecasting future events, situations.</li> <li>Giving reasons why you like and don't like.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telling someone what he or she is planning to do after an activity</li> <li>Asking someone to do something as soon as or when an activity is performed</li> <li>Sharing ideas about what the future holds</li> <li>Describing social or geographical changes in as a consequence of what is happening now</li> </ul>
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conditionals type 0</li> <li>Conditionals type 1</li> <li>The future with will</li> <li>Future with going to</li> <li>Negative form in present</li> <li>Negative form in future</li> <li>Questions with what if</li> </ul>		
<p><b>PHONOLOGICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I'll</li> <li>Ordinal numbers</li> </ul>		

**UNIT 10**  
**SCARED TO DEATH**

<b>UNIT 10 SCARED TO DEATH</b>		
<b>LEXICAL</b>	<b>PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE</b>	<b>SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjectives: frightening, exciting, surprising, interesting, boring, confusing, confused, surprised, frightened, excited, bored, interested, wild, poisonous,</li> <li>Nouns: wilderness, wealth, shelter, mushrooms, berries, seed, sleeping bag, consciousness, UFO, flying saucer, alien, spacecraft, encounter, helmet, visor, reporter, government agent,</li> <li>Verbs: hitchhike, starve, crawl,</li> <li>Verb phrases: stay in touch, get rid of, get along, to take off,</li> <li>Verb patterns: begin to feel, start aching, go camping, decide to stand up, used to, go skiing, managed to find, go shopping, try to understand, enjoy doing,</li> <li>Adverbs:</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functional Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about risky situations and real stories.</li> <li>Asking common situations of the past.</li> <li>Describing feelings.</li> <li>Giving testimonies of past situations.</li> <li>Stating opinions about the reliability of certain situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrating a real risky story in past.</li> <li>Sharing with others things you used to do in the past.</li> <li>Sharing with others your feelings in certain circumstances.</li> <li>Stating your opinion in a debate about the reliability of a testimony.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verb patterns</li> <li>Past with used to</li> <li>Questions in past with used to</li> <li>Infinitive of purpose</li> <li>Present participle</li> <li>So</li> <li>Such</li> </ul>		
<p><b>PHONOLOGICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verbs ending in -ed or -ing.</li> <li>Past tense.</li> </ul>		

**UNIT 11**  
**THINGS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD**

LEXICAL	Functional Competence	Discursive Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjectives: better, far</li> <li>Nouns: gallons, business, cans, recipes, advertisement, factories, sailors, teenagers, meal, drive-in, beard, briefcase, passengers, joke, truth, advice, weight, promise, stock market, seeds, addict, soil, fabric, silk, plantation, slaves, lung cancer, luxury, sugar cane, flavor, skeleton, honey, billboard, tree sap, pack, chum, gum, settlers, notices, broken vending machine, automatic teller machine,</li> <li>Verbs: made, grown, drunk, enjoyed, sold, invented, kept, produced, stolen, eaten, carried, told, lost, given, chain smoking, inhale, ban, sweeten, refine, chew, harvest, hire, freshen wrap,</li> <li>Verb phrases:</li> <li>Adverbs: certainly, nearly, early, worldwide, only,</li> <li>Conjunctions of time:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about things that changed the world</li> <li>understanding signs and notices.</li> <li>Giving and receiving information about when, where, who, why and how many times something changed the world.</li> <li>Combining nouns and verbs in a conversation.</li> <li>Talking about everyday things and how they became a reality.</li> <li>Understanding the difference between active and passive voices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing when, where, who, why and how many times something is, are, was or were done or made.</li> <li>Describing past events, situations.</li> <li>Giving reasons when, where, who, why and how many times something/s is/ are, was or were done or made.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telling someone what was/were made or done.</li> <li>Asking someone why something happened in the past.</li> <li>Sharing ideas about what happened in the past.</li> <li>Describing social changes as a consequence of what was/were made/done.</li> </ul>
<b>GRAMMATICAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passives</li> </ul>			
<b>PHONOLOGICAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>			



**UNIT 12**  
**DREAMS AND REALITY**

<b>PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE</b>		<b>SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE</b>
<b>Functional Competence</b>	<b>Discursive Competence</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about imaginary situations</li> <li>Wondering how different things would be</li> <li>Speaking about future plans</li> <li>Expressing future probable situations using might</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stating probable results or consequences to an imaginary situation.</li> <li>Being in someone else's shoes</li> <li>Speaking about future plans</li> <li>Foretelling what will probably happen in a place or situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing probable solutions or consequences to imaginary situations</li> <li>Writing and speaking about future plans</li> <li>Wondering about probable things to do, or happen in a specific situation in the future. In a party or a celebration</li> </ul>
<p><b>LEXICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjectives: famous, beachfront, ambitious, perfect, terrible, ghost, frightening, mysterious, retired, social, typical, funny, troubled, alone</li> <li>Nouns: toothache, noise, advertising, journalism, wallet, portraits, princess, weight, lift, servants, parakeet, stranger, burglar, fight, steak, Ghostbusters brain, scan, tumor, operation, story, clear gym an, worker, problems,</li> <li>Verbs: found, were, had, knew, would, saw, might, run, feel, start, claims, trapped, tell, ,</li> <li>Phrasal verbs: rid of., work out, get out, deal with, go away, grow up, go out with, stay up, get along with, look forward to, put out, run out, look up, turn something off, ask somebody out, look out, fill out, take off</li> <li>Adverbs: too, exactly, still, firmly</li> </ul>		
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conditionals type 2</li> <li>Past tense forms</li> <li>Negative forms in past tense form</li> <li>Auxiliary would</li> <li>Future with going to</li> <li>Might</li> </ul>		
<p><b>PHONOLOGICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would</li> <li>I'd</li> <li>Might</li> </ul>		

