

# Annual Conference on Formative Research on EFL

Current trends in language  
teaching and teacher training







# **Annual Conference on Formative Research on EFL**

Current trends in language teaching and teacher training

Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios – UNIMINUTO  
2022



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# Presentation

**Ninguna investigación está del todo completa. Es la gloria de un buen trabajo que abre el camino a algo aún mejor, y esto conduce repetidamente a su propio eclipse.**

**Mervin Gordon**

The Annual Conference on Formative Research and Research Hotbeds on Foreign Languages is an academic and scientific event in which undergraduate and postgraduate students and teachers share pedagogical experiences or results of completed or ongoing research processes in foreign language teaching and learning. This event is driven by UNIMINUTO's Bachelor's degree program in Foreign Languages with an emphasis on English. It is held every year to create spaces for reflection that allow trainees and teachers trainers to improve their pedagogical performance and share innovative initiatives and practices in the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

This is a compilation of the conference papers of the first meeting of formative research and research hotbeds in foreign languages which took place in November 2019. The event had the participation of main speakers in foreign language teaching from prestigious and recognized national universities such as Universidad de la Sabana, Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Universidad Nacional and Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia.

The topics addressed during the three-day event were framed within the framework of teaching and learning in foreign languages. It included conferences regarding teacher training, challenges in language teaching and learning, reflective practices, teaching and learning strategies; inclusive

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education, technology and communication, and intercultural education. These contemporary topics opened up spaces for dialogue, discussion and considerations among the participants.

The event featured presentations and posters by students and professors from UNIMINUTO's Bachelor's Degree Program in Foreign Languages and from other universities such as ECCI, Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, Universidad de la Sabana, Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, Universidad Santo Tomas and Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas.

We invite you to get to know these new research experiences and transformational proposals in education that will be an important contribution to improve our teaching practices, reflect on the processes we carry out in the classroom and create new research projects. They will also be an important input that will inspire new foreign language teachers and motivate them to continue on the path of investigation as an exercise in the teaching profession.

**Blanca Lucía Cely Betancourt**

Directora, Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con énfasis en inglés.

# Introduction

The improvement of school pedagogy has been a constant concern receiving special attention in educational research and developments. However, there appears to be a big gap between current educational research insights and classroom practice. To what extent can we say that educational practices have been decisive to produce “a just, inclusive, democratic, and imaginative future”? And if not, why is that so? Explanations for the gap between what education is and what it should be are various. (Jiménez Raya, M. & Vieira, F. *Enhancing Autonomy in Language Education: A Case-Based Approach to Teacher and Learner Development*. Apple Books.)

The focus of any research is to understand reality for its own sake or different motives, but it is primarily intended to intervene in given contexts to improve them or bring about some change. Similarly, educational research based on different experiences with study subjects seeks to reduce the gap between knowledge and praxis. Hence, the *Annual Conference on Formative Research on EFL* that took place in November 2019 sought to embrace this mission of studying the reality of the various contexts in which language learning takes place in the light of the current theoretical knowledge to validate, in some way, some of the practices or critically analyze some of the theories. The University students reported different lines of the then ongoing research, their main concerns about and contributions to studying language learning and teaching, and their underlying pedagogies and epistemologies.

One of the participating groups' concerns was finding out the identity development of teacher trainees as they recapitulate their formative process

with the practicum. How do they mold their identities into what language teachers need to exemplify in specific contexts? Such molding parts from the reality out there in schools and other settings where language learning takes place. The fundamental question here would be, “Are we ready and prepared enough to assume language teaching intricacies and challenges far and beyond the romantic backing of all the theories and knowledge acquired during the years of our professional training?”

It is on the same mission and concern from the initial question that another group of researchers envisioned the creation of a friendly town that promotes the development of life skills mediated by English learning following project-based learning’s principles. Accordingly, like a real town, social, economic, and political issues have some bearing on education. Friendly Town (FT), a project created and implemented in Cajicá, seeks to provide a space for immersion outside the regular formative process and subsidize learning, especially for low-income students from public schools. As an immersion program, the project seeks to develop different skills, ranging from educational rights to those needed for life.

The fruits of reflective thinking and teaching are innumerable but mainly in search of solutions to challenges in the teaching profession, the reason for which another paper proposes the need to forge a national identity through contextualized development of children’s literature. The fundamental concern here is, how can we speak to the Colombian children about all their circumscribing realities using another language? Will it not be a sort of bilingual approach to educational literacy, cultural literacy, and language development?

Coordinating learning inclusion and language teaching, two students from UNIMINUTO, July Viviana Castro Gaona and Elvis del Rosario Eljadue Fonseca, propose the inclusion of students with special needs, specifically those with Asperger syndrome and visual impairment, into language training. The authors are concerned about the absence of inclusive language methodologies for the formative process of students with special educational needs (SEN). Even so, the study seeks to strengthen

## Introduction

pedagogical reflections on this delicate area and recommend some didactical practices to attend to such students.

In this discussion, lecturers did not fall behind. Kelly Torres de la Hoz and Sebastián Concha Vargas, professors at UNIMINUTO, propose team teaching as a pedagogical tool and strategy to motivate the teaching and learning of a foreign language. Accordingly, team teaching promotes a joint reflection on the professional practice and becomes an ingredient to in-service teacher development. Concerted efforts in university teaching might result in solutions to challenges different contexts pose.

Another paper highlights the importance of people becoming more humane in their interactions with others. The author emphasizes the role of reflection as applied to teaching. Hence, to make for this vacuum between knowledge base and praxis, the paper recommends reflective teaching not only for teacher trainees but also for in-service teachers. Reflection is not only a high-order epistemological skill to be developed by novice and experienced language professionals but also a formative metacognitive skill that must be encouraged in academia.

Area still under development in different umbrella terms such as content-based, content and language integrated, interdisciplinary content teaching, project-based learning, among others, have allured Laura Natalia Orozco Bravo. This author envisions the use of English in an interdisciplinary area of enterprise and organizational communication for a common goal: productivity. In this kind of enterprise, Web 2.0 becomes an essential tool to promote assertive organizational communication within companies' constant transformation and innovation.

In the same line of thought, it is construed that speaking a language is different from communicating. Communication among workers demands other skills in the realm of values and cultural etiquette needed to relate as human beings or be more humane. This document proposes creating environments that promote respect, harmony, and fairness for easy and assertive communication. The group considers social media a tool for promoting the understanding and communicational wellbeing of the different subjects involved in the same project or mission.

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In short, there is no one straight cut solution to all the academic cum professional challenges in the area of epistemological pursuit and knowledge exchange. Reflections and studies into new learning and teaching methods that adjust to different contexts and their needs abound and are still underway.

**Thomas Ndonyo Osoro**

# Scheduling

## November 6th

### Opening ceremony

**Plenary session:** Safe Speaking Environments—What? Why?

**Speaker:** Yenny Jimenez. Cambridge University Press.

**Place:** Valmaría Auditorium V202 **Time:** 9:30-10:30 am

**Current sessions:** Research reports and pedagogical experiences

**Place:** Valmaría Auditoriums **Time:** 11-12 pm

**Plenary session:** Tackling Native Speaker Myth: Nest vs. Non-Nest

**Speaker:** Jermaine McDougald. Universidad de la Sabana

**Place:** Valmaría Auditorium V202 **Time:** 2:00-3:00 pm

**Current sessions:** Research reports and pedagogical experiences

**Place:** Valmaría Auditorium V202 **Time:** 3:15-5:00 pm

## November 7th

**Plenary session:** Self-regulation in Action: From Principles to Applications

**Speaker:** Liliana Cuesta. Universidad de la Sabana

**Place:** Valmaría Auditorium V202 **Time:** 8:30-9:30 am

**Current sessions:** Research reports and pedagogical experiences

**Place:** Valmaría Auditoriums **Time:** 9:30-10:30 am



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**Plenary session:** Demonumentalizing Research in ELT

**Speaker:** Adriana Castañeda. Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios

**Place:** Valmaría Auditorium V202 **Time:** 2:00-3:00 pm

**Poster session:** Presentation of Research Proposals

**Place:** Valmaría Hall **Time:** 3:30-5:00 pm

## **November 8th**

**Plenary session:** Interculturality and Rurality: Where Do They Meet?

**Speaker:** Bertha Ramos. Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia

**Place:** Valmaría Auditorium V202 **Time:** 8:30-9:30 am

**Current sessions:** Research reports and pedagogical experiences

**Place:** Valmaría Auditoriums **Time:** 9:30-10:30 am

**Poster session:** Presentation of Research Proposals

**Place:** Valmaría Hall **Time:** 11:00 – 12:00 pm

**Workshop sessions:** Learning and reflective activities

**Place:** Valmaría Auditoriums **Time:** 2:00-3:00 pm

**Plenary session:** Responsabilidad Social en la empresa, el Estado, la academia y la sociedad civil

**Speaker:** Muteba de la Haya. Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios

**Place:** Valmaría Auditorium V202 **Time:** 3:00-4:00 pm

**Closing:** Cultural activity

**Place:** Valmaría Hall **Time:** 4:00-4:30 pm

# Critical Incidents Informing about Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Identity Construction in their Final Teaching Practicum

**Yeny Lucía Rincón Duarte<sup>1</sup>**  
**Daniela Alexandra Yepes González<sup>2</sup>**

## Introduction

Pre-service teachers experience challenging situations when they start teaching English at schools, as they face new and complex realities, particularly when they assume their roles as teachers while coping with critical incidents permeating their practices. According to Brookfield (1990), “a critical incident is any unplanned and unanticipated event that occurs during class, outside class or during a teacher’s career but is vividly remembered” (p. 84).

Researchers have studied pre-service teachers’ identity construction upon reflection of experiences and interactions during the teaching

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practicum (Fajardo, 2013). Teachers struggle to cope with students' attitudes, behavior, and characters, which may cause trouble inside the class and the school (Peñaloza Villamizar, 2017). Thereby, when EFL pre-service teachers enter the classroom in the Colombian context during their final practicum, they experience different feelings such as confusion because of their own beliefs about teaching colliding with the reality of the teaching practicum and frustration because they do not know how to handle this unexpected situation.

## **Research Question**

What do critical incidents inform about pre-service teachers' teaching identity construction in the final teaching practicum?

## **Research Objectives**

### General objective

To analyze what pre-service teachers' critical incidents inform about their teaching identity construction during their final teaching practicum.

### Specific objectives

- To identify pre-service teachers' critical incidents when facing the final teaching practicum.
- To understand the role of pre-service teachers' critical incidents in constructing their teaching identity when facing the final teaching practicum.

## **Justification**

This study will benefit three different aspects: setting, participants, and researchers. Concerning the setting, this study will reflect on pre-service teachers' identity construction, as this goes beyond personal experiences, intrapersonal factors, and technical dimensions of teaching (Flores & Day, 2006; Izadinia, 2013). It also has to do with those challenging situations

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embedded in teaching practices and how they become a key in identity construction processes. In the same way, thanks to this project, participants can also reflect upon their practices and how they perceive themselves as language teachers by acknowledging the role of critical incidents in constructing their teaching identity. Finally, for the researchers, this project represents an opportunity to understand the implications of teaching practices in pre-service teacher's identity construction and how these reflections can prepare the researchers for their future performance as EFL teachers in the final teaching practicum.

