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**FACULTAD DE LENGUAS**

**TEACHER AGENCY AND CURRICULAR INNOVATION  
IN EFL SECONDARY SCHOOL IN MEXICO**

**THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF**

**MAESTRÍA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS**

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**Teacher Agency and Curricular Innovation  
in EFL Secondary School in Mexico.**

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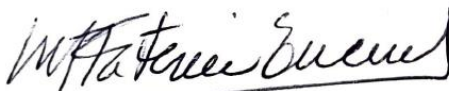
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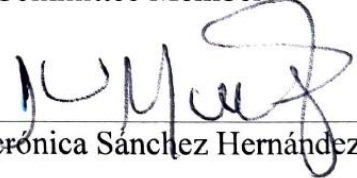
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## **ABSTRACT**

This study is embedded in the stance of qualitative sociocultural research in relation to English as a foreign language (EFL) policy, EFL teacher education and professional development and the construct of teacher agency. In particular, the purpose was to explore the effects of the implementation of a new curriculum (i.e. National English Program) in relation to the role of teacher agency to cope with potential systematic gaps between the curricular approach and teachers' praxis as well as how teachers' education and learning-in-practice shaped their roles and sense of agency. Therefore, in light of policy context of curriculum innovation that might demand teachers' agentic choices and agentic actions (Jian & Xuesong, 2017), agency is seen from an ecological and multi-layered genetic perspective because of its socially, historically, and discursively constituted nature. Consequently, the complexity and nature of teacher agency was analyzed in sociocultural domains of two EFL secondary school teachers' classroom practice in Central Mexico. The analysis of what teacher thinks/does and the genesis that underpins this thought/praxis relationship determined these EFL teachers' agency seemed to be framed by policy if policy or policies included teachers' professional discourses and these discourses were assonant in their context. This allowed them to enact such curricular innovation with high critical engagement. It also seems that construction and exercise of teacher agency was a dynamic process inflected by teachers' beliefs and discourses rooted from the past, knowledge of curriculum and pedagogical engagement in the present as well as future personal goals, which are sometimes shaped by current policies. These EFL teachers' agency indicated to be manifested via creative and protective mediation and strategic compliance, which shaped their daily teaching practice. Finally, some recommendations were provided for policy makers and teacher educators for enabling and affording teacher agency within curricular development and teacher education.

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I dedicate this piece of research to my parents, Gustavo (RIP) and María Teresa,

I must express my deepest love and thankfulness to them.

They always taught me to give my best at any time.

They have led my path with love and wisdom.

Dad and mom, I love you.

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*“Language learning is anchored in agency, as all of life is.  
Teaching, in its very essence, is promoting agency”.*  
(Leo van Lier, 2011b, p. 391)

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The contemporary trend of education policy in Mexico, and perhaps worldwide, seeks to boost teachers’ active participation in social, cultural and institutional practices that allow them to engage in educational development in immediate contexts. This means that teachers are currently required to exert agency in their schools. This is why this qualitative inquiry, embedded in the expanding stance of sociocultural research, examines the construct of teacher agency in relation to the field of English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher education, teacher practice and related educational policies, particularly in secondary school education.

Traditionally, most of former scholarship and research on EFL or second language (L2) teacher had focused toward more cognitive and social-constructivist conceptual, empirical, and methodological practices that generated an abundant body of research on teacher cognition and teacher learning. However, these lens for standards or paradigms that shape research inquiry do not completely suffice to be explanatory frameworks to what might seem meaningless, peripheral, or without focus in teachers’ learning and practice. At that juncture, the sociocultural analysis could enable scholars and researchers to articulate and to create comprehensive connections (Cross, 2010) on teacher cognition, teacher education and teacher learning as a prominent research agenda.

In order to exemplify the last assumption, it is acknowledged that the field of inquiry for teacher cognition had the purpose of identifying the development of EFL or L2 teacher’s mental processes (Kano & Stuart, 2011), but these practices might be strengthened by framing cognition from the stance of sociocultural inquiry in order to “articulate points of contradiction

and tensions within the activity in question” (Cross, 2010, p. 448). Later on, with the emphasis on social-constructive scholarship, teacher learning focused on how teachers’ mental processes have changed because of interaction with institutional contexts of teacher programs and teacher’s praxis in classrooms (Freeman, 2002); but then again, teachers were not also positioned as subjects within a broader cultural-historic domain for activity (Cross, 2010). In addition, Lewis, Enciso and Moje (2007) consider that these settings, where cognitive and social-constructivist stances of inquiry engage in teacher education and teacher learning research, also offer room for aspects that are not peripheral but central for learning such as power, identity, and agency. This is exactly where the contribution of a sociocultural perspective on EFL or L2 teacher education, scholarship and research might provide to these, and other, neglected aspects.

In particular, this study focused on contributing to extend EFL related to language teacher education/practice and the construct of agency, or teacher agency, beyond sociological, cognitive and socio-constructive horizons. There are four core reasons for arguing over and expanding teacher agency with interpretive and theoretical sociocultural frameworks. First, agency has been largely theorized from sociological perspectives that emphasize agency as dialectically constructed by and from larger societal forces since it is seen as the “time-space enabling constraints through which individual human actors can exercise power by recreating existing structures or transforming structures” (Walters, 2013; p. 14). Some representative examples of these tenets are Bourdieu’s (1984) habitus, agency, and structure and Giddens’ (1984) structuration. Nevertheless, the conceptualization of agency needs broader articulation and exploration of the social, cultural, historical, physical, and even political aspects of the sense-making of agency and teacher agency.

Secondly, agency has been conceptualized within psychological frameworks as the human’s inner capacity to achieve control under one’s life (Biesta et al., 2011). This



conceptualization seems consistent with Maslow's self-actualization (1970) and Bandura's self-efficacy (2001), which belong to the dominant theoretical approaches in the 1980's and the 1990's respectively. However, the construct of teacher agency needs large commitment to reflexive research practices where scholarship engages in addressing frameworks that account of micro and macro enactments and roots of agency. Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998), for example, address agency in this fashion, but their theorization needs more empirical study and focus on macro-structural conditioning.

Thirdly, teacher agency can be "theorized specifically in respect of the activities of teachers in schools" (Biesta et al., 2015; p. 6), but this perspective does lack of explicit theory development and research (Vongalis-Macrow, 2007). This means that teacher agency is not solely rooted, manifested, and operationalized by and in teacher's daily activity, but there are other constraining or affording socio-cultural and institutional forces that inform and shape teacher agency. As a result, curricular innovation and its implementation must be included as it represents, through a novel approach shift, learning and knowledge acquisition that are part of identity development (Kanno & Stuart, 2011) in teachers. This echoes Lewis et al.'s (2007) call for researchers to provide "greater emphasis to institutional, historical and cultural contexts within which individuals are constituted and which include as well as exclude particular relationships and meanings" (p. 5).

Another factor to take into account is teachers' professional experience and development as these are part of their identity development and learning. This is also important in researching teacher agency since Markee (2007) emphasizes that teacher learning refers to "change over time through engagement in activity" (p. 12) In addition, Biesta (2008) argues that "there is a need for more research that takes a longitudinal perspective on learning, wherever that learning is located" (p. 25). Therefore, teacher agency has to be analyzed in three

different overlapped domains of activity: within the classroom, within their professional histories and within the cultural and historic frames where their activity is located.

Fourthly, most theoretical frameworks and scholarship currently informing sociocultural research do not overtly address the issue of teacher agency per se but these usually involve other related constructs such as language learning, identity, power, and so on. For example, Trejo and Mora (2014) focused on teacher's professional identity in University professors and discussed agency as a related construct for identity and professional development. Moje and Lewis (2007) examined how a middle school teacher and her students' identity, agency and structure were articulated in dialogic power relations in the institution of schooling. Rogers and Fuller (2007) highlighted the role of conflict, structure and agency between participants in adult education in one General Education Development class. So, these studies demonstrate the deficiency of sociocultural research on teacher agency as the primary focus and it does also establish the lack of studies that scrutinize the construct in the context of middle or secondary schools.

This is why the goal in this sociocultural study was to provide empirical research for theorization of teacher agency, which is scrutinized in Chapter II, in order to bridge the gap between what is known about teacher agency and how it manifests itself in EFL secondary school teachers. Some other related objectives dealt with identify how teacher professional development and teacher learning frames and informs agency, how teacher agency is affected by curriculum or other broader policies, and in what ways teacher agency consequently shapes or informs teacher actual and future practice. These aspects are discussed in Chapter IV and V. As a result, Chapter III focused on describing how teacher agency was analyzed in three multi-layered domains of EFL secondary school teachers' activity, namely: socio-political and cultural context, personal/professional histories and articulation of EFL activity in the classroom through curriculum enactment. Such analysis took into account a qualitative case

study with a focus on narrative inquiry and enriched by multiple data collection strategies (e.g. participants' interviews-narratives, teaching/learning artifacts) in order to maximize the discernable number of instances of participants' behaviors, beliefs, discourses and values that would frame their agency and how this was mediated and negotiated in and by context and other cultural artifacts such as curriculum and related policies.

## **1.2 The purpose of the study.**

The purpose of the study was to explore the effects of the implementation of a new curriculum (i.e. National English Program - NEP) as well as other broader policies in relation to: a) the role of teacher agency in relation to potential systematic gaps between the theory of the underlying approach and EFL teachers' actual practice; and b) how the learning-in-practice of the teachers shape and inform their agency.

## **1.3 Statement of the problem and justification**

Innovations in the foreign language curriculum have permeated in Latin America during the last decades. Sayer, Mercau and Blanco (2013) describe that Chile introduced its *English Opens Doors Programme* in 1999, Colombia initiated the *Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo* (PNB) in 2004 and Argentina transformed their program in 2006 to start teaching English in fourth grade. In Mexico, the Ministry of Education for public education (SEP) considers English language as part of the curriculum in middle school or lower secondary level since, at least, 1954 and possibly since 1927 (Reyes Cruz et al., 2011). The reform in Mexico took place in 2009 with the *National English Program for Basic Education* (NEPBE) where English instruction was stretched through preschool and primary and adopted a sociocultural approach for language learning. This sociocultural perspective characterized a shift in

epistemological posture (Johnson, 2009) that demanded teachers in-depth reflection concerning their perspectives about what language was, language learning and teaching (Freeman, 2002). This meant that English instruction acquired a wider curriculum scope and approach that was presumably infused by teachers' rationale (i.e. teachers' beliefs about EFL learning), identity and agency.

Subsequent to the introduction and implementation of NEPBE, the name of the program was altered into National English Program (NEP) in 2016. Some minor changes in relation to its syllabi were made, but the underlying approach was the same. Since then, some studies have focused on how this curriculum has been implemented in relation to: actual teachers' methodological practices (Pamplon & Ramírez, 2013), pedagogical evaluations of textbooks used in the program and teacher's perspective about them (Castro, 2013; Lengeling, et al., 2013), expected teacher's knowledge about the program (Collins & Pérez, 2013), teachers and students' perceptions of the NEPBE learning activities (Alcántar & Montes, 2013), the role of the school principals as key players for the implementation of NEPBE (López de Anda, 2013), key areas to focus training efforts for NEPBE teachers (Sayer et al., 2013), or reflective personal and professional experiences towards the implementation of NEPBE (Salas & Sánchez, 2013).

Despite the accumulating body of research on teacher cognition, teacher learning or teacher beliefs about the implementation of NEP in the field of EFL over the past decade, no significant number of studies have investigated on the in-service EFL secondary school teachers' agency, identity or power. In particular, there are scarce studies that report how agency enables teachers to cope with the adoption of the curriculum and/or how this sociocultural curriculum shapes and informs teacher praxis and agency.

## 1.4 Significance of the topic

Making issues of identity and agency visible in EFL and L2 teacher education and research is critical at this historical moment for several reasons. First, teacher identity, which is seen as an on-going process that is socially constructed and as result of interactions with others (Johnson, 2001), is intrinsically embedded in the construct of agency according to some scholars (Lasky, 2005; Varghese et al., 2005; Lewis, Enciso & Moje, 2007; Biesta et al., 2008; Trejo & Mora, 2014). Both identity and agency have been acknowledged as concepts that determine the success or the failure in teachers' training and pedagogical practices (Trejo & Mora, 2014). This statement has been supported by research on language teacher cognition that emphasizes that "teacher identity is an essential component of what teachers know and do in the language classroom" (Johnson & Golombek, 2016; p. 12).

Second, curricular innovations and language policy trends tend to construct teachers explicitly as agents of change (Priestly et al, 2015), so the construct of teacher agency plays an important role for identity formation as "understanding individuals as intentional beings" (Varghese et al., 2005; p. 23) and as a means to achieve social transformation (Brown & Lee, 2015). Brown and Lee (2015) emphasize that scholars, such as Norton (2013) and Yashima (2013), have highlighted how layers of social structures of an individual's social setting are critically permeated by the role of agency.

Third, Brown and Lee (2015) claim that agency provides an abundant array of pedagogical implications for the classroom teacher in concrete methodological terms. They even perceive agency as principle that nourishes and embraces various constructs in second language acquisition and it is the core of language teaching as agency embodies other related constructs, namely: automaticity, transfer, reward, self-regulation, identity and investment, interaction, and languaculture (see Brown & Lee, 2015).

Therefore, this project could provide a contribution to theorizing and conceptualizing teacher's learning across the implementation of new curriculum in a Mexican context. Specifically, it attempts to theorize *teacher agency*. The pedagogical contributions of conducting research about this construct are that by understanding teacher agency and its relationship for teachers' classroom practices would lead to rethink how such content knowledge of EFL teaching and continuing professional development can be infused with an understanding of the influence that teachers' broader contexts have for classroom practice (Cross, 2006). Likewise, teacher agency offers considerable potential in enabling those who frame policies to more fully understand the implications of those policies for those who enact practice and who act in practice in EFL (Priestly et al., 2015).

To sum up, inquiry in EFL teacher development related to learning that is located within and owing to EFL curriculum innovation, educational programs and agendas is highly important since these policies permeate teacher's current and projective-oriented practices.

### **1.5 Research aims**

The main goal in this study is to bridge the gap between what is known about teacher agency and its operationalization, how it influences EFL secondary school teachers' actual praxis and the effects of EFL curriculum innovation as in situ learning that also permeates in teacher agency.

### **1.6 Research questions**

The before mentioned goal was guided through three different research questions, which also frame the structure of the overall discussion of the construct of teacher agency:

- A. How does the curricular reform and related broader policies shape EFL secondary school teacher agency?
- B. How do ELF secondary school teachers construct their agency in their teaching practice?
- C. How does this teacher agency they constructed enable EFL secondary school teachers to cope with potential systematic gaps between curriculum innovation and their praxis?

### **1.7 Ethical considerations**

This research was guided by “*Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*” that was developed by Creswell (2012). It was confirmed that participants understood the nature of the research, they were asked for signed consent for participation, and that they were able to withdraw from the study at any time. Anonymity was also guaranteed with participants’ self-chosen pseudonyms and background data in order to protect them from possible recognition. In these cases where participants-researcher fellowship could have developed beyond research relationships, participants were acknowledged with opportunities for help and support, especially in relation to the results of the study.

### **1.8 The background of the researcher**

This study was inspired by my own personal experience as a language teacher participating in a reform implementation in secondary schools in Mexico. In addition, my experience as a second language learner within the same context before the reform and my interest in conducting research as an undergraduate student in the field of EFL curriculum and ELF listening instruction. These contexts have provided me the opportunity to experience the three different types of curricula: namely the ‘planned curriculum’, the ‘enacted curriculum’

and the ‘experienced curriculum’ (Marsh & Willis, 2007). Marsh (2009) defines the former as the implementation and evaluation of the “planned” or intended curriculum based on the teacher’s professional judgments of the pedagogical knowledge to use; while the latter refers to “what actually happens in the classroom” (Marsh, 2009; p. 3).

I have been specifically interested in the enacted curriculum and the experienced curriculum. When I completed my undergraduate degree in English language teaching, I decided to research on the implementation of English language curricula in Mexican secondary schools as an English teacher of this context to make me more informed and qualified to participate in the efforts to improve my own praxis and understand better this English language curriculum. I carried out a case study within my context of practice in order to identify gaps between teacher’s practices in the classroom and the intended curricular practices in relation to second language listening instruction. The findings indicated that, in relation to the curriculum change that took place in 2009, in-service teachers of English perceived it challenging to enact. Many of them believed that the new curriculum was beyond students’ knowledge and capabilities and that the authorities did not supply them with the necessary elements for successful instruction. In addition, the study also indicated that classroom practice did not usually reflect the planned curriculum presumably due to teachers’ lack of training in the articulation of the new curriculum and teachers’ knowledge gaps in relation to its underlying approach. In addition, implications of this study and empirical observation within this context have yielded other insights about intrinsic factors, besides teachers’ cognition and beliefs, inherent to teachers that might enable them to deal with curriculum innovation.

## **1.9 Chapter summary**

This chapter briefly presented the main aspects of the sociocultural study which dealt with the role of teacher’s agency with potential systematic gaps between the theory of the



underlying approach and practice, and how the learning-in-practice of the teachers shape their sense of agency. It succinctly analyzed the issues concerning the study such as the statement of the problem and its justification, the significance of studying teacher agency, and the background of the researcher. Finally, this chapter offered a description of what each Chapter considers under discussion.

The next Chapter focuses on providing related approaches to conceptualize or analyze agency, which has been theorized from different fields. Later, a brief account of how agency has been researched in education is described. In addition, there is also the explanation of the theoretical framework that shaped the operationalization of teacher agency in order to conduct the case study and its analysis.

## CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW.

### 2.1. Introduction.

Priestley, Biesta and Robinson (2012) notice some curricular-development practices seek to provide central focus and guidance within school and flexibility for teachers to adapt based on local particularities. They also observe that there is a trend of the combination of features of top-down and bottom-up approaches for curriculum planning and development as well as fostering teachers as agentive forces of such planning. Biesta et al. (2008), however, observe that educational policies worldwide still hold an ongoing tension between countries that pursue reducing the opportunities for teachers to exercise agency in their educational settings, and those who seek to promote it.

Biesta and other scholars argue that conflicting tensions lead to perceive teacher agency “as a weakness within the operation of schools and seek to replace it with evidence-based and data-driven approaches, whereas others argue that because of the complexities of situated educational practices, teacher agency is an indispensable element of good and meaningful education” (Biesta et al., 2015; p. 624). Priestley, Biesta, Philippou, and Robinson (2015) argue that these type of tensions described above are grave since it is challenging for policy to require teachers to exert agency in their working practices, and then simultaneously refute them the means to do so, effectually disabling them. Moreover, they emphasize that while such policies tend to overtly focus on the individual dimensions of what it means to be an effective teacher, it neglects outstanding consideration of the cultural and structural conditions that play important roles in enabling teachers to achieve agency in their work.

It is within this intricate environment that the concept of teacher agency is prevailing (Priestley et al., 2015) since recent literature has perceived it as an alternative means of understanding how teachers might enact practice and engage with policy (e.g. Lasky, 2005; Leander and Osbourne, 2008; Ketelaar et al., 2012; Pyhältö et al., 2012; Huang, 2013, Priestley

et al., 2013; Buchanan, 2015). Nonetheless, the concept of teacher agency is indeed a problem itself since agency remains as a complex construct in much of the literature about teaching. In particular, it is often not clear whether the term refers narrowly to an individual capacity of teachers or more broadly to an emergent ‘ecological’ phenomenon dependent upon the quality and nature of individuals’ engagement with their environments (Biesta & Tedder, 2007).

In conclusion, the challenge lies on the fact that little theory building research has been done in relation to teacher agency that would create a solution in this dialectic or, at least, the conditions for a middle ground for teacher agency in order to develop educational policies according to the cultural and societal adequacies for each teaching context. This chapter sets the basis for theorizing teacher agency by discussing perspectives on agency from different schools of thought. These perspectives are described in their distinctive foci on what agency entails and how it is framed by and because of human development.

## **2.2. Approaches to understanding agency.**

Numerous scholars in different socially or psychologically oriented fields of inquiry have widely theorized what agency is. These scholars deconstruct “agency” in relation to those inner components and external, yet related, constructs in order to define and operationalized it. Before continuing, it is helpful to provide a provisional definition. For that purpose, the most succinct definition is provided by the anthropologist Ahearn (2001) who narrowly describes agency as “the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act” (p. 11). However, this conceptualization does not illustrate what it entails and does not enable academics to fully understand the complexity and nature of set of practices and conditions that exemplify it. Therefore, it is important to discuss some key perspectives on agency from sociologically and psychologically oriented scholarship.

The first two perspectives are directly linked with the concept of “structure” or social conditionings. Such concept can be defined as any interplay of social and cultural domains where individuals engage. Each perspective is organized in relation to how agency is linked to structure. A major contribution is done with Bourdieu’s (1984) “social capital” and “habitus” are determined as structure-shaping of human agency since agency is argued to be shaped by institutional factors and made possible by a loose coupling between different institutions in which the individual is engaged. Accordingly, Giddens’s (1984) “structuration theory” is also considered since it represents a middle ground perspective that advocates for the interplay of agency and structure wherein these distinctive entities interact with no primacy.

The second set of perspectives deal with socio-cognitive and sociocultural schools of thought. First, socio-cognitive theorist Bandura (2001) studied agency in relation to the nature and quality of exercising control through phenomenal and functional consciousness. Second, within a sociocultural perspective, Holland et al., (1998) perceived agency as structure-shaping due to agency is being exercised if the action(s) opposes the social structure, and it is in a dialectic relationship with social structure. They called their theory as “figured worlds” where functions as contexts of possibility that enable actors to use mediatory tools and mediated devices.

In addition, there are other variables that are linked to the construct of agency. However, one of the most influential of how agency develops and constructs is over time. Briefly, this view considers that agency has to do with the interplay of lifetime factors that limit or enhance activity in a particular situation. For example, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) and Hitlin and Elder’s (2007) typologies contend that the situation in which the social actor is situated determines the temporal orientation of agency. In particular, Emirbayer and Mische’s construction of agency with a temporal view is scrutinized.

