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**Critical Moments in Pre-service ELT Mexican Teachers' First
Professional Experiences**

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the problem

Experiences are learning “tools” in the process of human development. We all go through different situations which make us grow both, in our personal and professional lives.

At present, the focus in teachers’ lives and in the roll experiences take in teachers’ professional development has increased significantly due to the demand of a higher quality of education in the world. Furthermore, teachers play an essential role in the success of educational institutes and therefore in the learning of students.

In addition, teachers’ professional development does not only come from the preparation and formation of teachers’ professional knowledge in educational programs, but also from the events teachers face throughout their professional lives and from how they transform their knowledge into practice to benefit students’ learning, how they act in their contexts, how they interact with colleagues, students and parents and their daily routines they have inside and outside the classroom, in other words how they adapt themselves to the environment in which they work (Avalos, 2010; Rodriguez, 2011).

Moreover, pre-service teachers often have little support and have to face and handle all these events by themselves. Therefore, it is important to raise pre-service teachers’ awareness about some of the wide range of experiences they will face throughout their careers through the presentation of teachers’ stories.

This study’s main purpose is to explore critical moments of pre-service ELT teachers and find out which experiences have made them develop professionally and stand out in the

beginning of their carriers in order to support newcomers on how to handle the difficult process of becoming English teachers.

1.2 Rationale

In the light of the previous discussion it is important to investigate this aspect to explore the experiences that we may face in our profession, how we can overcome them, what we can learn from those experiences and how these experiences can make us develop and improve our practice. As mentioned above, the present survey is mainly focused on pre-service ELT teachers doing their *Práctica Profesional* in public secondary schools and universities.

1.3 The purpose of the study

The purpose of this survey is to explore into the professional life of pre-service ELT teachers enrolled in public education schools. These participants were chosen because this study will focus mainly on teachers doing their *Práctica Profesional*. Particularly, this study attempts to identify teachers' experiences, life stories and beliefs and how these act in their professional development. It is anticipated that the identification of such issues will be of significant importance to suggest professional development actions not only for me but also for people entering to the teaching field.

1.4 The context of the research

The theoretical areas related to this research are the following: professional development referred as all those individual and collective processes and activities designed to

improve the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes to be applied and improve the performance of a person, teacher education and teacher training, making a distinction between the two concepts and arguing how important they are for the preparation of teachers, teachers' beliefs which are of crucial importance to understand how these teachers see and understand their environment and profession; reflective teaching and the importance of reflection of one's actions to improve our practice, classroom management due to the fact that is one of the most popular issues beginner teachers face in their careers; learning to teach and the difficult process teachers face in order to be successful practitioners and finally the critical moments in teachers' lives topics that study the cycle of a teachers carrier, experiences and moments which make them develop.

1.5 Location of the research

The present investigation is a survey in which data will be collected through interviews. This instrument application implies 6 pre-service ELT teachers doing their *Práctica Profesional* in different public schools (See chapter three for more details). These students belong to a large university in central Mexico.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study aims to explore critical moments in pre-service teachers' lives, understanding the crucial moments in which they developed as well as to analyze the data to detect patterns or sequences in which these experiences take place. Therefore, it is meant to be useful for teachers entering the teaching field. As explained above, the study was carried out through an investigation of professional development, critical moments in pre-service

teachers' lives and teachers' education and training, reflective teaching, classroom management and teachers' beliefs.

1.7 Research Questions.

This study's research question is the following:

1. What critical moments do pre-service English teachers report made them develop professionally?

1.8 Chapter summary and thesis overview

As stated above, the purpose of the following project is to explore pre-service teachers' critical moments by exploring their experiences at junior high schools and high schools. In chapter two the theoretical considerations of the present research are to be presented. In the third chapter the methodology used to analyze the data is explained. In the same way, the context of the investigation is detailed. In chapter four the results will be discussed. Finally, the conclusions and proposals are mentioned in chapter five with the intention of having further research on this topic.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the most relevant literature concerning the issues related to this work. The literature review will first define professional development, its purposes and goals as well as its weaknesses; it will point out the distinction between teacher education and teacher training and finally will explain how important they are for educators in order to be better practitioners. It will also define how reflective teaching can enable one's professional development and how important reflection is in our daily lives. Teachers' beliefs and the role they take in teachers' views about their profession and their working environment will also be defined. It will overlook for what the majority of beginner teachers report as the most challenging factor in their profession, which is classroom management. It will also discuss the long process of learning to teach in educators and the importance of giving support to teachers in teacher education programs. Finally, teachers' critical moments, which are the experiences that make a teacher develop professionally and change their teaching, along with some of the stages in one's career will be discussed.

2.2 Professional Development

Professional Development (PD) has attracted attention in recent years due to the demands of higher standards and quality of education around the world. For this reason teachers have the need to update and improve in their profession.

There are several definitions for professional development, Fullan (1991, cited in Vrasidas and Glass, 2004, p. 2, cited in Rodriguez, 2011) states, "Professional development is

the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout one's career" which go beyond knowledge and skills and as mentioned in the quotation include informal experiences. Whereas, Guskey and Hubberman (1995) further identify PD as a dynamic process that spans one's entire career and define it as formal educational experiences that enhance the professional knowledge, skills and activities of educators.

Other researchers highlight those educational experiences related to an individual's work in which professionals learn and apply new knowledge and skills that improve their performance on the job (Hayes 2010, Craft 1996 & Vrasidas & Glass 2004 cited in Rodriguez, 2011).

In contrast to the individual perspectives of professional development Day (1999, p.4) incorporates a social view pointing out that "Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contributes, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom". He believes that teachers both alone or with colleagues increase their commitment and develop their knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence to think, plan and practice within their teaching contexts and through each phase of their teaching lives.

It is known that most of the experience needed is acquired in the job; therefore Professional Development is considered the only way in which educators can keep developing after graduating from college or university programs which provide few learning experiences. According to Craft (1996) there are several reasons for undertaking professional development:

- To improve the job performance skills of an individual teacher or of a whole staff.

- To extend the experience of an individual teacher for carrier development or promotion purposes.
- To develop the professional knowledge and understanding of an individual teacher.
- To broaden the personal or general education of an individual.
- To promote job satisfaction.
- To develop an enhanced view of the job.
- To enable teachers to anticipate and prepare for change.

Taking into account the definitions above, professional development can be defined as all those individual and collaborative processes and activities that span one's entire career and lead to the learning and application of new knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to improve the performance not only of educators, but also of any professional in his/her job and also to develop job satisfaction. These processes in addition might be helpful to improve the learning of students and the quality of education in schools.

Although today a number of strategies have been undertaken to enhance the approaches of professional development, it still has certain weaknesses. Craft (1996) states professional development programs may not provide a linkage to the needs of schools, it often provides few opportunities to practice what it is learnt and at times there is no continuation in the process. In addition, as they are often voluntary, teachers with the stronger necessities will not take advantage of it.

2.3 Teacher education and training

When talking about teacher education and teacher training it is important to make a distinction, even when sometimes they are used interchangeably outside the educational field, both have quite different roles in the preparation of educators. It can be said that education is knowledge based and general, on the other hand, training is narrow, skill based and with specific goals; however, a more detailed description of both concepts is given below.

In the context of teacher preparation the term “*education*” refers to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, its aim is among others to give teachers a wealth of professional knowledge in order to be a versatile, reflective and efficient practitioner. As Deng (2004 cited in Carlin 2010) states education is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and understanding with an emphasis of “knowing that”. Learning how to design lesson plans, promote critical thinking, theories about learning, curriculum development, and ways of instruction are some of the knowledge given in teacher education programs.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (quoted in Jarvis 1990, p. 105) states that “education is an organized and sustained instruction designed to communicate a combination of knowledge, skills and understanding valuable for all the activities of life. This organized instruction implies the involvement of an educator, and of an institution.

In addition, an educated person is the one who internalizes knowledge and makes sense of it. We can also add that it is a process that takes time and that perhaps has no continuity (Tight, 1996).

On the other hand, the term “*training*” is concerned with the learning of skills and it is not necessarily linked with the acquisition of theories and knowledge. It is typically associated with preparing someone to perform a task or role normally in a work setting and it forms part

of the broader field of human development. Training is also seen as part and an outcome of a more general process of education. It is used to refer to the mastering of a particular task which needs repetitive practice in order to achieve that goal and to reach a level of competence and efficiency which allows us to respond adequately and appropriately to an expected and typical situation (Peters, 1967 & Dearden, 1984 cited in Tight, 1996).

Essenhigh, (2000) formulated this difference arguing that education is the “knowing why” while training is the “knowing how”. He exemplifies those terms by giving the following example:

It's the difference between, say, being trained as a pilot to fly a plane and being educated as an aeronautical engineer and knowing why the plane flies, and then being able to improve its design so that it will fly better.

The quotation exemplifies in a clearer idea the distinction between these two concepts, whereas the pilot knows the reasons why the plane works as it does and can make improvements to it, he needs to be trained to fly the plane. At the same time it shows that they can be related too, theoretical knowledge can trigger practice on the individual.

Obviously both are essential parts in the preparation of a professional at one time or another and interact all the time, for that reason many people use education and training interchangeably, making the distinction very subtle.

2.4 Reflective teaching

Reflective teaching has caught a great amount of attention (Van Manen 1977, 1986, 1988, 1990 cited in Labercane, Last, Nichols & Johnson, 1998; Schon 1983; Xiong 1999 cited in Ma & Ren, 2011; Wallace 1991 cited in Rodriguez 2008; Richard & Lockhart 1996 cited in

Ma & Ren, 2011) and has been used as an important tool for professional development programs in the teaching field.

It is well known that reflection is important in our personal and professional growth; it allows us to analyze previous experiences either difficult or rewarding and learn from those experiences. Dewey (1933 cited in Romano 2006) first promoted reflection as a means of professional development in teaching, stating that it is an important quality on teachers, he states that the process of reflection initiates when teachers experience a difficulty or troublesome event that cannot be resolved immediately making them go back and analyze it prompted by a sense of uncertainty.