### Theoretical framework

#### Identity

The construction of identity as an interpersonal process happens when subjects reflect upon their thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, decision-making, and personal experiences, creating their perception of reality according to each context, such as their identity as pre-service teachers. This influences pre-service teacher decision-making regarding their roles as actual teachers, their students' needs, interests, and particular contexts. In this sense, identity is shaped and reshaped depending on different factors such as context, experiences, and interaction. Besides, identity constitutes a dynamic and ongoing process (Beijaard *et al.*, 2004; Flores & Day, 2006) involving interpretation and reinterpretation of those experiences as one lives through them (Kerby, 1991). These experiences define who we are and who we want to become through time and space during our lives; those lived experiences shape our beliefs and perceptions of reality and, consequently, our identities along this transformative process.

#### Critical Incidents

Critical incidents have been studied from different fields; one of them has been teacher education. According to Tripp (1993), critical incidents are those unplanned situations a teacher faces inside the classroom. Their main characteristic is their relevance to each specific individual. Despite being

called 'critical,' these events are not strictly negative; there are positive critical incidents relevant to each participant's perception. These events or situations have a strong meaning in each participant's perception of his/her reality; therefore, their importance relies on the significance of that moment in the individual's life. We decided to study pre-service teachers' critical incidents in the final teaching practicum because these pedagogical practices are full of several challenging experiences for the participants that trigger reflection processes in which their thoughts, beliefs, and opinions change constantly.

### Final Teaching Practicum

It is commonly agreed that practice plays a vital role in constructing the meaning of teaching (Beijaard *et al.*, 2004; Farrell, 2013). These authors consider that there may also be critical periods for preservice teachers' identity formation, which relates to what Fajardo and Miranda (2015) further state "pre-service teachers exhibited positive and stable identities as they constructed good relationships with pupils and the institution they worked at" (p. 339). Therefore, the great relevance of analyzing pre-service teachers' identity construction during their final practicum.

## Method

### Research design

The research design meant to answer our research question: What do critical incidents inform about pre-service teachers' teaching identity construction in the final teaching practicum? This section explains the type of study, participants, setting, data collection instruments, and procedures. Ethical issues concerning this study are laid out at the end.

### Research approach

This study follows a qualitative paradigm since its objective is to analyze what pre-service teachers' critical incidents inform about their teaching

## Critical Incidents Informing about Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Identity Construction in their Final Teaching Practicum

identity construction during their final teaching practicum. Jackson *et al.* (2007) stated that qualitative research encloses social matters that cannot be measured by numeric data. Furthermore, qualitative inquiry aims to understand the meaning of human action by describing and analyzing essential features of social or human experience. It is also useful to provide insights about specific contexts and their individuals. Therefore, our study has a qualitative paradigm because for it is necessary to identify pre-service teachers' critical incidents when facing the final teaching practicum and consequently understand the role of pre-service teachers' critical incidents in the construction of their teaching identity.

### Research type

This research was a case study in which we paid particular attention to the context and its participants. Yin (1984) defines the case study research method as an “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (p. 23). For us, it was a determining factor to study the phenomenon taking place in a real-life context, in this case, focusing on the critical incidents, daily life experiences, and challenging moments faced by pre-service teachers during their final teaching practicum. According to Baxter and Jack (2008),

**Case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. (p. 544)**

Bearing in mind that our main objective was to analyze what pre-service teachers' critical incidents inform about their teaching identity construction during their final teaching practicum, a case study allowed us to collect data regarding this phenomenon through different instruments. Specifically, we carried out a descriptive case study. According to Lambert and Lambert (2012), “the goal of qualitative descriptive studies is a comprehensive

summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals” (p. 25). We selected this approach to interpreting data because the final teaching practicum is an everyday experience in which pre-service teachers interact within their teaching contexts and take advantage of the diverse processes, enriching them at different levels of the personal and professional dimensions.

Our study is essential to a comprehensive summary of events and experiences in pre-service teachers’ daily practices that embodies the most relevant aspects challenging them, inside and outside their classrooms. Consequently, we will describe the critical incidents emerging in the final teaching practicum and what they inform about pre-service teachers’ identity construction. Hence, qualitative instruments will be used to collect, analyze, and categorize data as the participants reflect upon the identity construction processes taking place during their teaching practices in the final practicum.

## Setting

This research was carried out during the final practicum of the Modern Languages Program at Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia. This practicum is related to classes that participants had to give in different public schools throughout the city, specifically high schools. Pre-service teachers must attend the school they are assigned to for 16 weeks in the 10th semester of their undergraduate program. They must stay at the school during the morning shift (8-10 hours). The academic load in both languages, English and Spanish, is organized by the managers of each school. Pre-service teachers need to design lesson plans, teach specific English and Spanish topics, and manage the classrooms assigned to them. Students in those institutions are from 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and their ages range between 12 to 18 years old. Most of the students live in low-income neighborhoods; some of these communities have specific characteristics such as an insecure environment, poor unfavorable conditions to live, insufficiency of basic utilities, and most of these schools are specialized in academic education.

## Critical Incidents Informing about Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Identity Construction in their Final Teaching Practicum

### Data collection

Primary and secondary instruments were used to collect the necessary data for this study. In the first place, we used pre-service teachers' artifacts. According to Ormrod (2005), "Children's and teachers' artifacts (for example, students' short stories, lab reports, class notes; teachers' syllabi, handouts, quizzes) provide equally viable connections to real-world classroom contexts" (p. 213). For this study, pre-service teachers' artifacts were the handbooks they gave to their school teachers in which they make comments and annotations regarding pre-service teachers' performance in three different moments during the final teaching practicum. The information provided in these handbooks helps to get a glimpse of the progress pre-service teachers had in the practicum and how school teachers perceive them along this process.

The second instrument was pre-service teacher's audio journals, which were also the primary data gathering source. To elicit data about the critical incidents experienced by pre-service teachers during the final practicum, participants' audio journals constituted an essential means to record those meaningful moments and the participants' reflections upon their lived experiences. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) affirm that journals are "data that participants are asked to write in order to collect their personal insights and reflections on an event, practice, concept, phenomenon, and so on" (p. 36). Hence, pre-service teachers' audio journals provided valuable data for this study, as participants were required to describe their lived experiences at school during the final practicum regarding those meaningful critical incidents, whether positive or negative. Additionally, participants let us hear their voices on their reflections about what those critical incidents meant for them as human beings and actual teachers. These audio journals were recorded and sent via WhatsApp to the researchers in three moments: at the beginning, middle, and end of the practicum.

In the same way, a focus group discussion was implemented as a secondary instrument to validate and support data collected from the previous instruments. According to Denscombe (2007, as cited in Dilshad & Latif, 2013), "focus groups consist of a small group of people who are brought together by a trained moderator (the researcher) to explore



attitudes and perceptions, feelings and ideas about a topic” (p. 192). Hence, a focus group discussion was used for gathering information on collective views and the meaning behind them (Gill *et al.*, 2008) regarding significant critical incidents they faced during their final teaching practicum.

## Sampling

The participants for this study are Modern Languages students in the tenth semester, whose ages range between twenty-one and twenty-nine years old. They are in the final practicum, in which pre-service teachers go to a school to teach English and Spanish classes during a whole semester. It should be highlighted that pre-service teachers have had teaching experiences in previous semesters before this final practicum. However, the teaching experiences in the final practicum are longer and more complex than the previous ones, as pre-service teachers spend more time at school teaching and interacting with the community.

## Data Analysis Methodology

Grounded theory will allow us to analyze participants’ experiences, beliefs, and thoughts about their performance in the final teaching practicum and collect information about those pre-service teachers’ critical incidents that permeate the EFL classroom and what they inform about their teaching identity construction (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Concerning the methodology for analyzing the elicited data, we decided to follow the procedures proposed by grounded theory.

## Initial Findings

So far, the first data collection instrument, the audio journals, has been applied; therefore, most of the initial findings have been related to detecting patterns among the participants’ elicited data. Based on the data provided by the participants, we can conclude that critical incidents inform that identity construction depends on the context, as supported by Burr (2003), Lengeling (2016), and Norton (1997), who affirm that there is

## **Critical Incidents Informing about Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Identity Construction in their Final Teaching Practicum**

a closed relationship between identity and context. For instance, identity is context-dependent and context-producing and is re-shaped via social and cultural exchange. The sub-patterns were selected according to Johnston *et al.* (2002), for whom the context has social, cultural, and political dimensions. We used this concept to create the sub-patterns for our study. Pre-service teachers' critical incident experiences were categorized within those specific contexts in which the social one has to do with students, teachers, and administrative approval, the cultural one deals with students' background and parents' beliefs, and the political one is related to school rules, policies, and regulations. As this is an ongoing project, the final results will be presented shortly.

### **Initial Conclusions and Further Implications**

The conclusion we discussed so far is that critical incidents inform that social, cultural, and political contexts shape and reshape pre-service teachers' teaching identity during the final practicum. As the pre-service teachers are constantly in a particular context, which is the final teaching practicum at public schools, they face challenging situations. Due to the nature of that context, they go through several critical incidents that change their perceptions, beliefs, and thoughts of their role, implications, and the teaching itself; therefore, they are continuously re-shaping themselves as future language teachers. Some implications that we have found are that universities must check on school contexts where pre-service teachers are going to carry out their final teaching practicum. School teachers, parents, and school staff must be aware of the relevance of the final teaching practicum experience for pre-service teachers' teaching identity, while pre-service teachers need to be reflective beyond classroom practices.

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# Friendly Town: Developing Life Skills by Learning English as a Foreign Language

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## Introduction

In recent years, there have been different discussions regarding how learning and teaching English as a foreign language (hereafter EFL) processes are impacted by social, economic, and political factors and how these factors may interfere with education development. Therefore, the government of Colombia has claimed the necessity to propose and advance bilingual education policies in Colombia (MEN, 2014). Various projects were created for students across the country to participate in learning an L2, involving not only students but also teachers and stakeholders.

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## Friendly town: developing life skills through the learning of english as a foreign language

Accordingly, the local project Friendly Town (FT) in Cajicá, Cundinamarca, is proposed as a non-formal bilingual immersion program, which favors low-income students from six public schools of the area and exposes them to an EFL exchange for three months. The private Newman School and the Cajicá Town Hall created this program as a non-profit opportunity for children. After some observations and inactive participation in classes, we identified a couple of education implications that may interfere with learning a second language, but they do not necessarily have a negative impact. The researchers understood that the project does not only allow mere knowledge advancement in EFL, but also provides students with an excellent opportunity to improve their life skills. However, students did not have broad exposure to contextualized materials. In summary, this action research project is being conducted in the FT with the support of UniPanamericana University. It seeks to provide a theoretical and practice analysis based on creating and implementing four life skills-based non-authentic materials and analyzing their impact on the pupil's EFL reading skills.

The FT project seeks to connect different social environments in the participants, allowing them to learn English and develop a wide variety of skills, including educational and life skills. The development of life skills in bilingual education and immersion experiences has not been sufficiently studied in the foreign language teaching and learning literature. This project seeks to link the development of these skills through non-authentic digital material (life tales) for teaching and learning English and the immersion experience to encourage students' skills that may be applied both to solving classroom conflicts and to the everyday social context through a second language.

Taking this into consideration, the objectives of this action research project are:

*General objective:* To analyze the impact of creating and implementing digital learning materials (life tales) on the development of life skills through EFL reading on third-grade students of the FT bilingual immersion project.

*Specific objectives:* (a) To design a series of digital stories that will enable students to understand life skills through second language learning; (b) to identify the motivation levels of students starting from the implementation of the teacher-design materials; (c) to characterize the students' behavior in facing situations of coexistence in another language, in this case, English as a foreign language.