### **2.2.1. Bourdieu's habitus, agency and structure.**

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu approaches the concept of 'habitus' as the socialized norms or predispositions that guide human behavior and thinking that are exposed to modification and reconstruction through reflexive agency and educational practices (Pollmann, 2009). Therefore, Bourdieu (1990) claims that "habitus" is the outcome of social conditionings, which can be constantly modified, that enables reassuring homogeneity for the individuals since it produces rational and conventional behaviors.

Bourdieu (1984) labels these social conditionings as fields, a second important concept in his sociological perspective, which have subjective and objective structuring practices. These ones shape the boundaries of agents' actions, objective regularities, predispositions, schemata and so on. However, these fields are not fixed since there is a mutual constitution of both habitus and context and networks, which means that habitus is shaping fields and fields are also shaped by habitus according to this French sociologist. This means that social actors or agents navigate, submissively or actively, within and through a series of fields that provide them with some sort of character complexity, capacities and *capital* (Benson, 1999).

The notion that fields provide or set the basis for *capital* leads to this important Bourdieuan concept. Papacharissi and Easton (2013) claim that each field maneuvers as an entity, distinctive by its types of capital, but interconnected and mutually influential cultural sphere of the larger social realm. So, an individual possess capital by means of and through fields goes beyond material assets; he also recognizes social capital as well as cultural capital, both of which are exchangeable into economic capital. He elaborates that capital has to do with "accumulated labor [in its materialized form or its incorporated embodied form] that, when appropriated on a private, that is exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour" (Bourdieu, 2001; p. 96). Farrel (2010) argues that cultural capital itself can be further categorized into three types;

the embodied state, the objectified state and the institutionalized state. She describes that the first subtype of cultural capital involves personal cost and investment of time so the work is done for oneself, for example, professional development. The second subtype, the objectified state, has to do with the type of capital that can be transferred but it cannot be consumed, for example, owning a painting. The institutionalized state is the culturally recognized capital since its holders are conferred with conventional, permanent, and legal value with respect to culture. It is clear that these types of capital provide social actors with positions and dispositions (i.e. status and power) that enable or hinder their capacity to act in a field or fields.

In connection to the last assumption, Papacharissi and Easton (2013), based on Bourdieu's theory, considers that social actors and their capacity to act is not mechanic but tactical through conformity and divergence as specific strategies. This means that social actors might employ *strategic divergence* at the micro-level via a habitus of a routinized activity to permeate at the macro-level of a field of structuring practices or larger social realms. Conversely, social actors' *strategic conformity* might be deployed to maintain familiar practices despite change in the structuring practices of the field or social realms. Therefore, divergence and conformity bestows social characters with flexible set of choices of agency. In that sense, agency is seen within this framework as how social actor act or react upon and against structured and structuring practices at micro and macro levels.

### **2.2.2. Giddens' structuration theory.**

Anthony Giddens has contributed to social theory with his Structuration theory (Rose, 1998). Rose (1998) argues that Giddens seeks to show how the conception and embodiment of structure derives from human agents that are knowledgeable actors that discursively and recursively produce and reproduce set of rules, routines and practices at the ontogenetic level. These latter terms constitute social practices where human agents have the ability to reflect

about what and why they are doing it and the potential constraints and affordances to do it. This means that humans have some transformative capacity, in other words agency, or “the capacity to make a difference” (Giddens, 1984, pp. 14) that is connected with power. Walters (2013), therefore, claims that Giddens implicitly advocates that all human beings are agents to some extent since they are actors that exert power to reconstruct or change structures according to context affordance. Power involves how resources are exploited from tangible or abstract aspects of the natural world (i.e. allocative resources) and the relationships among human agents (i.e. authoritative resources). These resources form part of the structural properties in a society, alongside rules, which both constraint and enable agents in their actions.

Walter (2013) argues that, in a social structure, much of the power that is befallen to a person results from control over knowledge because power is related to use, application and transformation of knowledge to achieve a position or transform an existing social structure. Buchanan (2015) concludes that theory of structuration challenges the traditional dichotomy of autonomy of humans as individual agents (i.e. intentionalism) and social structure as driving forces of agents (i.e. structuralism). Instead, this theory emphasizes its dialectic and duality where “social practices are both a product of larger social forces as well as the mechanism for structural (re)formation” (Buchanan, 2015, p. 14).

### **2.2.3 Bandura’s agentic perspective**

Incorporated in social cognitive theory, Albert Bandura (2001) embodies agency as the personal influence that exercised, informed by several features such as the capacities, belief systems, self-regulatory abilities, and distributed structures and functions. He asserts that these core features of agency “enable people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with changing times” (Bandura, 2001; p. 1). These comprise the temporal extension of agency through intentionality and forethought, self-regulation by self-reactive

influence, and self-reflectiveness about one's capabilities, quality of functioning, and the meaning and purpose of one's life pursuits.

Briefly, Bandura perceives that agency is informed by self-motivator for plans of action (i.e. intentionality) and projected material and social outcomes (i.e. forethought). These features are self-regulated by people's personal standards in order to go beyond rewards-driven behaviors (i.e. self-reactiveness). In addition, they are simultaneously by metacognitive processes to guarantee people's self-efficacy (i.e. self-reflectiveness), and appropriate to the activities, goals and environments people choose to get into (i.e. quality of functioning and the meaning/purpose of one's life pursuits). Therefore, agency is regarded as a mental-functional capacity that operates within a network of socio-structural influences. So, people are manufacturers as well as products of social systems in these agentic transactions.

This social-cognitive theorist also distinguishes other two modes of agency: proxy agency and collective agency. He elaborates that:

[Proxy agency is] the socially mediated mode of agency [where] people try by one means or another to get those who have access to resources or expertise or who wield influence and power to act at their behest to secure the outcomes they desire. [Nevertheless], there is no emergent entity that operates independently of the beliefs and actions of the individuals who make up a social system. [So, collective agency] is people acting conjointly on a shared belief, not a disembodied group mind that is doing the cognizing, aspiring, motivating, and regulating." (Bandura, 2001; p. 13-14).

#### **2.2.4 Holland et al.'s figured worlds**

Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) developed a theory called "figured worlds" that belongs to a larger framework of study of the self and identity that fits in the sociocultural school of Vygotsky, the dialogic constructivism of Bakhtin, and some of other schools of thought such as culturalists and universalists (Urrieta, 2007). Broadly speaking, these scholars define figured worlds as "socially produced, culturally constructed activities" (Holland et al., 1998, pp. 40–41) where individuals are actors whose "identity and agency are



formed dialectically and dialogically in these ‘as if’ worlds” (p. 49). Holland et al. (1998) state that these figured world as “as if realms” since they see the potential of children’s game play, that include imaginary worlds with symbolic tools, as an antecedent to participation in an institutional life. Particularly, this world making through serious social play is a context that sets the conditions for figured worlds since these are “peopled by the figures, characters and types who carry out its tasks and who also have styles of interaction within, distinguishable perspectives on, and orientations toward it” (Holland et al., 1998; p. 51).

Holland et al. also describe four core characteristics of figured worlds. First, they claim that these “as if” worlds devise historicity as individuals’ lives intersect, frames their participation and shapes their development. Secondly, they are social phenomena located in times and places that positions participants’ rank and these dictate their kind of participation. Thirdly, they need participants’ recreation through social encounters that ensure their organization and perpetuation. Finally, figured worlds permeate in individuals’ broader scope of action as well as their self-senses across diverse activities. Therefore, people operate in socio-culturally constructed worlds that provide them with historically situated tools to construct themselves that results in a dynamic, complex identity with a sort of agency (Buchanan, 2014).

In relation to agency, figured worlds provide context for “possibility” since individuals are provided with tools (i.e. meanings for concepts of domains of action, contexts of for artifacts, and for action) that set conditions for improvisation and innovation (Urrieta, 2007). Holland et al., therefore, argue that figured worlds provide terms to define agency and the problem of consider individuals as both social products and social producers, which leads to their notion of heuristic development. Within heuristic development, these scholars argue that improvisations or microgenetic production of tools through social encounter, sustained activity and cultural resources leads to the appropriation of these products for upcoming activities and

“to the extent that these productions are used again and again, they can become tools of agency or self-control and change (Holland, et al., 1998; p. 40).

Another tool of agency is what these scholars named as “semiotic mediation”. Holland et al., (1998) argue that semiotic mediation has to do with assigning meaning to objects with the purpose of modifying behavior to exert some degree of agency. These mediated devices can be tangible or psychological tools that are given a meaning in activity. These are, however, constructed historically, collectively and socially; which means that mediated devices are not mostly original since they converge from societal and cultural construction.

### **2.2.5 Emirbayer and Mische’s temporal process of agentic social engagement.**

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) were concerned about conceptualizing agency on its own since most theoretical approaches considered only some facets. They argue that these approaches were one sided and did not consider the dynamic and multilayered interplay of several dimensions of agency that overlap within the flow of time. Based mainly on Mead’s (1932) theorization of temporality, these sociologists sought the disaggregation of agency into several components in order to demonstrate how these ones infiltrate in the different structural properties of society to generate implications of a new concept of agency.

This new conceptualization denotes a “chordal triad” perspective since Emirbayer and Mische distinguished three constitutive features in human agency: “iteration, projectivity, and practical evaluation”. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) argue that they took in consideration those temporal orientations of agency based on Mead’s ideas about human actors embedded in temporal channels where past and future help present decision-making as well as human’s capacity for “imaginative distancing” and “communicative evaluation” They therefore define agency as:

The temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments –the temporal-relational context of action– which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgment, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations. (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; p. 970).

In particular, these elements of agency are also described and they perform at synchronization to methodically shape accessibility to problematic situations. The first element is the iterational component that reactivates structural properties of the past such as habits as patterns of action or thought in activity, which provide endurance and order or institutions, identities and so forth. The second element, projectivity, deals with the capacity of actors for imaginative reconfiguration of structural properties of patterns of action or thought according to their needs, desires, and goals for the future. The last element has to do with practical and judgmental responsiveness to present evolving situations that allow actors to have a wide repertoire of trajectories of action.

Some properties about this framework of responsive action are that: a) each element appears in a varying degree in an instance of actions, b) each element can be either a constraint or affordance of another element within the framework, c) however, a particular element will be more prominent according to the nature of the action at hand, d) these elements do not work in a linear fashion but they emerge in an ongoing time-based passage, and e) each element encompasses its own temporal orientations in an inner triad composition.

### **2.3 Theoretical framework**

The former perspectives have established the basis to understand agency in more comprehensive and comprising standpoints where contextual, social, cultural and historical factors are included in an individual' activity or set of activities. The following sections describe succinctly those frameworks that commensurate some of the challenges that a conceptual framing of agency needs to address in relation to existing concerns of the

sociocultural literature, namely: the sociocultural theoretical domains of genetic analysis (Cole & Engeström, 1993) and the ecological view of agency-as-achievement (Biesta et al., 2015).

These theoretical sociocultural-oriented frameworks for agency converge in four specific assumptions about its conceptualization. First, these frames of reference hold assumptions concerning the subject as a social agent and how this social positioning alongside agency draw implications within their context of practice. Second, they incorporate a focus on historicity; this means that they take into account how the past is part of the nature of the sense-making process of subject's thinking and practice. Third, they also provide affordances to harmonize contradictions and tensions that arise when exerting agency. Finally, both frameworks result assonant with current and empirical and methodological innovations in the field of research on language teacher and the assumptions and paradigms that this research holds itself.

### **2.3.1. A genetic framework for agency analysis.**

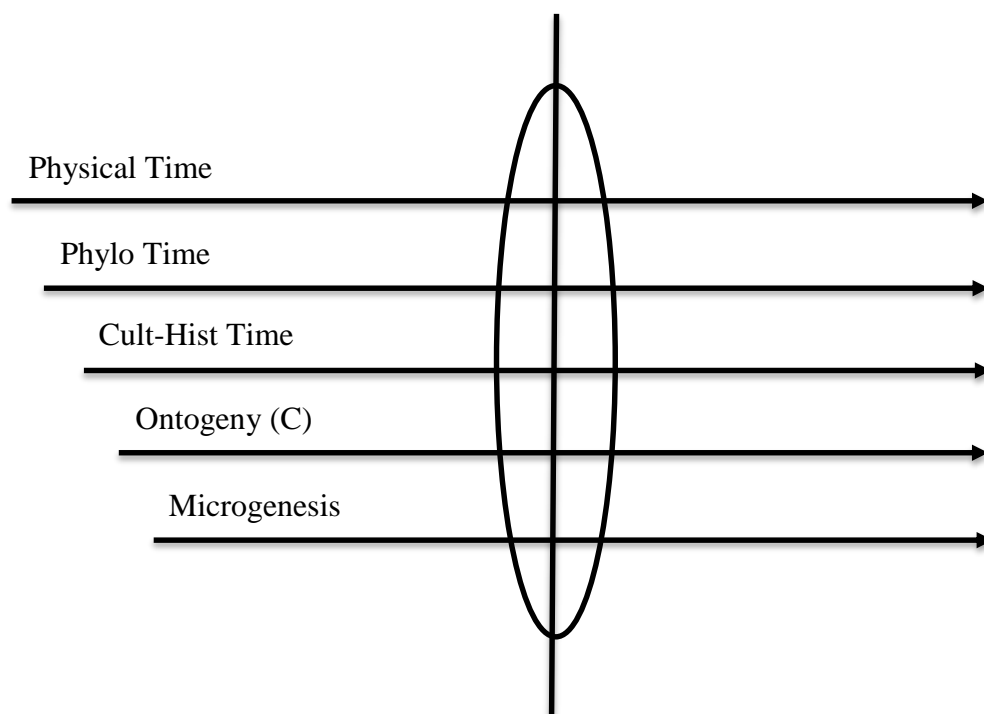
According to Cross (2010), Vygotsky favored a genotypic approach that would focus on the roots of the phenomenon in question; in this case, agency needs to be analyzed in terms of interrelated domains of human development. Broadly speaking, there are four domains that coexist in an ecology of subsystems: the phylogenetic domain, the cultural-historic domain, the ontogenetic domain and the microgenetic domain.

Cross (2010) claims that the first domain largely concerns the human development as a biological species, the second domain has to do with the society and culture, the third domain involves individual development across the human lifespan, and the fourth domain includes aspects of temporary instances of human engagement that are tangible in the concrete and practical activities with the world around human beings. This means that agency can be scrutinized primarily in the ontogenetic and microgenetic domains since the latter occurs on a

daily basis in the context of activity where subject engages in practical activity and “it is the foundation for defining who the [ontogenetic] subject ‘is’ in relation to concrete, social practices” (Cross, 2013, p. 3). However, the cultural-historic analysis of that activity must be considered due to its relation to the broader social, cultural, and historic context from which subject’s concrete practices have emerged. A representation of these multilayered domains is given:

**Figure 1**

*Sociocultural theoretical domains of genetic analysis.*



*Note.* Adapted from "Language teaching as sociocultural activity: Rethinking language teacher practice," by R. Cross, 2010, *The Modern Language Journal*, 94, p. 439. Copyright 2010 by The Modern Language Journal.

In other words, an individual’s agency becomes tangible in the range of purposeful actions in a particular setting (microgenesis) as unit of analysis that is not only situated in that immediate setting, but it is concurrently constructed by the background, experience, and history of that individual (ontogenesis) alongside with the broader systems (cultural-historic) that permeates in his/her activity. Yet, Cross (2010) insists on complementing the genetic analysis

with a framework that analyzes that activity as focal point as the site within thinking, doing and context converge in order to understand better human interaction through their use of tools and artifacts. This scholar, for example, draws on the field of Activity Theory and its potential for “conceptualizing the ‘thinking and doing teacher subject’ within socially, culturally, and historically constituted systems of ‘activity’” (Cross, 2010; p. 440).

### **2.3.2 An ecological framework for agency analysis.**

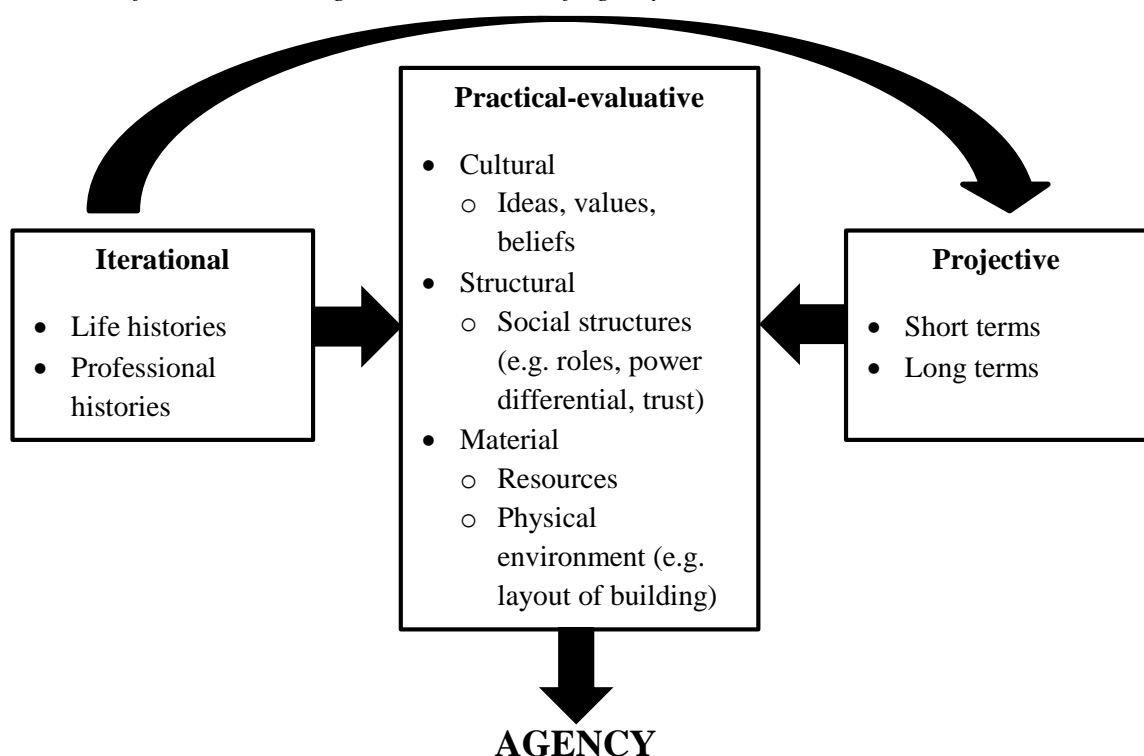
Based on the assumption of agency as a situated achievement rather than a capacity, Priestley, Biesta and Robinson (2012) developed a model to guide data-collection and assist data-analysis “to generate rich understandings of how agency is achieved by concrete individuals in concrete situations, and of the different factors that promote or inhibit the achievement of agency” (p. 4). These scholars built their model on Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) proposal of agency and Archer's (2000) perspective on culture and agency. The former corresponds to the proposition that the attainment of agency is the consequence of the interaction of iterational (i.e. past forces), practical-evaluative (i.e. present tangible and abstract resources) and projective (i.e. future intents and goals) dimensions. The latter deals with the notion that individual emergent properties include the development of identity, values, and beliefs although clearly these are shaped by cultural patterns.

This three-dimensional perspective on agency allows scholars to identify a number of further aspects that are likely to contribute to the achievement on agency. Priestly and colleagues conceive the iteration dimension as the influence of past trajectories of individual development in both general life histories as well as his/her more specific professional histories. With regard to the projective dimension, these scholars distinguish between short term and long term future orientations of activity engagement. They acknowledge that both the iterational and projective dimensions of agency relate primarily to the assets that individuals

bring to activity; in other words, the interplay of what subjects convey to the activity and what the activity conveys to him or her because its historical, cultural, and social load. Regarding the practical-evaluative dimension, they recognize various components of the present contexts which provide the conditions and affordances through which agency is achieved. Priestly et al., distinguish between the cultural, structural and material components in particular social settings. Cultural aspects include shared ideas, values, policies, paradigms and beliefs. Structural features include the social structures that subsidize to the achievement of agency since they embrace emergent properties of power, identity and trust where configurations of particular relationships and roles are comprised. Material aspects have to do with to the tangible resources that endorse or obstruct agency and the wider physical environment in and through which agency is achieved. The model layout is portrayed as it follows:

**Figure 2**

*A model for understanding the achievement of agency.*



*Note.* Adapted from “The role of beliefs in teacher agency” by G. Biesta, M. Priestley & S. Robinson, 2015, *Teachers and Teaching*, 94, 6, p. 627. Copyright 2015 by Taylor & Francis.

In practical terms, an example of agency as achievement is provided where every domain and subsets are present. Priestley et al., (2015) exemplify that particular ideologies or ideas about learning (embedded in professional histories, cultural and political aspects) could be used to rationalize the establishment of particular roles and structures (structural aspects), and in turn the power emerging from such structures (structural aspects) may be used to maintain and disseminate the cultural forms in question (long-term orientations). In addition, those particular ideologies could also be sustained by given the resources and constraints of the context such as actual policies or regulations (practical resources) or institutional facilities and layout (material resources).

Utilizing this triad of the iterational (past), projective (future imaginings) and the practical-evaluative (present) elements make possible to characterize the particular tone of people's engagement with events in their lives. On an empirical level, the conception of agency espoused by Emirbayer and Mische requires not only the 'composition' of agency to be explored, but simultaneously “requires a characterization of the different temporal-relational contexts within which individuals act” (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 137). This way of understanding agency provides space for the agentic orientations of people to differ in different contexts and times.

### **2.3.3 A sociocultural framework for agency analysis.**

Former theoretical models have set the foundations to approach agency in a more comprehensible perspective. Nonetheless, both models still hold some a few limitations on their own. This section addresses such limitations and suggests the development of a meta-theoretical framework, which involves re-envisioning elements of Vygotskian sociocultural genetic framework (Cole & Engeström, 1993) and Biesta et al.'s (2015) framework for agency-as-achievement in order to approach agency. An example of this type of endeavor is done by



Lewis, Enciso and Moje (2007) who call for the expanded form of sociocultural theory into a “critical sociocultural theory”. They advocate for building on reframing sociocultural theory in order to attempt to account for the widest range of mediators that address issues of identity, agency, and power.