For him reflection is complex due to the spontaneity of the things that happen inside a classroom. Bartlett (1990 cited in Ma & Ren, 2011) deems that critical reflection is a way in which an experience is recalled, considered and then evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose. He also deems that when we take action over past experiences, being conscious and examining them, we can then evaluate the situation and make decisions that will help us to plan, act, learn and improve, summarizing these process in 5 phases mapping, informing, contesting, appraisal and acting (Bartlett, 1994 cited in Alirio & Zambrano, 2010).

Schon (1983, cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996) gives another definition arguing that reflective teaching is an essential component of professional knowledge and practice. He believes that when teachers are engaged in reflection in action they will in addition develop the ability of continuing learning throughout their careers. He frames reflective teaching into two types of reflection, reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action.

Reflection-on-action occurs before and after a lesson, when we plan and think about our classes and when the class has finished so the teacher reflects on what happened during it.

On the other hand reflection-in-action takes place actually during the class forcing the teacher to frame and solve problems on the spot. According to him reflective practitioners reflect both “in” and “on” action (Schon, 1983 cited in Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Ma and Ren (2011) mention that reflective teaching is a process that can facilitate teaching, learning and understanding of an educator. In other words when we as teachers have the willingness to reflect on our own practice, we will be more conscious about what we do and do not do in classes, we will understand our profession better, and learn new ways of improving our practice, that is why reflective teaching plays a central role in teacher professional development (Ma & Ren, 2011; Richards & Lockhart, 1996 cited in Ma & Ren, 2011).

Reflective teaching helps teachers to be active agents and take more initiatives through exploring their performance in the classroom, solving teaching problems and establishing a deeper understanding of their professions. It also connects two of the four basis of education “learning to teach” with “learning to learn”.

It is clear that reflective teaching is a process; however, it is not a lineal process on the contrary it is a cyclical process in which teachers with their exiting schemata face new difficult or rewarding situations during their practice. After facing those situations they could reflect on them plan how to solve the problem, practice again and learn from those experiences will lead teachers to develop professionally.

A process of reflective teaching is not an isolated process it goes hand to hand with a professional development process. Without systematically reflective teaching, teacher professional development becomes impossible, and at the same time teacher professional development spurs teachers to do reflective thinking in their teaching (Ma & Ren, 2011).

2.5 Teachers' beliefs

Trying to define beliefs in a concrete manner is a difficult task, the variety of definitions given to this concept demonstrate that there is not only one definition due to the complexity and subjectivity of such a personal thought (Pajares, 1992).

For instance we can quote the definition given by Pajares (1992, p.316) who has contributed significantly to the literature of teachers beliefs, he states that beliefs can be defined “as an individuals judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition”. Such a judgment can be inferred based on how the individual understands the behavior of human beings, what they say, intend and do. They are used along with other terms just to mention attitudes, ideology, judgments, values, implicit and explicit theories, mental processes, and rules of practice.

He drew on the work of Rokeach (1968), Nisbett and Ross (1980), and Abelson (1979) to provide a list of 16 assumptions that can be helpful to provide a more concrete definition of beliefs. This list can be summarized and we can say that beliefs are self perpetuate regardless contradictions and they help us to interpret new phenomena. They are instrument for planning and also for decision –making, one of the main characteristic of beliefs is that they affect strongly the behavior of an individual because they can redefine, distort and reshape new information.

Ford (1994) quotes “beliefs are convictions or opinions that are formed either by experience or by the intervention of ideas through the learning process” in other words the intervention of new information influences our existing knowledge forming new frameworks and reshaping our way of understanding things.

Borg (2001) considers that beliefs are “a mental state” where something is held to be true on the basis that it is believed to be true. He argues that a belief is a completely subjective concept and it is likely that they vary from one person to another. Borg also deems that beliefs have a very important influence over teachers’ actions and decisions.

The belief system of teachers is formed gradually over time providing opportunities and conditions in order to influence teachers’ decisions and action in their profession (Richards & Lockhart, 1994 cited in Mohammed, 2006).

Within the broad term of belief there exist two components related to the concept of teacher beliefs, content specific beliefs and teacher self-efficacy beliefs (Pajares, 1992; Kagan, 1992 cited in Yaman & Özdemir, 2012). The first includes beliefs about the epistemological knowledge of the field to be taught and how significant they are for the success of the teaching process as they may have an impact on teachers’ decision-making. The latter refers to beliefs about the individual’s capability to execute and organize his or her acts in order to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular setting or context. They tend to look for educational outcomes such as student achievement and motivation (Kagan 1992; Cheng at al. 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Ross, 1992 & Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989 cited in Yaman & Özdemir, 2012).

As stated above, beliefs influence the way we understand and see the world and the information that come to us. At the moment we face a situation we will judge it according to our belief system and we will design a plan or make decisions according to our own perspectives. Due to the diversity on every person’s beliefs, everyone will understand and judge a situation differently.

2.6 Classroom management

Classroom management and students' behavior are probably the main sources of stress and weakening for teachers in the beginning of their careers (Charles, 2008; Hong, 2012; Lewis *et al.*, 2005; McNally *et al.*, 2005; O'Neil & Stephenson, 2011; Rudolf, 2008; Stoughton, 2007 cited in Keefer, 2013). A traditional definition of classroom management is related to imposing discipline and controlling students' misbehavior inside the classroom.

However, classroom management involves more than just keeping students quiet and involved in the task the teacher said. The meaning of classroom management has now changed from describing discipline and behavioral interventions to referring to a process in which a teacher creates a suitable environment in which learning can take place (Evertson and Harris, 1999; Brophy, 1999 cited in Allen, 2010).

There are several factors that appear to affect classroom practices and the relation between teachers and students. For instance (Mayer 2002 p, 85 cited in Allen, 2010) deems that unclear rules stipulated by teachers for students' department, a misuse in behavior management procedures, the use of punitive methods to control students, the lack of students involvement and motivation, and the lack of administrative support are some of those influential factors that promote a negative school and classroom environment. However, in occasions teachers react inappropriately to students' misbehavior triggering a chain of actions that spirals out of control, causing considerable damage to the classroom environment. In addition classroom management is considered as one of the most difficult and long term issues faced by teachers, especially by new teachers.

Pre-service teachers are more likely to perceive classroom management at the top of their concerns (Vennman, 1984 cited in Sanderson), surprisingly they express to be concern

about managing low level behaviors such as students being off task or refusing to follow instructions rather than more serious behavior problems (Crowell, 2009 cited in Sempowicz & Hudson, 2011), part of the problem is because they develop perceptions about what a classroom is like based on their own experiences as students. Therefore, they bring those perceptions with them when they enroll in teacher preparation programs, and still having them during their first years of teaching (Fajet, Bello, Leftwich, Mesler & Shaver, 2005 cited in Allen, 2010).

Furthermore, teachers' beliefs and assumptions with regard to classroom management influence in a significant way the discipline models and classroom practices that a teacher chooses to employ and these at the same time are affected by the social context in which the educator works and his/her relationship with others.

We have discussed how difficult is for new teachers to develop classroom management skills, due to their inexperience, their beliefs and assumptions, or also because of the ideas they bring from their experience as students, for this reason it is important to prepare teachers to develop these skills. As discussed above the actions of all members of the classroom affect the behavior of the others, for instance Burden (2003 p.3) cited in Sempowicz and Hudson, 2011 states that creating a favorable learning environment with "positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation" is at the center of managing students' behavior. Other researchers see rules as the key for maintaining a favorable environment inside the classroom, "classroom rule should be simple, specific, clear and measurable limited in number, and should be stated positively, posted, reviewed and practiced so that students know what to do to follow them" (Barbetta et. al, 2005, p.14 cited in Allen, 2010). Therefore, successful teachers are the ones who make use of strategies for establishing rules and

procedures, in order to control and monitor classroom event and react to misbehavior (Borko & Putman, 1995 cited in Allen, 2010).

2.7 Learning to teach

Learning to teach is one of the most difficult and long processes teachers must face during their careers and it requires a rigorous effort from pre-service teachers and their trainers. This process is constituted by the reorganization and reconstruction of the ideas pre-service teachers' have about learning and teaching.

The discussion between if teachers should be given a wide variety of teaching competences rather than be prepared with knowledge of theories of language and teaching methods has taken place in recent years (Conway, Murphy, Rath & Hall; 2009).

As stated before the process of learning cannot happen in an isolated way, it is rather a process that occurs within multiple and different contexts, it involves interacting with students, parents, institutions, colleagues, in other words the society. Therefore it can be said that learning to teach is best done when undertaken as a social, interactive and assisted accomplishment.

Recently the idea that there should be a connection between methods and theory courses and the social context of practice in classrooms and schools has grown significantly, this means give pre-service teachers plenty of competences, knowledge, and induction not only to be knowledgeable practitioners, but also to confront the tough world of teaching taking into account that this involves the adaptation of the educator into the teaching environment.

Induction is another component that has caught the attention in recent years, becoming vital in the professional trajectory. For induction it is understood as the first year of years of

teaching, in which the pre-service teacher will face the first experiences related to different aspect of the world of teaching like, classroom management, students' disruptive behavior, adaptation to the institution, etc. For that reason the transition from student teaching to full teacher status is now viewed as a critical stage in becoming an effective teacher.

2.8 Critical moments in teacher lives

As a result of the numerous changes on the educational field and the demands for a better quality of education, teachers are in the necessity to improve and be part of several programs for their preparation, and as a consequence improve students' learning. However, as Machado (2005) cited in Encinas and Pérez (2013) argues these programs emphasize theory and provide few opportunities for real-life situation in which they can put in practice what they learnt. Thus, there is a need to explore how and where teachers learn. The success of teachers' practice not always depends on what they are taught on a teacher education program, but also on the experiences lived throughout their classes. As discussed previously in this chapter, there are moments in which teachers begin developing through the experiences they face and by reflecting about those experiences.