## **Theoretical framework**

For conducting this research, it was essential to review the different analyses that other authors have performed regarding the main concepts that underpin this study. Hence, the three principal theoretical constructs are *English as a Foreign Language*, *Life Skills*, and *Materials Development*. The following section explains every concept in detail and its relevant support.

### **English as a Foreign Language**

English has become the *lingua franca* used for social and linguistic exchange and due to economic and business factors. Therefore, to train competitive professionals globally, Colombia has promoted bilingual programs such as the National Bilingual Program, created in 2004 and projected until 2019 (MEN, 2004). However, the program was replaced in 2014 by the English National Program "Colombia Very Well," which is planned to be consolidated as state policy by 2025 (MEN, 2014). It is of paramount importance to understand that English learning in Colombia is delineated in a context where the language is not official and does not enjoy national prestige. In addition, the language is not used by most citizens and does not play a predominant role in their daily lives (Broughton *et al.*, 2003), which means that English in the country is learned as a foreign language (EFL).

### **Reading Skills**

The development of language skills in learning a foreign language has been a topic of discussion for several years. According to Gamboa (2017), many years ago, reading was considered a passive process in which a person

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reconstructs, recognizes, and builds up the meaning of a text. For this reason, reading problems were conceived as decoding problems. Bojovic (2014) explains that reading is a cognitive ability in which a person interacts with a written text; in this process, readers identify and deduct word meaning and the use of unfamiliar lexical items. The development of such reading skills then allows pupils to improve different literacy processes; nevertheless, there is constant need to guide and help them acquire a foreign language.

Consequently, reading is not just decoding information in a passive process but rather a procedure that leads readers to acquire new ideas, vocabulary, and reinforcement of the foreign language (Burchiellaro, 2013). Hence, learners play an essential role while reading because they are in charge of giving meaning to the words and grammatical structures to build new knowledge (Gamboa, 2017). Therefore, developing reading skills is a complex process that allows readers to improve their EFL skills while autonomously acquiring the content presented in reading papers. By reading texts in the target language, they develop a more profound understanding of the foreign language.

### Life skills

According to Trilling and Fadel (2009), life skills are part of the skills that any student must develop in the 21st century, along with digital literacy and learning and innovative skills. Therefore, the development of life skills has the relevance of linking personal and social skills to the realities of students' daily lives (UNICEF, 2012). Now, life skills were categorized by WHO (1999) into ten abilities: decision making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, communication and interpersonal skills, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions, and coping with stress. These ideas are linked to the holistic development of students, as it involves areas beyond the academic field, such as the students' social and personal contexts related to avoiding fails in coexistence (Abdelhalim, 2015). The inclusion of life skills becomes a paramount factor in the class, as it strengthens the academic development processes of the student and improves personal development.



## **Materials Development**

The purpose of developing materials is to facilitate learning language. According to Nikoopour and Farsani (2011), such materials need to provide language use experience, stimulate language use, or make learners discover the language for themselves. Ramos and Aguirre (2014) mention the importance of creating, designing, and developing materials to make a more inclusive educational environment; when teachers develop their material by contextualizing learners' real life, they promote meaningful learning in the students. However, Nuñez Pardo and Téllez Téllez (2009) explain that materials development demands that students experience different types of learning. Given this disagreement, teachers should consider students' motivation and attention. Thus, materials' creation, design, and development should involve the students' needs and use of language to achieve meaningful learning.

In addition, Azarnoosh *et al.* (2016) mention that in most literature on materials, the teachers are teaching and learners learning through materials. In the same way, Tolimson (2011) argues that materials can include telling stories, expressing an opinion, and textbooks; however, they should provide input. The author reveals some of the principles to achieve relevance in materials development for language teaching, but we will mention just two of them: first, materials should help learners to feel at ease with the topic; second, materials should have an impact, meaning students should become curious, interested, and attentive. As a result, materials have been present over the years, but teachers are now creating their materials intending to foster comfortable spaces and achieve meaningful learning classrooms throughout the world.

**Digital material.** Digital materials play an essential role in students' motivation, as they are part of the new age; therefore, teachers should include them in their lessons. Then, the way that teachers prepare their classes is always different; teachers have changed and, "students are different, but a lot of educational material is not." (Underwood, 2009). It is well known that the materials have been the same for many years, the old

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textbook that is useful and is boring for students has not changed. However, according to Wajszczyk (2014), the technology offers education different devices and techniques, which can be overwhelming.

On the one hand, some teachers are not very interested in changing the materials because that implies recognizing some things from other knowledge domains. On the other hand, when teachers bring digital materials for their lessons, it provides new opportunities for language teaching and learning and increases students' motivation (Rekola & Savo, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to understand that times have changed, and so should the materials used in the lessons, as students' motivation is always important for their personal development.

### Method

Action Research (AR hereafter) was selected by following a qualitative approach to analyze the impact of EFL contextualized material on the development of life skills through the students' reading skills. Therefore, following the cycle of Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1998) from Burns' perspective (2015), we stated the problem; then, a learning strategy was *planned* and the digital books, worksheets, and class lessons. After that, we implemented the pedagogical intervention as part of the *act* stage; hence, we *observed* and applied the data gathering instruments; and finally, a reflection stage took place to improve and continue with the process. This project implementation was conducted in four different English sessions with one group of FT, where each life tale was piloted and implemented along with its corresponding worksheet that allowed us as researchers to assess the process.

### Action Research Approach

To analyze the impact of non-authentic digital materials referred to as "life tales" on FT students, the authors decided to work from the perspective of qualitative research, as it facilitates the "development of the hypothesis before, during, and after data collection" (Hernández *et al.*, 2003, p. 12).

Nevertheless, different authors have conducted research projects that analyze the impact of AR in the development of social projects, such as Burns (2015), Cohen *et al.* (2013), Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988), and Lewin (1946) . Additionally, Adelman (1993) mentions that AR “gives credence to the development of powers of reflective thought, discussion, decision and action by ordinary people participating in collective research on private troubles” (p. 8). In fact, as researchers, we decided to select action research as the approach since it allowed us to take an active role in the process and participate in implementing the materials created. The cycled use of AR used was proposed by Burns (2015) since it allows us to plan, act, observe, and reflect on the phenomenon found in the classroom.

## **Population**

The population consisted of six students participating in the FT chosen by random sampling. They were 9 to 10 year-old pupils from a rural area in Cajicá; in addition, these six students come from six different Public Education Institutions in Cajicá.

## **Sample**

Figure 1 shows the samples of four life tales (digital materials) created to improve reading skills on FT students, and further, the worksheets to assess the process (Figure 2). The life tales created were the following, and the topics were related to life skills: Interpersonal relationships, effective communications, problem-solving, and coping with emotions.

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Figure 1. Life tales



Note. This figure shows the contextualized life tales  
(books as digital materials).

Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 2. Life tale-based worksheets



Note. This figure shows examples of worksheets.

Source: Own elaboration.

## Techniques and instruments

**Student artifacts.** Students usually create different products in class, such as crafts, sheets of paper, and notebook activities. This type of students' production is called artifacts that are of interest to researchers. According to Jiménez (2015), "this important instrument allowed the researcher to do a critical analysis about how effective the English learning process can be after using didactic materials designed and based on the students' own interests and their degree of appropriateness" (p. 206). Hence, the researchers will use the worksheets developed by the students as artifacts in this study.

**Field diary.** The field diaries are an essential technique in qualitative research, in which the researcher takes notes about what is happening or what happened in the observations. These field diaries are part of "structured observation" as they follow a design that allows the author to have a pattern. Though this technique may be incomprehensible for anyone other than the author, it is essential to understand that it has a reflexive validity (Mulhall, 2002) that adapts to the research method. Hence, field diaries will be used in this study to understand better the things that happened in the observations and reflect on them.

**Voice recorded interviews.** In the process of this research, there are relevant aspects related to the information we get that is important to analyze through voice recorders as, Al-Yateem (2012) says, "it is a powerful way to understand people" (p. 31). It is indispensable in qualitative research because it allows the researchers to have the most extensive information and use it whenever necessary (Hayes & Mattimoe, 2002). Therefore, we decided to record the participants to have a wide variety of data.

## Data analysis

The data analysis procedure will take place at the end of the implementation of the project. As this is an in-development project, the data analysis has not been entirely conducted. Nevertheless, the data gathered allowed us to select the approach to conducting such analyses, and the Grounded Approach was selected (Murray & Chamberlain, 1999)

as well as the color-coding technique (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to group the data, to classify similarities, to recognize possible patterns, and, finally, to name the categories of data analysis. Once the data is directed through these processes, the researchers will support each category with several excerpts and analyses to understand if these digital and contextualized materials influence the pupil's life skills throughout the learning of English as a foreign language.

## **Conclusions**

As the conclusions have not been posted yet, we would like to propose the importance of discussing some pedagogical recommendations for future research: As teachers, there must be a fundamental need to contextualize materials for teaching language and content. Additionally, impacting our pupil's reading skills must be a matter of motivational strategies that allow them to understand the importance of reading as part of life development. Finally, we consider that teaching must involve the integral formation of citizens, and that is why this project has the focus for the development of life skills, which transcends beyond school and include aspects such as the personal development of the students that allow them to have good tools to face difficult situations in their daily lives both inside and outside the institutions. On top of that, developing materials should integrate the students' needs and styles of learning to enhance the interests and motivations in acquiring a foreign language. Also, materials developers must take into consideration the context in which the material is being created and implemented; it is imperative to foster the processes of teachers' materials development to make the teaching of English a fundamental and relevant axis for social development in a framework of strengthening bilingual programs in Colombia for global competitiveness.

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# Foreign Language Professors: Pedagogical and Didactic Competencies to Assist College Students with Asperger Syndrome and Visual Impairment

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## Introduction

Inclusion is a trend that must concern institutions since students with special needs can attend there. In this sense, schools and universities must have teachers with special training to attend to students who have SEN. It is necessary to prevent students feel excluded. Nevertheless, this process would be a little less complex if teachers have the knowledge and pedagogical tools to assist SEN students since it is a challenge that any teacher assumes when they have students with special needs in their classes.

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## **Foreign language professors: pedagogical and didactic competencies to assist college students with asperger syndrome and visual impairment**

At Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, inclusion is one of its main policies. For example, in its institutional policies, it is stated that the university “tends for an inclusive higher education that seeks the formation of social leaders and innovators, completely trained” (n.d., p. 12). In that sense, the current project arose as a concern for the lack of effective teaching processes to assist SEN students. Students with Asperger’s syndrome and visual impairment while learning English as a foreign language in the Bachelor English teaching as a foreign language.

In the same line, some teachers from the Bachelor claimed that even they a degree in pedagogy and teaching, they knew neither have specific training to assist that type of population. That situation can affect SEN students since they may need teachers who know different strategies and techniques to carry out a successful learning process.

Likewise, this proposal is crucial since it expects to promote awareness, inclusion, and interest in teachers who teach these students. Also, it is necessary to enrich the educational process of SEN students in terms of fairness and equality. Moreover, this proposal can be beneficial for higher education institutions, as it gives insights that would allow them to analyze proposals for developing inclusive education in the class. Thus, the purpose of this study is to strengthen the teachers’ pedagogical practices and knowledge to assist students with Asperger’s syndrome and visual impairment in the bachelor’s in foreign Language English at Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios.

## **Theoretical framework**

### Special Educational Needs

SENs are learning difficulties that show that each student has individual characteristics that make them different. However, also, those special characteristics make them unique participants in the learning process. According to Frederickson and Cline (2002), “special educational needs are taken to the outcome of an interaction between the individual

characteristics of learners and the educational environments in which they are learning” (p. 24).