On one hand, Vygotskian sociocultural genetic framework (Cole & Engeström, 1993) does not fully render unstable and dynamic enacted agency that is also informed by teacher’s orientations towards the future in some combination of short(er) term and long(er) term beliefs, objectives and values. In other words, the genesis of teacher’s praxis and thought needs the examination of projective orientations of what teachers bring to the situation. On the other hand, Biesta et al.’s (2015) framework for agency-as-achievement does not suffice the genesis that underpins teachers’ thought and practice relationship. This means that the overall design of the analytical and methodological of these scholars’ model still requires an overemphasized focus on historicity. What is meant as historicity does not only involve teacher’s professional and life narratives (ontogenesis), but it does incorporate analytical lens on broader social, cultural, historical and even political aspects that filter teacher’s situated activity.

The implications of these limitations are that, first, a sociocultural perspectives should approach agency as a dialogic and relational phenomenon that is shaped within ontogenetic (with forward-ontogeny), contextual and sociocultural forces. Second, such theoretical/analytical framework with concrete foundations of agency in a sociocultural view must consider culture (i.e. language policy, past policies of education, political stances on educational reforms, etc.) as basis of human development and human action. Archer (2000), for instance, identifies culture as a key concept in conjunction with structure and agency. This scholar implies that agents emerge in a dialectical process in which structural and cultural powers impact upon the human powers of the ‘self’ and ‘personal identity’ (Archer, 2000, pp. 254–255). Third, the cultural, historical, and individual forces that inform or reinforce

individual's past and future patterns of action also need to be considered. Cross (2010), for example, advocates for analytical frameworks with Vygostkyan perspectives as the basis to understand the relationship/intersection of social, cultural, historical, mental, physical, political aspects of subject/teachers' thinking, practice, and context.

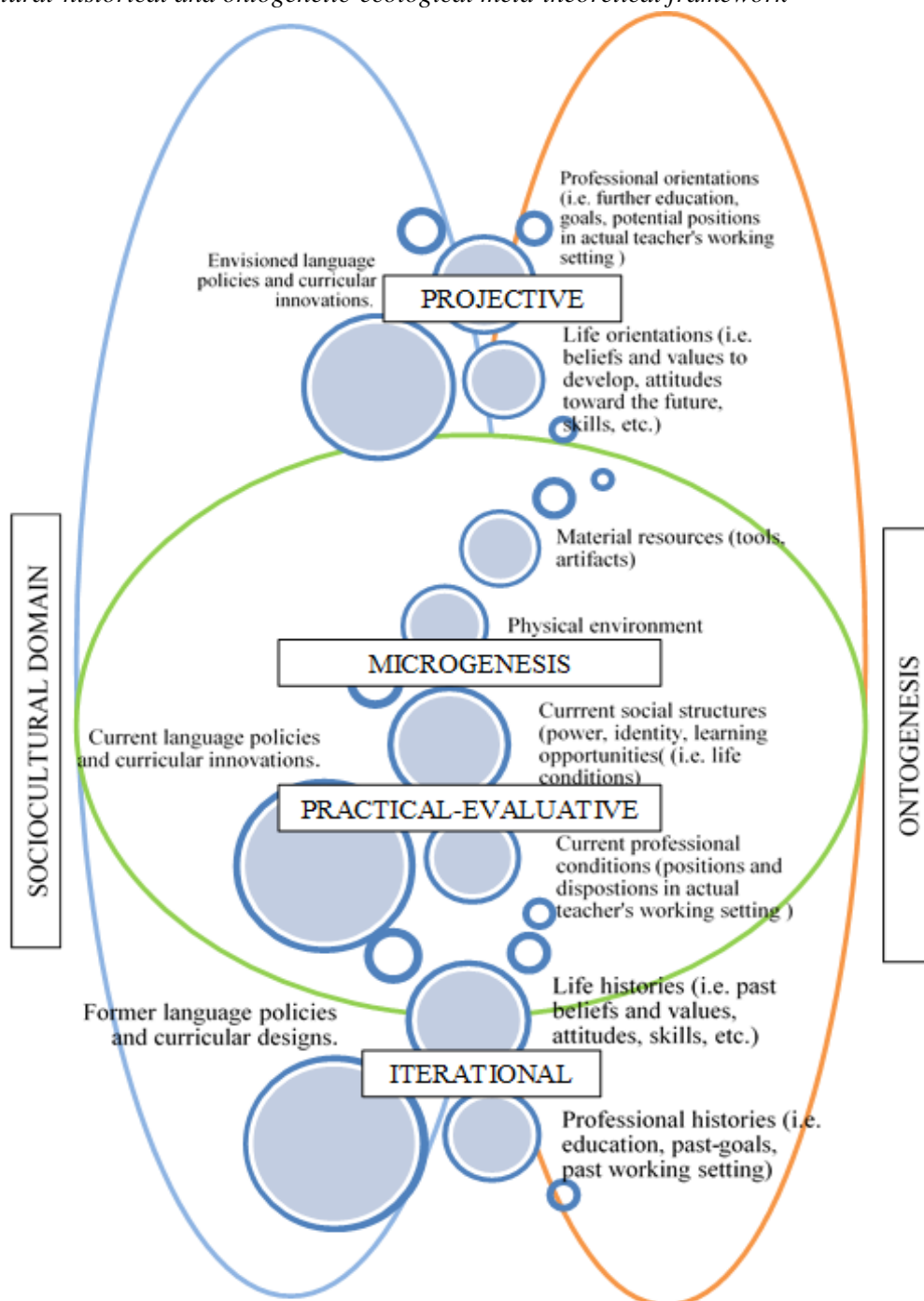
In conclusion, a cultural-historical and ontogenetic-ecological approach is assumed where a genotypic analysis of agency attempts to understand how and why teachers' choices and actions have come to exist in the way they have according to the cultural-historical, social and contextual, affordances or constraints and their interplay with teachers' past, present and future patterns of action (i.e. ontogenesis, micro-genesis and forward-ontogenesis).

As a result, this meta-theoretical framework provided the set of codes derived from theoretical frameworks and conceptual categories (Cross, 2006) in light of the considerations of how Cole and Engeström (1993) and Biesta et al.'s (2015) frameworks overlap in scope and nature. In particular, this study focused primarily on the ontogenetic and microgenetic analysis since the latter occurs on a daily basis in the classroom where teacher engages in practical activity (i.e. language teaching) and "it is the foundation for defining who the [ontogenetic] subject 'is' in relation to concrete, social practices" (Cross, 2006, p. 3). However, the cultural-historic analysis of that activity was also considered due to its relation to the broader social, cultural, and historic context from which subject's concrete teaching practices have emerged. In other words, the activity of language teaching that takes place in the classroom becomes tangible in the teacher's classroom practice (microgenesis) as unit of analysis that is not only situated in that immediate setting, but it is concurrently constructed by the background, experience, and history of the teachers (ontogenesis) alongside with the broader systems (cultural-historic) that permeates in their activity such as policy, curriculum, and so on.

Finally, it seems important to show how this meta-theoretical framework would look like in order to visualize how conceptual categories overlap and complement for understanding the complexity of agency as you can see in the next figure.

**Figure 3**

*Cultural-historical and ontogenetic-ecological meta-theoretical framework*



*Note.* Own elaboration based on Cole and Engeström's (1993) sociocultural domains of genetic analysis and Biesta et al.'s (2015) agency-as-achievement framework.

## 2.4 Introduction to teacher agency research

This section revises scholarship and research that have taken agency into account in relation to language learning, teacher education and teacher praxis. As a start, it is necessary to examine again succinct Ahearn's (2001) conceptualization of agency as the capacity of acting based on sociocultural mediating factors. Such definition allows to comprehend that an individual's action will be filtered by a layer of domains with social and contextual factors. This sets a foundation of what theorists have assumed about teacher's inherent repertoire of action that is mediated by local, national and international practices, beliefs, ideas, etc. This notion echoes Miller's (2016) perspective on agency that is the "contextually enabled and constrained capacity" (p. 350).

Therefore, teacher agency is the degree of interaction and enacted capacity of negotiating institutional relationships in educational and larger cultural contexts by means of reshaping and reconstructing their engagement and enactment (Kelchtermans, 2005, Lasky 2005; Zembylas 2003; Zhao & Baldauf 2012; Lasky, 2005; Leander & Osbourne, 2008; Ketelaar et al., 2012; Pyhältö et al., 2012; Priestley et al., 2015). In considering agency, Miller (2016) insists on taking into account both the "centripetal" perspective of the activity where individuals are enabled and constrained by external mediating factors and the "centrifugal" selves dialogically engaging or resisting those entities. Still, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) add that this active participation in the context does not necessarily mean exercising agency but the actual replication of larger trajectories of action. In addition, Miller does demand the constant inquiry of the conditions that afford or constraint the exercise of agency since the source of an individuals' repertoire of actions and choices develops within socio-historical and ideological discourses.

As mentioned in the previous section, there are many constructs that are linked to agency and these have been investigated in parallel to it. However, the following discussions

outline a subset of that literature where teacher agency is the focus or the parallel construct under scrutiny.

The study of teacher cognition and teacher learning has provided insights on assumption and several constructs that are linked or permeate in the conceptualization of agency. Cross (2010) emphasizes, for instance, the need of theoretical orientations that deal with the consideration and understanding of teachers as agents who are embedded in larger domains of practice such as sociological, historical and political ones. On one hand, by taking into account these orientations in different fields of inquiry, identity in language teachers has taken a wider range of research on teacher education and teacher practice. On the other hand, identity is a construct that has mostly been linked to the conceptualization and understanding of agency. The following section presents a succinct review of research in these connected issues.

For example, Kanno and Stuart (2011) examined two case studies from a situated learning stance with English as a second language teachers in a masters of arts in TESOL. The findings of this study pointed out that teacher identity development is central in language teacher education. This is because teacher identity enactment, or identity-in-practice (Varghese et. al, 2005), is reflective of teacher's agency that entails classroom practice, teacher knowledge and experience, moral, values and beliefs. These aspects are portrayed in both agency and identity, which are dialectically connected. Varghese et al., (2005) contends that agency is the utmost importance in identity formation since it does portray individuals as intentional beings and they describe teacher agency as: "action-oriented and focusing on concrete practices and tasks in relation to a group and mentors" (Varghese et. al, 2005, p. 39), These scholars support this idea based on the analysis of three distinctive case studies with different theoretical frameworks. The first study utilized the social identity theory by Tajfel (1978). They reported that the nonnative English teacher's struggle between her "assigned identity" and "claimed identity" was crucially negotiated by her agency. The second research report drew on the Lave

and Wegner's (1991) theory of situated learning. They concluded that agency of individual teachers was a critical intervening factor in the negotiation of teacher identity in professional development program for bilingual education. The last report was based on Simon's (1995) concept of the image-text). This study addressed the teacher-student relation based on discourse where the materials for the co-construction and negotiation of identity are provided and inherently transformative as pivotal for and by agency. Therefore, Varghese et al. (2005) conclude with several recommendations about how identity-in-discourse and identity-in-practice need more conceptualization for a more comprehensive perspective on teacher education.

Another example of the application of the construct of agency and identity in teachers practice is Trejo and Mora's (2014) case study of two teachers with a perspective on autobiographical narratives. In particular, the study analyzes the impact of professional development and educational context on participants' professional identity and agency. They conclude that teachers' individual past experiences and present engagement in their contexts are vital to understand the unique nature of each teacher's degree of agency. This would allow teacher educators and teacher practitioners to understand teacher's praxis and to the selection of better paths for their professional development.

Another study, elaborated by Eslamdoost and Lai (2017) focused on Iranian EFL policies and practices to identify the emerging conflicts of these teachers' agency and identity at the practical level: the classroom. They examined the dynamic nature of teacher identity and teacher agentive negotiation at the practice level by taking into account micro and macro policies and regulations. Iranian EFL instructors demonstrated their agency to negotiate and legitimize teacher expertise, sociocultural expectations towards teaching and learning, and institutional and broader Islamic ideologies. Teachers' agentive identities were mediated by the practices at local level and institutional context and educational policies at broader level.

Learners' expectations and the rules imposed by the authorities led some teacher participants to challenge against their desirable teacher agentic identities. Teachers' interaction with policies in centralized Iranian institutional contexts complicated their desired and performed agentic identities in relation to language learners, institutions, and larger Iranian sociocultural contexts.

In relation to another entity involved with agency in language education, there are studies that focus on learner's agency. For example, in a relational view of agency, Miller (2016) analyzed a case study through narratives where the participant's linked practices and discourses illustrated that agency was exercised in a higher or lower degree in a distributed continuum. This continuum shifted across artifacts, contexts, time, and it was informed by larger ecologies of socio-economic practices. She concludes that (learner) agency is fundamentally enabled to be exercised, possible and recognizable across diverse domains and layers of social and individual interactions.

An example of actual research concerned with teacher agency was carried out by McGowan (2015). This scholar drew upon the empirical work conducted in a single case study sponsored academy and how teacher agency is achieved within the autonomous schooling model of England's academies program. The enquiry was conducted in order to investigate whether the autonomy and freedoms afforded to one such school extended to the teachers working in it and how this affected their professional roles as classroom educators. It was found that teachers took one of two approaches to a new curricular reform being introduced by the academy sponsors. They either adopted it or used their limited agency to modify it so that it aligned more closely with their own educational philosophies. He concluded that, contrary to the policy rhetoric, teachers working in one sponsored academy may have had less autonomy than those teaching in local authority maintained schools. This in turn affected the agency they achieved, which appears to undermine the original vision and aims of the academies program.

## 2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter presented in a nutshell the main approaches to understanding agency. These approaches, where agency has been theorized, provided a foundation that allows this construct to be explored and distinguished according to its immediate interaction with structural conditions as Bourdieu and Giddens have emphasized, human's cognitive and conceptual procedures as Bandura devised it, the sociocultural mediation described by Holland et al. as well as the ecologies identified by Emirbayer and Mische.

This discussion allowed the basis for paving the way to identify and define the operationalization of agency by means of theoretically-driven frameworks that condensed the perspectives formerly described. On one hand, there is the Vygotskian sociocultural genetic framework frameworks that concentrated on the genetic analysis of agency whereas Biesta et al.'s (2015) framework for agency-as-achievement focused on several ecological circumstances. On the other hand, the limitations of these frameworks were mentioned, but these one set the foundation for developing a meta-theoretical framework that rendered both micro and macro enactments of agency and the examination on broader socio-cultural and historical-political aspects of this situated activity. In addition, a brief account of how agency has been researched in education was categorized according to the focus that each piece of research had on this construct.

The next Chapter involves the methodological orientations that this study followed for a qualitative sociocultural research. The first section describes the overall research design, a case study alongside the research questions to set the guidelines for studying agency. The second segment provides a concise cultural-historic analysis of the research setting, which is part of the genetic analysis of sociocultural approach, but a more comprehensive description is given Chapter IV due to the importance of structure and historicity within the study. The third module of this chapter entails a short description of the participants of the study. Finally, this



orientation leads to the last two segments of the chapter that have to do with the data collection instruments and how data was analyzed within the sociocultural framework.

## CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction.

This study is embedded in the expanding stance of qualitative sociocultural research. Lewis, Enciso and Moje (2007) claims that sociocultural research allows “to explore the intersection of social, cultural, historical, mental, physical and more recently, political aspects of people sense-making, interaction and learning around texts” (p. 2). This interaction and learning around text, which in light of policy context of curriculum innovation, might demand teachers’ agentic choices and agentic actions (Jian & Xuesong, 2017) to cope with “moments of conflict and disjuncture [that] are often the spaces in which learning occurs” (Lewis, Enciso & Moje, 2007; p.5). If agency is seen from an ecological and multi-layered genetic perspective because of its socially, historically, and discursively constituted nature, this allows the researcher to locate this study within the Vigostkyan sociocultural approach since it converges in the broad definitions and roles of human action mediated by symbols, language, and culture. In connection to this assumption, Miller (2016), who draws on the work of Vygotsky and Bakhtin, argues that human agency develops over time through active participation in discursive practices that are socially meaningful. Consequently, the complexity and nature of agency permeates in the genetic-analytical orientations of the sociocultural domains that observe teacher’s classroom practice both what teacher thinks/does and the genesis that underpins this thought/praxis relationship (Cole & Engeström, 1993).

This chapter defines the theoretical and methodological directions related to qualitative sociocultural research and these directions will be fully described. The first section describes the overall research design, a case study alongside the research questions to support the choice. The second section provides a succinct cultural-historic analysis of the research setting, which is part of the genetic analysis of sociocultural approach. The third component of this chapter entails a short description of the participants of the study. Finally, this orientation leads to the

last two segments of the chapter that have to do with the data collection instruments and how data was analyzed within the sociocultural framework.

### **3.2 Research Design.**

The first theoretical direction was to consider a case-study. This qualitative approach allowed the portrayal of the socio-culturally mediated teaching activity by capturing the detailed reality of participants' vivid former and actual experiences and thoughts/praxis about this situation (Cohen et al., 2000) and the participants were enabled to tell their stories (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In addition, Hyland (2009) recognizes that a case-study, despite of its limited generalizability, lies its potential in revealing the complexity and interactions in a context.

According to Yin (2003), a case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study; (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context. These criteria clearly entails the research questions in this study:

A. "How does the curricular reform and related broader policies shape EFL secondary school teacher agency?" It is relevant to cover contextual conditions because of the sociocultural nature of this study and because of the impact of reform since it is relevant to the phenomenon under study. The curriculum reform and the new EFL curriculum allowed to cover the socio-cultural domain of this study as well as the projective-evaluative dimension (i.e. current teacher's agentic choices and decisions) based on the tangible and abstract resources provided by these policies to teachers so they enact EFL education.

B. "How do ELF secondary school teachers construct their agency in their teaching practice?" In this question, the study tries to identify the genesis of teacher agency and how this is discursively portrayed and articulated in teacher education and teaching experience. It is

not intended to manipulate, but to observe participants' behavior, discourses, beliefs and values that work as practical-evaluative resources in their EFL activity. In this approach, the ontogenetic domain (i.e. personal and professional history) of teachers' activity is considered and it allows to evaluate the iterative and projective orientation (ie. past and future patterns of action, discourses and behaviors) of their praxis.

- C. "How does this teacher agency they constructed enable EFL secondary school teachers to cope with potential systematic gaps between curriculum innovation and their praxis?" In this question, the boundaries between the emergent phenomenon of teacher agency and the context (i.e. institutional conditions, the EFL curriculum reform, and other broader political and educative policies context) are not easily discernable of how these are key factors to enact daily critical teacher activity. It is also intended to identify how teacher agency affords or constraints the actual implementation of the reform, and how this reform reshapes or informs teacher agency. In this approach, the microgenetic domain (i.e. EFL teaching and learning in secondary schools and mediating EFL artifacts) of teacher activity is considered to determine how teachers' ontogeny (i.e. personal and professional histories) filters their daily praxis and the policies that afford or constrain it.

### **3.3 The context of research**

In order to understand the research setting, it is crucial to explain what the embedded broader context is. This complies with the second theoretical direction, the genetic analysis where a socio-cultural analysis is taken into consideration. This research is being undertaken within a single education authority in Mexico in a secondary school with two experienced teachers within this setting. This focus on experienced teachers, who are already actively engaged with the new curriculum known as the National Program of English in Basic Education (PNIEB) (SEP, 2012) and who might be expected to exercise considerable agency

in their day to day work, is providing insights into the factors that facilitate or inhibit such agency. The full description of this innovation is discussed in Chapter 4 as part of the analysis at the cultural and historic development of EFL secondary school teachers' activity

This study narrowly contextualized the problem in Mexican EFL secondary school teachers in public education who teach teenagers at a junior high school in central Mexico. The school population is around 1300 students in 36 groups, considering the morning and evening shifts. This school has three grades and in each grade of schooling, the students take an English class of 50 minutes three times a week. Teachers in this school, as in any public junior high school, might teach the three grades of English or any of them and they worked in an hour-basis. Each teacher had different load work according to different reasons that were not considered in the study.

### **3.4 Participants**

Participants of this study were two in-service teachers in a secondary in Central Mexico. The construction of this case study allowed the researcher to infer how the ecology of this setting (existing cultural forms, social structures and personal capacity) impacts on the subsequent teacher practices (Priestly, Robinson & Biesta, 2011). This aspect also relates to sociocultural research, and third theoretical direction, where participants “engage in social practices typically enacted in that context or in range of social practices (and others in the situation) bring from other sites” (Lewis et al., 2007; p. xvi). There were approximately seven English teachers in this research setting but the two participants were selected randomly and according to their own availability. Each teacher profile will be fully described in Chapter 4 for a fully account to cover the ontogenetic level of the genetic of the sociocultural domains. The succinct profile of those who were involved is as follows:

Teacher A was a female whose academic qualifications reached a Teacher College Diploma and 16 years of experience. For anonymity practices, she was given the pseudonym of Ana. She added to have also had additional training in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in BUAP in 2014 covering topics in relation to grammar (present, past, future, conditionals, etc.). She has not recently had any additional training. She was a teacher of first and second grades in the morning shift.

Teacher B was a male whose academic qualifications reached a Teacher College Diploma and 11 years of experience. For anonymity practices, he was given the pseudonym of Pablo. He has not had any additional training in Teaching English as a Foreign Language or any other type of Diploma course or workshop so far. He taught English to first and second grades in the morning shift.

### **3.5 Data Collecting Strategies**

Based on Priestley et al.'s (2015) observations about multi-method data collection strategies to maximize the generation of rich-data case studies, this study utilized three strategies. Cross (2006) supports such procedure of a multi-method approach since he advocates that substantive gains are made from the strategic juxtaposing of qualitative oriented data on teacher's thinking in relation to practice. Three data collecting strategies were utilized and are described in the order these ones are applied with a brief explanation of the techniques and their goals.

- A. First, analysis of key policy-oriented texts of external, yet linked, entities that allows to focus on identifying local curricular policies, underlying philosophies and patterns, and significant events and milestones as they apply in the case study. These documents dealt with scrutinizing the cultural historic analysis to ensure the focus on the broader policy

context where teachers' activity systems were situated. The data coding was identified as policies or broader discourses.