Studying teachers' critical moments will help us to understand teachers' professional development which means how they construct their knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes through interaction with others and within their teaching contexts.

When we enter to the teaching field, it is obvious that we have no experience to handle difficult situation such as classroom management, students' misbehavior, students' motivation, and even institutional policies. We might have learnt some at university but it is

not until we face the real situation that we put into practice theory and start finding ways to solve those problems.

One's career is a cycle; we go through different stages or sequences which are not always experienced in the same order, and are not experienced by everybody. Hubberman (1989 cited in Hubberman, 1993) names the following stages as part of a teacher career, *exploration, stabilization, experimentation, diversification, reassessment, serenity and relational distance, conservatism and complaints, and disengagement*. Other researchers have named these stages in different ways, *initial teaching period, period of building security and maturing period* (Unruh and Turner, 1970); *becoming stage, growing stage, maturing stage* and *fully functioning stage* (Gregorc, 1973); *survival, consolidation, renewal, and maturity* stages (Katz, 1972) and *survival, adjustments and mature* stages (Burden, 1982).

As this research is focused on pre-service teachers I will work with the first stages.

In words of Hubberman once one has explored the contour of the profession and has experienced the implications of it, we go to another stage, the stabilization stage, here the teacher becomes more responsible and aware of the circumstances, developing a sense of mastering and specialization of the job. However, this stage is not stable and some stabilize early, some later and some never stabilize.

Once teachers have stabilized, they go to the diversification stage, in which they start trying different ways of teaching and looking for new challenges, new situations, projects and commitments in order to feel enthusiastic about their profession.

There have been few studies about critical moments in teachers' lives sometimes called "bumpy moments" (Romano, 2006 cited in Encinas & Pérez), however not all of them involve teachers in reflection in action making these studies just a narrative of their previous

experience. As mentioned before reflection is an important part of professional development, thus it is important to make them reflect in their previous experiences.

Conclusion

We have discussed during this chapter the importance of professional development in one's career, it leads us to improve in our profession by applying new knowledge, skills and attitudes and therefore enhancing students learning and the success of institutions.

Furthermore, we have pointed out the importance of reflection on the individual's development, we have argued that it is a cycle in which we reflect on our past experience to plan and make decisions and these actions will be affected by the beliefs the individual has, the way he or she understands the environment in which he or she lives.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides detailed information about the setting, the participants, and the instrument used to carry out this research. A description of the procedures followed in the analysis of the data is also given. First of all, as the main purpose of this thesis is to know the critical moments of pre-service ELT teachers, it was necessary to use a survey research and it was decided to gather data by means of an interview. This research was carried out at the Facultad de Lenguas BUAP considering it was the most suitable place to carry out the interview and because of the available time the participants had.

3.2 Participants

The participants for this research were 6 pre-service English teachers studying their BA in English Language Teaching at the Facultad de Lenguas BUAP, 3 females and 3 males with ages ranging from 21 to 28 years old. The range of experience as English teachers is less than 2 years and they were doing their professional practicum working in different public schools and with different levels. As the aim of this research is to explore critical moments of pre-service teachers, all of the participants were doing their professional practicum.

3.3 Instruments

The instrument used to carry out this research was an interview. Considering that the present research follows a qualitative method, it was decided to use an interview as instrument in order to gather more specific and deeper information about the participants' critical moments. As Kvale (1996) cited in Lieblich, A.; Tuval-Mashiach, R. & Zilber, T. (1998)

states interviews are used to understand themes of the lived daily world from the subject's own perspectives.

The interview was made in Spanish and was based on just one question, however when trying to get as much detailed information as possible from the participants more questions emerged.

3.4 Procedure

As stated before, the interview was based on one question, before being conducted the interview was piloted in order to know its reliability. An appointment was made with each participant, trying not to interfere in their professional practicum classes, in order for the interview to be carried out. After making the appointment the interview was done in Spanish and recorded. After that the interview was transcribed and translated into English in order to analyze the data and gather as much reliable and useful information as possible. To analyze each interview I used a chart in which I included 7 sections, these sections contained the most relevant information gathered after analyzing the interviews. The sections were the following: 1) challenging situations: large groups, disruptive students and classroom management, 2) strategies to overcome challenges, 3) support: school, classroom teacher or practicum teacher, 4) the transition from being a pre service teaching student to becoming a teacher, 5) unexpected findings, 6) what they learned and 7) suggestions for students.

CHAPTER 4: Results

4.1 Overview

This chapter addresses the analysis of the data gathered in the interview administered to 6 pre-service ELT teachers from the Facultad de Lenguas BUAP. In the following lines, the research questions will be answered taking into account the participants' answers. All the data gathered from the interviews are presented in the Appendix section. Nevertheless, only some excerpts of the instrument are analyzed and showed in this chapter. For a better organization, the results are divided in five sections. The first section reports how these student teachers dealt with large groups, controlling students' misbehavior and the problems they had regarding classroom management. The second section will discuss the unexpected experiences faced by the participants including teaching a child with down syndrome. Unexpected situations that emerged inside the classroom changing their lesson plans and all they expected to do and the transition of one of the participants from being a student doing her practicum in a primary school to becoming part of the schools' teachers. The third section discusses the support they had while teaching and the importance it had for these pre-service teachers. The fourth section reports what the participants learnt from the experiences they had and finally the fifth section provides the advices these 6 pre-service teachers give to students who are about to go through this first year of teaching experience. For the analysis of the interviews the participants were given a pseudonym to protect their identity.

4.2 Challenging situations: Disruptive students, large groups and classroom management

Teaching is a complex profession and it takes plenty of time to develop professionally. Every teacher regardless his or her years of experience faces several challenging situations that lead them to learn something new if they engage in an in depth reflective process that enables them to reframe their perceptions, beliefs, knowledge and practice (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Inside the classroom teachers handle different factors in order to have a successful class, students' behavior; large groups and classroom management are some of those challenging situations faced by educators.

Several factors can contribute to students' misbehavior for example the lack of students' involvement and motivation toward the subject, unclear rules for students' department, the teachers' methodology and specially a failure on creating a good and effective learning environment are some of those factors (Mayer, 2002; Brophy, 1999). These pre-service teachers taught in different levels, and based on their comments it was possible to detect one of the main problems they faced while giving classes which was their students' disruptive behavior and classroom management. The following excerpts illustrate this

“They were standing up all the time, or something very typical they formed their little groups and were talking all the time, or the classic “may I go to the bathroom?” and they didn't wait for my answer they just left without permission, they didn't even pay attention to me nor collaborate in class”.

Se paraban todo el tiempo, o lo típico formaban sus grupitos y se la pasaban hablando todo el tiempo, o el clásico “¿puedo ir al baño?” y ni siquiera esperaban a que les contestara sino que se iban así sin permiso, ya no me ponían atención ni colaboraban en clase.

(Manuel)

“The first one was in Experiencia Docente con Adolescentes, what I really liked, and it’s an experience I will never forget, is that I had to handle and control my students’ behavior because you know they are teenagers and they are very disruptive, so they put nicknames one each other, or they said “teacher what does this mean?” and then they tell me a word that of course was offensive”.

La primera fue en Experiencia Docente con Adolescentes, lo que me gusto y es una experiencia que nunca olvidare, fue manejar y controlar el comportamiento de mis alumnos por que como tu sabes son adolescentes y son fatales, entonces pues se ponían apodos, o me decían “oiga maestra que significa esto” y pues era una palabra ofensiva.

(Sara)

Manuel and Sara reported these experiences as difficult, they both were teaching to first graders in secondary schools, probably and in their opinion the most disruptive students you can teach to, due to the stage of life teenagers go through, Sara says:

“They are very noisy... and... the behavior... you know, they are changing and all that stuff so at that age they want to catch your attention”.

Son muy ruidosos... y... la conducta ya sabes están cambiando y todas esas cosas así que a esa edad quieren llamar tu atención.

However, not only secondary schools’ students have disruptive behaviors, children and adults can be a difficult challenge as reported Carlos and Lizeth:

“During my classes with children, at the beginning, I got desperate because children did not pay attention to me...”

The second one was during my classes with adults. At the beginning everything went so good, the first week the students were so nice and they were patient but the next week I had to shut up a girl because she was rude... she laughed about me when I committed a mistake”.

En mis clases con niños, al principio me desesperaba por que los niños no me querían poner atención...

La segunda fue durante mis clases con adultos. Al principio todo iba muy bien, la primera semana los alumnos eran muy amables y me tenían paciencia pero a la semana siguiente tuve que callar a una chica porque fue muy grosera...se reía de mi cuando me equivocaba.

(Lizeth)

“Even though I had everything planned I think it was because I was a new person for them and also I think I was very kind with them so maybe that caused it, because they were doing other things instead of paying attention to me”.

Aunque ya tenia todo planeado creo que fue por que era Nuevo para ellos y también creo que era muy amigable con ellos así que creo que fue por eso, porque hacían otras cosas en vez de ponerme atención.

(Carlos)

The excerpts above show that four of the six participants faced problems with students’ behavior and classroom management, part of the problem was their lack of experience teaching, or that their teaching methods were boring or inappropriate. After those experiences they felt overwhelmed and frustrated, very common feelings at the beginning of our careers, however, they found ways to overcome and react in a good way to those challenging situations. After reflecting on those experiences, asking their students the reasons for their behavior or finding ways to control those situations, they decided to think more and plan their

classes better. They found out that one way to catch students' attention was using their interests to plan their activities, for example using songs and videos and they also opted to be stricter with their students

“...in the next class I said to one of the students “if you really like that word I’m going to call you in that way, do you like being called like that?” and the students were like shocked... and from that moment they stopped saying those words and I got a little more respect from them”.