As maintained by Carvajalino *et al.* (2016, pp. 61-62), there are three types of SENs:

- The individual educational needs refer to the different abilities, interests, levels, rhythms, and learning styles that mediate the learning process, before which, from a lovingly inclusive path, the teacher can become even more sensitive to the internalization that requires understanding that all students are unique, diverse. and different.
- Transitory SENs are learning difficulties in the student during schooling and demand differentiated attention and more significant educational resources than those of other peers of his age need; these can be overcome in the classroom.
- Permanent SENs are those that a person presents not only during their student period but throughout their lives, associated with intellectual, sensory disabilities, motor, perceptive, expressive, or genetic alterations. Consequently, there is an inability to perform the vital functions and relationships, requiring specialists’ attention and appropriate material to be addressed. In this category, there is visual impairment (blindness), hearing impairment (deafness), motor disability (cerebral palsy), intellectual disability, and multi-facial or associated disabilities.

**Asperger’s syndrome.** Asperger’s syndrome is considered a disorder derived from a neurological difficulty. This disorder affects different aspects such as intelligence, interaction, socialization, and communication with other people. For the American Psychiatric Association (2000), “Asperger’s Syndrome (AS) is characterized as a neurological disorder that affects children with average intelligence, affecting particularly their ability to socialize and communicate effectively with others” (p. 32).

**Visual impairment.** Students with visual difficulties present a great struggle to understand texts. Teachers must be aware that this impairment

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provokes a slow learning process. According to Dickson (2013), “students with VPD (Visual Processing Disorder) [...] experience difficulty in processing visual information. VPD has an impact on students’ learning in both literacy and numeracy” (para. 4).

### Inclusive education

Inclusive education is a fundamental aspect of education because it allows access to educational facilities to people who have disabilities, learning difficulties, or are in a vulnerable state, which implies that inclusion is a process that promotes the right to education for all, without considering any condition. For Sarto and Venegas (2009), “educational inclusion is directly related to the concept of ‘education for all,’ which aims to ensure access to basic education. It should not be assumed as a privilege of a few but as a right of all” (p. 35).

### Competencies

Competencies are composed of cognitive aspects, including the skills and abilities that people develop, allowing them to achieve goals in different fields. For Cano (2005), “the competencies contain or integrate resources (knowledge, skills, and skills), but they go beyond, orchestrating them. Therefore, we must emphasize the relevant component, the contextualized character of the competencies” (p. 20).

**Teachers’ competencies.** Teachers must be specially trained with excellent skills that allow them to impart their knowledge satisfactorily. Furthermore, through their educational practice, they can develop critical and intellectual processes to improve and acquire new competencies. According to Arnaiz (2013),

the training should be aimed at the creation of a professional who reflects on their practice within an educational organization that actively collaborates to improve their competence and that of the center and that acts as a critical intellectual of the ethical dimensions of their profession (p. 56).

## **Method**

The project was carried out based on a qualitative approach, with descriptive research, using techniques such as interviews and focus groups. These were conducted to search for information about the challenges teachers have when teaching students with special needs. On the other hand, the focus group was carried out to corroborate the information obtained from the interviews.

The following was the process conducted for the research:

First, the population was identified. It consisted of seven professors of the bachelor's in teaching English as a foreign language. Second, two interviews were designed, one for the university's First-Year Office and Inclusion Office, and the other for the participants. There was collected information about the number of SEN students in the program and if professors had had experiences with them.

Thirdly, the focus group was implemented to explore the pedagogical and didactic competencies that professors possess to help students with visual impairment and Asperger's syndrome.

## **Results**

The information was analyzed using grounded theory (Noble & Mitchell, 2016), where "categories and analytic codes developed from data" (p. 1). Four categories emerged from the analysis.

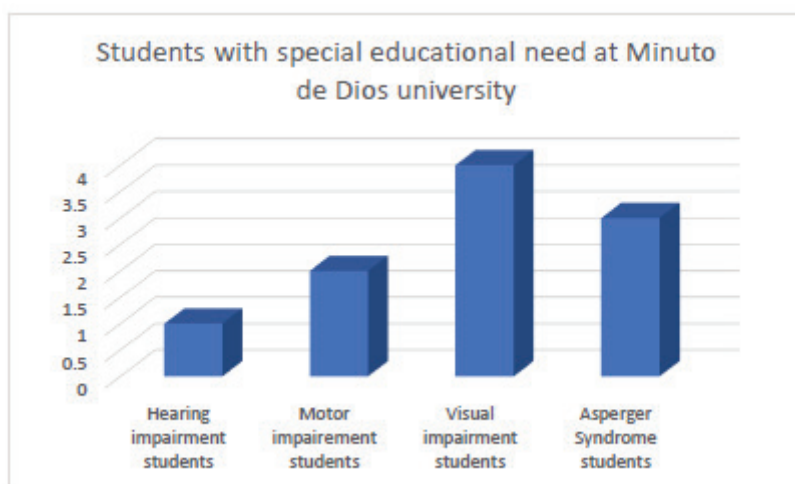
## **Teacher training**

According to the person in charge of the Inclusion Office, "At Minuto de Dios University there is a program of assistance and permanence in charge or promoting student welfare called inclusion. This program addresses physical, intellectual, autism spectrum disorder and sensory disabilities such as hearing and visual disabilities."

## Foreign language professors: pedagogical and didactic competencies to assist college students with asperger syndrome and visual impairment

Teachers stated that in their teaching experience at UNIMINUTO, they have had SEN students such as visual impairment, Asperger's syndrome, and motor disability (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Types of SEN students in foreign language undergraduate programs**



Note. Information taken from the Inclusion Office at UNIMINUTO.

Source: Own elaboration.

They also affirmed that they never received any training from the institution to attend to SEN students during their teaching training in the undergraduate program. The teachers also commented that the orientation they received in the Foreign Languages undergraduate program, in the case of having SEN students in their classrooms, was not enough to achieve teaching actions.

They said they had attended some conferences and training sessions where they superficially learned how to address them. However, there was no teacher training with a unique protocol containing strategies to deal directly with this population. Besides, it does not entail a unique and constant assistance in the classrooms to these students.



According to the First-Year Office, the support given to teachers with students with special needs in the classroom is some tools or tips for people with visual impairment. It allowed students with visual impairment to use the cell phone, record audio of the class, take pictures of the notes on the board, and suggest a screen reader called ALL READER to scan books and copies them.

Moreover, at the beginning of the year, the teachers receive a list of SEN students that they will have in their classes, and the First-Year Office gives them some strategies to put into practice with people with visual impairment, such as presenting exams with the Braille system and adapt the material.

On the contrary, there is no specific support for autism because only Inclusion Office is responsible for carrying out an academic follow-up in the subjects. However, it is not communicating with the teacher about the student's qualities. They only recommend that if the student feels uncomfortable, he must allow him to leave it.

For this reason, they affirmed that they are not sufficiently trained to attend to SEN students. Practically they empirically seek training to be able to meet the expectations of this kind of students.

## **Teaching strategies**

From their practical experience, teachers affirmed they design their methodologies or strategies to work with SEN students, such as:

- Finding a particular tutor for the student during classes.
- Seeking assistance in the Inclusion Office and always ask the student what strategies he could use to help him in his process.
- Translating the material, they will have in class with the help of a Braille printer to perform some computer exams. Using the YOUS text reader program, students can listen to the readings they propose in-class readings. People with Asperger's syndrome always seek to give clear and step-by-step instructions.

## **Foreign language professors: pedagogical and didactic competencies to assist college students with asperger syndrome and visual impairment**

- Allowing Asperger's syndrome students to ask few questions and work individually.
- Getting the group to know the classmates' condition and help without bothering them too much.
- Modifying activities according to the students' needs.

### **Teaching Competencies**

The teaching strategies described below allow teachers to develop competencies to teach English to students with special needs.

- The ability to make dynamic classes and more flexible so that students with special needs can work with the other students
- The innate search for strategies to manage the class and work with this type of population effectively.
- The capacity to observe and analyze the students' capacities to fulfill the class objectives.
- Autonomy and self-training to find necessary tools to work with students with special needs.
- Use of technological tools such as YOUS text reader and braille printers to adapt class materials.
- Awareness of delivering affordable material to visually impaired students and students with Asperger's syndrome.

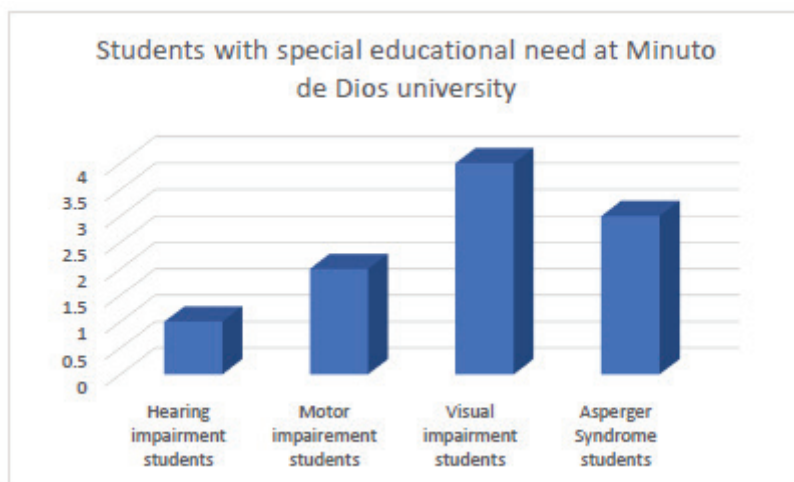
However, teachers consider that the ideal pedagogical and didactic competencies to work with these students, particularly with students with Asperger's syndrome and Visual impairment, according to them, are:

- Psycho-pedagogical competencies, since these problems are mostly seen at the health level rather than the pedagogical problem, so the ideal goal would be to integrate psychological and pedagogical disciplines.
- Creativity to adapt resources and create material according to the student's needs.

## Curricular suggestions

The teachers suggest the following strategies for the EFL Teaching undergraduate program (Figure 4):

**Figure 4. Suggestions to the EFL Teaching undergraduate program**



Note. Suggestions taken from the lecturer in the EFL Teaching undergraduate program.

Source: Own elaboration.

In general, most teachers suggested an elective course for undergraduate students focused on SENs, where they learn to develop activities and learn how to deal with these students in their teaching practicum.

Most teachers also recommended providing training where teachers learn strategies to attend to SEN students. Some others also proposed creating a research line within a research group to reflect on students with special needs, in which both SEN students and people are active participants.

## **Discussion**

The English foreign language degree program is synchronized with SEN students. The assistance mainly focuses on SEN students, while teachers receive few pieces of training to teach SEN students. According to UNESCO, "Inclusive Education implies more than integrating the student into the regular education system, it is an approach that seeks to transform educational systems and learning environments to respond to the diversity of learners, in order that all students participate" (2005, p. 23).

Moreover, teachers should acquire psycho-pedagogical and resource adaptability skills to include people with autism spectra actively in the classes and receive constant therapeutic support from the Inclusion Office.

Despite teachers' lack of knowledge and training to teach SEN students, they tend to communicate with SEN learners and accept any normal behaviors in their disorders so that they do not drop out of their classes. According to a study by Lee (2018), "[...] besides advisory and evaluation capacity to achieve the highest qualitative growth within the class. The teacher of students with special educational needs more experience and more training than regular student-teacher" (p. 202).