- B. Second, narrative prompting interviews which had a focus on teachers' personal and professional histories. Sarup (1996) argues that this type of interviewing encourages the researcher to examine the whats and hows. He adds that each narrative has two parts: a story (what) and a discourse (how); the discourse is like a plot where the narrator becomes aware of what happened and the order of appearance of the events. In language teacher education, Johnson and Golombek (2002) see this strategy as a "systematic exploration that is conducted by teachers and for teachers through their own stories and language" (p. 6) and they identify three main functions of this activity. Firstly, it enables externalization of new understandings by means of making explicit how, when, and why these emerge. Secondly, it enables verbalization of the internalized academic concepts and allows regulation of thought and practice. Finally, it provides systematic examination of the parameters of what has been learned and how it was learned (Johnson & Golombek, 2011). Therefore, individual interviews are undertaken. At the start of the project, each teacher is "story-telling" interviewed to construct a detailed biography, background and projective paths for each participant. This ontogenetic analysis (i.e. history of the participant within that activity system) focused on the participants' life and professional histories as well as short / long term goals.
- C. Third, artifact-based stimulated recall protocol was intended to focus more directly on the teachers' narrated understanding of their decision-making processes and narrated work practices to explore emerging data in respect of the enactment of the curriculum in teaching artifacts at hand. This mediation, as part of the core of symbolic interaction in social practices, provides a narrated framework of how cultural forms, meanings and tools are negotiated in particular settings. Johnson and Golombek (2004), for example, support the

idea that “from a sociocultural theoretical perspective, narrative, as a cultural activity, is not simply a device used to story one’s experience, but is a semiotic tool that has the potential to facilitate cognitive development (p. 345). One of these semiotic tools might entail “lesson plans” that, according to Johnson and Golombek (2011), are both symbolic and concrete since teachers “have the conceptual understanding of its meaning, but it has a material sense in how it is represented in terms of alphabetic or phonetic system of English” (p. 24). However, the teaching artifacts that were actually utilized are students’ products in notebooks, teacher’s handouts and worksheets. In this fashion, assumptions about what is knowable, categorical and, expressible begin to come into view (Enciso, 2007).

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

There are different methods of analysis that are embedded in sociocultural research. These perspectives include activity theory (Engestrom, 1999), situated cognition (Kirshner & Whitson, 1997), communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), cultural studies and critical discourse theories. However, each of these strands of sociocultural theory have a special focus. Lewis, Enciso and Moje (2007), for example, tend to:

[...] layer critical discourse theories with a cultural studies perspective because these ones demand that researchers spend time understanding cultural practices of different groups, examine those practices from the perspectives of the individuals engaging in them, and recognize that power is produced in people’s everyday lives and instantiated in institutions, systems, and socioeconomic structures that shapes, and, at times, control people’s everyday lives (p. 21).

The research design and data collection instruments allowed the study to undertake both a critical discourse analysis and cultural studies. The former focuses on examining how social power relations, identities, and knowledge are constructed trough written and spoken texts in social settings such as schools, families, and communities; in other words, it analyzes how



members' practices are shaped in ways of which they are usually unaware by social structures, relations of power, and the nature of the social practice in which they are engaged in whose stakes always go beyond producing meaning. The latter corresponds to the dialectic relationship between micro-practices of everyday life and macro-processes of structures, systems and institutions. In particular, cultural studies examine the agency of actors to enact powerful identities within culture and structural relations, at times challenging oppressive commands, at times only bending them, and at times reproducing them (Lewis, Enciso & Moje, 2007). Therefore, based on these remarks, Lewis, Enciso and Moje's (2007) analytical questions for conducting critical cultural discourse analysis were used and these are as it follows:

1. What are some of the features of this social activity?
2. What discourses (or ideologies) surface in this narrative?
3. What social identities are enacted in this exchange (through language use, linguistic constructions, discourses, actions)?
4. What relations of power are enacted and how there reproduce or constraint larger systems of power?
5. What aspects of action, talk and silence could be considered agentic? How? Why?
6. What tools are being used to engage in these agentic practices?
7. What is being learned via these practices? (p. 25)

### **3.7 Procedure of data analysis**

First, the empirical work within this study consisted of documentary analysis. This study exhibited the policy context for EFL in Mexican Education, including an analysis of the historical development of state secondary EFL schooling since 2009. The political contexts of Educational Reforms are considered, and particular attention is given to the National English Program for Basic Education. This was intended to understand the cultural, social and structural constraints and affordances of developing new policies and approaches to develop standard for EFL learning in secondary school. However, the scope of the investigation was not restricted to the national policy context, but the procedure also consisted on analyzing narratives and

artifact-based stimulated recalls within each teacher's ontogenetic development and his/her "micro"-setting (i.e. participant's personal as professional histories as well as participant's EFL activity) with the questions provided above, and later on, across "micro"-settings. The second part was done with the aim to scrutinize these cases to understand the similarities and differences between them (Baxter & Jack, 2008) in terms of recurring themes of teacher agency and praxis. These themes were also named after the conceptual categories of the meta-theoretical framework that was devised in Chapter I.

### **3.8. Chapter summary.**

This Chapter described every theoretical orientations of the research methodology in order to facilitate readers' understanding of the protocol as well as potential replication of the study. These guidelines were assonant with the sociocultural approach that this study adopted: view of agency as social-cultural mediated phenomenon, research design of qualitative case study to examine the complexity of the phenomenon, data collecting strategies and data analysis oriented to scrutinize particularities of this social practice and procedure to describe recurring themes of the phenomenon.

The next Chapter highlights the nature of the educational culture through policies, the biographies of teachers in this setting, social relationships which impact on the decision making of each teacher and the incidence of significant events (Priestley, Robinson & Biesta, 2011). These aspects facilitated inferring how the ecology of each setting (existing cultural forms, social structures and personal capacity) impacts on the subsequent teacher practices.

## CHAPTER IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### 4.1. Introduction

The first section of this chapter presents a cultural-historic domain of analysis where the focus was on the broader policy context where teachers' patterns of purposeful actions are situated and the coding data dealt with "policies" or "broader discourses" as well as the "language teaching policy" that informed and shaped their daily activity (i.e. NEBPE or NEP) in secondary education. The second section refers to ontogenetic analysis, which means the history of the participants inside and outside that activity system (i.e. personal and professional paths) as well as those participants' future orientations that could frame and shape present EFL activity practices. These data were coded as "life and professional histories and short/long term goals". Regarding the third section, the focus is on micro-genesis that informs the thought-and-practice relationship where agentic choices and agentic actions are enacted. Each section individually reviews participants' results. Then, these are cross-referred to see patterns of tensions and contradictions of teachers' daily EFL activity, whose agentic actions and agentic moments are both framed by the same policy and immediate context (i.e. school), but those are filtered by their own particular personal and professional histories (i.e. their ontogenesis) and particular micro-genesis (i.e. daily EFL activity).

### 4.2. The cultural-historic domain.

In this analysis of the teachers' cultural-historic context, the main focus is language learning policy since it is the primary tool which has shaped the wider context of the participants' activity at the classroom level. Yet, broader discourses are also analyzed and depicted, since they might also permeate in teachers' agentic choices. Cross (2010) argues that policies mediate the genesis of teacher activity within the sociocultural domain of cultural-

historic frame. Therefore, he advocates that policy is a sociocultural tool since “its role and significance [...] within the cultural-historic domain of education and the implications this carries for understanding the ontogenetic subject, their microgenetic space for activity as classroom teachers” (Cross, 2010, p. 441).

Regarding teacher agency, Priestly et al. (2015) argue that policies, in terms of sociocultural tools that provide possibilities and constraints according to the concessions and accommodations in particular settings (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992). These policies sometimes do not consider the cultural and structural conditions that enable teachers to achieve agency in their work. This echoes the assumption that teacher agency, according to Cross (2010), exists in the dialectic between policy as a cultural-historic tool mediated by the ontogenetic person in terms of his personal and professional life experiences.

#### **4.2.1 Broader discourses and policies in the participants’ context.**

This section describes foundations that support language policy in Mexico. These foundations are legal principles that are transversal across every level of Mexican education that were considered obligatory and elementary education (i.e. preschool, elementary schools, junior high school) in the time that study took place. Currently, high school and university are also considered as obligatory levels of education.

The Ministry of Education encouraged educational transformation by means of two frameworks and based on the attributions granted by the General Law of Education (*Ley General de Educación*). These frameworks, broader discourses and policies in the participants’ context, are the 2007-2012 National Development Plan (*Plan Nacional de Desarrollo*) and the objectives outlined in the 2007-2012 Education Sector Program (*Programa Sectorial de Educación*). These policies visualized a better articulation and efficiency from preschool, elementary and secondary school since the focal strategy was “to carry out an integral reform

in Basic Education, focusing on the adoption of an educational model based on competencies that corresponds to the developmental needs of Mexico in the XXI century” (SEP, 2007; p. 24). In addition, the 2007-2012 National Development Plan had as its twelfth objective to offer extracurricular subjects related to arts, sports, culture and language in public education to reduce disparity in the quality with private education. Such articulation of the teaching of English in all three levels of Basic Education targeted to develop multicultural and multilingual students who are able to engage in communicative challenges by the time the completion of their secondary education (SEP, 2011). These policies framed and enabled the articulation of the new curricular proposal in school organization: the National English program in Basic Education (NEPBE), which devised syllabi in the three levels of Basic Education. As shown in the following fragment of the curricular map, which full version is portrayed in Appendix 1, the English subject was entitled as “Second Language” and was established within the Basic Education curricula for first time as part of the standard “Language and Communication” (SEP, 2011).

**Figure 4**

*2011 Curricular map for Basic Education.*

CURRICULAR STANDARDS <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> SCHOOL PERIOD			2 <sup>nd</sup> SCHOOL PERIOD			3 <sup>rd</sup> SCHOOL PERIOD			4 <sup>th</sup> SCHOOL PERIOD		
EDUCATIONAL FIELDS FOR BASIC EDUCATION	Preschool			Elementary school						Secondary school		
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION	Language and communication			Spanish						Spanish I, II & III		
			Second Language: English <sup>2</sup>	Second Language: English <sup>2</sup>						Second Language: English I, II & III <sup>2</sup>		
MATHEMATICAL THINKING	Mathematical thinking			Mathematics						Mathematics I, II & III		

*Note.* Fragment of the curricular map. Adapted from *Programa Nacional de Inglés en Educación Básica. Segunda Lengua: Inglés. Fundamentos curriculares. Prescolar. Primaria. Secundaria. Fase de expansión* (p. 60), by SEP, 2011. Copyright 2011 by SEP.

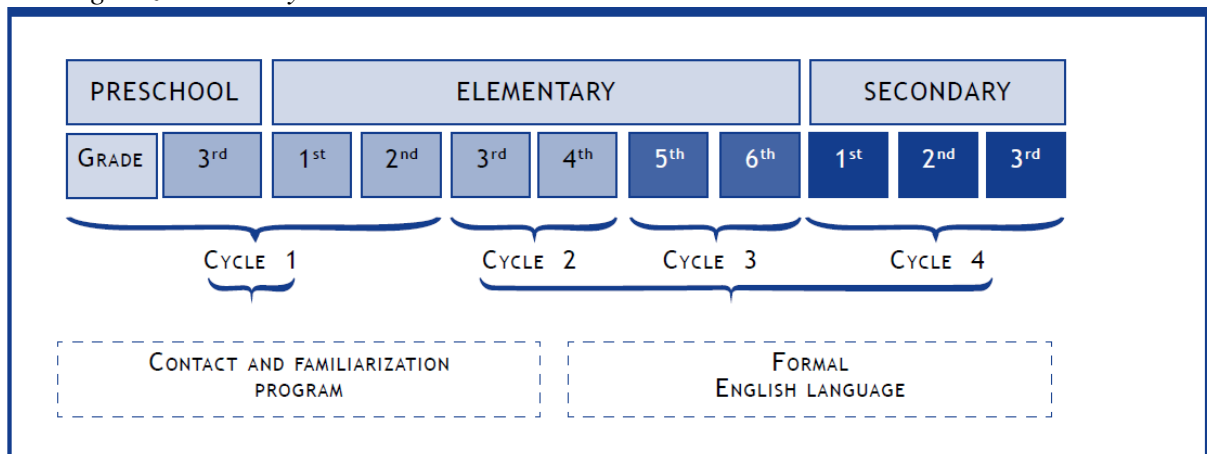
#### **4.2.2 Language teaching policies in the participants' context: NEPBE / NEP.**

The innovations in the foreign language curriculum with the National English Program for Basic Education (NEPBE), which was renamed as National English Program (NEP) in 2016, adopted a sociocultural approach for language learning where English instruction was stretched through preschool to secondary education as with the subject of Spanish. It is stated that the curricular approach followed a sociocultural stance since the general purpose of English language teaching in Basic Education aimed students “to use language to organize their thoughts and speech; analyze and solve problems; and gain access to different cultural expressions from their own other cultures” (SEP, 2011). That is to say, the curricular focus echoes primary constructs of sociocultural theory where communicative processes are indivisible from cognitive processes that are framed both in individual’s self-efficacy and agency as well as in individuals’ participation in cultural-distributed events (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).

Broadly speaking, the new program included four “cycles”, starting from kinder garden until secondary school, that were divided in two ample stages: cycle 1 devoted to familiarization of the program and cycles 2, 3 and 4 focused on the formative teaching of English. In particular “cycle 4” aimed at allowing the students, who studied in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades of secondary school, to strengthen their proficiency in basic communicative situations and develop specific competences in relation to the “social practices of the language” (SEP, 2011), so it changed from a communicative approach to a sociocultural cultural one. Thus, this new program required a big deal of second language knowledge and competencies in teenage students who assumedly acquired them in the former “cycles”. However most of the students, in the micro-context of the research, have had no such articulation of the content and language learning in pre-school and elementary school. A visual representation of the features formerly described can be observed in the next figure.

**Figure 5**

*Organization on cycles*

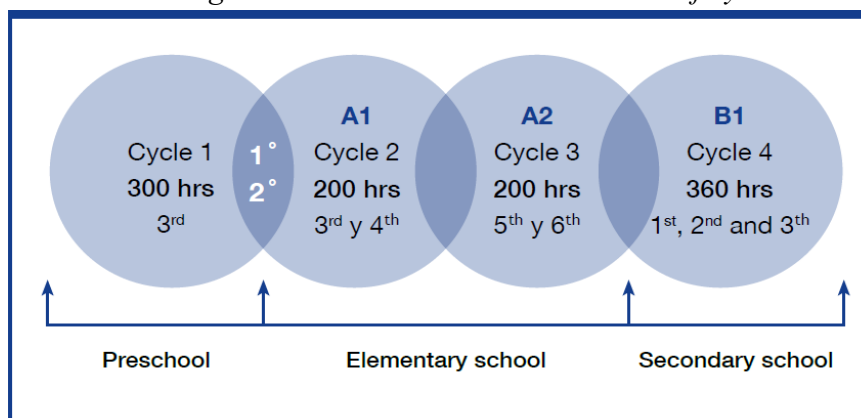


*Note.* Adapted from *Programa Nacional de Inglés en Educación Básica. Segunda Lengua: Inglés. Fundamentos curriculares. Prescolar. Primaria. Secundaria. Fase de expansión* (p. 62), by SEP, 2011. Copyright 2011 by SEP.

This might represent a significant challenge since teachers must manage to articulate content where, assumingly, there is no student’s prior knowledge of the language and its social practices that were supposed to be met in previous “cycles”, which turns into a drawback if Walqui’s (2000) argument is considered, “students’ prior knowledge of the second language is of course a significant factor in their current learning” (p. 2). Therefore, as observed in the next figure, students are not likely to attain B1 English language level in secondary education.

**Figure 6**

*Expected students’ English level based on the articulation of cycles in NEPBE*



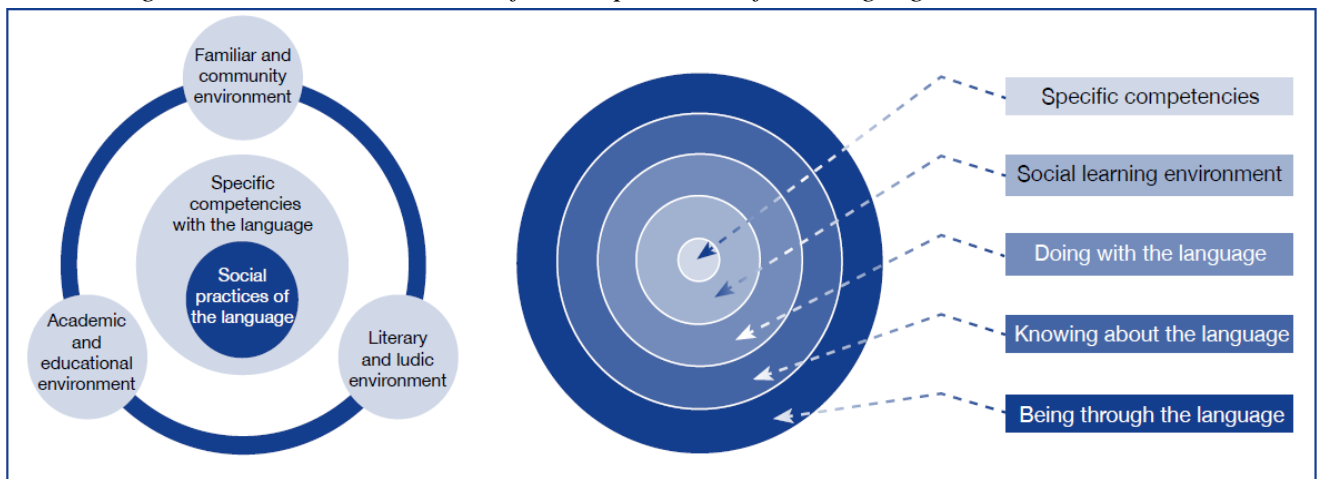
*Note.* Adapted from *Programa Nacional de Inglés en Educación Básica. Segunda Lengua: Inglés. Fundamentos curriculares. Prescolar. Primaria. Secundaria. Fase de expansión* (p. 65), by SEP, 2011. Copyright 2011 by SEP.

In addition to innovations about the approach, some other particular features of the program deal with articulation, flexibility, teacher-oriented guidelines, and teacher-oriented beliefs that are described and analyzed as potential constraints and affordances for teacher agency. First, the NEPBE syllabi was articulated by cycles and not by school grades and it was argued that this guaranteed continuity and articulation in the three levels of Basic Education (SEP, 2011). From this perspective, the curricular innovation offered room for the iterative dimension of agency where past students’ experience of the syllabi could provide resources for current teachers’ enactment of the curriculum in secondary education.

Secondly, contents were thought to be open and flexible as they offered guided lesson sequences that enabled teachers to carry out context-specific adaptations. Regarding content, where main categories are “social practices of the language” and “specific competencies of the language”. The former articulates school grades in each of the cycles, and the latter define specific curricular contents for each school grade in the cycles. The visual representation of these “social practices of the language”, according to SEP, would look like as it follows.

**Figure 7**

*Organization and distribution of social practices of the language in NEPBE.*



*Note.* Adapted from *Programa Nacional de Inglés en Educación Básica. Segunda Lengua: Inglés. Fundamentos curriculares. Prescolar. Primaria. Secundaria. Fase de expansión* (p. 82), by SEP, 2011. Copyright 2011 by SEP.



This aspect offered room for the practical evaluative dimension of agency that allows teachers to judge tailoring language activities according to actual learners' language proficiency, progress, needs as well as to perceive teachers as capable of redefining tasks or activities in consideration of the complexity of such contents. Even, NEPBE stated that “contents are not expected to be totally covered or treated in the same way or extent” (SEP, 2011; p. 28).

Third, the curricular foundations of NEPBE offered guidelines to organize teaching work: plan communicative situations and guarantee the development of routine activities (i.e. decide what to do with language). These features, the components of articulation with gradation of contents and unit components of the syllabus, are shown in Appendix 2 and 3 respectively. In other words, NEPBE fostered teacher-oriented actions which perceived teachers as agents who developed methods and strategies to organize and implement their educational work. This feature of the curriculum also provides affordance for teacher agency since it enables teachers to adopt teaching strategies that fit their contexts and teaching practices.

Fourth, the program advocates that the school is highly responsible for providing the necessary conditions for students, with low literacy or to participate in instances of English language usage. This might seem some type of affordance for getting material resources for enacting teacher agency, yet specific patterns of actions to guarantee that this postulation could be enabled in practice.

Finally, NEPBE also portrayed a series of assumptions of what teachers' characteristics should possess. One of the most important features deals with assessment. NEPBE indicates that assessment is meant to help teachers revise and analyze their practice, so that they can reconsider, make decisions or seek innovation, and improve the language teaching-learning process. This a key factor for enacting teacher agency.

### **4.2.3 Participants' cultural-historic systems of social EFL activity.**

As part of the issue of EFL teaching as a socially constructed activity, it is significant to be aware and understand the contexts within language teachers are positioned. This section also focuses on how relations of Ana and Pablo's agency are enacted within those and how larger systems of power, ideologies and policies are reproduced or constrained.

When Ana and Pablo were involved in this study in 2016, the overall goal of English in schools in middle education with NEP (i.e. using language to organize their thoughts and speech; analyzing and solving problems; and gaining access to different cultural expressions from their own other cultures) seemed to have any relevance in the broader social, cultural, political, and educational context for Mexican basic education. One of the main sociopolitical constraint in this context was the discrepancy between the considerations of English as a second language and the actual status of this language in Mexico. Indeed, this curriculum rhetoric on the consideration of English as a "second language" was constantly challenged by participants' discourses, beliefs and actual praxis.

In addition to that policy shift on the value of EFL education, SEP's initiative, as the ministry of education, that involved pre-school and primary school in the organization and enactment of the EFL syllabi was not thoroughly completed in many schools across the state. Ana and Pablo also demonstrated aspects of agentic action to deal with this situation that are discussed in the subsequent section. Overall, participants' iterative dimension of agency was achieved when they took into consideration the lack of past students' experience of the syllabi as well as the actual EFL resources for their current enactment of the curriculum in secondary education.