A la siguiente clase le dije a uno de esos alumnos “si en verdad te gusta esa palabra te voy a decir así, ¿te gusta que te digan así?” y los demás alumnos se quedaron de a seis y desde ese día dejaron de decir esas palabras y yo obtuve un poco de respeto.

(Sara)

“Well with them I was stricter and on times through games and activities I showed them that I had my good side”.

Bueno con ellos fue un poco más estricto y de vez en cuando jugando o en las actividades mostraba mi lado amable

(Carlos)

Lizeth realized that the way she was talking to her students was not appropriate and for that reason she had problems with them.

“I had to apply certain skills to get the students to be kind with me again; I realized that the way I talked to her was not the appropriate one... at the beginning I used to say "Eduardo, read", then I changed to "Eduardo, could you read, please?", it was less rude, I planned my classes with more effort and I tried my material to be more attractive. I rehearsed before the class to not to commit mistakes”.

Tuve que aplicar ciertas Habilidades para hacer que los alumnos fueran amables conmigo otra vez, me di cuenta de que la forma en que le hablaba a esta chica no era la apropiada... en un principio decía “Eduardo lee”, después opte por decir “Eduardo ¿puedes leer por favor?” era menos grosera, planeaba mis clases con mas esfuerzo y trataba que mi material fuera mas atractivo. Ensayaba antes de mi clase para no equivocarme.

In addition, these changes made them develop and achieve better result in their classes, they are now more conscious of how to deal and manage large groups and deal with students’ misbehavior, they felt more motivated and this led them to continue with their practicum.

4.3 Unexpected experiences

Teaching children with special abilities

Teaching is a profession full of unexpected situations; we discussed the most common problems these six pre-service teachers faced while giving classes in different levels, now this section contains those unexpected findings of the research. While teaching in a primary school Manuel faced a new challenge, something he never thought about, he had a student with down syndrome,

“I was working with a six grade group I noticed in the second class that I had a kid with special abilities, he had down syndrome...”

Trabajaba con un grupo de sexto y en la segunda clase note que tenía a un niño con habilidades especiales, tenia síndrome de down...

In the same way he did with their disruptive students’ in the secondary school he had to re-structure his teaching method, now trying to integrate this kid to the whole group...

“I also had to restructure my entire work plan and adapt it with this child’s necessities because I tried to make him participate just as the other students did but this child didn’t want to participate he said he was afraid.

I had to investigate about the basic necessity that a child with special abilities has.”

También tuve que re-estructurar todo mi plan de trabajo y adaptarlo a las necesidades del niño, porque trate de hacerlo participar así como a los demás pero este niño no quería participar, tenía miedo.

Tuve que investigar acerca de las necesidades basicas que tiene un niño con habilidades especiales

After some classes Manuel managed to integrate the child to the group the child felt more comfortable and gradually he started to lose that fear to participate, he says this kind of incapacities do not affect the learning process as he firstly thought, children with down syndrome can learn and do lots of things just the way others do. At the end of the course the child showed a notable development in the classes.

Unexpected situations inside the classroom

Planning lessons demands for teachers to take into account different components in order to have a successful class, activities, time for those activities, considering students’ level, finding the appropriate materials, students’ way of learning, and many others are some of the aspects teachers have to think about their lesson plans. Nevertheless, they can never know what is going to happen inside the classroom so they have to be aware of those unexpected situations they may face.

“The very first experience that I had, was in "Experiencia Docente - Adultos" because I taught in the Faculty of Medicine and I made just one observation of the class, I think I needed more observation because I forgot many details that did not take into account in my first classes for

example the level, I did not imagine that those students had a really good English level so I planned few exercises and very easy for them and when I realized, my lesson plan for 1 hour did finished in 30 min.”

La primera experiencia que tuve, fue en “Experiencia Docente-Adultos” ya que di clases en la Facultad de Medicina y solo observe una clase, creo que necesitaba observar más clases por que olvide muchas cosas que no tome en cuenta para mis primeras clases como por ejemplo, el nivel, nunca imagine que esos alumnos tenían un muy buen nivel de Inglés por eso planee solo pocos ejercicios y muy fáciles para ellos y cuando me di cuenta, mi lesson plan que era para 1 hora lo termine en 30 minutos.

(Daniela)

“The first class was with kids and even when I planned my class it didn’t work as I thought , it was very stressful because the kids didn’t act as I expected them to act so it was a mess, and based on that mess I had to reflect and think about why that happened.”

Mi primera clase fue con niños y aunque planee mi clase y todo no funciona como pensé, fue muy estresante por que los niños no reaccionaron como esperaba así que fue un desastre, y en base a ese desastre tuve que reflexionar y pensar el por que había sido un desastre

(Carlos)

The excerpts show that both of the participants had planned their classes. Daniela did not take into account her students’ level of English and her 1 hour lesson plan ended in less time, she believes that it is important for a teacher to be prepared to improvise activities when this situations happen, Carlos also planned his class, however his children students acted in a different way and he felt overwhelmed and had to reflect on what happened and make changes to their methodology. Now they report being more aware of those little details when planning their classes and being able to improvise in case something goes wrong in the classroom.

The transition from being a pre service teaching student to becoming a teacher

One of the participants found in her teaching experience with children class the opportunity to become part of the institutions' teachers. After being observed by the principal and the English coordinator in one of her classes she was asked to work in the school and being paid for doing it

“They told me that I could finish my hours of practice and then they talked about they could probably hire me...”

Me dijeron que podía terminar mis horas de práctica y después hablaron acerca de tal vez contratarme

Daniela never expected to be hired by the institution and eventhough she was surprised and nervous she took advantage of this transition to improve and show the institution she could do it better than she did while she was doing her practices

“ I thought that it could be a good opportunity to start, so from the very beginning I tried to do my best and when they hired me I wanted to convince them that I could do it better.”

Pensé que podía ser una oportunidad para empezar, por eso desde el principio trate de hacerlo bien y cuando me contrataron quise convencerlos de que podía hacerlo mejor.

Unexpected classroom observation

Other experiences they reported were related with being observed by other people. Having a mentor who can observe your classes, and give you formative feedback is now considered one important factor in teacher induction and education programs (Conway, Murphy, Rath & Hall; 2009).

“I remember it well, it was Friday, my class was about emotions (sad, happy, angry, etc) it was like my 13th class, so for those days I felt more comfortable with them, however, the day I went there, I was surprised because there was a guy from Oklahoma, and during my class he was going to be there observing my class, nobody told me about that and well, I was so

nervous, my class started but children did not pay attention, they were delighted with the native guy, so I began to sing one song that I recorded and that did not work.”

Recuerdo muy bien, era Viernes, mi clase era acerca de las emociones (triste, feliz, enojado, etc.) era como la 13va clase, ya para esos días me sentía mas cómoda con ellos, pero ese día que llegue ahí, me sorprendí por que había un chico de Oklahoma, y durante mi clase el estaría ahí observando mi clase, nadie me dijo nada y pues, estaba bien nerviosa, mi clase comenzó pero los niños no me ponían atención, estaban deleitados con el chico de Oklahoma, así que empecé a cantar una canción que yo había grabado pero no funciona.

(Lizeth)

“I was teaching my first class and suddenly the principal, the English coordinator and the psychologist arrived to my class and observed my class, oh my God! It was so frustrating and I was nervous...”

Estaba dando mi primera clase y de pronto llegaron la directora, el coordinador de Inglés y la psicóloga y observaron mi clase, ¡Dios! Fue tan frustrante y estaba nerviosa...

(Daniela)

Being observed for these teachers was something they did not expect and of course they felt uncomfortable, nervous and even frustrated. In the case of Lizeth her students were delighted with the presence of the American observer and as a consequence nobody paid attention to her and it made her finish the class just 10 minutes after she started it. This experience made her think about how to act to the presence of an observer. Fortunately, she reported this experience helped her a lot to be more confident about herself when giving classes. In Daniela's case, being observed and given feedback by the English coordinator, the school's principal and the psychologist also was an uncomfortable situation however, after they gave her feedback she understood the importance of it. She put that in practice to keep her students' attention and to plan her activities better.

“I really understand the importance of feedback from people who observe you, because... we made mistakes and we do not notice until someone tells us.”

En verdad entiendo la importancia de la retroalimentación de la gente que te observa, por que...nosotros cometemos errores y no lo notamos hasta que alguien nos lo dice

In addition the data discussed above demonstrates how important it is to have someone who can observe your classes, give feedback and help you during this difficult process of learning to teach. This topic will be discussed in depth in the next section.

4.4 Support:

In chapter 2 we discussed the elements related to the development of teachers, it is clear that this development takes place not in an isolated way but rather inside a community and support is very important to guide the teacher during this process to improve his or her practice. For that reason participants were asked if they had a teacher supporting them during their teaching process.

In addition, as the idea that theory and practice should be connected, and that teaching takes place in a social context grows significantly, it is important to provide pre-service teachers plenty of tools to be knowledgeable and to confront the complexity of classrooms and the teaching environment (Conway, Murphy, Rath & Hall; 2009).

“The teacher who I am working with in the school has helped me in every class and when I get to have a mistake she tells me that but at the end of the class not at that moment, she gives me feedback, recommendations and all the support I consider crucial to improve and integrate myself to the groups... Also here I received a lot of support by my mentor in Professional Practicum I really appreciate her help, at the beginning I thought she was very strict, but with time I realized that she is not strict she wanted discipline, and that discipline has made us grow a lot, she is very creative and it makes us make a big effort at the moment of planning our classes, she inspires us to have challenges and to challenge our students to learn.

On the other hand I can say that my classmates of Practica Profesional helped me because at the moment we were planning our lesson plans we used to motivate each other, they give ideas or complement the others ideas, we share materials, experiences, etc.”