According to the interview with the representative of the Inclusion Office, "it is not a just telling the teacher the qualities of the SEN student, suddenly if the student feels uncomfortable and wants to leave the class, the teacher then should allow him to do so." Thus, perhaps the teacher ignores how to act out in the situation or get out of and take part in a particular protocol.

The tools provided by the First-Year Office are just a few strategies given to students for overcoming situations in class. This office only provides teachers with some guidelines, tools, or essential strategies to begin teaching and learning processes with students who present a special need for education. In the case of students with visual impairment, the teacher is told that they can use the cell phone, record an audio of the class, and take pictures of the notes on the board.

It should be noted that these types of strategies, although they are workable, they make these people look for ways of defending themselves without exerting any effort to include them directly with the teacher. This is how a transformation is sought from educational policies to eliminate this institutional gap.

## Conclusions

Reforms to educational policies, curriculums, articulation processes, diagnostic efforts, and pedagogical equipment in the institutional education project (PEI) are needed to include SEN people.


Although teachers are not fully trained to work with SEN students, they somehow look for a way to learn in a self-taught way and gradually acquire skills to help them. However, they also need to be trained to face and implement inclusive actions that impact this type of community's educational processes but have guidance from the Inclusion Office within the classes.

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# Team Teaching as a Pedagogical Tool and Motivating Teaching-Learning Strategy

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**Sebastián Concha Vargas<sup>9</sup>**

## Introduction

For years the role of the teacher and professor has had meaningful importance. The educator is considered the open door for students learning process. This teaching progress requires a great dose of multitasking, planning, grading, tutoring, assisting parents and students when difficulties or relevant matters are around the learning path. For decades, this has been a remarkable fact that is still the traditional teaching system implemented in schools and higher education institutions. Individual instruction has made an impact on the way teaching is considered adequate for students. The educator is seen as the tutor and guide of the class, which is still a reality; however, the new era of technology and

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## **Team teaching as a pedagogical tool and motivating teaching- learning strategy**

the world progress in terms of education make a great debate in new teaching methodologies and approaches to keep learners eager to learn and discover the art of new knowledge.

At Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, Individual teaching continues its progress with great results and rewards during the academic years. However, in the second semester of 2019, two professors from the Foreign Language Teaching Education program decided to reflect and observe lessons and analyze the curricula content applied in English and Phonetics third semester class sessions. Interviews to professors and students from an age range of 18 and 23 years old, target populations' types of learning and behavior based on traditional teaching methods were considered a case of study to work on team teaching method as a pedagogical tool to engage and enhance students learning progress through motivational strategies and methodologies based on actual communicative and cultural content of the curricula.

Considering the previous idea, the current presentation regarding Team Teaching as a Pedagogical Tool and Motivating Teaching-Learning Strategy results from the exploration in English and phonetics classes through different closed-form questionnaires, structured interviews, and classes checklist and opinionnaire sessions with students.

### **Theoretical framework**

#### Team teaching

Team teaching methodology started in 1954 at Harvard University. Then in 1960, the innovative idea was introduced in elementary schools in Britain. Some years later, in Chicago university, team teaching was considered an effective way for students' learning. A team-teaching background is defined as having two or more teachers who work together and provide instruction in the classroom (Dieker & Murawski, 2003). For instance, in language teaching, team teaching has been widely used in Japan and other Asian countries and recognized as an innovative method for the Ministry of



Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (Japan MEXT, 2014). This kind of teaching-learning methodology has shown that it does not only help students to learn and tutors to teach in a more secure and friendly environment and benefits students to have a primary source of emotional support. The professor has the role of a supportive partner who is there to navigate through often difficult moments during classes (Nguyen & Hudson, 2012) and contribute among other educators to widely reach professional development (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2014).

Several studies related to team teaching have supported it as an innovative pedagogical tool based on teachers' collaborative work and commitment. For instance, studies in elementary schools in Japan and Asian countries in 2017 reveal the wide use of team teaching to benefit students to gain practical and cultural experience using the language. The studies showed it started from elementary and high schools by giving native and foreign teachers equal responsibility to plan classes with cultural and practical communication to learn language skills. The planning laid on defining the roles well, organizing materials, classes, and evaluations to recognize these tools to be prepared in real contexts situations. The research revealed that the team-teaching method requires a great time in preparation of communicative activities to ensure the participation and synergy of the two professors making better choices, students could learn effectively.

Another study regarding team teaching was made in the same year 2017 in Chile in Pontificia Universidad Católica in Valparaíso. The research addressed team teaching not only helps improve English Language skills but also teachers' professional development, emotional support for students when facing learning difficulties, and more collaborative activities in class as students and educators are more encouraged to implement more group collaborative activities.

A third reference based on a different study related to reading growth was conducted in Northwest Missouri State University, where two teachers managed to increase teacher-student interaction and more individualized

instruction. The revision concluded in more detail that having two tutors in a classroom allows students to gain more personal interaction and more academic and skill growth in a shorter time because responsibilities, collaboration, and compromise are shared.

With the previous ideas, the fundamental background of this pedagogical practice refers to three research studies that proved team teaching is effective in refreshing new teaching methodologies in the classroom.

### Method

#### Type of Research

This study gathers qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research helps understand behavioral situations and why and how certain events related to behaviors occur. In addition, qualitative research supports the numerical representations collected from the questionnaires, checklist, and opinionnaires sessions with the students in Phonetic and English classes.

#### Participants

There were three class groups: Phonetics I with 22 students, Phonetics II with 20 students, and Pre-Intermediate English B1 I with 21 students. The sample for this study was 63 students in total. They were considered for this project once the project was socialized with the sample groups. Students eagerly showed their motivation to work on the class content with the method proposed.

#### Procedures

The professors attended to the different groups and developed the planned classes together. In Pre-Intermediate English B1, each day had a different ability to practice and reinforce. The professors took turns to check the book exercises, and the other professor reinforced the content of the class with games and additional activities related to the ability practiced. In Phonetics, for instance, classes were developed with theory content

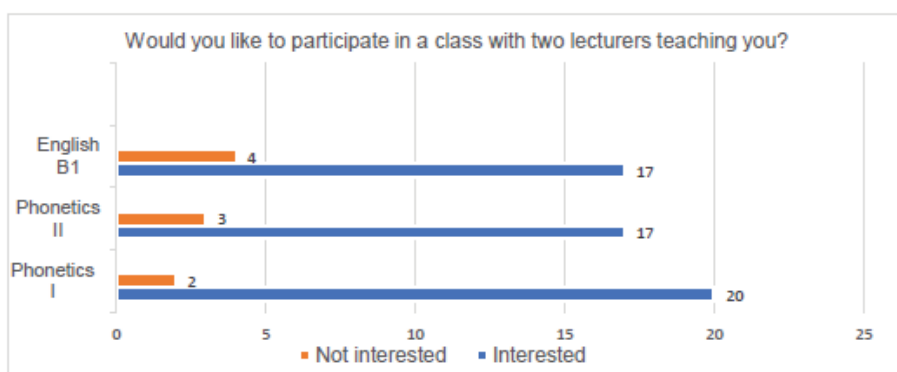
and then with common life examples that confirmed the how and why the sound, articulation, and manner work the way they work. Other classes were divided into working group sessions to support transcription, pronunciation, and accent.

When the English and phonetics class sessions were about to end, students participated in the data collection that contained recorded interviews, questionnaires about their learning process and attitude in the class, and their opinion about the type of class they had and how they felt.

## Results

The outcomes from a good time in observations, interviews with students and professors, visits, and excellent planning in materials, test, activities, and schedules were reflected on testimonials of students who got the benefit of the idea of having two tutors in one class (Figure 5) since this is an opportunity, they do not have on regular classes. Interviews showed that the professor is explaining that the other tutor is making sure students are following the objectives of the class.

**Figure 5. Questionnaire to get students' opinions about classes with two lecturers**

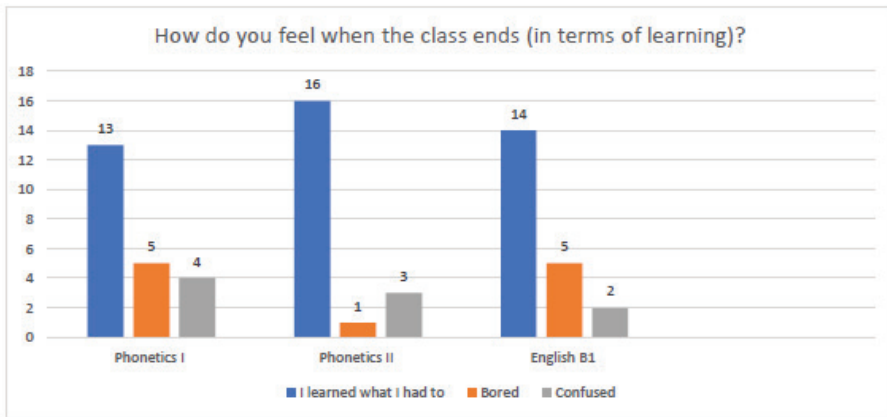


Note. Questionnaire to know students' interest in having two lecturers for the class.

Source: Own elaboration.

In the beginning, it was a period of adjustment for the sample group, but with the orientations and class development, students trusted the process by having open communication to talk about the highs and lows aspects of their learning process (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. Opinionnaire sessions for students**



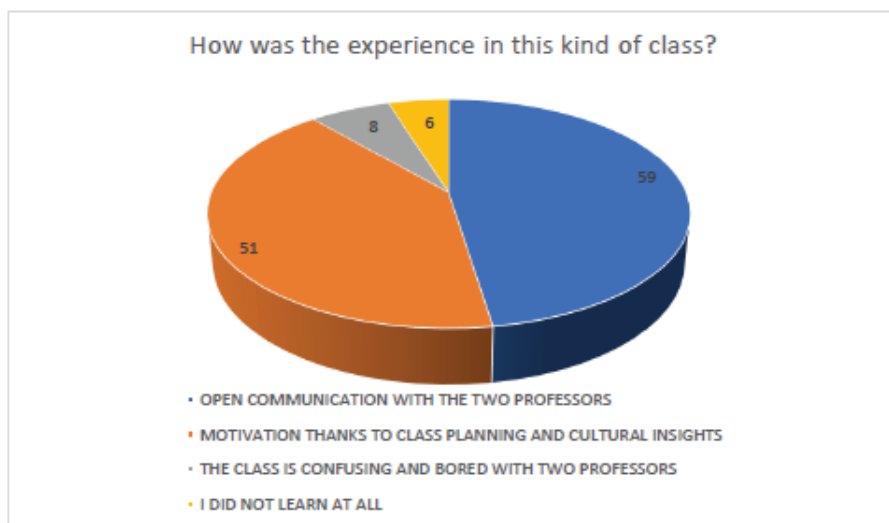
Note. Students' opinions about the end of the class.

Source: Own elaboration.

Motivation increased since the curricula were transformed into a more cultural and communicative plan to follow. The interest in learning from actual teaching-learning experiences through games, role plays, debates, tutoring, and practice at the same time made more progress in a shorter time within the class since difficulties were addressed immediately by counting on the definition of the teachers' role (Figure 7).

This pedagogical practice benefited students and the professors interested in breaking the traditional paradigm of teaching, risking time and effort to make pedagogical practice more meaningful academically and professionally.

**Figure 7. Interviews with students at the end of the pedagogical intervention**



Note. Students experiences at the end of the intervention.

Source: Own elaboration.