Participants, in turn, seemed to have seized how NEP offered room for the practical evaluative dimension of agency since they constantly redefined tasks or activities in consideration of their complexity and actual learners' EFL, interests, and needs. Despite of

these teacher-oriented agentic actions, there are two important aspects to discuss about these. First, NEP discourse about teachers as agents who strategize the organization and the implementation of the curriculum was clearly enacted in Ana and Pablo's activity, but these social identities were mostly driven by their own principled approaches of EFL teaching and beliefs. Some of these examples were portrayed in the excerpts through their language use, linguistic constructions, and discourses. Secondly, NEP also offered guidelines to organize teaching work: plan communicative situations and guarantee the development of routine activities (i.e. decide what to do with language). Yet, teaching artifacts and discourses portrayed that those guidelines were not key for the development and enactment of participants' agency. Ana and Pablo constantly demonstrated how they adopted or enabled teaching strategies that fitted their contexts and their teaching philosophies.

#### **4.3 Ontogenetic analysis (Participants' personal and professional histories and projective orientations)**

In this analysis of the teachers' ontogenetic development, the main focus is the discussion of what the participants bring to the classroom in terms of background, experience and personal history from which he or she makes sense of the system and decisions on how to act within it. Indeed, Cross (2010) claims that the ontogenetic subject works as a mediatory influence between the concrete microgenetic activity and the broader social structures by means of the interplay of his background, previous knowledge, and experience. The following segments describe the participants' ontogenetic development (i.e. the history of the participants of this study within their activity system of language teaching) since "teachers' prior experiences play an important role in their achievement of agency" (Priestly et al., 2015, p. 5).

#### 4.3.1. Ana's ontogenesis

Ana is a native speaker of Spanish and in her seventeenth year of teaching English at secondary school. Her career trajectory did not typify that portrayed by many secondary school teachers since she moved from a university degree to teacher education because of personal reasons. Due to her mother's teaching background and advice, she decided to study English language teaching in non-traditional pattern of teacher education which is "Escuela Normal Superior" during summer breaks since she was working as a forensic photo specialist. Later on, she got a post as a janitor for public schools given that his brother gave it up for her where she worked from 1997 to 2000. After having more than the seventy percent of her studies in language teaching education, she was given the opportunity to start working as a teacher in a rural area in the secondary subsystem known as *telesecundaria* in the North mountain range of that state.

In terms of her formal preparation, she did not have any teaching practicum as part of her development as a teacher and she claimed that there was no preparation to perform school management activities that she was expected to do as she initially was floater principal and teacher of the rural school for three years. During her seven years as a *telesecundaria* teacher, Ana's performance was context-specific since the division of labor was heavily influenced by other roles and responsibilities she had there, especially in terms of having to teach multiple subject areas as this subsystem requires teachers to do so.

This rural context provided some affordances for her first agentic choices and actions. The fact of staying in the home community was a key influence on their teaching practices at the microgenetic level since this allowed her to engage in a matter of 'self-education' and 'self-improvement'. The following excerpt illustrates this individual and school-based professional development as key for the *telesecundaria* program's implementation:

Y el hecho de que me quedaba en la comunidad, pues como no tenía otra actividad qué hacer, pues realmente te entregas el cien, doscientos y trescientos por ciento a tu labor porque en la tarde nos reuníamos mis compañeras y yo a, por ejemplo, a estudiar todo lo matemáticas, física, química, las materias más [...]; como telesecundaria, en ese entonces realmente no había el perfil que hubiera 'maestros de telesecundaria' sino que la mayoría era o maestros que venían de primaria que estudiaron la Normal Superior, algunos eran maestros de primaria que entraron como piloto cuando surgió la telesecundaria [...] otros compañeros eran de diferentes especialidades.

In addition, the issue of having co-workers with different specializations influenced her and her school to make decisions on the regulations and conventions that constrained actions and interactions of the teachers and the curriculum that produced a positive within-school influence. This particular situation of school effectiveness led to the increase in the frequency of output regulation through school inspections and accountability systems by the Ministry of Education. Perhaps not surprisingly, after the implementation of this educational policy for shaping school improvement, teachers' agency in relation to constructive teaching practices was distorted. Ana asserts:

En telesecundaria, llevas todas las asignaturas, entonces si había el problema en que los compañeros decíamos 'híjole, sabes a mí se me dificulta matemáticas', 'sabes, es que yo soy de ciencias', 'yo soy de inglés, yo soy de español'; entonces nos apoyábamos y de alguna manera modificamos el Sistema porque por ejemplo decíamos '¿sabes qué? Se me atora muchísimo química, bueno entra a mi grupo da química y yo voy a entrar a tu grupo y yo voy a dar inglés [...] era un acuerdo interno, o sea eso no se tenía qué hacer pero nos funcionó de tal manera que a pesar de que estaba la escuela en la sierra, la escuela de hecho llegó a ser muestra a nivel nacional por el compromiso que teníamos también todos los compañeros. [...] Cuando surgió el programa 'Escuelas de Calidad', nuestra escuela fue seleccionada para ser una muestra a nivel nacional de que estábamos obteniendo Buenos resultados con los niños académicamente (Y) al ser monitoreados, tuvimos que realmente retomar el programa o la modalidad como tenía que ser [unclear words] porque habían revisiones cada mitad de año donde llegaban, nos filmaban, nos grababan nuestras clases, y luego se iban con nosotros a decirnos 'esto estuvo bien', 'esto estuvo mal', revisaban libretas con el más alto desempeño, tu planeación dice que tu trabajaste volumen, (...) si era mucha presión porque lo administrativo era revisado muy minuciosamente, entonces era complicado.

This is an example where ethical and professional practices fall behind performativity pressures that lead to teacher's tactical compliance (Biesta, in press). In other words, school effectiveness and curriculum regulation is through attainment data or external inspections

where teachers foster its instrumentality rather than promoting a broader scope of what education is or seeks. Priestly et al. (2015) claim that this raises important issues about the virtual balance between input and output rules and conventions and their various impacts on teacher agency.

After working in this rural context, she had the opportunity to change to another subsystem of secondary schooling in an urban context. Once again, Anna's performance was constrained by that immediate setting where her expectations as a teacher were reflected and shaped by the rules, community, rights and responsibilities. Anna argued that her understanding and enactment as a teacher changed considerably due to mismatch of the number of students she had to teach and the different subjects for every school grade and their respective lesson planning. She acknowledged that her previous experience as a *telesecundaria* teacher helped her, but she particularly made the distinction of the very limited interaction between her and the students since she was not able to spend the whole school day with them. She added that this situation did not allow her to get to know her students in terms of strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, and so on. The constraints illustrated in Anna's experiences resonate with Cross' (2006) observation of how contexts within which teachers are positioned play a noteworthy role in constructing what they do in such role.

This ontogenetic analysis, based on the work Priestley et al.'s (2012) projective dimension, also comprised Anna's orientations to the future where her motives, goals and intentions were examined. She mentioned her interest of modernizing her expertise with English and technology-facilitated instruction due to students' actual needs and interests. She also added to envision a post degree with a humanistic approach such as neurolinguistic programming or something that has to do with emotional aspects. Every single projective orientation she mentioned was strongly linked to the immediate setting and educational policies which frame teachers' work. This means that her actions were oriented to professional

development that targeted broader discourses of educational policies. This gives a notion that Ana's repertoire of future actions are grounded within, and emerged from, her contextual, social and cultural circumstances. She explained that:

Número uno es actualizarme, porque voy a cumplir como docente 17 años, ahorita en octubre pero dentro del sistema tengo 20 años pero tengo 43 entonces me faltan 17 años con la nueva Reforma (para jubilación) y si lo veo de esa forma no puedo quedarme así, realmente requiero actualizarme con la tecnología, con el idioma, con todo, porque me van a ganar, porque va a llegar el momento en que no voy servir, va a llegar un momento que no voy a poder transmitirlo porque ya los niños van a venir ya con el chip integrado, si ya nos tocó la generación Tablet y eso es lo que veo en los niños que ellos si quieren más el uso de tecnologías quisieran que fuera todo más interactivo entonces si requiero actualizarme (...) el idioma siento que de forma personal es fácil quedarte con el nivel que tengo, si ya no lo utilizo para otras actividades pues ya me estanco con este nivel si requiero entonces estar en cursos para practicar si no se te olvida y más que ahorita los niños siento que en otras generaciones tenían mayor fluidez y ahorita veo que con cosas súper sencillísimas les están contando muchísimo trabajo respecto al idioma (...) y de posgrado lo quiero más enfocado, como ya nos cambiaron la jugada y ahora va a ser Nuevo Modelo Educativo pues entonces también quiero enfocarlo a la parte humanista como la parte emocional, de disciplina en el aula, de cosas que tengan que ver con programación neurolingüística.

#### **4.3.2. Pablo's ontogenesis**

Pablo is a native speaker of Spanish and in his ninth year of teaching English at secondary school. He started to work in 2000 in SEP, but he started a teaching position in 2008. His career trajectory started as a student of language and technology at an ICT institute that influenced him to be a teacher. He believes that he engaged in the activity of assisting classmates when did not understand, so he liked the idea of teaching. The following extract illustrates how his earlier experiences of learning English shaped his intentions towards the projective orientation of becoming a teacher. It also depicts what the iterative dimension of agency entails about "actors [...] are able to recognize, appropriate and refashion patterns of behaviors and experience as they seek to maneuver among repertoires in dealing with present dilemmas" (Priestley, 2014; p. 213):

Yo enseñaba como más o menos había visto y como más o menos sabía yo, pues darme ideas ¿no?, pero ahí [within the Normal Superior] sí como que fui aprendiendo más

metodología de cómo enseñar, como abordar las clases, el conocer a los jóvenes, las etapas, historias de lo que es la educación, bases normativas, o sea fue más amplia la formación.

In addition, he decided to enroll at “Escuela Normal Superior” where he acknowledges he learned more about how to teach (i.e. methodology) and pedagogy (i.e. teaching background, legal frameworks, students’ learning phases, students’ cognitive growth). He stated that he got teaching practice since his sophomore year and, even, when he was a freshman, he did classroom observations. The whole junior year was about teaching practice.

He recognizes that working on both private institutions before and later teaching in public institutions made him realize how students’ attitudes and needs differed. When he was asked about how he managed this transition, he replied that he tried to use some strategies that worked in private institutions. He asserts that some strategies worked and some other did not; therefore, he tried to applied techniques from former experiences especially didactic material that he had previously used. This is an instance of how his teaching experience unfolded according to contextually-opposing settings. In addition, two salient aspects about his development as teacher. The first has to do with the “community”, as indicated in the upcoming excerpt, was a key influence in his teaching activity. The second ones relates to his intent, where his attention is directed, as it focuses on his perception of his students and the relationship he had with them and the effect these perceptions had on his activity. He explained that:

Es muy diferente lo que es trabajar en escuelas particulares de lo que es escuelas públicas, desde la motivación de viene de cada alumno entonces ese año que estuve trabajando me sirvió pues para ver todas las diferencias todas las carencias que tienen los alumnos, igual yo buscar algunas estrategias porque en la escuela de cursos, pues yo llegaba y ya sabía que los alumnos llegaban dispuestos a aprender el hecho de estar pagando hay una exigencia a eso van, pero lo que es secundaria llegan los alumnos a veces ni quieren ir o ya están aburridos de otras materias [...] traté de incorporar de lo que tenía yo de experiencia en cuanto a escuelas privadas tratando de ver actividades que yo había visto que funcionaban no, algunas pues si funcionaban, algunas no tratando de incorporar, como de por si estaba yo acostumbrado a que en los cursos se



utiliza mucho material didáctico de apoyo entonces eso también lo incorporaba yo en mis clases.

As part of his ontogenetical growth in relation to professional histories, Pablo described how this learning-in-practice made him realize the need to be updated about what the students' interests are. He believed that no matter that teachers were taking training teacher courses or English classes if they were not aware of students' interest, they would not make students be involved. He adds that sometimes it was necessary to read again what they learned before applying it in the classroom.

Regarding teaching challenges or obstacles, he acknowledged that 3 hours a week in the program was not enough to learn the language besides extra activities within school that might decrease the amount of time. It was also necessary to expand the program with media in English so that English was considered as a Second Language. He asserted that it was thought to be a second language, but it was actually a foreign one. There are two important aspects to take into consideration under the environment of practical-evaluative dimension of agency. First, he evaluated the fact that only having 3 hours a week of language learning was sufficient to attain a specific language level. he reacted about the notion of second and foreign language dichotomy where there was a dissonance between the policy on language education's (i.e. NEPBE) discourse of "English as second language" and his views related to "English a foreign language"

Concerning his teaching philosophy, he believed in the analogy that if one wanted to learn how to swim, one had to dive in the pool; so, this was the reason why he claimed that his lessons were taught in English so that students would get as much input as possible. He added that if students do not take part in the class, as in a swimming class to learn how to swim, they would never learn to swim, even if they have the best teacher. It is important to maximize time by using English so they feel in immersion and to motivate students to learn by themselves and

practicing because they feel the need. Biesta et al. (2015), based on data on teachers' beliefs, could perceive that these actions are clearly driven by his beliefs about language learning, as mediators of his alternative courses of actions and his decisions.

This ontogenetic analysis, based on the work Priestley et al.'s (2015) projective dimension, also comprised Pablo's orientations to the future where his motives, goals and intentions were examined. He claimed that he was interested in participating in exchange programs or similar scholarship but he had refused them since he did not have time because of personal issues. He mentioned in addition that when he had the opportunity to do an Exchange program, he assessed what he had already. Thus, he needed to leave what he had built, so he decided to stay and not to participate in the exchange program back then. This situation depicts that his agentic choices were fundamentally oriented towards the present and their actual resources. For example, he preferred to invest time, if any, on personal matters such as resting or leaving his job aside for a while

In addition, he mentioned that he would not look for a promotion (e.g. becoming a principal) since he enjoyed being a teacher, despite the fact that there were teacher evaluations to have another educational position. This means that broader policies for teacher professional development did not have an impact on his projective orientations. He asserted that:

Yo siento que no es para mí, me gusta estar con los alumnos, ahí es donde se pueden hacer los cambios porque difícilmente uno puede cambiar al maestro, es más fácil cambiar a un alumno que a un maestro.

#### **4.3.3 Participants' personal and professional histories and projective orientations.**

Regarding the iterative dimension of analysis, Ana and Pablo had quite distinctive paths of teacher education that enabled this research to better understand how teachers might experience and respond to the practices of (foreign) language teacher education as well as how

personal histories might shape such practices to bear on the same teaching context. Both participants had a great influence on their immediate context to become language teachers.

On one hand, Ana's orientations to become a teacher were greatly influenced by the structural conditions. In particular, social structures related to relationship to other actors (i.e. her mom and brother) and to roles (i.e. becoming a mother) changed her orientations to study language education. On the other hand, Pablo's intent to become a teacher was more personally driven. Specifically, his life history and material resources (i.e. learning English at a language school and later, teaching on this context) strongly provided the agentic choices of studying formal language education. This led him to a typified career trajectory of many secondary school teachers who study Normal education before taking up a teaching post.

As a result, it could be discerned how each participant capitalized on some events, resources and social conditionings that led to English language teacher education. In fact, Bandura (2001) perceives that some of these happenstances and personal resources, as Ana and Pablo experienced, are socially mediated by human agency as people try to exercise some measure of control over their self-development. Ana's situation on becoming a mother and Pablo's intent of studying ICT and language courses were important determinants in the shift of their career trajectories, but these were also mediated by both participants' attributes, belief systems, interests, and the molding power of the social milieus wherein they were engaged. These particular Ana and Pablo's proactive agentic choices illustrated "the agentic management of fortuity" (Bandura, 2001). However, these type of agentic moments are better articulated and informed if a sociocultural stance is considered. For example, if it is considered Ana's potential repertoire of actions when considering teacher education, she would not have the same opportunity with current conditions since teacher education programs in summer (i.e. "Normal Abierta") no longer exists.

In addition to Ana's non-traditional versus Pablo's traditional patterns of language teacher education, both teachers exhibited distinctive agentic choices and moments when experiencing early professional experience. It could be perceived that both participants enacted purposeful approach to endorsing language education greatly based on the type of educational institution and setting. On one hand, Ana's actions were indicative of strong and high levels of agency, framed around strong, rich and varied peer-to-peer thrust and support rather than controlling top-down supervision when she worked in a *telesecundaria* school. This is perhaps due to the fact that she was a floater principal and she adopted such identity to engage in agentic choices for school improvement. On the other hand, Pablo's actions were also framed by agentic choices according to past teaching experiences and settings. In particular, his teaching praxis was highly driven by students' profile (i.e. private versus public education, students' interests and background, etc.).

Former samples of early teaching experience displayed how teachers develop through the mediation of others (Johnson & Golombek, 2016). In particular, Pablo's early experience does resonate with Johnson and Golombek's (2016) perspective that L2 teacher and teaching expertise as the development of "reasoning teaching" in which teachers identify, conceptualize and construct explanations for their ecology of teaching since teachers decipher "how to teach a particular topic, with a particular group of students, at a particular time, in a particular classroom, within a particular school" (Johnson, 1999; p.1) in order to respond to the social interactions and meanings across every stakeholder inside and outside the classroom. Ana's early teaching experience proportionated an instance of how people, or teachers, do not have direct control over the social conditions and institutional practices that affect their everyday praxis, yet they strive to seek well-being and valued outcomes by exercising proxy agency (Bandura, 2001). This means that Ana, in her circumstances in which she could exert direct influence as floater principal, turned to proxy agency when she felt she had not developed the

means to do so and she believed other teachers could do it better (e.g. asking teachers to teach content where they were more expert). Yet again, a sociocultural approach informs that such “proxy agency” was also enriched by the incipient emergence of *telesecundarias* where no clear policies of teacher activity in this type of schooling were concretely distributed and informed.

These samples of teachers’ background and their early teaching experience depict how, according to Cross (2006), contextual, social, and cultural circumstances determine “who language teachers are” and “what language teaching is”. Therefore, Cross adds that there is a: “need to educate language teachers to understand and be aware of the contexts within which they are positioned as language teachers, since this plays perhaps the most significant role in constructing what they then do in that role” (p. 7).

As a result, two key implications on language teacher education are salient by taking into account an ontogenetic analysis. First, language teacher education has to be infused by understanding the formation of language teacher identity. This means that teacher educators might strategize better the type of content and knowledge of language teaching if he or she considers teacher learner’s background, discourses, values and beliefs. This corollary also results assonant with continuing teacher education where institutionally driven teacher training often underscores that teachers come with very different backgrounds, discourses, values and beliefs. Secondly, it seems fruitful to consider potential contexts of teacher learner’s classroom practice to tailor such content and knowledge and make them be aware of those contexts, so that teacher learners are enabled to address, respond, change or even create policy (Priestly et al., 2015). In connection to this, Johnson and Golombek (2016) observe that teacher education “need(s) to look at the social/professional worlds from which teacher and teacher educators have come and now operate in” (p. 7).

In conclusion, these aspects of teacher identity development, background and potential and current teaching contexts are groundbreaking for enhancing teacher agency since they could become in cultural, practical-evaluative and, even material resources to frame teacher agentic moments and choices.

#### **4.4. The microgenetic domain (participants' concrete EFL practices)**

This section describes participant's activity that occurs on daily basis in the classroom. Cross (2006) claims that subjects' concrete social practices that emerge in this domain depict teacher's "identity-in-practice" (Varghese et al., 2005) since the individual functions as a mediatory influence between the cultural-historical and micro genesis domain. This means that, despite of being observable, micro-genesis can be fully understood when these concrete social practices are referenced across the cultural-historical and ontogenetic domains (Cross, 2006).

This section focuses on the micro-genesis that arises on the artifacts that teachers elaborate or reproduce for classroom activity and students' learning. Artifacts within the classroom are mediational means that filter the cultural-historical and the ontogenetic teacher into his concrete social practices, in other words his microgenesis. These artifacts can be symbolic or ideal and concrete or material (Johnson & Golombek, 2016) and, according to Lantolf and Thorne (2007), "human agency appears once we integrate cultural artifacts and concepts into our mental and material activity" (p. 63). This is why participants' artifacts were utilized in a stimulated-recall protocol to discuss this ideal and concrete features in teacher activity.

Ana and Pablo's results are presented by taking into account the conceptual categories of the ecological model of agency-as-achievement (Priestley et al., 2015). This means that the practical-evaluative dimension of their activity took into account: a) cultural aspects (i.e. shared ideas, values, policies, paradigms and beliefs), b) structural features (i.e. the social structures

that embrace emergent properties of power, identity and trust where configurations of particular relationships and roles are comprised, and c) material aspects (i.e. resources and the wider physical environment). After these results are presented, the analysis across these “micro”-settings is aimed to scrutinize the similarities and differences between them in terms of recurring themes of teacher agency and praxis.

#### **4.4.1. Ana’s microgenesis**

Regarding the practical-evaluative dimension, the microgenesis related to cultural resources showed that Ana:

- She fostered practical and, interesting and enjoyable experiences in language learning so that students break barriers on misconceptions on learning a language and they see instrumental benefits of it (i.e. scholarships, exchange programs, etc) beyond school objectives.
- She perceived that the practical content of the curriculum (i.e. the actual usage of language with communicative purpose) was a strength since it is important that students engage in quotidian communicative exchanges.
- She perceived that some syllabus topics in the cycle 4 were beyond students’ actual language proficiency. She acknowledged that this usually diminishes students’ motivation and interest on learning English.
- She used former curriculum topics to teach English since she claimed that those were more suitable for students’ language proficiency, more ludic and more comprehensible.
- She recognized the link between English learning and other subjects as the curriculum underlined.

- She believed that the program was not cohesive as she had to identify the sequence among each module.

In particular, Ana managed structural conditions as follows:

- Her school organization's division of labor was clearly influenced by other's roles and responsibilities.
- She seized that the new curriculum does not offer concrete activities to create or redesign activities that foster students' creativity.

Finally, Ana's microgenetic analysis in relation to material resources portrays that:

- She focused on students who do not deliver expected work by monitoring them individually. In addition, those students who do not work appropriately or work behind schedule were asked to do so by giving them another deadline but with score penalties.
- She identified that students' projects should be done at school since she would not require students to work outside school.
- She followed external demands such as doing projects by contextualizing them and attending students' interest.

#### **4.4.2. Pablo's microgenesis**

Regarding the practical-evaluative dimension, the microgenesis related to cultural resources showed that Pablo:

- Praised student's risks
- Claimed that he changed his activities every year, as a personal strategy, as he needed to be amused and challenged.
- Guided his activity by both the curriculum foundations and social practices, but with the adaptation to students.