La maestra con la que estoy trabajando en la escuela me ha ayudado en cada clase y cuando llego a tener un error me lo dice pero hasta el final de la clase no en el momento, me da retroalimentación, recomendaciones y todo el apoyo que considero crucial para mejorar e integrarme a los grupos. También aquí recibí mucho apoyo por parte de mi mentora de Practica Profesional en verdad aprecio su ayuda, al principio pensé que era muy estricta , pero con el tiempo me di cuenta de que no era estricta sino que quería disciplina y esa disciplina nos ha hecho crecer mucho, ella es muy creativa y hace que nos esforcemos cuando planeamos nuestras clases nos inspira a ponernos retos y a ponerle retos a nuestro alumnos.para que aprendan. Por otro lado puedo decir que mis compañeros de Práctica Profesional me ayudaron por que a la hora de planear nuestras clases nos motivábamos, dan ideas o complementan las ideas de los demás, compartimos material, etc.

(Marco)

“I received support from my classmates in my teaching experience class, and at the beginning of my practicum also from some of my friends... they gave me some ideas on how to do certain activities, or sometimes ideas on what activities I should use in my classes.”

Recibí apoyo de mis compañeros de de mi clase de Experiencia Docente, y al principio de mis practicas también de algunos amigos... me daban ideas de cómo hacer ciertas actividades, o a veces ideas de que actividades usar en mis clases.

(Carlos)

“In my Teaching Experience with Adults class teacher Cuatlapanzi supported me all the time, she was very nice, and she was a wonderful mentor. In my experience with children my mentor was not good she used to leave me alone with the kids and in practices, well, my mentor never observed me, she just signed my lesson plans , just that.”

En mi clase de Experiencia con Adultos la maestra Cuatlapantzi me apoyo en todo momento, ella era muy amable, y fue una maravillosa mentora. En mis experiencias con niños mi mentora no era

buena solía dejarme sola con los niños y en practicas, bueno, mi mentora nunca me fue a observar, solo me firmaba mis lesson plans, nada mas.

(Lizeth)

The excerpts show that they received different kinds of support and from different people; Marco had a lot of support from his practicum tutor and mentor, they gave him ideas of what activities to use and gave feedback. This support made him develop as a person and as a professional. Lizeth was less supported and she says she only had one teacher who helped them during this process. Furthermore, having an experienced teacher who can help you develop professionally and improve your practice is part of the aims of mentoring in teacher induction programs (Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999; Strong, 2009; Britton, Paine, Raizen, & Pimm, 2003; Hobson Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009 cited in Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Carlos and Marco reported that they received support from friends who were doing their practicum too; this illustrates that by sharing ideas and working collaboratively with friends or colleagues help us to understand and make sense of our teaching development (Edge, 1992, p. 4).

4.5 What they learned

It was important for this research to understand what these pre-service teachers learned from the experiences they had. They all went through a period of reflection before they could know what they learnt and improve their practices, some of them were helped by more experienced teachers some others did it more independently, however it was not easy for them and it took time in order to develop before facing those experiences

“I learnt that you have to be very patient with all your students because you will always have students who don’t like your classes, that’s very important, also that you have to integrate all

your students into your class, it doesn't mean that just because they have special abilities you won't work with them and I also learned that you have to adapt yourself to their necessities.”

Aprendí que tienes que ser paciente con todos tus alumnos por que siempre va a tener alumnos a los que no les gusten tus clases, eso es muy importante, también que debes integrar a todos tus alumnos en la clase, no quiere decir que solo por que tengan habilidades especiales no trabajas con ellos y también aprendí que debes de adaptarte a sus necesidades.

(Manuel)

“I learnt to work with big groups, with teenagers, I learnt to manage their behavior, also to take into account their interests when planning my activities.”

Aprendí a trabajar con grupos grandes, con adolescentes, aprendí a lidiar con su comportamiento, también a conectar mis actividades con sus intereses.

(Sara)

“Well, I learned that I have to be more polite when I asked for something to my students, that I have to be prepared, everyday is a challenge, I learnt that I have to improve and be patient.”

Bueno, aprendí a ser más cortés cuando les pedía algo a mis alumnos, que tenia que prepararme, cada día es un reto, aprendí que tengo que mejorar y ser paciente.

(Lizeth)

“... it helped me to take into account a lot of details when teaching for example students' level of English, not to underestimate your students and when planning prepare more activities just in case. Experience is very important in this field because if we have a lot of theory the practice is the complement it is very important, and the support from teacher is vital, it is important for us to develop our way of teaching.”

Me ayudo a tomar en cuenta muchos detalles al dar clase como por ejemplo el nivel de inglés de los alumnos, no subestimar a tus alumnos y al planear, pues, preparar mas a actividades solo por si a caso... la experiencia es muy importante en este ámbito por que si tenemos

demasiada teoría la practica es el complemento, es muy importante, y el apoyo por parte del maestro es vital, es importante para nosotros para mejorar nuestra manera de enseñar.

(Daniela)

“You can be “kind” but you don’t have to show a lot of trust with your students because they can misunderstand that and it can have negative consequences in what you do in your classes, and I learnt how to use my time and plan my classes.”

Puedes ser “amable” pero no tienes que mostrar mucha confianza a los alumnos por que lo pueden mal entender y puede tener consecuencias negativas en lo que haces en tus clases, y aprendí a como usar mi tiempo y planear mis clases.

(Carlos)

“I learned to recognize when I’m wrong and my mistakes, in this case my lack of experience, but I can also say that I won that credibility. Today I can tell you that I feel capable to give one, or two complete classes, to be more versatile, to improvise and if someday someone tells me “go and give my class please” I can do it I feel able to do it. I also learned that I have to be prepared and increase my knowledge, if you don’t have that knowledge you probably couldn’t give a class.”

Aprendí a reconocer cuando Estoy mal y mis errores, en este caso mi falta de experiencia, pero también puedo decir que gane credibilidad, hoy puedo decir que me siento capaz de dar una, o dos clases completas, ser mas versátil, a improvisar y si un día alguien me dice “ve y da mi clase por favor” puedo hacerlo ya me siento capaz de hacerlo. También aprendí que tengo que prepararme e incrementar mi conocimiento, sin ese conocimiento difícilmente podrías dar clases.

(Marco)

These excerpts show that most of them learned to be more patient with their students. The fact that every classroom and every student is different makes teaching a complex profession. They also learned to work with large groups, to control students behavior, to

establish certain limits between teacher and students so that you can have a better relationship with them, to plan and adapt their activities to their students' level and interests and something of paramount importance they learnt that teaching is not an easy task it takes time to adapt yourself to the new profession.

4.6 Suggestions for newcomers

We have seen so far what were the experiences these participants had, the ones that made them develop their practices in their first year and a half of teaching experience. Throughout this research we have discussed how they overcame those challenging situation and what they learnt from them. Now we will discuss some of the pieces of advices the six participants give to future teachers; this was one of the aims of this paper.

“First that your classes will never work a 100% or just as you expect them to work and that you have to adapt yourself to the environment in which you work.”

Primero que tus clases nunca van a funcionar al 100 o como esperabas que funcionaran y que tienes que adaptarte al ambiente en el que trabajas

(Manuel)

“First of all, that they love what they do, second that they understand that everything is a process; they do not have to expect what they planned is what they are going to apply, they have to be prepared, be patient, and take things easy.”

Primero que nada que amen lo que hacen, segundo que entiendan que todo es un proceso, que no esperen que lo que planearon es lo que van a aplicar, deben estar preparados, ser pacientes, y tomar las cosas tranquilamente.

(Lizeth)

“I will tell them that they will face a lot of situations and they have to be prepared. Planning is very important and if they have someone who can observe them ask for help, the comments will help them a lot.”

Les diría que van a enfrentar muchas situaciones y que deben estar preparados, la planeacion es muy importante y si tienen a alguien que los observe, pídanle ayuda, los comentarios les ayudaran mucho

(Daniela)

“Well I think it depends on where he/she is going to teach, if it’s with kids I would recommend to be very patient, you have to have in mind that it requires a lot of patience and also you have to think about how to speak to them and what you are going to do during you class. In the case of adults I would say to be more relaxed and also to plan your classes very well.”

Pues creo que depende donde va a enseñar el o ella, si es con niños le recomendaría ser muy paciente, tienes que tener en mente que requiere demasiada paciencia y también debes pensar como les vas a hablar y que vas a hacer durante tu clase, en el caso de los adultos les diría que sean mas relajados y también que planeen sus clases muy bien

(Carlos)

“I think that in order to teach better you have to know your students and know how to control them it doesn’t matter the number of students you have, If he or she is working with teenagers, because I have worked with them mainly, they have to know their students, how they are as person so that they can teach well, so just evaluate them very quickly like “this guy behaves this way, this other likes this etc”. That is what I can advice, to know your students so that later you can work well with them.”

Creo que para enseñar mejor debes conocer a tus alumnos y saber como controlarlos no importa el número de alumnos que tengas. Si el o ella esta trabajando con adolescentes, por que yo he trabajado principalmente con ellos, pues que debe de conocerlos, como son como persona para que así puedas enseñar bien, así que solo evalúalos así rápido “el se

comporta así, este otro así, etc.”. Eso es lo que puedo recomendar conocer a tus alumnos para que después puedas trabajar a gusto con ellos

(Sara)

“First to trust in yourself and in what you can do, you have to know that when you are going to give a class your perspectives have to change. You have to be tolerant, respectful with your students and the institution; you have to be sociable, creative, smart, and very, very patient.”

Primero tener seguridad, confiar en ti mismo y en lo que puedes hacer, tienes que saber que cuando vas a dar una clase tus perspectivas tienes que cambiar, debe de ser tolerante, respetuoso con tus alumnos y la institución, tienes que ser sociable, creativo, astuto, y muy, pero muy paciente.