## Conclusion

This study was conducted for over four months, which required professors' schedules and times arrangement for class planning and evaluation design, grading discussions, and feedback with students. It also requested good time management for decision-making for all the instruments used in this project to be analyzed and interpreted to understand the path of this mission.

Once the project started with the classes, previous interviews were made to confirm how they felt about having two professors in the class. Expectations were high, and even though other students were not as optimistic as others because they felt observed, cooperation and collaboration were seen as an excellent big step to open new doors toward innovation in language teaching and learning.

Results also showed that individual teaching methods offer one professor's expertise; however, team teaching could provide better time

management in tutoring sessions within the class and more collaborative work among the students in the class. Additionally, this study showed that motivation to learn not only depends on the students; this part also needs the role of the professor, the class planning, Open communication in and out of the class, and authentic cultural resources that, combined with the technology use could benefit the student community in language learning.

It is suggested that this kind of good practices are recognized and promoted by the academic programs of Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios to innovate not only in technology in education but also new tools and methods to keep going with the critical role of the educator in the learning process of the student and teamwork. This study strongly recommends that the languages program could manage professors' schedules to plan classes that promote teamwork and cooperative role models within the class.

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# Reflective Practice: A Tool for Teacher Training

Juan Camilo Fonseca Parra<sup>10</sup>

During the first experience of a preservice teacher, who had just started discovering how big the field of language teaching was, there was a mixed reaction to the situation given that the topic chosen for that day was a complex one and he did not have good knowledge about it even though he had studied it at university. He had been convinced that it was easy for him and his students to go through it since he used it perfectly well in oral production. However, he had not reflected on the fact that explaining a language topic was different from using it. (A field note entry of a pre-service teacher).

## Introduction

This paper parts from one of the concerns of the students' research group *Language, Teachers & Identity*, which has been working on this topic since 2017 when a group of researchers carried out a study from UNIMINUTO to determine the link between pre-service teachers' practicum, beliefs, and knowledge they had about English Language teaching.

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In that sense, the researchers felt that it was necessary to have a tool that would allow students to recognize the areas in which they made mistakes. Hence, this literature review analyzes the concept of reflective practice, its definitions, and some ways to develop this activity to change pre-service teachers' teaching performance by using this tool.

### Theoretical framework

#### Reflective practice

It is worthwhile defining what *reflective practice* is before discussing its contribution to the teacher training process. On the same note, it should be borne in mind that its interpretation has dramatically changed since it was first defined by Dewey (1933), who considered *reflective practice* as a systematic form of problem-solving. However, as time passed, it became more specific.

Although its early definition was limited, Schön (1983) introduced two terms in the 1980s: *reflection-in-action* and *reflection-on-action*. These terms would help other authors improve their definition of *reflective practice* in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century scholars. It starts from considering the *reflective practice* as a process that evaluates "various aspects of their professional expertise" (Wallace, 1991, p. 3) to defining it—Ashcroft (1992, as cited in De Ville, 2010, p. 2), O'Connor and Diggins (2002), and Ruth-Sahd (2003)—as an intellectual activity that allows teachers to answer questions such as why do you do that in your class? And how do you do this in class?

The 21st-century authors consider the space for reflecting on the practice as appropriate to reveal the theory to which it applies. Accordingly, *reflective practice* is discernment and all the professional values that contribute to positive change among teachers who dedicate their time to think of their teaching process. Similarly, they view *reflective practice* as "based on a perceived concern or challenge derived from enacting a lesson plan and, through a multi-step process, results in modifications of the teacher's practices." (Sibbald, 2008, p. 12), which presents the idea that reflective



practice is not just the action of answering the questions mentioned above. However, it requires a scaffolded meta-cognitive process developed by the pre-service teachers that foster them to plan different kinds of activities and new methodologies to improve the proceeding lessons keeping in mind the students' background.

In more recent years, there have been some authors that solidify similar ideas, such as Bozu and Imbernon-Muñoz (2009), Farrell (2012), and Lupinski *et al.* (2012). They define *reflective practice* as a type of reflection that involves going back to the lessons taught to explain why they do the things in the way that they do in their classroom, to help improve their future. Additionally, it was also considered that *reflective practice* "compels teachers to describe, to analyze and evaluate and to use the resulting insights to improve practice" (Sellars, 2012, p. 462). It also implies that teachers "take on more personal responsibility for their classroom decision-making and, when deciding on specific aspects of theory practice which they want or need to develop, not looking for teaching methods developed by others." (Farrell, 2013, p. 31) all this because of the meta-cognitive process of establishing new methods created by these teachers who have reflected carefully on their previous practice.

### Reflective activities

Regarding how pre-service teachers develop this process, it has been found that there are some activities to develop this process, such as portfolios (Bozu & Imbernon-Muñoz, 2009) and 360-degree-video (Walshe & Driver, 2018). According to Bozu and Imbernon-Muñoz (2009), portfolios allow teachers to analyze the practice and draw conclusions about the weaknesses and strengths during their teaching process. Portfolios also provide teachers with an ethical responsibility for their professional development.

On the other hand, Walshe and Driver (2018) used a 360-degree-video video because most pre-service teachers needed a tool that allowed them to express what they felt during the class and see their teaching process

from a different perspective. This sort of self-reflection where trainees are recorded during a teaching episode and subsequently watch this back to scaffold their ability to learn about and from their practice helped them, since it allowed them to be a viewer of their class.

### Method

We decided to search papers published in the last five years in four databases: Proquest, ScienceDirect, Ebsco, and ERIC, to select the reviewed articles. There were 25 articles on the topic, from where 15 of them were selected and included in this final paper. The analysis of the 15 texts was done using a comparative table in an Excel document. All the documents were summarized with their main key words, objectives, methodology, audience, and results registered, which helped the researchers understand and solidify similar concepts developed about *reflective practice*.

### Discussion

The definitions of reflective practice in teachers' education help teachers improve their teaching skills. Hence, different authors converge on the concept of reflective practice as a process involving various stops and assessments regarding the practice to propose alternative perspectives that will change the very practice (O'Connor & Diggins, 2002, p. 16). Similarly, the process above allows pre-service teachers to reflect on their teaching process and so have the opportunity to learn from experience (Lane *et al.*, 2014, p. 482).

It has been analyzed that the definition of reflective practice has been drastically changing since it appeared in the field of teachers' training when Dewey (1933) first mentioned it. As time passed, some other scholars made it more specific because each profession has its unique way of reflecting the practice. In this way, it is essential to mention that a remarkable book such as *The Reflective Practitioner* (Schön, 1983) provides two relevant processes that promote the reflective practice process in teacher education: *reflection-in-action* and *reflection-on-action*. There are key terms that allowed

pre-service teachers to analyze their performance while teaching and, in the same way, drastically improve it for future lessons.

In recent years, Farrell (2013) has become an essential person in reflective practice, and his definition has made it more complex, establishing some new tools that help the process. Such tools include journals, videos, reflective portfolios, and other tools that may help improve this process. Farrell (2013) has also developed a new step to the process, first established by Schön (1983) called reflection-for-action, which allows pre-service teachers to reflect while planning future lessons based on the lessons taught.

## **Conclusion**

During the bibliographical research, there is a lot of information and research that has considered the reflective practice as a fundamental process in language teaching. Despite this amount of research carried out in Colombia, it is necessary to keep using reflective practice since it allows teachers to improve their teaching skills since teachers are more aware of their own beliefs, decisions, and actions.

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# The Community Manager: Social Media within the University

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## Introduction

Today, social media have played an essential role in society since people can follow celebrities, friends, relatives, admire favorite brands, and universities and find everything they need. As Broad Band Search (2019) cited, “in 2017, people spent 135 minutes per day, or nearly two and a half hours, on social media. They can estimate that the number has now grown to 153 minutes per day” (p. 20) (Figure 8).

For this reason, companies, brands, shops, and even educational institutions have given importance to social media, to the point of creating a new field where the community manager (CM) becomes someone fundamental to the companies.

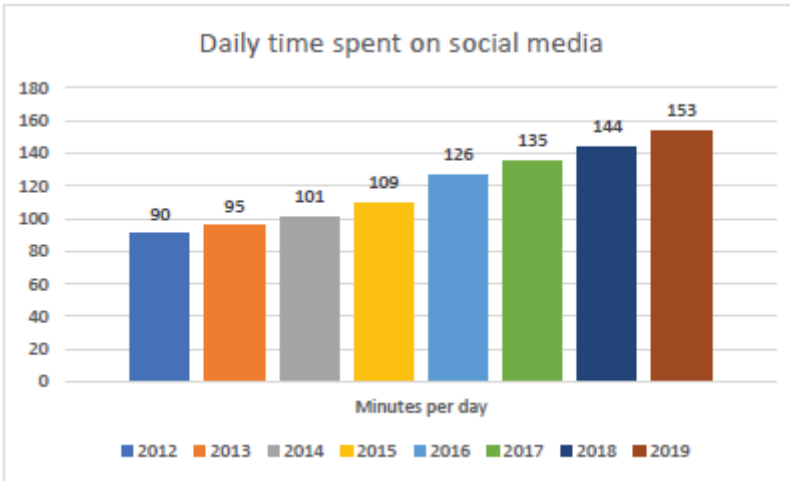
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Figure 8. Time spent on social media



Source: Broad Band Search (2019).

Different opinions can be handled through social media, but messages can be misinterpreted and generate displeasure in many people towards the entity, generating mistrust. For this reason, the CM must comply with specific characteristics and knowledge in areas such as communication and information of the company.

It is essential to know who the followers are, what they want and expect from the company to generate an efficient engagement, favoring its image more than consumers. What is sought through social media is to create loyalty.

With the effective use of social media, the CM can attract new people. These people can leave satisfactory comments in the publications and thus attract potential clients interested in the organization; a simple comment can conquer or distance the people.

## Theoretical framework

### Organizational communication (OC)

It is the communication that companies manage with their employees or work team and their clients. The OC is the actions carried out that allow receiving and transmitting information through different methods, media, and communication techniques, either internal or external, to fulfill the company's objectives (Table 1).

**Table 1. Definitions of organizational communication**

Year	Author	Concept
2018	Montoya-Robles	"The OC is understood as a set of techniques and activities aimed at facilitating and streamlining the flow of messages that occur among the organization's members or between the organization and its environment, or to influence the opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of the organization's internal and external audiences."
2013	Marín	"Communication in organizations is how members gather relevant information about their organization and the changes that occur in it."

Note. Definitions of OC given in the last years.

Source: Own elaboration.

Both the achievements and the failures of a company are related to it because the objective of the OC is to improve the performance of the work team through strategies, productivity, and internal and external relationships already established.

In addition, OC allows a correct development of the company's internal activities to have an optimal work climate. It also maintains effective

and efficient management because it grants the knowledge of the achievements and solves the difficulties that may arise in the company or a specific department.

There are two types of OC: internal and external, which facilitate the fulfillment of the objectives and the relations of the company; internal Communication is the activities carried out by companies to create and maintain strong relationships between their members through the ICT they manage working with Endomarketing. External communication manages the B2B or B2C Marketing that allows preserving the external relations of the company. For Andrade (as cited in Montoya, 2018, p. 9). Table 2 summarizes the definition:

**Table 2. Types of organizational communication**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Concept</b>
2018	Andrade, as cited in Montoya	"Internal communication is the set of activities carried out by any organization for the creation and maintenance of good relations with and among its members using different communication models that keep them informed, integrated, and motivated to contribute with their work to the achievement of organizational objectives."
2018	Andrade as cited in Montoya	"External communication is the set of messages issued by any organization to its different external audiences (shareholders, suppliers, customers, distributors, government authorities, the media, among others), aimed at maintaining or improving their relations with them, projecting a favorable image or promoting their products or services."