**UNIT 13**  
**MAKING A LIVING**

LEXICAL	Functional Competence	Discursive Competence	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjectives: homeless, average, regular, indoor, outdoor, windy, exhausted,</li> <li>Nouns: delivery business, complaint, wealth, salary, headline, advertisement, beachcomber, checkout stand, beachfront cabin, keg, pension, waste, hot air balloon, deer, flight, sunset, computer programmer, software company,</li> <li>Verbs: complain, injure, earn, advertise, skate, grab, reach, barter, chase, last, move,</li> <li>Verb phrases: make a living, fall asleep, make money, fly balloons, get paid, keep in shape, keep busy, put off, make a career out of passion, get wet, cook dinner,</li> <li>Adverbs: mainly, possibly, really, nearly, seriously, exactly, carefully, fluently, fortunately, lively, most, least,</li> <li>Modal verbs: might</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about different jobs.</li> <li>Describing unusual jobs.</li> <li>Asking and answering questions about jobs and occupations.</li> <li>Talking about your job using present perfect continuous.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing what you do to make a living.</li> <li>Describing what other people do to make a living.</li> <li>Creating dialogs where you explain what you have been doing in PPC.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telling others what you do to make a living.</li> <li>Telling others what other people do to make a living.</li> <li>Telling others what you have been doing in PPC.</li> </ul>
<b>GRAMMATICAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present perfect continuous.</li> <li>WH questions</li> <li>Adverbs ending in "ly"</li> </ul>			
<b>PHONOLOGICAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numbers in American and British English.</li> <li>Adverbs ending in "ly"</li> </ul>			

**UNIT 14**  
**ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE**

LEXICAL	PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE	DISCURSIVE COMPETENCE	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjectives: angry, hungry, delighted, sore, upset, unhappy.</li> <li>• Nouns: suitcase, novel, fiction, romance, darling.</li> <li>• Verbs: met, known, seen, been, behave, water, passed, forgotten, swaying.</li> <li>• Verb phrases: turned off.</li> <li>• Adverbs: unfortunately, strangely, extremely,</li> <li>• Conjunctions of time: while</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functional Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking about what you need.</li> <li>• Talking about what you want.</li> <li>• Differentiating tenses according to your communicative needs.</li> <li>• Reporting a past event.</li> <li>• Saying good-bye.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discursive Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing your needs.</li> <li>• Describing your wants.</li> <li>• Organizing your discourse with the appropriate tense order.</li> <li>• Reporting in chronological order.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telling someone what your needs and wishes are.</li> <li>• Reporting someone something you witnessed.</li> <li>• Predicting what will be next.</li> <li>• Saying good-bye in different circumstances.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past perfect</li> <li>• Reported speech</li> </ul>			
<p><b>PHONOLOGICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>			

## UNIT 1

### It's a wonderful world!

LEXICAL	Functional Competence	Discursive Competence	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adjectives:</b> active, amazing, ancient, below, brief, commercialized, dramatic, giant, gorgeous, hectic, humble, nuclear, online, passionate, technological.</li> <li>• <b>Nouns:</b> achievement, action, activity, agriculture, airplane, ambassador, builder, cellular, competition, cow, destination, earth, economy, equipment, expectancy, exploration, famine, farming, fortune, galaxy, goodwill, greed, health care, horror story, etc.</li> <li>• <b>Verbs:</b> afford, assassinate, benefit, destroy, drug abuse, equal, estimate, figure, hang on, hurry up, increase, revolutionize, rise, stand for.</li> <li>• <b>Adverbs:</b> just, surely.</li> <li>• <b>Prepositions:</b> before, between, preposition, below, until, with, in, for, of, to.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving personal information by using different grammatical structures.</li> <li>• Taking out the main idea and specific information about different readings, to expand vocabulary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for and give information about each one.</li> <li>• Talking about different ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking about different issues, testing the student's general knowledge.</li> <li>• Continue using correct words and expression in different contexts.</li> <li>• Using social expressions such as: <i>Don't worry about it!</i>, <i>Take care!</i>, <i>You must be kidding</i>, <i>I'm sick and tired of...</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple Present and Continuous</li> <li>• Present Perfect Simple and Continuous</li> <li>• Past Simple and Continuous</li> <li>• Passive and Active Forms</li> <li>• Short Answers</li> </ul>			
<p><b>PHONOLOGICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the correct intonation in different kinds of contexts, either in words and phrases.</li> </ul>			

## UNIT 2

### Happiness

	PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
	Functional Competence	Discursive Competence
<p><b>LEXICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adjectives:</b> best, happiest, happy, long, married, beautiful, old, young, new, loud, favorite, funny, better, typical, silly, sensitive, sick, good, particular, frightened, busy.</li> <li>• <b>Nouns:</b> happiness, years, leisure, work, home, life, lawyer, company, suburb, children, weekend, golf, college, graduate, family, designer, paperboy, doctor, clown, millionaires, baseball, tennis, exercises, sports, equipment.</li> <li>• <b>Verbs:</b> work, speak, turn off, have, understand, travel, play, paid, read, decorate, give, drive, like, know, want, enjoy, come, want, think, love, feel, arrive, spend, meet, tell, wear, become, learn, allow, eat, run, do, go, talk, as, now.</li> <li>• <b>Adverbs:</b> sometimes, always, usually, a lot, often, occasionally, some, other, soon, rarely, never.</li> <li>• <b>Prepositions:</b> of, in, on, at, for.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making comparisons</li> <li>• Describing activities</li> <li>• Use of verbs</li> <li>• Correcting mistakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking about one person's life.</li> <li>• Describing everyday activities.</li> <li>• Talking about jobs and job preferences</li> <li>• Talking about leisure activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple Present, present continuous</li> <li>• Spelling of verbs</li> <li>• Adverbs of frequency</li> <li>• Stative verbs, verbs of emotions and feelings, verbs of the senses.</li> <li>• The passive voice</li> </ul>		

## UNIT 3

### Telling Tales

LEXICAL	PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adjectives:</b> formal, stuffy, great, large, acceptable, good, rude, impolite, excited, right, rainy, free, sorry, dirty, clean, great, kind, poor, next, each, which, nice, asleep, good, boring.</li> <li>• <b>Nouns:</b> Pictures, noise, story, dinner, battles, warrior, joke, painter, author, poet, novelist, sculpture, chapter, masterpiece, biography.</li> <li>• <b>Verbs:</b> Tell, look, arrive, match, cooking, fight, laugh, do, read, write, paint, draw.</li> <li>• <b>Adverbs:</b> really, still, already, undoubtedly, probably, often, about, usually.</li> <li>• <b>Prepositions:</b> before, between, preposition, below, until, with, in, for, of, to.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functional Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving a description activities including order (schedule).</li> <li>• Giving a description about people, using passive (referring what they have done).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discursive Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for and give opinions about different issues (books and movies).</li> <li>• Talking about different cultures through stories.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present Tense</li> <li>• Present Continuous</li> <li>• Past Simple</li> <li>• Past Perfect</li> <li>• Past Passive</li> <li>• Auxiliary verbs</li> </ul>		<p><b>EXPANSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makeup stories starting with a sentence and hand them on from one student to another. (Brainstorming activity).</li> </ul>
<p><b>PHONOLOGICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronunciation of Simple Past of the Irregular Verbs</li> </ul>		