(Marco)

As mentioned before these suggestions can be taken into account by students who are near to have their first experiences in the teaching field, it is important to mention that not every person will go through exactly the same experiences and that every one of us sees things in different ways but these pieces of advice illustrate that not all what you plan is what you will get in your classes and as Lizeth says you have to love what you do to understand that the process is not easy nor impossible.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the main and most important findings of the critical moments of these 6 pre-service ELT teachers and how support influenced and helped to their teaching process, as well as what they would advise to other student teachers. In chapter V, some conclusions will be drawn taking into account the data presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

In this chapter a summary of the results are presented. In the same way the limitations and implications of the study and some directions for further research are also provided.

5.1 Summary

The results of this research carried out through the use of an interview as instrument provided relevant information about the experiences, difficulties and development of these 6 pre-service English teachers. The result also answered to the research question in which this paper was based on: What experiences do pre-service English teachers report made them develop professionally?

Most of the experiences these 6 pre-service teachers faced, in this study, were related to classroom management and disruptive students, their lack of experience and of course the number of students they had in their classrooms made it difficult to have control over these situations. It seemed that teenagers and children were the most difficult students to control and in occasions their teaching methodologies contributed to students' lack of interest and discipline in their classes.

Some of the participants faced unexpected situations that made them feel frustrated, nervous and also to think and act rapidly to those experiences, for example, to have students with special abilities and investigate how these children learn and spend more time trying to join them to the whole group, or underestimating important factor when planning classes and facing completely different things inside the classroom. One of the pre-service teachers was asked to work for the institutions in which one of the participants did his/her practice making a transition from being a pre-service teacher to being a teacher.

The result also highlighted the importance that support has in the process of learning to teach as it is important for beginner teachers to have someone who can provide them with knowledge, skills and competences for real life situations taking into account that teaching takes place in a social context.

Finally the participants reported what they learned from those experiences, most of them learned to be patient, sociable and versatile to improvise inside the classroom. They learned to plan their classes according to their students interest and to take into account different factors that may cause problems while giving a class like the students' level of English; they also reported to feel more secure about themselves and about what they can do. Furthermore, they advised future pre-service teachers in order to help them face all those situations they may encounter when giving their first classes.

5.2 Limitations of the study

The present thesis intended to search for those experiences that made these pre-service teachers develop in the beginning of their carriers. For this purpose narrative research was used through the help of an interview. However, interviewing was harder than what I thought, the duration of the interviews was not as long as I expected, and therefore there might be a lack of in depth information. At the beginning of the research the idea was to work with novice ELT teacher who were studying their masters at the Facultad de Lenguas BUAP, nevertheless it was difficult to find a day to interview them, for that reason I decided to work with pre-service teachers. It was difficult to get an appointment with them and while doing the interview it was hard to make them speak. Also the number of participants was shorter and this could probably cause a sense of unreliability in this research.

5.3 Implications

The present narrative research about the critical moments pre-service ELT teachers lived in their first year of teaching experience provided important and relevant information about the difficulties one may encounter in the process of learning to teach, as well as the how the participants dealt with those difficulties and what they would advice to newcomers in the teaching field. Similarly, this research pointed out the importance of support for new teachers, the significance of providing them with skills and competences to be more prepared and versatile and not only to overcome the difficulties this career implies but also to become better educators. This implies a better organization in our curriculum and most importantly in subjects like teaching experience (children and adults) and in our professional practicum subject. It would also be helpful to develop teachers with a social view so that they can understand that the teaching process takes place in a social environment in which the relationship with students, parents, colleagues and institutions takes an important role.

5.4 Directions for further research

As stated before this research was only focused on pre-service English teachers, however, further work is necessary. First of all, the participants were asked to describe only two experiences and the interviews did not have a long duration, therefore more in-depth data is necessary to be collected. On the other hand, work on novice and experience teachers could be done separately or making a comparison, following the same method of this research.

In addition a longitudinal research can also be done following these 6 pre-service teachers' careers and looking on how their development takes place throughout time.

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APPENDIX 1

Categories

Name	Challenging situations: Large groups, disruptive students and classroom management	Strategies to overcome challenges	Support: School: Organization and classroom teacher Practicum teacher	The transition from being a pre service teaching student to becoming a teacher	Unexpected findings	What they learned	Suggestions for students
Manuel	<p>I was giving classes for the subject of Experiencia Docente con Adolescentes y Adultos, there I faced a situation in which the group at first worked very well with me until maybe the fourth class in which suddenly every student started playing, they didn't pay attention to me and I was wondering why, because the first classes they participated, they worked very, very well</p> <p>-they were standing up all the time, or something very typical they formed their little groups and were talking</p>	<p>Until one day I decided to ask one of my students why they weren't working like the first days, so he told me that most of his classmates were getting bored of my English classes, that maybe my teaching method was kind of boring, so that made me think more on my lesson plans and in what I was going to teach them so that they could work and have the same willingness they had before, so I restructured everything I was working and I used things they liked, for example music, I had multimedia</p>			<p>I was working with a six grade group I noticed in the second class that I had a kid with an incapacity he had like a "retraso mental"</p>	<p>Well, in the first one I learnt that you have to be very patient with all your students because you will always have students who don't like your classes, so that's very important and in the second one that you have to integrate all your students into your class, it doesn't mean that just because they have special abilities you wont work with them and also that you have to adapt yourself to their necessities</p>	<p>First that your classes will never work at a 100% or just as you expect them to work, and that you have to adapt yourself to the environment in which you work.</p>

	<p>all the time, or something very common in all school the classic “may I go to the bathroom?” and they didn’t wait my answer they just left without permission, so they didn’t even pay attention to me nor collaborate</p>	<p>and that was very helpful because I could show them videos, songs and that helped them to increase their level of English, so that experience really helped because I learned how to made a work plan and plan my classes according to students’ likes.</p> <p>-I also had to restructure all my work plan and adapt it with this child’s necessities, because I tried to make him participate just as the other students did but this child didn’t wanted to participate he said he was afraid</p> <p>- I restructured my lessons and little by little the child started to get into the class and learned from my classes eventhough there were just few classes but he</p>					
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		<p>learned a lot</p> <p>- I had to make an investigation about the basic necessity that a child with special abilities has</p>					
Sara	<p>The first one was in Experiencia Docente con Adolescentes, what I really liked and it's an experience I will never forget, is to handle and control my students' behavior because you know they are teenagers and they are very disruptive, so they put nicknames one each other, or they said "teacher what does this mean?" and then they tell me a word that of course was offensive</p> <p>-The same with my secondary students, they are very noisy, well I think it depends on the age I have work mostly with teenagers,</p>	<p>I said one day if you really like that word I'm going to call you like that, you know cause they knew the meaning of the word, it was just that they wanted me to tell them the meaning, so I was getting upset of that situation , so as I told you in the second class I said to one of the students "if you really like that word I'm going to call you like that, do you like being called like that?" and the students were like... and from that moment they stopped doing and saying those words and I got a little more of respect from them</p> <p>- therefore if you ignore them they stop talking so</p>			<p>I learnt to work with big groups, with teenagers, I learnt to manage their behavior , also to connect my activities with their interests because they had told that their teacher uses activities that are not connected with reality, that's what they had told me, so I used activities that are more related with their environment and learn</p>	<p>I think that in order to teach better you have to know your students and know how to control them it doesn't matter the number of students you have</p> <p>- Well, If he or she is working with teenagers, because I have worked with them mainly, that they have to know their students, how they are as person, so that they can give good classes, so just evaluate them very quickly like " this guy behaves this way, this other like this etc", so it's what I can advice to know your students so that later you can work well with them.</p>	

	they are very noisy... and... the behavior you know they are changing and all this stuff so at that age they want to catch your attention	that you can take them into account, so that had helped me a lot					
Lizeth	<p>During my practices with children, at the beginning, I got desperate because children did not pay attention to me. The first month it was so frustrating, but my mentor told me that it takes time to reach children get involve</p> <p>-The second one was during my practices with adults. At the beginning everything went so good, the first week the students were so nice and they were patience but the next week I had to shut up a girl because she was rude</p> <p>- they laughed</p>	<p>She suggested me to find out information about how to deal with children and I did it, the next month my classes went better because one of my strategies was record songs, in that way children got involve</p> <p>-I had to try to applied certain skills to reach the students were kind with me again, I realized that the way I talked to her was not the appropriate one of my skills was corrected them their pronunciation, in that way they paid attention and at the end I think I could to finish my practices in a good way</p> <p>- I used to asked them to</p>				<p>Well, I learned that I have to be more polite when I ask for something, that I have to be prepared, everyday is a challenge, I have to improvise and be patient</p> <p>Interviewer:</p> <p>-I think these kind of subjects help a lot because when we face the real world we have an idea about how to deal with students because and we improve or change what we did not well</p>	<p>Firs of all, that they love what they do, second that they understand everything is a process, they do not have to expect what they planned is what they going to apply, they have to be prepared, be patience, and take things easy</p>

	about me when I committed a mistake, but I realized that they thought they had a good level of English so what I did was that when somebody got wrong	help, so they began to participate because they knew the answers, in that way they were less rude , also, at the beginning I used to say "Eduardo, read", then I changed to "Eduardo, could you read, please?", it was less rude, finally, I prepared my class with more effort and I tried my material was attractive, I rehearsed before to not commit mistakes					
Daniela			1 month later my teacher who was in charge of my signature went to supervised me and she gave me feedback and observation about the length of some exercises, she noticed that one activity last about 20 minutes, so it was a lot of time and all they told was	they told me that i can finish my hours of practice and then talk about a they probably could hire me and I thought that it could be a good opportunity to start, so from the very beginning i tried to do my best and when they hired me i wanted to convince	- the very first experience that I had, was in "Experiencia Docente - Adultos" because I taught in the Faculty of Medicine and I made just one observation of the class, I think I needed more observation because i forgot many details that did not take into account in my first	It was my very first class and i was so nervous even scared and i had to improvise then, it helped me to take into account a lot of details when teaching for example students level not underestimate your students and when planning, prepare more activities in case of any circumstance -I don't have enough	I will tell him that he will face to a lot of situations and he has to be prepare, planning is very important and if he has someone who can observe him, ask for help, the comments will help him a lot