- Followed a humanistic approach.
- Perceived that the transversal content of the curriculum and its communicative purpose as strengths.
- He seized that the new curriculum does not offer concrete activities to create or redesign activities that foster students' creativity.
- Perceived that the amount the hours in the cycle 4 of the curriculum and the lack of missing cycles in former students' studies were constraints in his daily activities.

In addition, Pablo managed structural conditions as follows:

- He followed external demands by contextualizing them and attending students' interest (e.g. activities required by the school).
- Combined language learning with administrative duties. However, he believed that administrative duties might be left aside.
- School organization's division of labor was clearly influenced by other's roles and responsibilities.

Finally, Pablo's micro-genetic analysis in relation to material resources portrays that:

- He maximized and made time efficient by means of alternate resources.
- Utilized the audiovisual room whenever possible.
- Fostered tangible and hands-on projects.
- Utilized ICT's to engage students in the development of e-portfolios.

#### **4.4.3. Participants' concrete and practical-evaluative EFL activity.**

In light of the participants' narrated practices, these teachers' micro-genesis of social activity demonstrated three important features. First, Ana and Pablo's approach to language teaching was highly framed by student-oriented perspectives. This cultural resource allowed them to tap into students' motivation and interest on learning English. Ana, for example, used

collaborative strategies as a mediatory tool for her classroom activity while Pablo's focused on ICT's to engage in activity. It seems that both participants' early teaching experience have further influenced how Ana and Pablo chose to use these mediatory tools. Another teachers' cultural discursive construction of students dealt with the resistance and lack of ability to engage with NEP. Both teachers acknowledged that syllabus content were not either significant or appropriate for students' ELF attainment. This allowed to engage in agentic practices by "constructing" teaching artifacts that both permeated in curricular foundations and tapped students' motivation and interest on learning English. It was also interesting to see that both Ana and Pablo praised the new curriculum focus on cross-curricular links. However, most of the artifacts they elaborated or reconstructed did not seem to fit into this criterion at all. Perhaps, this was due to their overall perception of difficulty of syllabus topics and contents and it was afforded by the permissiveness or ambiguity to enact NEP, which both teacher acknowledged and utilized. These examples provide issues of how teachers' discourses and beliefs of EFL acquired through teacher education and teacher life course enable them to choose the "right approach" in their context.

Secondly, it was seen that their agentic choices and moments of their activity did not permeate in other school areas or institutional practices (i.e. structural conditions). It was evident through their language use and linguistic constructions that their social identity was an EFL teacher in secondary education, but none of them perceived or projected themselves as having or aspiring other roles or positions. Other educational figures' roles and responsibilities were fixed and these were neither challenged nor collaborated. This was particularly interesting to recognize since teachers are now positioned in integrated and collaborative whole school approaches named as *Consejos Técnicos*. These are basic education meetings (for preschool, primary and secondary) that are held before the beginning of the school year, as well as the last Friday of each month. These are made up by the director of the educational center and the entire

teaching staff, with the aim of raising and executing common decisions aimed at addressing problems, academic achievements and pedagogical needs of students (SEP, 2018). Yet, they only seem to comply with such new configurations of this setting. As a result, relations of power are still enacted in vertical hierarchy, which reproduce larger systems of power (i.e. the whole school, school districts, etc.).

Finally, these teachers' agentic choices and moments in relation to material aspects prompted projects as mediatory tools. These tools were constantly being used in the description of their teaching artifacts to engage in these agentic practices. Most of these artifacts were reproduced from websites and former book activities. This might seem as a simple reproduction of social practices in EFL, yet these turned into agentic practices when those artifacts were consistent with teachers' rationales and affording the different layers of the ecologies in their school. In addition, these were also mediatory tools between policy, the ontogenetic and micro-genetic EFL teaching and learning activities.

#### **4.5. Chapter summary**

This Chapter illustrated key connections between policies, and teachers' ontogeny that impact on the practical-evaluative work of each teacher's micro-politics of their classroom, teacher-student relationship, and their potential trajectories of action. As a result, the following Chapter discusses all the insights, implications and potential contributions on teacher agency that are grounded from former analysis.

In addition, limitations are deliberated as they set the boundaries of this research scope, yet they do allow other researchers to engage in similar practices to expand the generalizability of these results. In connection with this assumption, suggestion for further research are explored and encouraged.



## **CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This section discusses the insights and its implications mainly based on the socio-cultural, ontogenetic and micro-genetic analysis as these domains portray the concrete and practical activity of language teaching, yet these are grounded within and emerged from larger contextual, societal and cultural forces and past and future personal histories and trajectories of EFL activity. In order to do so, the discussion is guided by the research questions of the study. In addition, some implications and contributions of teacher agency, within a sociocultural stance, emerge in this discussion in relation to teacher learning, teacher education and continuous professional development. There is also a description of potential limitations of the study and how these could be managed in specific suggestions for further research.

### **5.2. Policies as sociocultural mediating devices of teacher agency.**

The curricular reform that took place in 2012 and the sociocultural shift in the EFL curriculum provided constraints and affordances for shaping and enacting teacher agency in secondary education. One of the most salient features of the implementation of the curricular reform was that this did not guarantee students' formal language learning in previous "cycles" (i.e. pre-school and primary education). In addition, the program did not completely facilitate the epistemological shift in EFL secondary teachers in this context since this policy lacked of formal training program at the individual or school levels.

Former features were both constraints and affordances for participants' agency. On one hand, they generated agentic moments for "concept developments" (Johnson & Golombek, 2016). These developments are the union of academic concepts and everyday concepts into true concepts. An example is Pablo's professional discourse of "second language learning"

where such concept did not come down to concrete phenomenon of ELT in secondary school, but the notion of “foreign language learning” emerged from an actual and everyday concept in such context into true concept as a tool for thinking and curricular enactment. In this way, there were instances of ELF teachers’ transformation of tacit knowledge and beliefs learned through teacher education and experience (Johnson & Golombek, 2016), which enabled them to articulate theoretically sound instructional situations, pedagogical purposes, and views about teaching and student learning. On the other hand, this also developed strong professional discourses (Biesta et al., 2015) and beliefs towards children in EFL. There were illustrative instances in both teachers’ discourses that showed tensions in teachers’ beliefs about secondary school students and their abilities and capabilities. These language samples suggest that these teachers focused on students’ actual language level in their microgenetic activity rather than on EFL education in terms of syllabus purposes. They enacted the curriculum according to structural conditions and mediatory tools. As a result, it seems that teachers’ narrated practices underpin contesting and competing discourses versus their expected new EFL curricular assumptions.

Another key aspect to consider was that a great portion of the professional discourses used by these teachers dealt with framing their practical-evaluative and projective orientations (i.e. practices that contribute in their current agency and future trajectories of agentic action). This teacher agency had mostly its origins in the educational reform policy. For example, Ana was eager to foster students’ collaboration, and Pablo’s activity was enriched in using ICT’s. Both acknowledged how important these elements were in their context and daily activity. Yet, the education reform of 2011 demanded teachers who worked in collaboration to build up learning and who were capable of using educational materials to favor learning according to the pedagogical principles that underlined such syllabus (SEP, 2011) as well as teachers’ actions might reflect other guidelines and assumptions such as integrating ICT’s based on the

national strategy Digital Abilities for All (i.e. in Spanish *Habilidades Digitales para Todos* [HDT]).

In conclusion, these teachers did not seem to lack a systematic set of professional discourses over and above those provided on the curricular reform. This allowed them to engage critically with this broader policy. Interestingly, teacher's understanding of concepts and guidelines of the new EFL curriculum (i.e. NEP) often remained superficial and vague, in apparent lack of opportunities for systematic sense-making of NEP core tenets. Thus, teacher agency seems to be framed by policy if policy or policies include teachers' professional discourses, and these discourses are assonant in their context that allows either low or high critical engagement (Biesta et al, 2015)

### **5.3. Constructing teacher agency from mediation of the past, present and future.**

Based on the former description of participants' agentic choices and moments, it seems that teacher agency is key for developing a principled approach to language teaching that would balance the on-going interplay between curricular innovation and teacher praxis. This is on account of teachers' prior experiences that play a prominent role in the actual constitution of teacher agency. For example, Pablo and Ana's early teaching experience demonstrated that their varied repertoire of learning paths and professional experience enabled them to engage in constructing a principled approach to teaching that dealt with the demands of the educational institutions and settings at hand. This echoes Priestley et al.'s (2015) observation about "how teachers' agency is shaped by their past experiences, in ways which afford different possibilities for actions in their professional lives" (p. 214). As a result, teachers become active theory users and producers for their own means and according to the teaching contexts (Johnson & Golombek, 2016). These principled approaches to teaching will, in turn, become

internalized psychological tools for teacher thinking (Johnson & Golombek, 2016) and practice once their agency and the affordances and constraints along the setting become assonant.

It was also discernable that teacher agency enabled the participants to face tensions and contradictions between NEP goals and syllabus and the social, contextual and historical circumstances within the activity system where it was implemented. On one hand, the most salient tension between NEP and teachers' praxis was the students' expected language level and actual language level. This tension was managed by the teachers' agentic choices described formerly. On the other hand, the most outstanding contradiction between NEP and teachers' activity system dealt with the consideration of "English as second language" within an actual context of "English as a foreign language". Both teachers acknowledged that NEP larger discourses on views of language were dissonant with the immediate institutional, sociocultural and historical realities. This contradiction was also mediated by teachers' agency by filtering NEP syllabus and considering students' needs and interests. As a result, teacher agency works as a mediatory influence between context-specific and broader discourses and the micro genetic activity of language learning. In this sense, Cross (2010) argues that teacher agency "exists in the dialectic between broader social structures (that created through cultural-historic tools [for example] polic[ies] and the subject [or] the ontogenetic person, in terms of their own personal background, values, and understanding" (p. 442). In conclusion, this activity system (i.e. language teaching) can be fully defined, mediated and constructed when this is further considered in relation to the broader social, cultural, and historic frameworks from which it has emerged (Cross, 2010). The exercise of teacher agency is thus a dynamic process inflected by teachers' beliefs (Biesta, Priestley, & Robinson, 2015), personal goals (Ketelaar et al., 2012), and knowledge of curriculum and pedagogy (Sloan, 2006).



#### **5.4 Teacher agency as bridge between curriculum innovation and teaching practices.**

By discussing teachers' daily practice in the classroom, teacher agency was mainly portrayed in three key agentic choices and two agentic moments. The first of the three agentic choices is "creative mediation" (Osborn, Croll, Broadfoot, Pollard, McNess, & Triggs, 1997) that characterizes teachers' curricular enactment based on policy's affordances and constraints and teacher's adjustments. Such mediation of policy often emerged when teachers utilized their varied prior experience as teacher learners and seized the lack of accountability and attainment-driven culture in the immediate context. The second agentic choice dealt with "strategic compliance" (Biesta et al., 2015) where teacher comply with policy based on former practices as well as NEP's (i.e. the language curriculum) permissiveness to approach to its content. This was due to the fact that NEP allowed teachers to modify syllabus as necessary and participants perceived some sort of ambiguity. This also enabled teachers to exercise agency when selecting materials and activities that aligned and, sometimes, challenged the intentions of NEP. This is an example of how agency is informed by the past and it does reflect teachers' perspectives on maintaining some values, discourses and beliefs about language learning. The third type of agentic choice had to do with "protective mediation" (Osborn et al., 1997) where teachers selected NEP content and materials according to teachers' perception of inappropriacy or poor pedagogical value to their students. This meant that teachers often adapted the official curriculum by filtering materials and adding teacher-created artifacts to address tensions about NEP objectives and actual students' language level and potential repertoire of EFL encounters.

Likewise, there are two key agentic moments that were encountered within the participants' narratives. The first kind of agentic moment addressed those expansive aspirations in relation to their teaching and the second type dealt with resilient projections in relation to NEP and education more broadly. The former indicated that both teachers' agency was highly informed by professional goals and ambitions that were rooted in both broader

educational discourses such as “teacher evaluation” or “teacher retirement protocols” and personal goals. For example, Ana was eager to learn more about technology to apply in the classroom and she also wanted to initiate another degree based on both students’ and personal needs. Pablo, instead, did not want to look for a promotion (e.g. principal or another management position) as he believed that teachers “could” do more in the classroom than in any other position. In addition, he strongly believed in considering personal goals and interests to be attained before professional ones. As a result, these instances of teacher agency were framed by their projective dimension that emerged from both personal discourses and beliefs as well as broader educational policies. The second kind of agentic moment was perceived when teachers’ fostered language learning activities that did not only deal with complying NEP goals, but they reflected teachers’ professional discourse about educational purpose. This meant that their activity was framed by instrumental engagement (i.e. achieving NEP particular aims) and with regard to longer-term educational purposes.

### **5.5 Implications based on analyzing teacher agency within sociocultural research**

The former subsection have widely discussed, based on findings, some adequate and plausible guidelines to guide foreign language education policy and practice. Yet, it seems important to recapitulate these guidelines in a more succinct and intelligible approach. The first guideline enlightens that both language teacher education and continuing teacher education need to embrace and address teacher learners and teachers’ background, discourses, beliefs, and values as well as former, current and potential social milieus of activity with special attention to histories of power relations (e.g. teachers versus policies, experienced teachers versus novice teachers, teachers versus other stakeholders of education, etc.) and groups/individual struggles for teacher identity. This intention with the goal of developing more suitable teaching knowledge base and context-specific teaching skills in teacher training

or teacher education. Due to the fact that teachers are protective, strategic and creative mediators, the second guideline focuses on policy makers in every educational tier (i.e. curricular, administrative, political, etc.) since it is implied that teacher agency has to be incorporated in every ideological and political artefacts in education such as syllabi, content curricula, parameters of accountability and teaching performance, etc. In other words, teachers from different ranges of growth and contexts have to be part of the development of policies as these “have been constructed within a particular historical and political context” (Burton & Weiner, 1990), but it is the local community or setting within which teachers activity takes place and their degree of experiential knowledge that would enable them to use, avoid or modify these policies. So, the value of teacher agency is not only for facilitating student learning, as Brown and Lee suggest (2015), but also for continuing professional development” (Toom, Pyhalto & Rust, 2015, p. 615) and teaching practice.

### **5.6 Research contributions of this sociocultural study.**

The most important contributions were made in relation to the generation of more adequate and plausible guidelines to guide foreign language education policy and practice, the expanding of qualitative sociocultural research and the reenvisioning of elements of the research process. These aspects are scrutinized in this section in order to understand better such contributions.

A salient contribution of this study has to do with enriching sociocultural stances of inquiry that articulate explanatory frameworks to what might seem meaningless or without focus about teaching education. For example, the meta-theoretical framework developed with constitutive conceptual categories of Cole and Engeström (1993) and Priestly et al.’s (2015) frameworks provided broader and deeper lens of analysis as they overlap in scope and nature and complement each other. Specifically, Cole and Engestrom’s framework for genetic

analysis was nourished by the projective orientation of Priestly et al.'s ecological view of agency. Likewise, the latter was also enriched by the nature and scope of the cultural-historical domain that is portrayed in the domains of the genetic analysis.

Another contribution, related to the former frameworks, has to do with how narrative inquiry as a methodological procedure was enriched by considering and developing such meta-theoretical framework. By doing this, the articulation of cultural, historical, political, social, mental and physical affordances and constraints emerged when examining the whats and hows in the narrative story-discourse dialectic.

A key contribution of this research had to do with a data collection strategy. This strategy filled the gap to scrutinize teachers' microgenesis besides lesson observations (e.g. Johnson and Golombek's dialogic video protocol). The strategy was called "artifact-based stimulated recall" in which teachers' iterational, practical-evaluative and projective dimensions of agency emerged when discussing the what, the how and the why of these mediational tools. In addition, this echoes important features of sociocultural inquiry such as Rosenblatt's (1994) transactional theory and Johnson and Golombek's (2016) *obuchenie* (i.e. teaching/learning process). The former concerns on the writer/reader and the text wherein each working its effects upon the other, contributing to the shape of the activity. The latter concerns on the Vigostkyan idea of capturing the actions and intentions of teaching and learning since "teaching/learning [are] collaborative interactions governed by a mutuality of purpose (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 212, cited by Johnson & Golombek, 2016).

### **5.7. Limitations of the research.**

The major limitation of this study lies on the limited generalizability of the results since this was a qualitative case study. Replication of this study is highly recommended in different contexts of practice. For example, private and public secondary schools also intervene in how

curriculum is enacted according to more contextually guided demands. Another context that is often left aside is *telesecundarias* and rural schools. Ana's early experience depicted how agentic choices and moments were highly nourished by institutional practices meant for *telesecundarias* and its rural context. In addition, it is noticeable how Ana's and Pablo personal histories permeated in their actions and choices. So, teacher agency with a focus on gender studies might also contribute to understand how institutions, policies, discourses, beliefs either afford or constrain male and female teacher agency in different degrees.

A second limitation has to do with the lack of wider theoretical background of the researcher in relation to psychological and sociological stances of the concept of agency. A deeper understanding of those concepts would have allowed this research to consider other aspects that might have remained aside in the narrated practices of the teacher. This also persisted as a challenge when constructing the literature review of the study. Therefore, it is suggested that collaborative research in the issue of agency is beneficial. Other experts in those fields might contribute in constructing a more theoretically-multifaceted analysis and discussion of teacher agency.

A third limitation dealt with the methodological orientations. First, the meta-theoretical framework could need more study and theory development based on these findings and other related studies. Second, the data analysis could have been enriched by asking participant to map their degree of agentic choices and moments. This strategy could have enabled a stronger triangulation of data. Third, other educational actors could have been included such as principals, teaching staff and figures inside and outside schools (e.g. pedagogical technical advisors, chiefs of the section for General Secondary Education, school district inspectors, and so on.

## **5.8. Suggestions for further research.**

It is important to analyze other current trends of education policy in Mexico. One these trends dealt with improving teachers' active participation in social, cultural and institutional practices that allows them to engage in educational development in immediate contexts in monthly meetings known as *Consejos Técnicos*. This integrated and collaborative whole school approach for teachers, principals and teaching staff might provide tools for enacting teacher agency. Another trend has to do with pairing up a novice teacher with a more experimented one in Basic Education. The purpose, according to the "General Framework for the Organization and Working procedures of the Tutorship in Basic Education" (SEP, 2019) is to strengthen novice teachers' competencies with a guided immersion in their educational setting and school participation as well as to contribute to enhance their professional practices. So, this also offers room to analyze teacher agency in both novice teachers and their teacher-tutors.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: 2011 Curricular map for Basic Education

CURRICULAR STANDARDS <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> SCHOOL PERIOD			2 <sup>nd</sup> SCHOOL PERIOD			3 <sup>rd</sup> SCHOOL PERIOD			4 <sup>th</sup> SCHOOL PERIOD							
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>					
EDUCATIONAL FIELDS FOR BASIC EDUCATION	Preschool			Elementary school						Secondary school							
LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION	Language and communication			Spanish						Spanish I, II & III							
			Second Language: English <sup>2</sup>	Second Language: English <sup>2</sup>						Second Language: English I, II & III <sup>2</sup>							
MATHEMATICAL THINKING	Mathematical thinking			Mathematics						Mathematics I, II & III							
EXPLORING AND UNDERSTANDING THE NATURAL AND SOCIAL WORLD	Exploration and knowledge of the world			Exploration of Nature and Society			Natural Sciences <sup>3</sup>			Science I (emphasis on Biology)	Science II (emphasis on Physics)	Science III (emphasis on Chemistry)					
	Physical development and health						The state where I live			Geography <sup>3</sup>			Technology I, II & III				
													History <sup>3</sup>			Geography of Mexico and the world	History I & II
										State subject							
Personal and social development				Civics and Ethics <sup>4</sup>									Civic and Ethics I & II				
			Artistic expression and appreciation				Artistic Education <sup>4</sup>						Tutoring				
																Physical Education <sup>4</sup>	
						The Arts I, II, & III (Music, Dance, Theatre or Visual Arts)											

<sup>1</sup> Curricular Standards for Spanish, Mathematics, Science, Second language: English, and ICT Skills.

<sup>2</sup> For students who are speakers of an Indigenous language, Spanish and English are considered second languages to the mother tongue. Second Language: English is in process towards its generalization.

<sup>3</sup> They foster the learning of Technology.

<sup>4</sup> They create educational links with Natural Sciences, Geography, and History.