## UNIT 4

### Doing the right Thing

	PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LEXICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adjectives:</b> Nationalities, formal, stuffy, great, large, acceptable, good, rude, impolite, excited, right, rainy, free, sorry, dirty, clean.</li> <li>• <b>Nouns:</b> teenagers, parents, bills, friends, home, makeup, homework, house, jeans, food, passengers, lane, luggage, job, checkbook, credit cards, manners, business, greetings, clothes, countries</li> <li>• <b>Verbs:</b> Modal verbs, have to, need to, mean, smoke, buckle up, get married, drink, wear, buy, take, pack, go, think, lose, help, turn, start, meet, kiss, yawn, arrange to, invite, prefer, bring, check, eat, cook, produce, invent.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Functional Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correcting mistakes in sentences that include a modal verb.</li> <li>• Explaining the meaning of street signs</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Discursive Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving suggestions</li> <li>• Comparing ages</li> <li>• Making requests and offers</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modal verbs: can, be allowed to, should, have to, must.</li> <li>• Present tense</li> <li>• Past tense</li> </ul>		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXPANSION</b></p> <p>Watch the movie “Do the right thing” by Spike Lee, to talk about the behaviors of different races in the USA and how they interact.</p>



## UNIT 5

### ON THE MOVE

LEXICAL	PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE	DISCURSIVE COMPETENCE	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adjectives:</b> fresh, polluted, sophisticated, historic, sick, tired, elderly, funny, warm, bored, delicious, giant, different, shaped, beautiful, blue, forested, large, nice, dry, right, wonderful, excellent, windy, boring, rough, sunny, cold, freezing, chilly, hot., stormy, snowy, rainy, foggy, cloudy, foggy, icy, exciting, impressive, ideal, similar, interested, smooth, perfect</li> <li>• <b>Nouns:</b> weather, sun, food, places, people, towns, clouds, winter, vacation, spring, haircut, car, gas, sugar, yogurt, milk, bread, loaf, stamps, steaks, film, camera, newspaper, can of white paint, video, CD, post office, tennis match, day, test, movie, airport, job, forecast, qualifications, experience, story, acting, week, traffic, homework, millionaire, tube, home, travel agency, world, dream, beach, pile, books, foot, churches, stores, museums, restaurants, markets, resort, bed, heaven, gardening, meal, trip, downtown, snow, bag, pajama, sculptures, movie, theater, deer, pelt, electric bill-bank, tickets-travel agent, tennis balls, library, art galleries, drinks, day, sail, water, sea, view, passenger, way, car, bus, taxi, subway, train, plane, ferry, towel, helipad, brochure</li> <li>• <b>Verbs:</b> auxiliary verbs: do, be, have, can, allow, go, should, must, will, going to, pick up, might, stop, look like, love, want, make, let, read, ring, look at, worry, get, stay, watch, wait, need, think, stop, depend on, have, forget, fill up, ask, buy, speak, win, pass, fail, like, study, practice, melt, look for, take, rain, arrange, keep, spend, look</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functional Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask and provide personal information.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discursive Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write a informal and formal letters</li> <li>• Communicate information about important life events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand expressions about recommendations, requests and offers</li> </ul>



<p>around, move around, send, know, go on, poke around, hurry, go around, confess, travel, wake up, putter around, tell, take, land, look forward to, arrive, supply, visit, rise, shine, snow, blow, say, turn, drive, navigate, carry on, begin, sit up, call out, take care, recommend, order, make decision, hop in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adverbs: lately, really, well, dramatically, pretty, five times a year</b></li> <li>• <b>Time expressions:</b> tonight, today, tomorrow, next vacation, later, for weeks, this afternoon, this semester, Friday morning, Friday afternoon, at night, next year, this weekend, from now on, on time</li> <li>• <b>Connectors:</b> but, also, and, so, however, then,</li> <li>• <b>Prepositions:</b> at, in, on, for, by, to, with, of, about, out, next to, over, from,</li> <li>• <b>Professions:</b> teacher, receptionist, travel agent</li> <li>• <b>Information questions:</b> where, what, why, when, how often, how many, how much, who, why, whose, which, what kind</li> </ul>			
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present tense</li> <li>• Simple past: regular and irregular verbs, past continuous,</li> <li>• Future tense, present perfect progressive, present perfect, present continuous, present passive, past perfect, modal verbs, future forms: will, going to,</li> <li>• Verb patterns: I love cooking, I like lazing</li> <li>• Question words</li> <li>• Yes, no questions.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>PHONOLOGICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past pronunciation of regular verbs.</li> </ul>			

## UNIT 6

### I just love it!

	PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE
<p><b>LEXICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adjectives:</b> fresh, junk, disgusting, fast, delicious, tasteless, plain, vegetarian, frozen, rich, homegrown, wealthy, starving, excited, exciting, home, old, modern, college, young, busy, capital, antique, cosmopolitan, industrial, agricultural, small, historic, long, expensive, bored, sociable, shy, rude, tall, crowded, boring, global.</li> <li>• <b>Nouns:</b> the United States, Mexico, Australia, Japan, India, China, Italy, Brazil, England, family, aunt, pizza, anchovies, garlic, eel, oil, shrimp, bacon, squid, salmon, peas, sweet corn, herring, pineapple, tuna</li> <li>• <b>Verbs:</b> polluted, sophisticated, tell, promise, finish, help, forget, hate, can't stand, need, ask, succeed in, refuse, love, could, couldn't, try, make, enjoy, stop, start, decide.</li> <li>• Describing food, places and people.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Functional Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correcting mistakes in an informal letter</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discursive Competence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: customs connected with births, weddings and funerals</li> </ul>
<p><b>GRAMMATICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Words that go together:</b> fresh food, historic towns, elderly people</li> <li>• <b>Questions with like:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What's she like?</li> <li>- What does she look like?</li> <li>- What does she like to do?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Verb patterns:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I love cooking</li> <li>- I wanted to go home early</li> <li>- She made him go to bed, but she let him read for awhile</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sights and sounds</li> <li>• Noisy neighbors: two people making statements to the police</li> </ul>

## Appendix E: Foreign Languages for Adults Program (FLAP) Level 1 and 2 Course Syllabi

Universidad Estatal

Foreign Languages for Adults Program

### *Course1 (Starter Course)*      **Teacher's Copy**

**Goal:** In this course, students will commence their acquisition of metacognitive, autonomy, literacy, linguistic and sociolinguistic skills conducive to successful processes of foreign language learning.