			<p>important for me, i took those advices into account, they helped me a lot then, i really comprehend the importance of feedback from people who observe you because we made mistakes and we do not notice until someone told us</p> <p>- when starting to teach we do not have too much experience so we need a guide very good</p>	<p>them that i can do it better</p>	<p>classes for example; the level, I did not imagine that those students had a really good English level so i planned few exercises and very easy for them and when I realize, my lesson plan for 1 hour did finish in 30 min.</p> <p>-, I was teaching my first class and suddenly the principal, the English coordinator and the psychologist arrive to my class and they were observing me, oh! my God it was frustrating, I was nervous but not to much then they gave feedback and they told me that was ok</p>	<p>experience it's a long process and every class i learn something new like designing material and planning activities</p> <p>- Just that experience is very important in this field because if we have a lot of theory, the practice is the complement and it is very difficult because i think must of us did not have previous experience so it was the first time it is very important and the support from teacher is vital, is important for us for developing our way of teaching</p>	
	<p>Yes, the first class with the kids because even when I planned my class it didn't work as I</p>	<p>Well with them I was stricter and on times through games and activities I showed them</p>			<p>I think that one of them was to give classes during my Social Service,</p>	<p>That you can be "kind" but you don't have to show more trust with your students because they</p>	<p>Well I think it depends where he/she is going to teach, if it's with kids I would recommend to be very patient, you have to have in mind that it requires a lot of patience and also you have to think how to speak to them and what you are going to do during</p>

<p>Carlos</p>	<p>thought , it was very stressful because the kids didn't act as I expected them to act so it was a mess, and based on that mess I had to reflect and think on why did that happen.</p> <p>-Even though I had everything planned I think it was because I was a new person for them and also I think I was very kind with them so maybe that caused it, because they were doing other things instead of paying attention to me.</p>	<p>that I had my good side, thing that I'm still doing in my Practica Profesional, with this guys I'm more relaxed and kinder because they are older and in a certain way they are less disruptive because they like the course</p>			<p>eventhough they were only two students that really helped me think how to use my time in a class and that helped a lot because honestly the number of students I have right now it's almost the same 3 and 4 students</p> <p>- I think Experiencia Docente con niños helped me more than Experiencia Docente con adultos because I had more students in fact I had 20 kids in the classroom and there I had to do the contrary, think in less activities in which I could involve all the kids.</p>	<p>can misunderstand that and it can have a negative consequence in what you do in your classes, and I learnt how to use my time and plan my classes.</p>	<p>you class, in the case of adults I would say to be more relaxed and also to plan very well your classes</p>
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APPENDIX 2

Manuel

Interviewer: Could you please describe two experiences that made you develop professionally?

Participant: The first one was when I was giving classes for the subject of Experiencia Docente con Adolescentes y Adultos, there I faced a situation in which the group at first worked very well with me until maybe the fourth class in which suddenly every student started playing, they didn't pay attention to me and I was wondering why, because the first classes they participated, they worked very, very well. Until one day I decided to ask one of my students why they weren't working like the first days, so he told me that most of his classmates were getting bored of my English classes, that maybe my teaching method was kind of boring, so that made me think more on my lesson plans and in what I was going to teach them so that they could work and have the same willingness they had before, so I restructured everything I was working and I used things they liked, for example music, I had multimedia and that was very helpful because I could show them videos, songs and that helped them to increase their level of English, so that experience really helped because I learned how to make a work plan and plan my classes according to students' likes.

Interviewer: And what were the problems you had, were they standing up all the time, or were they very talkative?

Participant: Yes, they were standing up all the time, or something very typical they formed their little groups and were talking all the time, or something very common in all school the classic "may I go to the bathroom?" and they didn't wait my answer they just left without permission, so they didn't even pay attention to me nor collaborate, they were just...

Interviewer: What grade was it?

Participant: It was first grade in secondary school

Interviewer: Ok and what would be the second experience:

Participant: Ok the second was during my classes in Experiencia Docente but with children, when I started giving classes there I realized... it was the second class I had with them and I was working with a six grade group I noticed in the second class that I had a kid with an incapacity he had like a "retraso mental", so in this experience I also had to restructure all my work plan and adapt it with this child's necessities, because I tried to make him participate just as the other students did but this child didn't wanted to participate he said he was afraid, but even with the limitations he had, he actually could do lots of things but it was just that he was afraid and he didn't want to participate, so I restructured my lessons and little by little the child started to get into the class and learned from my classes eventhough there were just few classes but he learned a lot

Interviewer: And you made him to join the class?

Participant: Yes he did, I think a 90 % because when I said to him "go to board" or something like that he participated and he wasn't afraid anymore

Interviewer: And you had to investigate about how to teach these children?

Participant: Yes I had to make an investigation about the basic necessity that a child with special abilities has.

Interviewer: Ok and from those two experiences what did learn the most?

Participant: Well, in the first one I learnt that you have to be very patient with all your students because you will always have students who don't like your classes, so that's very important and in the second one that you have to integrate all your students into your class, it doesn't mean that just because they have special abilities you won't work with them and also that you have to adapt yourself to their necessities.

Interviewer: And finally if you had the opportunity to advise someone who's entering to the teaching field and that is facing similar situation what would you advise to him or her?

Participant: Ok, first that your classes will never work at a 100% or just as you expect them to work, and that you have to adapt yourself to the environment in which you work.

Sara

Interviewer: Could you please describe two experiences that made you develop professionally?

Participant: Yes, the first one was in Experiencia Docente con Adolescentes, what I really liked and it's an experience I will never forget, is to handle and control my students' behavior because you know they are teenagers and they are very disruptive, so they put nicknames on each other, or they said "teacher what does this mean?" and then they tell me a word that of course was offensive and they always said that, but I don't want to say the meaning you know because of respect, or they even used those words in class, so I said one day if you really like that word I'm going to call you like that, you know cause they knew the meaning of the word, it was just that they wanted me to tell them the meaning, so I was getting upset of that situation, so as I told you in the second class I said to one of the students "if you really like that word I'm going to call you like that, do you like being called like that?" and the students were like... and from that moment they stopped doing and saying those words and I got a little more of respect from them, so now I know how to work with teenagers and once you find the way of controlling them you can give better your classes and work better because now you can control them.

So I think that in order to teach better you have to know your students and know how to control them it doesn't matter the number of students you have.

The same with my secondary students, they are very noisy, well I think it depends on the age I have work mostly with teenagers, they are very noisy... and... the behavior you know they are changing and all this stuff so at that age they want to catch your attention, therefore if you ignore them they stop talking so that you can take them into account, so that had helped me a lot. And those are my two experiences they are related with students' behavior.

Interviewer: Ok and from those two experiences what did learn the most?

Participant: I learnt to work with big groups, with teenagers, I learnt to manage their behavior, also to connect my activities with their interests because they had told that their teacher uses activities that are not connected with reality, that's what they had told me, so I used activities that are more related with their environment and learn, and I really like when they come to me saying "thank you teacher I have learnt a lot" and you feel because you are like "they understood!" and you feel happy.

Interviewer: And finally if you had the opportunity to advise someone who's entering to the teaching field and that is facing similar situation what would you advice to him or her?

Participant: Well, If he or she is working with teenagers, because I have worked with them mainly, that they have to know their students, how they are as person, so that they can give good classes, so just evaluate them very quickly like " this guy behaves this way, this other like this etc", so it's what I can advice to know your students so that later you can work well with them

Lizeth

Interviewer: Could you please describe two experiences that made you develop professionally?

Participant: Well, during my practices with children, at the beginning, I got desperate because children did not pay attention to me. The first month it was so frustrating, but my mentor told me that it takes time to reach children get involve, she suggested me to find out information about how to deal with children and I did it, the next month my classes went better because one of my strategies was record songs, in that way children got involve

The second one was during my practices with adults. At the beginning everything went so good, the first week the students were so nice and they were patience but the next week I had to shut up a girl because she was rude, since that day, I felt certain tension, and all the course I had to try to applied certain skills to reach the students were kind with me again, I realized that the way I talked to her was not the appropriate one of my skills was corrected them their pronunciation, in that way they paid attention and at the end I think I could to finish my practices in a good way

I remember it well, it was Friday, my class was about emotions (sad, happy, angry, etc) it was like my 13th class, so for those days I felt more comfortable with them, however, the day I went there, I was surprised because there were a guy from Oklahoma, we was going to do some practices too, and during my class he was going to be there watching me, nobody told me about that and well, I was so nervous, my class started but children did not pay attention, they were delighted with the native guy, so I began to sing with one song that I recorded and that did not work, My mentor was busy, so I was there alone, like 10 minutes after I wanted that my class finished, I was so uncomfortable, I remember that I did not finish it, I just gave them the vocabulary but I did not develop the activity, children took my material and everything was horrible

The next classes the girl did not pay attention, she talked all the time with some partners, they laughed about me when I committed a mistake, but but I realized that they thought they had a good level of English so what I did was that when somebody got wrong, I used to asked them to help, so they began to participate because they knew the answers, in that way they were less rude , also, at the beginning I used to say "Eduardo, read", then I changed to "Eduardo, could you read, please?", it was less rude, finally, I prepared my class with more effort and I tried my material was attractive, I ensayaba before to not commit mistakes

Interviewer: Did you have any kind of support from someone while you were teaching? In your teaching experience and professional practicum?

Participant: Someone?, who? My mentor? or anyone else?

In my experiences with adults teacher Cuatlapanzi supported me all the time, she was very nice, and she was a wonderful mentor.

In my experience with children, my mentor was not good she used to leave me alone with the kids and in practices, well, my mentor never observed me, she just signed my lesson plans , just that.