Note. Definitions of type of organization given by Andrade.

Source: Own elaboration.



## Community Manager

Before defining the CM, it is necessary to define who the CM is. This person studies and directs the necessary strategies to communicate with the company's audience; manages all the company's communities and building their loyalty through the different social media; connects with the public and at the same time attracts potential clients who are interested in obtaining the products and services offered, and attracts companies and sponsors to make alliances (Table 3).

**Table 3. Definitions of community manager**

Year	Author	Concept
2013	Barranquero & Treviño	"A professional in charge of creating interactive communities for the company and caring for and maintaining them once created. In general terms, the purpose of the CM is to connect organizations and communities, adapting to the new language and underlying standards of Web 2.0.
2009	AERCO & Territorio Creativo	"His/her function is to establish a relationship of trust with the community of users or supporters of the brand, collect feedback from them and use it to propose internal improvements."
2014	Moreno	"The company's digital identity manager and brand ambassador to its customers and employees."

Note. Definitions of CM from different authors.

Source: Own elaboration.

The CM is both the voice of the company for the customers and the voice of the customers for the company, being also aware of the needs and desires of both, must be an "excellent communicator 2.0." and the minimum

skills to handle are “journalism, advertising, marketing or communication” (Carbellido, 2019 p. 20).

### Method

In this work, the methodology focuses on OC as an ally, the CM, a social media manager that works as a communication bridge between different entities that make up a company. In addition, the benefits and contributions that the use of new communication strategies based on social media brings to an organization are made known as positive factors.

Different types of research were used to know the importance of Web 2.0, the role of the CM, and its impact on companies; for this, it was necessary to find the definition, make an appropriate application in the research, and be able to reach the desired results. The profile of the study indicated that it is qualitative with an approach like the case study, with a design within the exploratory paradigm and cross-sectional and descriptive research.

Qualitative research involves an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world, so qualitative researchers study things in their natural environment, trying to make sense of them, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning that people (actors) give them (Duran, 2012)

Through qualitative research, facts, attitudes, values, situations presented with a community are addressed, in this case, in a work environment, like all types of organizations, how the technological resources are involved in carrying out the communicative processes. In this way, it studies if the message fulfills each characteristic that will reach the desired recipients, considering the importance of including a profile such as that of the CM in its organizational structure to improve OC. Similarly, the research process was developed around the study on the impact and revolution generated by social media, their role in new companies that includes digital marketing strategies in business plans.

This research is a case study, and it was made about the definition of CM, its functions, importance, benefits and advantages, the experiences

of people who have this charge; and then to be able to analyze OC in organizations, but now with an entrepreneur, as a CM.

Exploratory research is done when you want to get more information about a problem or where information is unknown. The CM has been considered a profession in Colombia, but people are still unaware of its importance within organizations. Interviews, thesis, analysis of two institutions in their OC were analyzed to gather information.

A transversal study is a type of market research in which information is collected in a period on a population sample. We studied different techniques and strategies that companies have used to maintain communication processes and know the needs and problems that arise as globalization comes with technological changes. It forces companies to reconsider their business model in terms of innovation in different areas that compose it.

The objective of descriptive research is to “get to know the prevailing situations, customs and attitudes through the exact description of the activities, objects, processes and people” (Van Dalen and Meyer, as cited in Noemagico, 2016, p. 34). As mentioned throughout the methodology, they studied different situations in which each of the concepts such as OC, Web 2.0, CM, social media are related to explain the boom and the importance of hosting new technological tools to find an assertive communicative process. Thanks to different articles, news, documentaries about social media, thesis, it was possible to find the desired research and results.

## **Findings**

Getting to know the definition of the CM, her profile, roles, and the different benefits it brings for an organization allows new concepts, experiences, learning, testimonies to give support and credibility to the study. Subsequently, a new concept was discovered that defines and groups each task to be performed by the professional in a company and designates it as follows:

## Monitoring social media

With monitoring, the CM analyses different factors that affect the company or bring benefits: to consider users' positive and negative opinions; they work to improve and develop a service that does not carry out its definite purpose. Positive feedback helps strengthen areas that provide adequate service, but they can further improve and satisfy users. Also, feedback allows a competitive analysis in social media, that is, to study how direct and indirect competition moves in networks, to establish the needs, problems, and annoyance of customers, to create a bond of trust and security between the organization, the services, products which are sold and the customers or consumers who get them.

The abovementioned leads to a single conclusion that through monitoring, it is easier for the CM to generate strategies that lead to economic, organizational, and social development, among others, based on communication through new technologies. The CM's world is unknown since it is gradually implementing this activity as an official profession; however, certain relevant aspects are unknown.

There are several applications where the professional has the help of templates; these automate programming the contents, publish them on the networks, and monitor interactions and conversations with the users, such as Hootsuite Tweetdeck, Buffer, y Sprout social.

The University ECCI (Colombia) and Madero (México) websites were analyzed with the social media that they manage to support the above arguments. Madero University was chosen because it is one of the institutions that have an agreement with the ECCI where students can make an academic exchange around modern languages. It is characterized by having a similar approach to the Colombian institution (Figures 9 and 10).

First, each of the Universities' webs was analyzed. Madero University's website offers different contact forms: Create a direct link to WhatsApp, links directly to your social media, a chat with immediate response, and a link to the mail. Through news, activity reports, announcements, photos,

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videos, maps, general information, the institution generates bridges of communication with students, staff, and external universities. In addition, the institution has a project called Red Exaumad, which consists of bringing together the ventures of the graduates to make them known and help in their promotion.

The ECCI University's website has tools that allow the user to navigate more easily; it consists of different sections with their respective information. People can find on their homepage news, videos, activities, primary data, and agreements. In addition, the page has a special section where we find links of interest that directs the institution's platforms where teachers and students make use of them and maintain active communication.

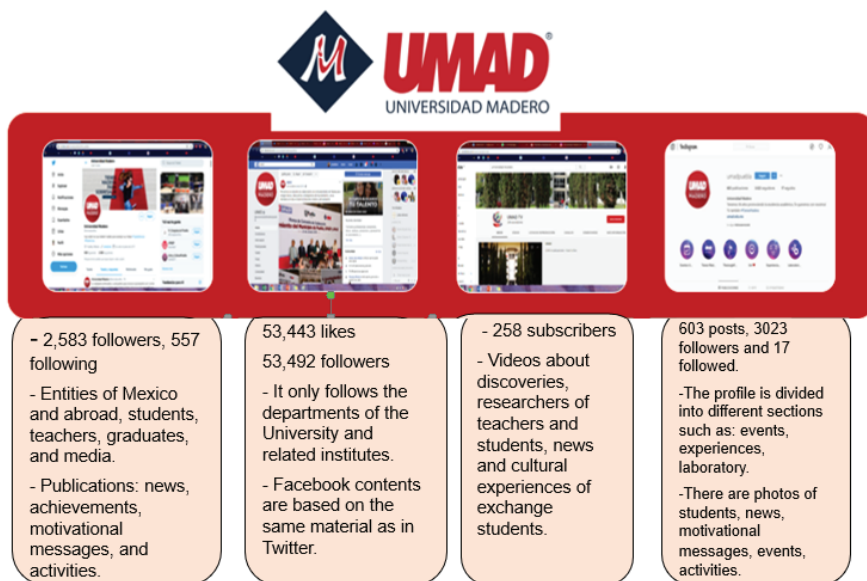
Figure 9. Social media used by ECCI University



Note. Followers and subscribers of ECCI University in different social media.

Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 10. Social media used by Madero University



*Note.* Followers and subscribers of Madero university on different social media.

Source: Own elaboration.

## Findings from interviews

We interviewed Teresa Gelover, the communication director of **Madero University** and the Mexican Madero Institute, where we had the opportunity to know more about the role of the CM within both institutes. They work with the regulations ISO9000, which establishes the roles of the social media. Madero University's CM publishes news, activities, achievement to generate a communication bridge with the students, graduates, parents, even external people. Thanks to social media, the university has achieved the acceptance of people due to the trust and security that consider each user's complaint and suggestion, commentary, feedback in the university. There, the CM analyses and implements more strategies to create a bond of effective communication in each university department.

In the same way, we interviewed two people at **ECCI University**. Lorena Vega Escobar, ECCI University's CM, told us that the university has a unique manual about virtually and social media, but both are different. In this manual, there are parameters that they must follow if they want to publish a file with University's logo, suitable time, interaction with students and graduates. Also, there are contents OVA (Virtual objects of learning) and AVA (virtual classroom files) for students to obtain information from different subjects. Then, Julieth Lizarazo is the CM in charge of the university's social media; she manages Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Youtube. She mentioned that the University has a type of instructive passbook where there is a protocol to use properly social media, all about reactions, commentaries, feedbacks. There are likewise different publications: Informative, Interaction, leisure, and each one have its approach. Finally, the most critical departments and sectors of the university communicate through social media.

## **Conclusions**

This work aimed to answer the strategies offered by the CM to optimize the OC through social media, and it was chosen as an example the use of social media in the universities ECCI (Bogota) and Madero (Puebla, Mexico).

It was defined what a CM and the OC are. It was exposed the management of social media by the universities who evidenced the importance of the CM. The CM is a profession that requires study, experiences, ethics as a formal and everyday profession; for that reason, not anyone can manage social media company.

It was concluded that the OC is more efficient and optimal with the help of the CM because it allows the information to reach different parts of the world and, therefore, to people, allowing the services or products of a company to be known and gain a reputation.

In addition, he improves the communication between the company and the client because the CM obtains and gives knowledge, that is to say, it strengthens the B2B and B2C of the company.

Companies that decide to be part of Web 2.0 require the presence of the CM and accept the responsibility it brings. Web 2.0 is not just an advertising campaign; and it is a way to communicate with others.

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# Web 2.0 as an Essential Theme for assertive Organizational Communication

Laura Natalia Orozco Bravo<sup>14</sup>

## Introduction

Society and economy develop utilizing solid patterns of conversion where communication is personal and working culminating. A percentage of individuals can create optimal, transcendental, distinguished, novel ideas, among others. However, the lack of communicative skills limits or even vanishes the purposes.

The immersion of Web 2.0 technologies and the knowledge of different languages are part of the people's daily lives, small, medium or large companies, allowing the consumer to be the priority through Assertive Communication: knowing how to listen and knowing how to speak. As a first step, each term is defined to allow the reader the appropriateness of the text, contrasting modernity with history to link concepts, thus creating a perfect setting for success in a company. Subsequently, an analysis of each concept is carried out to deduce the benefits and characteristics of each

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one. Finally, it can be inferred that executing it as an administrative and managerial guide in a Modern Language Professional has a high percentage of labor success (Solarte, 2009).

### Problem statement

Businesses and companies are optimal environments to achieve success through ICT tools such as advertising media, ways to obtain recent information; ways to update; resources for the improvement and inclusion of staff and customers. However, this has been abused, so that communication becomes inefficient because companies have chosen more production and savings than quality over time. Therefore, companies put in place labor personnel devices that perform their subordinate work without demanding remuneration, and what is worse, their performance does not offer quality and impeccable relationships as human beings would do in their nature.

### Research Question

How are administrative processes affected by the usage of Web 2.0 in Assertive Organizational Communication?