<b>Language:</b> English	<b>Course:</b> English 1-40 Hours	<b>Time:</b> 40 hrs.	<b>Prerequisites:</b> None	A little Spanish will be spoken in class to explain activities, objectives, news, evaluations and cultural contrasts
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**Objectives:**

1. To acquire the ability to reflect and manage their foreign-language learning processes by using appropriate strategies, media and resources.
2. To acquire the ability to know the language and about the language.
3. To initiate the acquisition of cultural contrasting and respect skills conducive to an appreciation of the world cultures, and the sensitiveness to contextual aspects of language use.

Teaching and Learning Aspects	Communicative Language Competences	
	Sociolinguistic Competences	Pragmatic Competences
<b>Macro-Functions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manipulative</li> </ul> <b>Language Learning Tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using The Dictionary (bilingual Dictionary)</li> <li>Avoiding Translation</li> <li>Keeping Glossaries</li> <li>Practicing Oral Language</li> <li>Drafting</li> </ul> <b>Language Study Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using Different Tools</li> <li>Successful Experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S/He can identify and use different titles in formal speech.</li> <li>S/He can greet and say good bye in formal and informal conversation.</li> <li>S/He can differentiate when to use last names and how they work in English.</li> <li>S/He can get people's attention using appropriate wording and expressions.</li> <li>S/He is sensitive to physical distances in cultures and turn taking when giving or asking for personal</li> </ul>	<b>Oral language:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S/He can start conversations as to get or give general information.</li> <li>S/He conveys his or her general information in terms of origins, habitation, company, age, birthdays and dates, and occupation.</li> <li>S/He understands when an interaction or exchange has finished.</li> </ul> <b>Understanding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S/He can read different kinds of informational, descriptive texts about people's personal information extracting the general and/ or required information (nationality, age, and place of birth, place of habitation, occupations, telephone number, and birth day/date).</li> <li>S/He can understand different kinds of oral texts in interactions, and exchanges about people's personal information (nationality, age, and place of birth, place of habitation, occupations, telephone number, and birth day/date).</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Work Skills</li> <li>Correcting Mistakes</li> </ul> <p><b>Autonomous learning Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using Tutoring Service</li> <li>Reading Books</li> <li>Singing</li> <li>Free Writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Multimedia &amp; Multiliteracy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raising Literacy Expertise Inventories.</li> <li>Becoming aware of contemporary and varied media richness.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Information.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S/He can use particular habits of introduction like shaking hands, or just smiling when being introduced to people.</li> <li>S/He can identify a variety of world countries, their location in the globe, and important cities in them.</li> <li>S/He can use specific skills required in English more than other languages, like spelling names and telling phone numbers digit by digit.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Written language:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S/He can read general information about people.</li> <li>S/He can write her or his own or other people's personal information.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Speaking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S/He can use appropriate intonation of Yes/No and WH- Questions with BE and DOES.</li> <li>S/He can utter the sound contrasts /s/ and /z/, and /l/ and /ll/.</li> <li>S/He can use appropriate expressions to introduce questions, and for conversations about people's personal information, according to formal or informal situations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Process:</b> S/He can write short texts about people's personal information using simple sentences and basic connecting words. S/He can fill in forms about people's personal information.</li> <li><b>Final Products:</b> Short descriptive notes to describe the family for example, CV's, Application forms, family portraits etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Text Book:</b> Soars, Liz and John Soars. American Headway 1, Units 1, 2 and 3. Oxford University Press. England. 2001</li> <li><b>Suggested Resources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>American Channel beginners: Student's book</li> <li>American Channel beginners: workbook</li> <li>Clockwise elementary : class book</li> <li>Cutting edge elementary: Mini-Dictionary</li> <li>Cutting edge elementary: workbook</li> <li>Explorations 1: Student book</li> <li>Explorations 1: workbook</li> <li>Expressions 1 : student book</li> <li>Expressions 1 : workbook</li> <li>Gateways 1: student book</li> <li>Gateways 1: workbook</li> <li>Web Pages in the Multimedia Room Lists</li> </ul> </li> <li>Language to go elementary student's book</li> <li>Let's talk 1: student's book</li> <li>Let's talk 1: teacher's manual</li> <li>On your mark : introductory</li> <li>Side by side 1A: Student book</li> <li>Transitions 1: Student book</li> <li>Transitions 1: workbook</li> <li>True voices : an EFL video : video workbook</li> <li>Voyages 1 : Student book</li> <li>Voyages 1 : workbook</li> <li>Cambridge Dictionary of American English, Student Activity Book.</li> </ul>			

## Course 2 -Teacher's Copy

**Purpose:** In this course, students will continue with their acquisition of basic communicative competencies in English as a foreign language as well as expand their metacognitive, autonomy, literacy, linguistic and sociolinguistic skills conducive to successful processes of foreign language learning.

Language: English	Course: English 2 Regular	Time: 40 hrs.	Prerequisites: Course 1	A little Spanish will be spoken in class to explain activities, objectives, news, evaluations and cultural contrasts
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**Objectives:**

1. To continue with the acquisition of the ability to reflect and manage their foreign-language learning processes by using appropriate strategies, media and resources.
2. To continue with the acquisition of the ability to know the language and about the language.
3. To continue with the acquisition of cultural contrasting and respect skills conducive to an appreciation of the world cultures, and the sensitiveness to contextual aspects of language use.