Interviewer: Ok and from those two experiences what did learn the most?

Well, I learned that I have to be more polite when I ask for something, that I have to be prepared, everyday is a challenge, I have to improvise and be patient

Interviewer: Anything else you want to add?

That I think these kind of subjects help a lot because when we face the real world we have an idea about how to deal with students because and we improve or change what we did not well

Interviewer: And finally if you had the opportunity to advice someone who's entering to the teaching field and that is facing similar situation what would you advice to him or her?

Participant: First of all, that they love what they do, second that they understand everything is a process, they do not have to expect what they planned is what they going to apply, they have to be prepared, be patience, and take things easy

Daniela

Interviewer: My first question is could you please describe two experiences that made you develop professionally while teaching either in practica or experiencia ?or maybe in your job

Participant: ok, the very first experience that I had, was in "Experiencia Docente - Adultos" because I taught in the Faculty of Medicine and I made just one observation of the class, I think I needed more observation because i forgot many details that did not take into account in my first classes for example; the level, I did not imagine that those students had a really good English level so i planned few exercises and very easy for them and when I realize, my lesson plan for 1 hour did finish in 30 min.

It was my very first class and i was so nervous even scared and i had to improvise then, it helped me to take into account a lot of details when teaching for example students level not underestimate your students and when planning, prepare more activities in case of any circumstance

Interviewer: And did your students notice that you were improvising?

Participant: Think so... I was so nervous and if they noticed they did not tell anything at the end of the practice they gave a feedback and told me that they noticed i was so nervous in the first classes, but then i did my best

Perfect now let's go to the second experience please

The second was in the second signature in "Experiencia docente - niños" now my job, i did my practice in a school where there wasn't English teacher so the principal wanted to hired me but also in my first class there were many people observing me

I'd never worked with children, it was my first time and they were from 1st grade in preschool so they are 3 even 2 years old, I was teaching my first class and suddenly the principal, the English coordinator and the psychologist arrive to my class and they were observing me, oh! my God it was frustrating, I was nervous but not to much then they gave feedback and they told me that was ok! just that i should sing with them when i noticed they start getting bored, they like it and then, 1 month later my teacher who was in charge of my signature went to supervised me and she gave me feedback and observation about the length of some exercises, she noticed that one activity last about 20 minutes, so it was a lot of time and all they told was important for me, i took those advices into account, they helped me a lot then, i really comprehend the importance of feedback from people who observe you because we made mistakes and we do not notice until someone told us

Interviewer: That's very important, so would you suggest feedback and observation as a main aspect in those kind of subjects?

Participant: Yes of course these aspects are really important when starting to teach because we do not have too much experience so we need a guide very good

Interviewer: And talking about the transition from a subject to a job how did u feel when you were asked to work in that school?

Participant: Well, they told me that i can finish my hours of practice and then talk about a they probably could hire me and I thought that it could be a good opportunity to start, so from the very

beginning i tried to do my best and when they hired me i wanted to convince them that i can do it better

I think that I have a lot of think to learn, although i have 7 months working there i think I don't have enough experience it's a long process and every class i learn something new like designing material and planning activities

Interviewer: Very interesting Delia something else you want to add?

Participant: Just that experience is very important in this field because if we have a lot of theory, the practice is the complement and it is very difficult because i think must of us did not have previous experience so it was the first time it is very important and the support from teacher is vital, is important for us for developing our way of teaching

Interviewer: Ok now if it's redundant, the question, please let me know it but what did you learn the most from those two experiences??

Participant: The importance of planning class, all that you have to take into account when planning activities, the number of students, their English level, how long the class is, etc and how important is the feedback for novice teacher, how much you can learn from this, for example if you are doing wrong with any activity or if something is not appropriate for your students

Interviewer: Ok and finally just to finish if u had the opportunity to advice someone who's entering to the teaching field what would you advice?

Participant: I will tell him that he will face to a lot of situations and he has to be prepare, planning is very important and if he has someone who can observe him, ask for help, the comments will help him a lot

Is that all?

Yes

Carlos

Interviewer: Ok my first question is could you please describe two experiences that made you develop professionally while teaching either in practicum or teaching experience?

Participant: I think that one of them was to give classes during my Social Service, eventhough they were only two students that really helped me think how to use my time in a class and that helped a lot because honestly the number of students I have right now it's almost the same 3 and 4 students so that helped to plan more my activities, and also here at school giving expositions, etc, and with the experiencias docents with adults and children thou I think Experiencia Docente con niños helped me more than Experiencia Docente con adultos because I had more students in fact I had 20 kids in the classroom and there I had to do the contrary, think in less activities in which I could involve all the kids.

Interviewer: And do you remember a specific class that really helped you?

Participant: Yes, the first class with the kids because even when I planned my class it didn't work as I thought, it was very stressful because the kids didn't act as I expected them to act so it was a mess, and based on that mess I had to reflect and think on why did that happen.

Interviewer: And why was it a disaster, what happened?

Participant: I'm still wondering that because as I told you, even though I had everything planned I think it was because I was a new person for them and also I think I was very kind with them so maybe that caused it, because they were doing other things instead of paying attention to me.

Interviewer: And from that class how did you handle your next classes?

Participant: Well with them I was stricter and on times through games and activities I showed them that I had my good side, thing that I'm still doing in my Practica Profesional, with this guys I'm more relaxed and kinder because they are older and in a certain way they are less disruptive because they like the course.

Interviewer: Ok and going back to your first experience why was it good for you to teach to only 2 students?

Participant: As I told you in the case of the children I had fewer activities because there were more people, in my point of view, because I spent more time in making all the children participate, in the case of my two students they were older and the activities took less time so I had to think in more activities and how to do them also what to say during my classes to take advantage of my class time.

Interviewer: Ok and from those two experiences what did learn the most?

Participant: That you can be "kind" but you don't have to show more trust with your students because they can misunderstand that and it can have a negative consequence in what you do in your classes, and I learnt how to use my time and plan my classes.

Interviewer: And finally if you had the opportunity to advice someone who's entering to the teaching field and that is facing similar situation what would you advice to him or her?

Participant: Well I think it depends where he/she is going to teach, if it's with kids I would recommend to be very patient, you have to have in mind that it requires a lot of patience and also you have to think how to speak to them and what you are going to do during you class, in the case of adults I would say to be more relaxed and also to plan very well your classes.

Interviewer: Did you receive support from anyone while you were doing your teaching experiences and your practicum?

Participant: Yes, I received support from my classmates in teaching experience, and at the beginning of my practicum too from some of my friends

Interviewer: And how did they support you?

Participant: Well, they gave me some ideas on how to do certain activities, or sometimes ideas on what activities I should use in my classes

Ok y crees que es importante el apoyo por parte de los maestros para poder desarrollarse mejor y mejorar como futuros maestros?

Pues creo que sí es importante pero realmente no me acerqué a ellos para que me dieran consejos sobre que hacer durante las practicas o durante las experiencias

Marco

Participant: The first experience is, and I consider it is very important is that you have to be very sociable with the teachers, the people you work with, in this case where I'm giving my classes right now. This interaction has made me develop as a professional, as person, and as a student.

Interviewer: Could you please be more specific?

Yes of course, when you are in touch with other teachers, more experienced teachers, they can give you extra knowledge that sometimes is not given here in our career, and that helps me to apply that knowledge, for example, how you can call your students' attention, or what to do in specific activities and how to handle those activities, that's what has helped me as a student and as trainee.

Also I consider that the school has been very kind with me because it's easier to work knowing that the school supports you, if they would had put me obstacles I wouldn't felt good giving classes there this support makes me see this not as a compromise but as a way of developing and of course it makes me feel more secure. And about the teachers I cannot say bad things about them because they have brought me a lot of support and they make me feel secure too.

The second experience was quite awkward, I was giving a class and at the moment a students asked me something related to the class I don't remember well what was the question, I couldn't answer because I didn't have the knowledge to do it, but that rally helped me because now in my Practicum I can be more versatile and I consider myself more knowledgeable about the English language.

Interviewer: Did you have classroom management problems?

I've always been very nervous, but at the moment I get into the classroom I show myself secure and the first two classes in Practica Professional I was very nervous, but I handled that situation because as I told you I feel more prepared and I've acquired that ability that when I'm nervous I can calm myself easier.

Interviewer: Now talking about the support who was the person who supported you the most?

Well first the teacher who I am working with in the school she has helped me in every class and when I get to have a mistake she tells me that but at the end of the class not at the moment, she gives me feedback, recommendations and all the support I consider crucial to improve and integrate myself to the groups. On the other hand I can say that my classmates of Practica Profesional because at the moment we make our lesson plans we motivate each others, they give ideas or complement the others ideas, we share materials, experiences, etc and that makes you grow as a student and as a teacher believe me. Also here I received a lot of support by my mentor in Professional Practicum I really appreciate her help, at the beginning I thought she was very strict, but with time I realized that she is

not strict she want discipline, and that discipline has made us grow a lot, she is very creative and it makes us make a big effort at the moment we plan or classes, she inspires us to have challenges and to challenge our students in order for them to learn.

Interviewer: Ok and from those two experiences what did learn the most?

I learned to recognize when I'm wrong and my mistakes, in this case my lack of experience, but I can also say that I won that credibility, today I can tell you that I feel capable to give one, or two complete classes, to be more versatile, to improvise and if someday someone tells me "go and give my class please" I can do it I feel able to do it. I also learned that I have to be prepare and increase my knowledge, if you don't have that knowledge you probably couldn't give a class

Interviewer: And finally if you had the opportunity to advice someone who's entering to the teaching field and that is facing similar situation what would you advice to him or her?

There are lots of things a can advice but, I would advice... first to have security, to trust in yourself and in what you can do, that you have to know that when you are going to give a class your perspectives have to change, you have to be tolerant, respectful with your students and the institution, you have to be sociable, creative, smart, and very, very patient.