## Appendix 2: Components of articulation and gradation of contents (sample)

**FIGURE 5. COMPONENTS OF ARTICULATION AND GRADATION OF CONTENTS**

ACCESS AND APROXIMATION "A1": 3 <sup>rd</sup> AND 4 <sup>th</sup> GRADE. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL					
Social practices of the language					
Familiar and community environment	Literary and ludic environment	Academic and educational environment	Social practices of the language	SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES	
				3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Elementary school	4 <sup>th</sup> grade Elementary school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk and write to participate in everyday dialogues.</li> <li>• Offer and receive information about one's self and acquaintances.</li> <li>• Listen to and express immediate practical needs.</li> <li>• Interpret messages in advertisements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and sing songs.</li> <li>• Play with words, and read and write for expressive and aesthetic purposes.</li> <li>• Read narrative texts and recognize cultural expressions from English-speaking countries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give and receive instructions to make objects and record information.</li> <li>• Formulate and answer questions in order to find information about a specific topic.</li> <li>• Record and interpret information in a graphic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give and receive instructions to make objects and record information.</li> <li>• Formulate and answer questions in order to find information about a specific topic.</li> <li>• Record and interpret information in a graphic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the steps of an instruction manual to make an object.</li> <li>• Recognize and ask questions to look for information about a specific topic.</li> <li>• Find and interpret information in a graphic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give and receive instructions to interpret and record information on a calendar.</li> <li>• Formulate and answer questions to obtain information about a specific topic.</li> <li>• Record and interpret information in a graphic.</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3: Unit components of the syllabus (sample)

#### CHART 5. UNIT COMPONENTS

##### Unit 2

SOCIAL PRACTICE OF THE LANGUAGE: FOLLOW STEPS IN A SET OF INSTRUCTIONS IN ORDER TO MAKE A PRODUCT		
ENVIRONMENT: EDUCATIONAL AND ACADEMIC		
SPECIFIC COMPETENCY: Follow instructions to carry out a simple science-related experiment		
ACHIEVEMENTS	CONTENTS	PRODUCT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinguish instructions from a list of materials.</li> <li>• Order words to form questions.</li> <li>• Interpret and follow instructions.</li> <li>• Identify the order of instructions in a sequence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DOING WITH THE LANGUAGE</b></p> <p>Explore simple illustrated texts on experiments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify parts of the text and their distribution.</li> <li>• Distinguish instructions from lists of materials.</li> <li>• Identify graphic and textual components.</li> </ul> <p>Participate in the reading aloud of texts on experiments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predict the content based on previous knowledge, title, and illustrations.</li> <li>• Identify questions about an experiment</li> <li>• Identify words that form questions.</li> <li>• Order words to form questions.</li> <li>• Select options to answer questions.</li> <li>• Practice the pronunciation of questions and answers about an experiment.</li> <li>• Identify and follow instructions to carry out an experiment.</li> </ul> <p>Participate in the writing of texts on experiments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify names of materials.</li> <li>• Rewrite names of materials.</li> <li>• Complete instructions using one or more words.</li> <li>• Compare differences and similarities in instructions.</li> <li>• Identify the logical order of instructions in a sequence.</li> </ul> <p><b>KNOWING ABOUT THE LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose and topic.</li> <li>• Textual and graphic components.</li> <li>• Word and sentence formation.</li> <li>• Repertoire of words necessary for this social practice of the language.</li> <li>• Upper and lower-case letters.</li> <li>• Punctuation.</li> </ul> <p><b>BEING THROUGH THE LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use language as a means of sharing knowledge.</li> <li>• Show confidence in the use of the English language.</li> <li>• Pay attention to the audience.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ILLUSTRATED SEQUENCE OF AN EXPERIMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Choose a simple experiment (i.e. germinate a seed).</li> <li>– Make or cut out cards.</li> <li>– Write the list of materials for the experiment on the cards.</li> <li>– Collect the materials and start the experiment under teacher's supervision.</li> <li>– Observe the different stages of the experiment.</li> <li>– Write sentences (previously written by the teacher) that describe every observed stage.</li> <li>– Check that the written form of sentences and materials is complete and legible.</li> <li>– Display the illustrated sequence of the experiment inside or outside the classroom.</li> </ul>



## Appendix 4: Interview transcripts

### PABLO'S INTERVIEW

Interviewer: Bueno profe, va a hablar acerca de usted, bueno, su nombre completo, que se dedica, profesional o incluso si quiere hablar un poco personal, también con todo gusto estoy abierto a escuchar

Participant: Bueno mi nombre es Pablo, tengo 36 años, de servicio estoy desde el 2002 y como docente desde el 2008, o sea llevo, 7... 9 años de servicio. Como docente empecé a trabajar en escuelas de cursos de inglés y computación, ahí estude en una escuela que se llama CETEC, estude ingles estude computación y posteriormente ahí mismo me ofrecieron trabajo y ahí empecé a trabajar desde lo que es el 2000 o sea de experiencia podríamos decir que 17 años. No realmente, estudiando me fui, o sea realmente fue así.

Interviewer: Ok muy bien ¿Cómo decidió, adentrarse a la carrera como docente, que lo influyo a usted.

Participant: Pues cuando estaba yo estudiando precisamente, este...pues tenía yo esa actitud de que mis compañeros no le entendían entonces yo les apoyaba, les explicaba les enseñaba y me fue empezando a gustar, de hecho, empecé a estudiar inglés, porque no sabía de inglés y por experiencias pues algo desagradables por no saber inglés, entonces pues a raíz de empezar a estudiar me empezó a gustar y compartir con mis compañeros igual me empezó a gustar. Y de ahí es como una celda de idea entrar a lo que es el master.

Interviewer: Okey entonces primero empezó como una cuestión personal aprender inglés y dentro de este contexto donde estuvo aprendiendo le apoyo para adquirir el gusto para empezar hacer como docente, okey, me pregunto si justamente en esta parte donde estudio en el cetec fue, que le permitió también desarrollar habilidades como para enseñar el idioma aparte de aprenderlo o solamente eran como cursos primero solamente de idioma.

Participante: Primero eran cursos como de 1 año que fue básico, 4 niveles, después de ahí otro curso que fue 2 niveles un poco más avanzado y posteriormente ahí podíamos tomar lo que es... pues algunas materias más específicas de docencia.

Interviewer: Perfecto, okey muy bien dentro ¿dentro de este contexto hubo o habia prácticas profesionales o experiencia algo como para empezar a hacer un poco de pues como dicen, decimos “pininos” empezar a enseñar.

Participant: Mmmm no, ahí no pedían prácticas. Horas de practica no ...

Interviewer: Antes de iniciar aquí, en el magisterio como tal tuvo algunas otras experiencias como docente o solamente dentro de este instituto

Participant: Estuve ahí en septiembre como 3... 4 años algo así, después de ahí estuve en... igual en otra escuela de... institución de inglés no me acuerdo de su nombre, pero bueno están sobre el pico igual ahí dando clases, ahí dan más clases de inglés y posteriormente de ahí como al mismo tiempo estaban estudiando la normal pues ya fue cuando que hice lo que es el servicio de educación pública.

Interviewer: Excelente ¿entonces empezó aquí en CETEC y después entro a la normal, o fue a la par?

Participant: No, primero CETEC y después cuando ya estaba yo en “ICO” al mismo tiempo empecé yo a estudiar la normal.

Interviewer: Okey ¿y en la normal también fue inglés?

Participant: Sí, en la normal fue la especialidad de inglés.

Interviewer: Okey y en la normal ¿Qué otras habilidades desarrollo o como complemento esta experiencia previa que tuvo en el CETEC y en el ICO?

Participant: Pues mucho de lo que veíamos ahí en lo que es la teoría pues mucho lo podía yo asimilar fácilmente porque o sea en la práctica igual algunas cosas ya las había yo.... experimentado y ahí me sirvió porque tuve más experiencia y más herramientas en cuanto a lo pedagógico, y a lo forma que, pues había no, el idioma. Yo enseñaba como más o menos había visto y como más o menos sabía yo pues darme ideas no, pero ahí si como que fui aprendiendo más metodología de cómo enseñar, como abordar las clases, el conocer a los jóvenes, las etapas.... historias de lo que es la educación, base normativa o sea fue más amplio la formación.

Interviewer: Okey y bueno, ya con este contexto entonces ahí si supongo vuelve más como experiencia profesional, práctica profesional hacer practicas

Participant: Sí desde que fue primer año ya eran observaciones, segundo año igual ya fueron observaciones y semana de prácticas, tercero igual eran ya prácticas y todo lo que fue el cuarto año fue practica ya, todo el ciclo escolar.

Interviewer: Okey ¿Cómo estas prácticas le empezaron a dar mayor apoyo justamente a la docencia a desempeñarse como tal?

Participant: Ees muy diferente lo que es trabajar en escuelas particulares de lo que es escuelas públicas, desde la motivación de viene de cada alumno entonces ese año que estuve trabajando me sirvió pues para ver todas las diferencias todas las carencias que tienen los alumnos, igual yo buscar algunas estrategias porque en la escuela de cursos, pues yo llegaba y ya sabía que los alumnos llegaban dispuestos a aprender el hecho de estar pagando hay una exigencia a eso van, pero lo que es secundaria llegan los alumnos a veces ni quieren ir o ya están aburridos de otras materias etc. No es lo mismo, entonces ese año realmente me mostro la diferencia de lo que es ... escuela pública y privada

Interviewer: Okey si claro ¿y cómo detectaba en esos inicios, como intento, mejor dicho, pues llevar esta parte de diferencia una vez que empezó con escuela pública a pues resolver quizá los problemas o dilemas que pudo a ver enfrentado, como decía usted de, pues de chicos que cansados de estas materias o aburridos o con poco interés en el idioma bueno la (inaudible) en sí.

Participant: Eh trate de incorporar de lo que tenía yo de experiencia en cuanto a escuelas privadas tratando de ver actividades que yo había visto que funcionaban no, algunas pues si funcionaban, algunas no tratando de incorporar, como de por si estaba yo acostumbrado a que en los cursos se utiliza mucho material didáctico de apoyo entonces eso también lo incorporaba yo en mis clases. Y de alguna manera, algunas clases si, unas no eso me fue dando una idea más completa de los gustos de los adolescentes, con que les gusta trabajar, que tipo de actividades requieren.

Interviewer: Oh bien, entonces utilizo esos, esas ideas que tenía para plasmarlas dentro del aula con estos chicos para motivarlos. Okey ... Y bueno ya en este transcurso de

tiempo a través de esta experiencia que ya tiene, que le ha hecho descubrir a usted como docente como poco a poco este crecimiento como docente que ha tenido, que le ha hecho descubrir como áreas de oportunidad, áreas de fortaleza que tenga usted.

Participant: Em pues en cuanto a áreas de oportunidad, una, que hay que estar muy actualizados en lo que son los intereses de los adolescentes que igual podrías estar actualizados en estar tomando cursos este... estar al corriente en un nivel mínimo de inglés, pero si no conocemos los gustos de los adolescentes difícilmente por mucho que sepamos, vamos a hacer que los adolescentes se involucren. Entonces esa es una parte que me ha ensañado, que, nada hasta terminarse, es seguir y seguir. Avances con un grupo funciona una metodología una forma de trabajo, esa misma con otro grupo no funciona. Entonces es cosa de ir trabajando, a veces investigar o volver a leer lo que ya se sabía, pero que se olvida

Interviewer: Aparte de este conocimiento de los adolescentes, ¿hay algún otro aspecto que sea difícil o demandante o un obstáculo en lo que es la enseñanza hoy, que usted sienta o crea que haya. ¿O algún desafío que tengamos o tenga usted?

Participant: Yo siento que un idioma así como se maneja ahora como una segunda lengua, involucraría más de 3 clases a la semana, entonces realmente si sería un proyecto muy completo que se debería de ver armado. Y no solo es en la escuela , tendría que ser también en los medio de comunicación, que se difunda también el inglés, programas en inglés, sea mucho más antes de poder considerar una segunda lengua en un mes, o sea ahorita sigue siendo realmente una lengua extranjera y 3 horas a la semana es muy poco y se le quitamos que, pues hay actividades extras, hay suspensiones, ceremonias, equis o ye cosa, tres a la semana a lo mejor con un grupo trabaja uno o a lo mejor con uno se trabajas las tres, yo creo que es uno de los principales obstáculos . Es muy poco el número de horas que se le dedica la materia de inglés.

Interviewer: Bien, a partir de esta situación que quizá son pocas horas, tres horas, aparte de otras ciertas cuestiones quizá como maneja, pues, ceremonias o las áreas administrativas. ¿Cómo esto también con experiencias de recursos que se tienen de 3 horas con los chicos, cómo esto ha moldeado lo que usted cree como una

filosofía de enseñanza, que es cosa como de 3 aspectos de una buena enseñanza, poniendo aun todos los obstáculos, cosas que también tenemos en la enseñanza, qué sería entonces una buena enseñanza a partir de lo que tenemos y vivimos ahora?

Participant: Lo que siempre les digo a mis alumnos, bueno, porque todos tenemos diferentes metodologías y diferentes formas de enseñanza. Lo primero que siempre les digo, que yo llevo a desarrollar y todas las clases las doy en inglés y yo les hago la comparación, "si ustedes fueran a aprender a nadar, aunque tuvieran un excelente maestro pero si no se meten al agua, nunca van a aprender a nadar o perder el miedo al agua", lo mismo con el inglés, si no es en un ambiente que este orientado, un ambiente de inglés, pues va a pasar lo mismo, si les habla en español, explicándoles inglés y cuando necesiten preguntar algo, lo van a preguntar en español y o sea, es un circulo que no vamos a salir. Así que, uno tratando de que esas horas son pocas, realmente aprovechar al máximo para que ellos estén innatos en épocas de inglés y el otro, tratar de que ellos aparte pues, vayan aumentando el estudio, practica, repaso, hasta autodidacto, ellos vayan encontrando ese gusto.

Interviewer: Perfecto, y bueno un poquito regresando a la parte personal, ¿Tiene algún plan acerca de proyectos que llamaba usted de Train, de seguirnos preparando, en algún proyecto profesional a futuro para que la enseñanza, no se estudiar un posgrado o cualquier otra situación que le gustaría, pues lograr dentro de la profesión?

Participant: Pues fíjate que he tenido oportunidad de irme de intercambios, teniendo becas pero soy tan inmerso en tanto niveles escolares como actividades personales pero realmente no me queda tiempo, ya si me queda tiempo, es apenas para descansar un rato y olvidarme tantito del trabajo. Entonces, pues prácticamente todo lo que hago, todo lo que he hecho es autodidacto, o sea leo, me meto a un concurso, pues porque no tengo tiempo, tengo 10 minutos, tengo 1 hora o 2 horas libres, entonces en cuento a buscar otra posición profesional no lo creo, me gusta estar en el salón, hay una oportunidad que se nos da de hacer los exámenes para ascender a ser director, subdirector, coordinador, etc. Pues en teoría buscando un número, pero yo siento que eso no es para mí. Me gusta está

más a la hora de estar con los alumnos, ahí es donde se pueden hacer los cambios, es más difícil cambiar de maestro.

Interviewer: Okey, antes de pasar a la siguiente situación que es un poquito, va más a la práctica de usted lleva a cabo, ¿Hay algo que usted quisiera comentarme o acerca de lo profesional o de los intercambios ese que es otro, es una de las partes más, pues llamarla así (inaudible), más rica que sea respecto a eso?

Participant: Sí, como te dije, empecé en el 2002, que es el sistema y ya después en el 2008, ya como docente, durante el tiempo que estuve estudiando se me dio la oportunidad de viajar a Inglaterra y a Estados Unidos pero si me iba, iba a perder lo mucho que ya tenía ganado, entonces esa situación que en ese tiempo que digamos, no podía. Ahora sí, tuve que ver con experiencias y no me convenía, irme y dejar lo que ya tenía.

Interviewer: Ahora, me gustaría hablar justamente de como tal la actividad y más o menos ya comento esta parte de hacernos, bueno, vaya aprenden pues básicamente como metodología, metiéndose al agua, metiéndote bien, así es como aprenden. En este caso no sea justamente el agua o los chicos no se metan al agua. ¿Cuál serian estas cosas importantes que los estudiantes deben aprender dentro del salón? , como cosas que usted crea sean necesarias para que un chico deba aprender.

Participant: Bueno, primero como muchas veces el idioma o sea una segunda lengua, no te sientes tan confiable, tan confiado, muchas veces los alumnos tienen el miedo a cometer algún error, equivocación, entonces lo primero que les digo son muy empáticos, traten de comunicarse , si estás bien o si estas mal, trata de hacerlo, te comunicas te entiendo, adelante, si no, pues no utiliza otras estrategias, otras palabras, pero trata de hacerlo (inaudible) y también lo fomento con los alumnos que, se supone que todos estamos aprendiendo el respeto hacia el compañero, porque los que saben y participan pues tienen un mérito pero los que no saben y quieren participar y hablan, tienen un mérito doble, porque se arriesgan con el temor de los demás se rían, o sea, darles esa confianza para que hablen, lo hagan y lo digan.

Interviewer: Muy bien, y entrar un poco a la clase, ¿cómo usted daría una clase por ejemplo?  
¿Cómo sería un día normal en su clase?

Participant: Normalmente llego y saludo, dependiendo de la actividad que tengo ese día, el pase de lista es con algunas actividades, no sé por ejemplo les digo, múltiplos de 4, four, twelve, o a veces son vocabulario de adjetivos, voy pasando lista y me van diciendo un adjetivo. Trato de incorporar para que el pase de lista no sea una pérdida de tiempo, si no que realmente sea un rescate, pues hacer algo porque son 50 minutos pues realmente no alcanza.

Interviewer: Tienes que pasar lista y justamente hacer la clase.

Participant: Ya cuando la clase requiere más tiempo, entonces el pase de lista lo dejo y solo pregunto quién faltó, porque necesito algo más específico, o sea realmente dependiendo el tema, de la actividad, a veces mediante un vídeo, a veces mediante alguna grabación, a veces mediante preguntas o a veces cuando traigo los objetos les hago preguntas, o sea trato de generar el ambiente. Posteriormente, muchas de mis actividades son con fotocopias porque si yo las escribo en el pizarrón, ya perdí 20 minutos, trato de ahorrar el tiempo para que todos los 50 minutos sean realmente aprovechados y tratando de formular actividades tanto visuales, audios, tratando de trabajar las 4 habilidades.

Interviewer: Me llamó la atención que comenta que provee este material de copias y se nos da un libro, entonces el libro es solamente como parte de apoyar lo que está viendo o pues solamente como en este caso usted lo está manejando.

Participant: El libro, bueno yo lo que hago es dividir mis tres clases: cuando tenemos fábula de medios bueno cuando del internet una clase en el salón, otra clase en el aula de medios y otra clase es para el uso del libro cuando tenemos el aula de medios, como ahorita no tenemos internet entonces dos horas le dedico a lo que es del salón y bueno actividades aparte del libro y una hora a lo que es el uso del libro; El libro pues sirve porque es un buen recurso, trae audios, trae actividades que son orientadas al tema, entonces si también es una parte de apoyo.

Interviewer: Está bien, bueno y pues estoy que muero de ganas por ver los productos que, bueno los trabajos que usted maneja con los chicos que usted también quiera comentar no sé, los productos que crea más convenientes o que diga justamente

ese es el que le dio al clavo con de que los chicos se metieran al agua y se dieran un buen chapuzón.

Participant: Bueno ahorita tengo dos grupos que son a los que les di clase hoy, entonces solamente son actividades de estos dos días. Bueno esto no sé si recordarás que fue de los quince días, pero yo lo analice y pasa lo que son los alumnos y todo, ciertas actividades las cambie porque no me convencían o sea si es el mismo pero ciertas actividades como que hay que ponerse mucho en el lugar del adolescente y a mí me aburrían, entonces esas mejor las cambie por otras; Por ejemplo el tema que era “courtesy and manners” ahí marcaba que hiciéramos un dialogo y creo que aparecía en español y luego lo tenían que traducir al inglés, bueno yo lo que hice fue que les proyecte un video que igual hablaba de esto “courtesy and manners” y en el video se iban proyectando palabras clave de “courtesy and manners” algunos también como tips o cosas que deben hacer por si te prestan algo dígas por favor, si quieres salir pide permiso, o sea todo eso no, que si se me hizo importante e interesante si lo apliquen, pero si lo cambie por que el video era un video en español y esa fue una de las actividades entonces si fui muy enfático igual me sirvió por que como al principio igual los pongo sobre que tienen que respetar al que participe y tienen que apoyar o reconocer, entonces cuando uno participe, entonces si me llamo la atención y la actividad la complementé con una sopa de letras que bueno traía parte del vocabulario con el que se trabajó en la clase igual el de “los quince días” nos manejaba que había que ver vocabulario del salón de clase lo que se utiliza comúnmente, igual pues yo busqué mi actividad, casi todo si algo me llama la atención lo utilizó, si algo veo que no o sea poniendo me en el lugar de los adolescentes mejor lo modifíco o lo cambio.

Interviewer: Por ejemplo, incluso utilizó imágenes que usted buscó, por ejemplo.

Participant: Sí, por ejemplo este material yo lo hice, entonces si hay veces que le dedico mucho tiempo en hacer material y si está en desorden pues ya voy acomodando, ya habíamos visto algunos y en un juego vimos esto también, entonces lo fueron trabajando igual hasta lo complementé que fueron los números, una actividad con los números, que primero jugamos una especie de papa caliente y ya posteriormente íbamos haciendo un repaso de los números, esto fue dentro de



los quince primeros días, también igual en otra actividad como sillas musicales lo que yo quería era que ellos empezaran a escribir a empezar a hablar, entonces cuando perdían un lugar el que se quedaba parado tenía que decir algo en inglés lo que sea, hay unos que decían “My name is”, me gusta, no me gusta etcétera, hay unos que ni siquiera “My name is” y ya pero por lo menos algo empiezan a hablar y posteriormente les dejo una tarea y bueno si te das cuenta son actividades que utilizo con fotocopia que si yo les escribiera esto y les dicto nos tardaríamos más de lo que realmente pudiera llevar y así aprovechamos el tiempo, son actividades que vamos haciendo.

Interviewer: Están viendo bienes y servicios de la primera unidad

Participant: Algo que me parece interesante del programa del 2011, pues unas al final del ciclo si me costó por qué no te dan actividades como del ciclo 2016 que ya decía que temas y actividades y todo en específico y aquí no, “bienes y servicios”, “expresar una queja sobre un servicio recibido”, entonces aquí que voy a usar, entonces todo eso si te quedas ahí pues no tienes nada, pero si vas e investigas y buscas que hacer hay muchísimo que implementar sobre esto por ejemplo, ahorita no lo traigo pero de proyecto a ellos les deje que grabaran un video sobre bienes y servicios, entonces que estaban el hospital, que estaban en la clínica, que estaban en la farmacia todo sobre servicio médico, tenían que grabar un video en el que pues se expresara una queja, y cuando les dejas a los alumnos trabajos en los que ellos puedan utilizar su imaginación, o sea no les dices específicamente que, si no les das una idea y ya que ellos la desarrollen hacen trabajos muy bonitos, algunos por ejemplo ya tienen esa habilidad de editar video, de meterle sonido de hacer animaciones, entonces hay trabajos que logran ser muy bonitos y pues bueno trabajo, vocabulario, esta fue de la unidad, esta es una actividad que me gusta de la unidad dos, que habla sobre seguir instrucciones para hacer un experimento; Lo primero que yo checo con ellos es si saben seguir instrucciones, que la mayoría de los jóvenes en general no lo saben, es engañosa esta actividad, porque yo les digo: “A ver chicos cinco minutos y el primero que acabe punto extra”, entonces en ese afán de terminar pronto dejan aparte esto de poner atención, de leer cuidadosamente y se van rápido haciendo las cosas, sin leer, hay actividades que son chuscas o divertidas,

que canten la cucaracha o que saluden al de junto o que pregunten un nombre etcétera.

Interviewer: Pero, ¿sí ven realmente al final lo que tienen que hacer?

Participant: Por eso me gusta, porque es específicamente es seguir instrucciones y lo que se les pide solo es leer y poner su nombre.