Teaching and Learning Aspects	Communicative Language Competences		
	Sociolinguistic Competences	Pragmatic Competences	Linguistic Competences
<b>Macro-Functions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manipulative</li> </ul> <b>Language Learning Tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using The Dictionary (bilingual Dictionary)</li> <li>• Avoiding Translation</li> <li>• Keeping Glossaries</li> <li>• Practicing Oral Language</li> <li>• Drafting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S/He can talk about addresses and contrast how they are given in English and Spanish.</li> <li>• S/He can ask for and give directions following an English style.</li> <li>• S/He can interact with (unknown) people in exchanges using modal verbs to show good manners.</li> <li>• S/He can apologize.</li> <li>• S/He can ask for people's attention.</li> <li>• S/He can ask for clarification.</li> </ul>	<b>Oral language:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S/He can start conversations as to get or give general information.</li> <li>• S/He conveys his or her general information in terms of origins, habitation, company, age, birthdays and dates, and occupation, and people's routines habits, leisure activities, and skills.</li> <li>• S/He understands when an interaction or exchange has finished.</li> </ul>	<b>Understanding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S/He can read different kinds of informational, descriptive texts about people's personal information extracting the general and/ or required information (origins, habitation, company, age, birthdays and dates, and occupation, and people's routines habits, leisure activities, and skills.</li> <li>• S/He can understand different kinds of oral texts in interactions, and exchanges about people's personal information (origins, habitation, company, age, birthdays and dates, and occupation, and people's routines habits, leisure activities, and skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Language Study Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practicing language in different written and oral media</li> <li>• Discussing successful learning experiences</li> <li>• Group Work Skills</li> <li>• Correcting Mistakes</li> </ul>	<b>Written language:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S/He can read general information about people.</li> <li>• S/He can write her or his own or other people's personal information, showing comprehension of the construction of basic paragraphs.</li> </ul>	<b>Speaking:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S/He can use appropriate intonation of Yes/No and WH- Questions with BE and DO/ DOES.</li> <li>• S/He can utter the sound contrasts /s/ and /z/, and /l/ and /ll/, /d/, /t/, /θ/ and /ð/.</li> <li>• S/He shows ability to stress words</li> <li>• S/He can use appropriate expressions to introduce questions, and for conversations about people's personal information, according to formal or informal situations.</li> </ul>	
<b>Autonomous Learning Tips:</b>			



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using Tutoring Services</li> <li>• Reading Books</li> <li>• Singing</li> <li>• Free Writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Multimedia &amp; Multiliteracy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising Literacy Expertise Inventories.</li> <li>• Becoming aware of contemporary and varied media uses for learning.</li> </ul>			<p><b>Writing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Process:</b> S/He can write short descriptive texts about people's personal information using simple sentences and basic connecting words. S/He can fill in forms about people's personal information in terms of origins, habitation, company, age, birthdays and dates, and occupation, and people's routines habits, leisure activities, and skills.</li> <li>• <b>Final Products:</b> Short descriptive texts like pen-pal e-mails, introductory notes, reading- journal entries, etc, starting to use paragraphs to organize the information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Text Book:</b> Soars, Liz and John Soars. American Headway S1, Units 4, 5, and 6. Oxford University Press. England. 2001</li> <li>• <b>Suggested Resources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American Channel beginners: Student's book</li> <li>• American Channel beginners: workbook</li> <li>• Clockwise elementary: class book</li> <li>• Cutting edge elementary: Mini-Dictionary</li> <li>• Cutting edge elementary: workbook</li> <li>• Explorations 1: Student book</li> <li>• Explorations 1: workbook</li> <li>• Expressions 1: student book</li> <li>• Expressions 1: workbook</li> <li>• Gateways 1: student book</li> <li>• Gateways 1: workbook</li> <li>• Web Pages in the Multimedia Room Lists</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language to go elementary student's book</li> <li>• Let's talk 1: student's book</li> <li>• Let's talk 1: teacher's manual</li> <li>• On your mark: introductory</li> <li>• Side by side 1A: Student book</li> <li>• Transitions 1: Student book</li> <li>• Transitions 1: workbook</li> <li>• True voices: an EFL video : video workbook</li> <li>• Voyages 1: Student book</li> <li>• Voyages 1: workbook</li> <li>• <i>Cambridge Dictionary of American English</i>, Student Activity Book.</li> </ul>

## Appendix F: Oriana's Key Information Provided in the Questionnaire

Pseudonym	<b>Oriana</b>
Age	Mid 30s
<b>Foreign Languages</b>	<b>Proficiency level</b>
English French	Mid advanced Low intermediate
<b>English language learning experience</b>	In Colombia
<b>Bachelor's</b>	English, French, Spanish translation
<b>Master's</b>	Teaching and learning of foreign languages
<b>Other professional preparation</b>	Teaching Spanish as a foreign language ( <i>Diplomado</i> )
<b>Travel abroad</b>	No
<b>Years of teaching experience</b>	13
<b>Working experience</b>	Private classes Private pre-school institution Private school Private language institute Public higher education institutions
<b>Professional development</b>	Seminars workshops In-services Study groups Research projects Coaching
<b>Courses taught at the FLTS</b>	Communicative courses for undergraduates

<b>Courses taught at the Outreach Center</b>	Communicative courses for children and professionals
<b>Working hours per week in fall 2016</b>	18.5
<b>Working hours per week in spring 2017</b>	26.5
<b>Contractual conditions</b>	<i>Cátedra</i> teacher
<b>Monthly average income</b>	USD \$ 570



## Appendix G: Angela's Key Information Provided in the Questionnaire

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Angela</b>
<b>Age</b>	Late 20s
<b>Foreign Languages</b>	<b>Proficiency level</b>
English Portuguese	High advanced High advanced
<b>English language learning experience</b>	Home country FL2 speaking country FL1 speaking country FL1 speaking country
<b>Bachelor's</b>	Translation and interpretation in two FLs
<b>Master's</b>	Teaching and learning of foreign languages
<b>Travel abroad</b>	Yes
<b>Countries</b>	FL2 speaking country FL 2 speaking country FL1 speaking country FL1 speaking country
<b>Years of teaching experience</b>	11
<b>Professional development</b>	Courses
<b>Working experience</b>	Private language institutions Public higher education institutions
<b>Courses taught at the FLTS</b>	Communicative courses
<b>Courses taught at the Outreach Center</b>	Communicative courses

<b>Courses taught at the Department of Languages</b>	Courses for translators
<b>Working hours per week in fall 2016</b>	28
<b>Working hours per week in spring 2017</b>	36
<b>Contractual conditions</b>	<i>Cátedra</i> teacher
<b>Monthly average income</b>	USD \$ 830