### General Objective

To describe the link of three current communicative factors: Web 2.0, Organizational Communication, and languages, to put them into practice in the life of the Modern Languages Professional.

### Specific objectives

- To review the literature in reliable sources that present evidence of the topics they present.
- To explore the particularities within Assertive Communication through tools such as media, Web 2.0, languages, and internal Organizational Communication, which allow the link with partners and consumers.

- To propose strategies for the acceptable use of Web 2.0, computer tools, and integration of collaborators.

## **Theoretical Framework**

In today's society, technology is essential in diverse atmospheres: work, family, education, and science, as well as social media, have reached considerable usefulness. Therefore, it is appropriate to contrast the advantages and disadvantages between traditional media and recent media, considering that the human being is constantly replaced by technological elements that can achieve more outstanding performance. In effect, there is the possibility of proposing alternatives to make technology work for the human being and likewise social media to achieve success.

The implementation of Web 2.0 is a set of excellent and essential benefits. The employer can comfortably access generating links with partners, colleagues, employees, and customers. It is possible to program each member's telephone number and e-mail so that activities carried out within the company reach each of the collaborators without significant difficulty. Likewise, it is possible to consider a web platform to facilitate the communication between clients, work for group and company, adding to the previous fact that handling will be in the head of the man.

Languages are also essential tools for effective communication, labor, and economic productivity. The competition is inside and outside the country, making it necessary to use several languages to facilitate business execution with international companies, so you will be faced with a business phenomenon that does not deteriorate the environment and employment opportunity.

## **Communication**

Language has a symbolic value that allows its transformation for historical-cultural exchange, offering numerous informative tools that allow the social, political, educational, or economic advance, to which one cannot be alien. Humanity is nourished daily and makes use of the word,

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even without realizing it and the value it carries with it. The importance of the word is constantly modified. It becomes rich when sung, sculpted in pictograms or hieroglyphics, produced in cinematographic art, written in prose, texts, or literary works. It subtracts its prodigy when mistreated by the Internet or digital media. However, it continues to be present in the process of human and globalized emission.

Starting from the fact that communication itself is of great importance for interacting with our environment, in the organizational sphere, it is a challenge. Everyone must be aware of all changes, information, and history independently of the proposed organization chart in each company. Communication and communication channels have varied at an incredible pace so that innovation and renewal must be present to avoid disruption.

It is an excellent problem in different companies, the lack of knowledge of the technological age. Today Web 2.0 is constantly managed. Information is transmitted in an ascending, descending, and lateral way so that each member of the team feels important. That is part of the advancement or transformation of the organization without excluding anyone.

Therefore, there are levels of communication within companies: internal and external, that must meet objectives to effectively reach all messages sent without intervening in the channel or code used. Involving each member is primary as the coherence and cohesion of the issuer, so action plans are required because any task that is carried out and has as objectives productivity and efficiency required it according to each department or hierarchical division within the organization. It should also be considered that collaborators are internal customers and are the main components, making them participate and adapting them to change, promoting a sense of belonging, and activating productivity by knowing why and for what purpose it carries out its functions, feeling like an essential part of the company.

### Assertive communication

Given that communication transforms an idea into a message and transmits it through a channel, the element that makes communication

assertive is the code. How is the message transmitted, and what effect will it have on the sender? Considering these ideas, Assertive Communication is the ability to transmit and generate knowledge and respect through codes that are used as verbal, non-verbal, and attitudinal ones, so it is essential to provide importance within any organization that aims to achieve success internally and externally. Through Assertive Communication, it is possible to express tastes, desires, beliefs, opinions, and even to assert rights always giving priority to respect in a bidirectional way by promoting the participation of all members within organizations and contributing ideas for its benefit.

Before establishing the goal of achieving Assertive Communication efficiently, it is vital to know the detonating factors that stop Assertive Communication. For example, passive communication, which is communication in which one does not respect one's rights, either by trying to please others, not hurting, or avoiding judgments. On the other hand, aggressive communication uses verbal language, non-verbal and violent attitude violating the rights of the receiver. At the same time, solutions must be established to avoid such difficulties as evaluating oneself, one's style, reaffirm and express opinions, in a similar way avoid aggressive behavior, judging in a hurry; contrary to what has been expressed, choose to acquire attitudes of kindness, listening and respect (Bayer, 2014).

## Web 2.0

Web 2.0 is a concept that encompasses all those applications and websites where users are receivers of information and, in turn, producers of content, so that promotes research and facilitates the exchange of ideas and knowledge. As a result, Web 2.0 breaks the one-way communication scheme of Web 1.0 where users had access only to the presented content they observed, but it was not possible to transmit the opinion or thought that generated such content. It goes from being a container or source of information to a massive platform of shared work. Above all, its use is simple, allowing less experienced people in the field of information technology to

## Web 2.0 As an essential theme for assertive organizational communication

upload, share, and download information, allowing others to perform the same activity.

At the same time, it has contributed to developing inside and outside organizations worldwide due to transmitting and transporting information from one goal to the other. Additionally, it is accessible from any mobile device. Its simplicity has allowed working more practically and efficiently to share concepts, multimedia, knowledge, or store information quickly and without barriers in conjunction with the cloud, thus avoiding the loss of information. It can be accessed globally and allow others to access, share, complement, and give opinions (Hernández, 2013).

Through these tools, videoconferences can now be carried out in real-time, reducing the time spent responding to any problem or establishing links with companies from other countries, and even better, it will increase competitiveness. Those companies that have optimal Web 2.0 reach a high level of development, standing out from the others who even offer the same product or service, both customers, employees, and employers will feel in an environment free and full of opportunities. For this reason, it is also important to emphasize that security is paramount, which is the reason Network Security is assigned, in charge of avoiding viruses, identity theft, information theft, file deletion, among other possible inconveniences (Ortiz, 2016).

### Method

This action-research study aimed to understand key terms and effective strategies applied by successful companies to achieve an Assertive Communication that integrates all collaborators and the proper use of Web 2.0 and computer tools where human talent plays a vital role in companies.

This is qualitative research relevant in which an analysis of descriptive information was made through which the most relevant characteristics of the information obtained in the observation will be captured. As a data collection instruments, the observation of administrative management

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models will be used, different formats used in the area of human resources, internal updating concerning Web 2.0, specifically with the Intranet and internal social media platforms, communication methods implemented: ascending, descending, lateral or bidirectional, knowledge of the current ICONTEC and ISO standards applied to the work performed and the use of languages other than Spanish by the members of the companies (Hernández, 2013).

Companies that stand out for their organizational culture and effective communication with their internal and external clients are referenced. Davivienda is a Colombian bank active since 1972 (46 years), provides financial services to individuals, companies, and the rural sector, currently belonging to the Bolivar Business Group and has had a process of expansion in Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama, Miami, and El Salvador (Figure 11).

Permission or availability of time is requested from the general managers of Davivienda bank. Their branches are located in the central park of the Municipality of Funza, to access documents and information that is permitted by the same; thus observing and describing the communication models employed, areas of Human Talent, use of languages other than Spanish, and the implementation of Web 2.0 (intranet, internal social media, mail, among others) within the organization. In this order of ideas, it will be possible to contrast the information obtained in each bank and later decide which strategies are more efficient, effective, and viable to be applied (Sánchez, 2017).

Figure 11. Davivienda analysis chart

DAVIVIENDA		The following is a brief analysis of the communication implemented by Davivienda bank, since for them internal communication is fundamental to increase productivity		
	WITHOUT WEB	WEB 2.0	INTRANET	ASSERTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION
CHARACTERISTICS	Physical interaction	Virtual interaction Apps and websites Davivienda has been implementing them since 2003	Virtual interaction Davivienda has been implementing it since 2003 with all its internal members	Ability to transmit information with respect through the codes used
ADVANTAGES	Physically know the perso or people who they want to agree or solve a problem	Communication from different parts of the world in real time. Easy and quick access from any where information storage	All internal members of the company are informed of each process, control and purpose of the company quickly and safely	Thanks to the good dissemination of information internally, all internal and exetrnal members of Davivienda are treated with respect and kindness
DISADVANTAGES	Programming time is too long. Information can be forgotten. It is difficult to move	Information security can be affected by viruses, computer hacking, etc	Two-way communication is not implemented	Difficulty in communicating an idea in the intranet; therefore, it generates cmunicative disruption
BENEFICIARIES	Chiefs Collaborators Clients	Shareholders Skateholders	Internal members of the company	Shareholders Skateholders
TIME OF RECEIPT OF INFORMATION	Weeks or months	Real times Minutes Seconds	Real times Minutes Seconds	

Note. Analysis of the bank communication channel

Source: Own elaboration.



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# Conclusions

The *Annual Conference on Formative Research on EFL* is an academic and scientific event that integrated pre-service and in-service teachers with shared interests and concerns about teaching English as a foreign language. These concerns have been evidenced in the research process they carried out and shared during the event.

In teaching and learning a foreign language, teachers cope with various situations that affect the success of the processes. However, each teacher assumes a commitment and the challenge of overcoming all issues, no matter how complex they could be. Teachers are always inspired and willing to help their students by making pedagogical proposals to achieve the goals and make their students succeed in immersing themselves in the world of English.

This academic space was an opportunity to learn about the experiences of both pre-service and in-service teachers in teaching English as a foreign language and how they had succeeded. It was also an opportunity to share concerns and reflect on their performance as teachers.

Pre-service teachers usually cope with challenging situations in the contexts where they develop their pedagogical practicum. Those experiences make them change their perceptions, beliefs, and thoughts about teaching. They continuously refit and adjust themselves as future teachers since they have to cope with different situations with parents, students, and school staff during their practicum.

Another challenge that pre-service teachers scope with is teaching to special needs students. Sometimes students are not prepared or have not received enough training to attend this kind of population. In this sense, schools and universities must be aware of this situation and prepare futures

## Conclusions

teachers to attend to students who present special educational needs. Special education has been a crucial topic that is worth being considered an object of reflection.

Reflective practice was also a crucial topic presented during the event because of its contribution to teachers' training processes. Pre-service and in-service teachers recognized the importance of reflecting on their teaching performance as an opportunity to improve their teaching practice and get better learning processes.

It was also evidenced that the use of technology has been a crucial aspect of education and that it has had a tremendous impact on learning and improving a foreign language. The immersion of Web 2.0 technologies and the knowledge of different languages are getting part of people's daily life. Nowadays, social networks have taken an essential role in society. These kinds of strategies are being used to increase students' motivation to improve their performance in English.

Finally, as organizers notice that teachers and students of pedagogical practicum are committed to teaching English as a foreign language, they are always concerned for their students' improvement of communicative competencies in English. Research has become part of their lives; they are constantly planning, reflecting, implementing, and reflecting again about the impact and achievements of their students.

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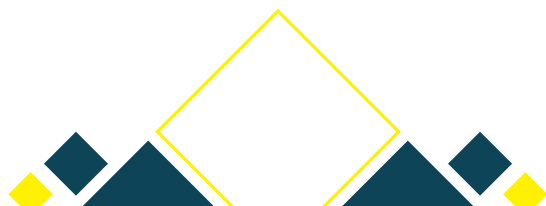
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The conference papers of the Annual Conference on Formative Research on EFL. Current trends in language teaching and teacher training collect pedagogical experiences and research reports on language teaching, teaching practices and communication. Each paper invites the community of the language teaching field to reflect on the development of life skills, didactic competences, critical incidents and practice and the use of English in the communication of organizations. We expect to make visible those innovative experiences and enrich the practice and knowledge of the ELT community.



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