## Appendix H: Teresa's Key Information Provided in the Questionnaire

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Teresa</b>
<b>Age</b>	Early 50s
<b>Foreign Languages</b>	<b>Proficiency level</b>
English French Japanese German Portuguese Italian Chinese Turkish Russian Arabic	High advanced High advanced High intermediate Mid advanced Mid beginner Mid beginner High beginner High beginner High beginner High beginner
<b>English language learning experience</b>	In Colombia
<b>Bachelor's</b>	Professional in languages
<b>Graduate studies</b>	English teaching certificate ( <i>Especialización</i> )
<b>Other professional preparation</b>	Teaching and Didactics at the higher education level Teaching Pedagogy and Didactics for Teaching Elementary and High School Pedagogy, Didactics and Assessment in higher education
<b>Years of teaching experience</b>	23
<b>Professional development</b>	Courses Seminars Workshops In-services Study groups Research projects

<b>Working experience</b>	Public and private schools Public and private higher education institutions Private language institutions
<b>Courses taught at the FLTS</b>	Reading comprehension for undergraduate and graduate students Listening comprehension courses for graduate students Communicative courses for undergraduates and instructors
<b>Working hours per week in fall 2016</b>	22
<b>Working hours per week in spring 2017</b>	36
<b>Contractual conditions</b>	<i>Cátedra</i> teacher
<b>Monthly average income</b>	USD \$ 500

## Appendix I: Camila's Key Information Provided in the Questionnaire

Pseudonym	<b>Camila</b>
Age	Early 50s
Foreign Languages	<b>Proficiency level</b>
English French	High intermediate High beginner
English language learning experience	In Colombia
Bachelor's	Translation
Travel abroad	Yes
Countries	EEUU
Years of teaching experience	10
Professional development	Courses Seminars
Working experience	Public schools Private language institute Public and private higher education institutions
Courses taught at the FLTS	Reading comprehension for undergraduate students
Working hours per week in fall 2016	34
Working hours per week in spring 2017	27
Contractual conditions	<i>Cátedra</i> teacher
Monthly average income	USD \$ 580

## **Appendix J: First Individual Interview: Guidelines for Teachers' Timelines**

In order to prepare for the first interview, please prepare two timelines, one with the significant people and events in your language learning experience and another one with your experience as a language teacher.

A timeline is a format that facilitates the identification of specific moments and people about a topic; in this case, your experience as a language learner and as a language teacher. It can be done in a letter-size sheet of paper but there is not pre-established format to do it. It can be a mind map, a fishbone or something similar. It does not have to be computer-made. The idea is to do it as easily as possible, you can use pencil, pen, color pencils, you can write and/or draw.

Para el día de la entrevista debes preparar dos líneas de tiempo, una con las personas y eventos significativos en tu experiencia como aprendiz de lenguas y otra sobre tu experiencia como profesora de lenguas.

Una línea de tiempo es un formato que permite visualizar momentos y personas específicas sobre un tema, en este caso, tu experiencia como aprendiz de lenguas y como profesora de inglés y portugués. Se hace en una hoja tamaño carta, no hay ningún formato preestablecido para hacerlo, puede ser un mapa mental, una espina de pescado o algo por el estilo. No tiene que ser en computador, la idea es que sea haga lo más fácil posible, puede hacerse con lápiz, lapicero, con colores y se puede escribir y/o dibujar.

## **Appendix K: Protocol for the Second In-Depth Interview**

**Title of the project:** EFL teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices in a public university of a main city in Colombia

1. Draw two timelines with the most influential people and events in your life as a language learner and language teacher.
2. Could you please explain your timelines?
3. How did you learn English?
4. How were you assessed in your English classes?
5. How do you become an English teacher?
6. How was the experience in your preparation as an English teacher?
7. How has your experience with the professional development offer in the university been?  
(Courses, seminars, in-services, workshops, study groups, research projects/groups)
8. How you teach English?
9. How do you assess your students' learning?
10. Have you experienced any ups and downs in your career? Can you mention and explain some of them?
11. How do you see yourself as English teacher in the university, in the city, in Colombia?
12. Who is a good English teacher is for you?
13. What has it meant for you to be a teacher during all this time?
14. What does it means for you to be a teacher in the new English program of the university?
15. What does it means for you to be a speaker of English in the city?
16. What do you do to maintain your language proficiency in the language you teach?
17. Do you feel well paid as an English teacher? And as a professional?

## Appendix L: Third Individual Interview

### Questions for all the participant-teachers

#### About teachers' participation in the study

- Why did you decide to participate in this study?
- How did you feel participating in the study?

#### Teachers' identities

- Who and/or what do you think are the people and things that have contributed to be who you are as a teacher?

#### Teachers' beliefs about language learning

- How did you learn the foreign language(s) you teach?
- How were you taught?

#### Topic selection for the course

- How do you choose the topics you use for your classes and the topics for the material? Where do you find them?

#### Course and lesson planning

- Tell me about how you plan your courses?
- And your classes?
- How do you position yourself when you are planning a class? (As one of your students? As the teacher? As a language learner?)

#### Administrative issues

- When you began to work in the program which classes I have been observing, what type of information did you receive? (Type of contract, payment method and benefits, sick leaves, teaching and learning materials and resources you and your students could have access to, teaching methodology, course content, class activities, assessment guidelines and procedures).
- If you didn't receive this type of information, how have you gotten to know those procedures?
- What does the course syllabus say about the teaching methodology and assessment in the FL2 classes in the FLP?
- What are the topics, course contents and language skills proposed for this class?

#### Concepts to take into account

- **Teaching practices (teaching approach)**
- **Approach:** Reflects a **theoretical model or research paradigm**. It provides a **broad philosophical perspective on language teaching**, such as found in the **justification** for the direct method, the reading approach, or the communicative approach. (Anthony, 1963 as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2014, p. 2)
- **Teaching practices (techniques or procedures)**
- **Technique:** A **specific classroom activity**. It represents the most specific and concrete of the three concepts. Examples of techniques are dictation, listen and repeat drills, and reading a passage and filling in the blanks. (Anthony, 1963 as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2014, p. 2)
- **Procedures:** Refers to **techniques, practices, behaviors**, and equipment observable in the classroom. The **interactional patterns** and the **strategies** used by teachers and



students are also part of their procedural component. (Richards & Rodgers, 2001 as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2014, p. 2-3)

#### **Questions for Oriana and Angela**

- How were you taught?
- How did you learn to write in English?
- I noticed that in your classes you include some critical topics like politics in Colombia, citizenship or genre issues. Tell me about that.
- Why do you do it?
- Are those topics included in the curriculum or the course syllabus?

#### **Listening skills**

- Tell me about how you work on the development students' listening skills in the class? (Do you do a pre-listening activity to activate students' previous knowledge? How do you proceed with the audio during a class exercise? How do you check the answers?)

#### **Writing skills**

- Tell me about how you promote students' writing skills in the class? What you do to help students develop their writing skills.

#### **Questions for Teresa and Camila**

- How did you learn to read in English?
- How were you taught?
- I would like to know how can asking students to translate English texts in class can help them understand a reading text and to deal with vocabulary questions, inference questions, to identify patterns in the text such as: cause and effect, contrast, addition, example and summary.

#### **Question for Oriana and Camila**

- I noticed that in your classes you wrote the class agenda at the beginning of each class. Why do you do this? Where do you learn it?

#### **Question for Oriana**

#### **Topics selection for the course**

- Why do you choose topics for the class of the type of gender roles, the Peace Plebiscite, the postconflict in Colombia, and the U.S. presidential elections?
- Can you tell me when did you start to include this kind of topics in your classes? Have you always done this? Have you done it because of your work in the EPA? After the master's?
- I would like to know what has influenced your decision of asking students to choose a polemic topic for their Mini-Talks? (Is it because of the master's?)

#### **Teaching practices: Vocabulary strategies**

- I noticed that in your classes you wrote unknown words for students on the board, is there something that you tell students to do to help them work on their vocabulary skills improvement?
- During your classes, I noticed that when students didn't know how to say a word in English, you wrote it on the board, gave an explanation and some examples. I would like to know your rationale to do this.

#### **Teaching and assessment practices: Mistake-correction strategies**

- I noticed that sometimes you corrected adjective noun word order mistakes with a gesture crossing your hands. Could you please tell me about it. When did you learn that?

**Teaching and assessment practices: Monitoring students' group work**

- In the class I observed, I noticed that you usually had students working and interacting in pairs and small groups, what can you tell me about that?
- During your classes, you monitored students' group work, I would like to know the kind of questions or comments you gave them.

**Assessment practices**

- Tell me about how you assess your students. How do you describe your classroom assessment procedures?
- How do you position yourself when you are evaluating your students? (From what you think students know or from what you teach?)

**Assessment practices: Preparation strategies**

- When you presented the final assignment instructions to students you gave them some tips to help them get ready for the assignment. Where does this idea come from?
- I noticed that during the Mini-Talks your students used some notes to help themselves when they were presenting, have you suggested that strategy to them?

**Assessment practices: Asking questions to students**

- Do you prepare the questions to ask to students during the presentations or when you read their papers?

**Assessment practices: Encouraging self-correction**

- During the oral evaluations, I noticed that sometimes you asked students to self-correct when you were giving them feedback of their performance. Tell me about. Why do you do it? Where did you learn that?

**Assessment practices: Assessment criteria**

- What criteria do you give students to prepare the Mini-Talks? (Check if there is a file with this information in the Facebook group)
- What's your criteria to assess students' Mini-Talks? (Check if there is a file with this information in the Facebook group)
- Could you please tell me about the use of rubrics and the procedures you follow to assess with them? (Where did you learn that?)

**Assessment practices: The use of rubrics**

- Do you use the rubrics to give written feedback and the grade to students? Tell me about it.

**Member check of teaching and assessment practices observed in the classes**

- The following is a description I made of your teaching. Could you please read it and tell me if my description fits what you do, if there is something missing or something you would like to add.

This class is well structured. The teacher is punctual to begin the class, always writes the agenda on the board at the beginning of the class and explains it to students. Every class, she usually proposes an activity where students can interact or has one of the students presenting his or her Mini-Talk, where students have to shortly present about a topic that usually includes a critical perspective, they have to take a position, and prepare some questions for their classmates; sometimes the teacher summarizes students' Mini-Talks before asking them some questions, before they ask their classmates the questions. When the teacher has a whole class activity, she usually asks students for their background knowledge, introduces and develops the topic and has students working in pairs or small groups to discuss something related to the topic and to work

on an activity. As students work on what they were assigned, the teacher passes around the groups to monitor their work and help them with whatever they need, give them recommendations or make corrections. After students work together, they share their work with the class and the teacher gives them feedback. When working on students' writing skills, she proposes a peer-talk for students to discuss how to write a text for example. Then she asks students to share with the whole class, uses some visual aids to refer to what students have discussed, shows students an example of types of text they will be writing, uses audiovisual aids to show students how to analyze the purpose of a text, explains the purpose of what she is doing, and offers students some practice. She also promotes self-assessment among her students and asks them to participate in the definition of the assessment criteria. She includes project work in her teaching.

### **Questions for Angela**

#### **Topics selection for the course**

- Why do you choose topics for the class of the type of women with children in jail, the plebiscite, the postconflict, and the U.S. presidential elections?
- How are those topics connected to the curriculum? And the course syllabus?
- What is the input you give students to get ready to talk about these topics?
- How do you and your students get material for this topic in the FL2 if the situation is based on what happens in Colombia?

#### **Teaching practices: dialogues and role-plays**

- I have noticed that you implement a lot of dialogues, conversations and role-plays in your FL2 class. Where does that idea come from? Why do you do it? (Implicit beliefs about interaction that guide her teaching practices)
- Tell me about that memorization strategy that you tell students to use when you tell them to prepare a dialogue or a conversation in class. (Is this related to the way you learned the FL2 or English?)

#### **Teaching practices: Language structures in the EFL class**

- In the FL2 classes I observed, I noticed that sometimes you explained grammar structures or vocabulary expressions. Just after that, you asked students to prepare a dialogue or to write a paragraph where they used those structures. How did you come with that idea? Why do you do it? (Check the teacher's understanding of the communicative purpose of tasks like these and its meaningfulness) (Focus on form vs. focus on meaning)
- I noticed that during your FL2 classes you wrote grammar structures on the board (e.g. variable and invariable pronouns, rules for accents) and then dictated examples for students to write them down. Aren't these types of structures in the textbook they use?
- I noticed that in your classes you copied from some notes you had. Isn't that information in the textbook students have?

#### **Teaching practices: dictation**

- I have noticed that some times in your FL2 class you dictate to students. Where did you take this idea from? (Is this related to the way you learned the FL2 or English?)

#### **Teaching and assessment practices**

- Despite in your FL2 class you implement lots of dialogues, conversations and role-plays in pair and groups, sometimes the oral assessments you propose are individual. Could you please tell me about that?

#### **Assessment practices:**

- How did you come up with the idea of a radio program for the midterm and final oral evaluation?
- What were the criteria to assess students in these evaluations?

### **Assessing writing**

- Tell me about how you prepare your written evaluations?
- What kind of things do you include? (Heading, instructions, language skills, scoring method, examples, language tasks)
- What language skills do you include?
- How do you select the tasks to include?
- What do you take into account?
- Are students been evaluated in the same way they have been taught in class, that is to say, assessing the same kind of skills they have been developing in class? Could you please explain.

### **Assessing listening**

- How many times do you play an audio in a listening quiz or exam?
- What are the underpinnings of that decision?

### **Self-assessment**

- Tell me about your experience with self-assessment? How long have you been working with it? What training have you had?

### **Working at different programs**

- Do you have the same styles/approaches to teach in the different programs and courses you teach?

### **Teacher identity**

- Tell me about your imaginary country? Where does the idea come from?

### **Member check of teaching and assessment practices observed in the classes**

- The following is a description I made of your teaching. Could you please read it and tell me if my description fits what you do, if there is something missing or something you would like to add.

She begins the class checking homework with students if one was assigned the previous class. She introduces and encourages students in the discussion of a current topic that usually includes a critical component. Every class she usually gives a grammar explanation of the type of verb conjugations or something about vocabulary use. Just after the grammar explanation is given, she usually asks students to work in pairs or small groups to put into practice the structures explained. She also asks students to do exercises in class from their textbook that can be drills or filling the gap exercises, completing sentences or changing verb tenses. Sometimes students are asked to write sentences or paragraphs in class or as out-of-class-work assigned for homework. Sometimes audios with images or videos are presented in class and students are asked to get information from them. Students are frequently asked to search for content information about a specific topic to be prepared to talk about it in class or to get ready for an oral assessment evaluation. In class, students are encouraged to use the target language to communicate, although it is ok if from times to times they use a word in their mother tongue when they don't know it in the target language. However, when students turn to speak completely in Spanish, the teacher encourages them to use the FL2, unless it is a very controversial topic where content is more important than using the target language. Then the teacher allows students to communicate ideas in Spanish. During the class, it is usual that the teacher corrects students' pronunciation or verb

conjugation mistakes as they speak, although this doesn't interfere with the flow of communication.

### **Question for Teresa**

#### **Writing the class agenda**

- In the first course of yours I observed, I noticed that you didn't write a class agenda but you did it in the second course. I would like to know why you didn't do it in the first course I observed but you did it in the second course?
- Why do you do write the class agenda? Where did you learn it?

#### **Readings level of difficulty**

- Do you give any criteria to students to choose the reading texts you ask them to bring to class?
- What do you take into account when you choose the level of difficulty for the readings?
- What recommendations do you give them to choose the topic, length and the level of difficulty?

#### **Reading books in Spanish**

- I recall from the classes I observed, you had students reading books in Spanish. I would like to know where this idea comes from.

#### **Use of movies in the class**

- Could you please tell me how you connect the use of movies in your classes to the reading comprehension skills you aim at developing in your students?

#### **Out of class work**

- Do you assign students out-of-class work?
- What type of work do you assign?
- What type of work do you suggest?
- How often do you assign or suggest students out of class work?

#### **Self-assessment**

- I saw that in the first course of yours that I observed that you asked students to give themselves a self-assessment grade. Tell me about your experience with self-assessment.
- What do you think the objective of self-assessment is?

#### **Resources and materials**

- What kind of resources and materials do you, as a teacher from the program, have access to?
- Do you receive some guidelines from the program coordinator about what you should take into account for the use of class materials? (Format, heading, ways to prepare it and adapt it, parts to include in it)

### **Questions for Camila**

- In the last class of the first course I observed, I heard when you mentioned to your students that you "have learned a lot autonomously after you graduated", could you please expand on that?
- Could you please tell me how you connect the use of movies in your classes to the reading comprehension skills you aim at developing in your students?
- How do you choose the topics to work in class with your students? (i.e., religion)
- In one of your classes, I noticed that students were presenting about Deism, Pastafarism and other related topics. I would like to ask you how, in your experience, those presentations about can help students to develop their reading comprehension skills.
- How do you combine the teaching of vocabulary strategies such as identifying cognates with supporting students' reading comprehension in English?

## **Appendix M: Background Questionnaire**

**Title of the project:** EFL teachers' identities and their teaching and assessment practices in a public university of a major city in Colombia

Name:

Age:                      Gender:

Languages the teachers knows:

Level of proficiency in the languages teachers know:

Professional preparation in teaching or other areas:

Experiences out of Colombia: (including language learning and teaching experiences or tourism)

Time of the experience out of Colombia:

Years of English teaching experience:

Educational contexts where teachers have worked as English teachers:

Participation in professional development programs: (courses, seminars, workshops, in-services, study groups, research projects, coaching)

Current working places:

Weekly working schedule:

Monthly income:

Contractual conditions:

## **Vita**

Diana Patricia Pineda Montoya earned her Bachelor's degree in Foreign Language Teaching from Universidad de Antioquia in Medellin, Colombia in 2002. In 2011, she received her Master's in Applied Linguistics in Teaching English as a Foreign Language from Universidad de Jaen in Spain. In 2012, she became an assistant professor in the Universidad de Antioquia. In 2013 she joined the doctoral program in Teaching, Learning, and Culture at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Ms. Pineda was awarded with some honors that included the Good Neighbor Scholarship and the Frank B. Cotton scholarship that she received twice. While pursuing her degree, Ms. Pineda worked as a research assistant at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Ms. Pineda presented her research at national and international conference meetings including the American Educational Studies Association (AESA), the Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference, the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the American Anthropological Association (AAA), and the International Applied Linguistics Association (AILA). Additionally, she has published her work in the PROFILE Journal: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development. Ms. Pineda's dissertation entitled "EFL Teachers' Identities and their Language and Assessment Practices in a Public University of a major city in Colombia," was supervised by Dr. Erika Mein.

Contact Information: [diana.pineda@udea.edu.co](mailto:diana.pineda@udea.edu.co)

This dissertation was typed by Diana Patricia Pineda Montoya.