Interviewer: Okey, perfecto, ¿aquí por ejemplo que tiene aquí también español quizá como el apoyo esto lo agregó usted o estaba la actividad así?

Participant: No, esa yo la hice y después yo la pegue, la agregue al principio porque digamos que esto todavía es el segundo bimestre, entonces maso menos es el inicio del tercer mes de clase y como es una actividad que si requiero que entiendan en cuanto a lo que son los verbos de acción y lo que dicen , porque si se los dejo así sin lo que está en español en específico esta actividad es la única que tiene español, porque las demás no tienen o una de dos, o se aburren o no lo hacen o en lo que están checando en el diccionario se perdió el objetivo, entonces si esta como apoyo entonces ya que lo terminaron de leer hago una analogía no solo en inglés sino también en español no saben seguir instrucciones y ya de ahí ésta actividad me sirve para ver verbos sobre seguir instrucciones

Interviewer: Muy bien, qué interesante.

Participant: Otra por ejemplo esta igual de seguir instrucciones, antes de entrar al tema de lo que fue experimentos primero trato de abordar actividades que fueron orientadas a eso de las instrucciones, aquí hicimos un barquito y lo hicimos todos juntos, pero después del barco yo les cuento una historia en la que ellos le cortan el mástil, la popa, y les cuento una historia sobre un pirata, etcétera, y cuando lo abren sale la camisa del pirata, entonces yo les doy esas instrucciones y ellos tienen que completarlas estas otras del barco o la camiseta, entonces más o menos voy a ir tratando de que lo que les dejo al principio sea poco, pero que realmente sea útil, y tratar de que todos hagamos las actividades juntos, porque fácil podría yo ponerles, les pongo los dibujos y “a ver escribanme las instrucciones”. Si somos realistas 2 o 3 lo van a hacer, lo van a terminar, pero la mayoría no. Y aquí ya empezamos con la cuestión de experimentos, igual me gusta mucho que lo que hacemos lo llevemos a la práctica entonces por ejemplo:

los experimentos ellos traen su material y ya les doy las instrucciones; y ellos por ejemplo escribieron las instrucciones o sea yo les voy indicando con lo del material y les voy diciendo que hacer y ellos lo hacen y posteriormente ya que lo hicieron ellos elaboran sus instrucciones, pero ya tuvimos unas y hacen su reflexión.

Interviewer: Todas estas actividades van encaminadas a él, como primero presentación que puedan entender un poco y ellos puedan después crear y ya todo esto llega al final a un producto.

Participant: ¡Exactamente! En este caso, por ejemplo, el producto, el de la primera unidad era que hicieran su producto. El de la segunda su producto su proyecto fue que hicieran algún experimento. Entonces igual trajeron su material y me demostraron su experimento e igual son trabajos muy interesantes. Este hace dos años, organicé como una feria de ciencias o algo así, en lo que los grupos salieron en el receso y demostraron sus experimentos con sus compañeros, pero no siempre repito, sí lo que hice hace un año ya no lo repito e igual experimentos; y esto ya es la unidad 3.

Interviewer: Al no repetirlo lo hace para: cambiar un poco la dinámica con los chicos o con base en qué hace estos cambios.

Participant: Está es una estrategia personal que aprendí al principio; que por ejemplo si esta actividad que hice hace un año la aplico el próximo año, no me va a funcionar o quizás me funcione, pero yo me la voy a saber y voy a estar aburrido. Entonces a lo mejor está ya la hicimos o doy por entendido algo que a lo mejor con este grupo no lo vi, pero como llevo año tras año repitiéndolo pues ya pensé que ya lo vimos y se me paso. Entonces por eso voy cambiando actividades porque cada grupo es diferente, por lo menos cada generación es diferente. Otra si hago todo lo mismo, lo hago por mi mejor. Ya si no así realmente lo voy disfrutando en estas actividades de confianza, por un experimento que hicieron o algunas actividades.

Interviewer: Porque yo pensé que cuando me hablaba de copias y actividades extra; uno pensaría que cuando lo está narrando que podría ser solamente como lo que usted cree, pero si va muy acorde con lo que se está viendo en el plan.

Participant: Sí, ¡exacto! Lo que yo hago tiene que ir a fuerza apegado con el plan si no, sería como una clase perdida, o sea si hago que trabajen y a lo mejor aprenderán vocabulario, pero no es de lo que yo quería que aprendan. Entonces si cada actividad, aunque son fotocopias van orientadas (van orientadas con lo que se ve en las unidades y programas) y entonces llevan una secuencia; aquí por ejemplo el día que jugamos bingo, en la unidad 3 que se ve sobre juegos separados ahí marcan en el libro algunos, pero existen muchos: una sopa de letras, crosswords, por ejemplo, este material, este yo lo hice, este es de un tablero que tengo, este yo lo hice, es un material que ya llevo haciéndolo desde hace mucho.

Interviewer: ¿Entonces esto necesita de mucha inversión de tiempo en casa, no?

Participant: Sí.

Interviewer: Planeando y pensando una actividad apropiada; tanto para sus chicos para que ellos no se aburran y también esta parte de que complementen el programa ¿no? ¡Sí claro!

Participant: Hace unos años me hicieron una encuesta de cuantas horas tenía yo frente al grupo, me lo hicieron en la otra escuela de cuantas horas tenía frente al grupo y cuantas horas me dedicaba a planear y pues allá tengo 12 horas pero para planear muchísimo tiempo. Cada clase si se lleva sus 2 o 3 horas, para poder hacer tanto el desarrollo como el material. Entonces aquí tenemos... bueno esto es parte de su examen, esta es del cuarto y esta se ve sobre: situaciones inesperadas. En está por ejemplo lo que hice al principio con esta unidad, fue que ellos hicieran unos memes porque es lo que (ellos ven actualmente) sí que hicieran unos memes sobre una situación inesperada, este y si salieron unos bastante buenos y si logro que lo lleven a la práctica.

Interviewer: ¡Ok! Justamente que tengan que ver con la práctica social del lenguaje.

Participant: Por ejemplo, este que tiene que ver con el tema de la unidad 4, con la cuestión de analizar y entender y producir el intercambio respecto a situaciones de esparcimiento, -

Interviewer: Por ejemplo, este producto de un meme de la que usted elabora, ¿cómo podría explicarme que se conjuga?

Participant: Por ejemplo, nos vamos ya a lo que es la competencia específica, porque ves que esta es por todo primero, segundo y tercero ¿no? para la unida 4 A y ya si nos vamos al 4A en tercer grado “interpretar y hacer descripciones sobre situaciones inesperadas en el intercambio oral” entonces una situación inesperada ¿no? en la que ellos ya hicieron obviamente su meme y expresan con una oración lo que sucedió la situación. Incluso lo que hice fue traer unos memes que igual los busqué los hice, igual sobre situaciones inesperadas, sobre cosas que ellos van pasando, y ya de ahí voy retomando, o sea de aquí me sirve para que ellos se vayan encaminando hacia lo que es el producto, aquí debe de haber uno...

Interviewer: ¡Claro! Con este meme del supuesto chico que supuestamente claro están impactados.

Participant: Y lo que hice a partir de ese bimestre – mira por ejemplo este.

Interviewer: Ok claro, ya viene la creatividad de ellos.

Participant: Sí.

Interviewer: Y al final puede haber errores, pero el mensaje llega ¿no?

Participant: Eso es lo que yo busqué, que se comuniquen, o sea a lo mejor no exactamente en la gramática porque a lo mejor no hubo exactamente sintaxis en todo, pero podemos analizar ya que lo final es la comunicación.

Interviewer: ¡Perfecto! Muy bien, muy interesante ya hasta estoy aprendiendo aquí. Bueno y justamente ve que hay muchas mezclas de estas herramientas personales, me habla, por ejemplo, de la otra escuela, habría alguna diferencia con la otra escuela que lo que es aquí o es igual o ¿por qué lo haría diferente? Por cuestiones digamos de una dinámica diferente o alguna diferencia.

Participant: Sí, en cuanto a dos situaciones. Una la organización, allá si está más personal ya que obviamente las actividades se dividen en un menor cargo con el personal. Otra el contexto. Cada escuela tiene sus pros y sus contras, igual allá uno de sus contras es el contexto, está al sur de la ciudad, en una zona urbana marginal, con bandas, con drogas, con muchas cosas ¿no?, pero una fortaleza es que el personal trabaja, está unido, se lleva mucho lo que es el orden la disciplina y entonces tiene sus pros y contras. Igual hay actividades de aquí y allá parecidas que se pueden implementar, pero no dan el mismo resultado.

Interviewer: Ok.

Participant: Una por ejemplo lo que es a partir de este cuarto momento, la unidad 4ª, ¿no sé si conoces el Moodle?

Interviewer: Sí, la plataforma.

Participant: En esa plataforma lo que hice fue empezar a trabajar con ellos con el Moodle. Entonces empecé a meter las actividades, las evaluaciones, encuestas, etc. Aquí me funcionó muy bien, en esta escuela

Interviewer: Ok.

Participant: O sea los alumnos: “Profe ¿cuándo va a poner otra actividad? o ¿va a ver otra actividad? o ¿qué hay que hacer?” Aquí sí funciona muy bien y allá en la otra escuela no funciona

Interviewer: ¿Sabrá por qué o cuál habrá sido una de las detonantes?

Participant: Allá... bueno aquí más o menos el tiempo que dedican como que es más justo o sea se van al internet, como que no pasan tanto tiempo y si van a lo mejor si se meten a los videos al Facebook o a otra cosa, pero finamente sí hacen la actividad que van a hacer, y en la otra escuela no porque en el contexto de las familias está más segregado no hay tanta vigilancia de papás. Aquí pues por lo menos está el abuelito o abuelita la mamá, y allá no, completamente solos

Interviewer: Ok.

Participant: Entonces no hay quién los esté vigilando, o por lo menos estar ahí no mantenerse.

- Interviewer: La otra escuela es ¿vespertina o matutina?
- Participant: La otra es vespertina. Sí la otra es vespertina. Igual por el contexto que te digo que está al sur y todo marginado. Esa es una que yo considero y otra que esto se me ocurrió meterlo ahorita en lo que es el cuarto bimestre. No sé, ahorita como hubieran sido los resultados si lo hubiera metido desde el primer bimestre en la plataforma. Sí y a partir de la cuarta lo que empecé a trabajar con ellos fue el portafolio porque lo llevaba yo, pero portafolio en folder, y con esto lo que logré es que tuviera yo un portafolio digital, y el proyecto que igual se dejan proyectos pero aquí ahora el proyecto me lo envían y ahí lo tengo almacenado. Y ésta igual fue una buena herramienta y les ha gustado mucho
- Interviewer: Claro, al final al parecer también están juntos en intereses pues es algo innovador para ellos también entonces se utiliza una plataforma para que ellos pues aprendan mejor y lo refuercen
- Participant: Es la parte que te mencionó que hay que tratar de ampliar porque 50 minutos, claro no son suficientes
- Interviewer: Sí, no son suficientes.
- Participant: Para lo que se espera a los chicos. Bien, ¿se le hace un poquito común este plan este nuevo currículo 2011 a comparación del 2006? ¿Cómo podría describir que es este currículo? ¿Qué pretende? ¿Qué le parece como fortalezas del mismo? ¿Qué definitivamente son debilidades que pues se nos valen en el salón?
- Participant: Pues, fortaleza si leemos bien el programa es que todas las materias están entrelazadas en cuanto a lo que son los temas por ejemplo en la unidad que vemos experimentos al mismo tiempo en biología están viendo experimentos. Ahorita en la unidad que se ve lo de obras de teatro en español igual están viendo obras de teatro. O sea sí va muy de la mano y eso ayuda porque pues están en el mismo contexto, están trabajando obras de teatro y pues el todo el material todo lo pueden compartir o sea están más involucrados. Es una gran fortaleza y algo que si le faltaría al programa es igual creo incrementar el número de horas porque se supone se debían incrementar de 3 a 5 pero no se ha hecho. Claro o sea no se hizo o no se logró entonces esa si sería una debilidad y la otra es que el programa viene muy ambicioso considerando que en el supuesto mis

alumnos deberían venir ya con primaria 6 años de inglés y tienen en realidad 1 o 2 años un curso o algo así. O sea el nivel está muy bueno si el nivel de primaria fuera el que se supone.

Interviewer: Ok, ¿algún otro aspecto como obstáculo dentro del programa que crea o solamente esos?

Participant: Bueno igual otra fortaleza que yo veo en el programa de inglés es que es comunicativo, entonces ya no se va tanto a la gramática si no a la parte comunicativa claro es una ventaja y no alguna otra área creo que no.

Interviewer: Ok y pues al implementar el curriculum o el plan 2011, ¿qué sería como unos ... o una gran pendiente, que tiene o duda, o que diga “no lo entiendo”? o diga que “esto no lo llevo a aplicar porque me causa ruido todavía”; quizás porque no está muy explicado o no es muy claro qué hay que hacer. Me decía que el plan 2006 por ejemplo era un poquito más de la mano que hay que selectividad a b c y d y en esto quizás, no. ¿Qué no ha logrado implementar o que quizás no hay esa conexión que usted puede encontrar o quisiera encontrar?

Participant: De todo el plan de lo que es en inglés, yo creo que sí se puede o sea he tenido los 3 grados por lo menos 1 tercero y todas las unidades yo creo que sí se pueden ver, en la única que sí he visto y he tenido dificultades para que los alumnos entiendan ese tema es el primer año en la unidad 2 cuando explicas sobre el uso del diccionario sobre las abreviaturas sobre los fonemas sobre todo esto. Es una parte que ni siquiera la saben en español entonces esa es una unidad que sí considero muy complicada. De ahí en fuera, todas las otras unidades yo creo que si se pueden desarrollar, que si sí se desarrollan.

Interviewer: En esta parte que maneja que só es complicada porque justamente a lo mejor sí necesitan los niños conocimientos previos de español como usar un diccionario en español por ejemplo no, ¿cómo se da cuenta o qué técnicas utilizaría para ver justamente ir modulando que los chicos entiendan y cómo ir dándoles retroalimentación a lo que están haciendo? ¿Qué hace usted pues para monitorear pues este progreso y pues tratar de apoyar esta falta de uso de diccionario? por ejemplo en este tema.



Participant: Pues ahora sí que empiezo de cero. Lo primero que hago es que todos deben de tener su diccionario y me apoya mucho el aula de medio en YouTube lo que es tutoriales. Les va mostrando por ejemplo si llega a ver abreviaturas yo busco un video para que ellos vayan viendo abreviaturas y en el salón vamos reforzando. “A ver vamos a ver, este abreviaturas de esto, para qué sirve,” etcétera. No seguimos los fonemas igual con aula de medios hay páginas interactivas en la que ellos van escuchando los fonemas y ya después lo aplicamos en el salón. “Esta palabra ¿cuál es? ¿Cómo lo encontramos en el diccionario? porque igual a veces en el diccionario cambia la simbología. Entonces trato. Hay veces que trato de meter todas las herramientas que más puedo aula de medios, diccionario, libro, proyecciones, presentaciones power point, lo más posible. Y al terminar el proyecto, al terminar las actividades que van conscientes a un proyecto

Interviewer: ¿Cómo lo evalúa al final? Más allá de una calificación, ¿cómo lo va... a bueno... el chico si alcanzo, si no alcanzo? ¿cómo lo evaluará usted?

Participant: Hay proyectos que bueno hay algunos alumnos que se les facilita trabajar en algo escrito. Hay algunos que se les facilita trabajar con algo visual y hay otros que en equipo no o individual. Entonces, generalmente lo que hago es que del mismo proyecto les doy unas cuatro opciones, por ejemplo ahorita que vimos este proyecto de situaciones inesperadas, les puse 4 opciones y que ellos escogieran la que más con la que más se sintieran confiados. Les puse, uno que redactaron un texto y que le pusieran alguna imagen sobre una situación inesperada. Otro les puse que hicieran una caricatura en una situación inesperada. Otro les puse que me hicieran una presentación power point de una situación que les había pasado y en equipos que hicieran un video de una situación inesperada. Entonces al hacer eso hay unos que son que les gusta escribir mucho entonces se les facilita hay unos que se entiende más y pues me lo entregan escrito y hay unos que te digo que tienen las herramientas de visión de video de todo eso y me lo entregaron en power point. Otros que se les dificulta y cuando trabajan en equipos se sienten más apoyados y hacen mejor equipo entonces cada una ya voy viendo porque son diferentes son el mismo producto, es el mismo fin y diferente la manera de evaluación y en unas pues califico la escritura, la idea y el contexto. En otra califico la creatividad, las animaciones,

etc. etc. Tienen el espectro para poder trabajar en diferentes formas incluso también en grupos porque puede ser individual o puede ser algo en equipo.

Interviewer: Bien, pues creo que realmente fue muy interesante la conversación y ver su trabajo pues felicidades por aplicar no fue solamente aplicar pues no solo fue del curriculum sino también justamente las experiencias y en lo que usted hace. No sé si hubiese alguna otra situación que le gustaría comentar acerca de pues su práctica diaria que quizás se me haya pasado y que usted crea conveniente comentar.

Participant: Pues la principal en cuanto al trato con los alumnos, porque a veces uno como maestro se siente en otro nivel y hay ocasiones en las que somos o groseros o déspotas. O sea no nos ponemos como seres humanos. Entonces en cuanto yo, en cuanto mis clases trato de ser lo más humano con ellos, pero igual siendo firme, entonces trato de balancear, si yo te respeto tú me respetas con confianza y todo, tranquilo y nos llevamos bien. Para mi esa es la clave, porque sí constantemente yo estoy acosando agrediendo evitando, constantemente a un joven o a una señorita, cuando yo le pida algo no lo va a hacer o si lo hace es por presión no por convicción. Entonces si existe un ambiente cordial en el salón que no siempre se puede, o sea hay alumnos que también nos sacan de nuestras casillas pero bueno se dan los menos y con esos si después de diez veces de verdad no se puede hay otros medios, pero sí el respeto en el salón porque finalmente es nuestro trabajo es estar aquí muchas horas al día durante muchos días al año y el que yo viniera y me aburro o el que yo viniera y ya me tocó con este grupo o el sentirme incomodo realmente me lo va a hacer muy cansado , muy largo, muy tedioso, muy feo, entonces ese trato humano, cordial con los alumnos es siempre con respeto.

Interviewer: Perfecto, pues maestro muchas gracias por su tiempo, por apoyarnos, por apoyar a sus chicos, es la inversión del tiempo que veo es digno de admirar y los productos que se que lleva con ellos y muchas gracias y pues estamos allí también para servirle por cualquier situación. Pues listo profe muchas gracias, entonces si vaya me quede con el ojo cuadrado, muy bien profe.

Participant: Todos lo podemos hacer, la cosa es que muchos no están dispuestos a pagar el precio.

Interviewer: Exactamente, por eso justo cuando estoy en este estudio, esta parte de gentilidad es como ver como nuestros recursos van tejiendo para la práctica diaria, entonces justamente ya algunos cuentan como cuentan su práctica y digo si justamente el profe Pablo se ve muy interesante como va tejiendo nuestros recursos para la utilización de la práctica diaria y pues justamente como estrategia justamente esta parte pues de las experiencias o de lo que usted maneja día a día pues para que este esto no para los chicos y justamente diga usted si me aburro yo ya con eso me perdí yo también.

Participant: Sí es cansado por ejemplo los jueves que esta todo el día y venir de siete a una es, común decir que nos aburrimos, pues muchas gracias.

#### ANA'S INTERVIEW.

Interviewer: Me gustaría saber acerca de ti, ¿cuándo iniciaste?

Participant: Realmente la normal no fue mi primera opción, yo estaba estudiando organización turística internacional y estuve a la mitad de la carrera y, bueno, me convierto en mamá, y soy hija de maestra y mi mamá me decía “Métete a la normal”. Entré a estudiar la normal superior y pensé “¿Qué especialidad?” Y estaba entre en español e inglés o sea me gustaban las dos materias y dije “Pues bueno, me meto a inglés”. Entonces, fue por eso que entre a la normal superior en el estado de Puebla

Interviewer: Ok.

Participant: Y ya en el camino fue que le fui encontrando realmente el gusto a la docencia pero realmente no fue mi primera opción.

Interviewer: Me gustaría saber acerca de ti, ¿cuándo iniciaste?

Participant: Realmente la normal no fue mi primera opción, yo estaba estudiando organización turística internacional y estuve a la mitad de la carrera y, bueno, me convierto en mamá, y soy hija de maestra y mi mamá me decía “Métete a la normal”. Entré a estudiar la normal superior y pensé “¿Qué especialidad?” Y

estaba entre en español e inglés o sea me gustaban las dos materias y dije “Pues bueno, me meto a inglés”. Entonces, fue por eso que entre a la normal superior en el estado de Puebla

Interviewer: Esta bien, entonces fue solamente esta cuestión que dejas la carrera por esta situación personal y después te vas a la docencia por pues un poco por influencia de mamá.

Participant: Sí realmente fue, “termina y estudia” y estaba la opción de la normal abierta. Entonces yo también estaba laborando y entonces se dio la oportunidad de estudiar la normal abierta, los veranos que, esa modalidad que había. Entonces, empecé a estudiar ahí y después pues se dio la oportunidad de ingresar al sistema. De hecho, yo entré a trabajar como intendente porque mi hermano tenía esa plaza. Él se fue a vivir a Estados Unidos “Ana, ahí está la plaza, ¿la quieres? Pues sí” y en ese entonces pues se podía pasar y fue como llegue a... en 1997, de ahí del 97 al 2000 estuve trabajando tres años como intendente entonces ya con el 70% de la normal, sale la oportunidad de que podía canjear, de hacer mi cambio de adscripción, entonces cambio ya la clave y me dicen “¿Sabes qué? Hay una clave pero para telesecundarias”. Entonces, entre en el 2000 ya como docente.

Interviewer: Esta actividad de hacer el cambio de adscripción e irte a la sierra, ¿fue tu primera experiencia docente o...?

Participant: Sí, fue mi primera experiencia.

Interviewer: ¿O prácticas profesionales?

Participant: No realmente, estudiando me fui, o sea realmente fue así.

Interviewer: Ok.

Participant: Entonces, ya cuando entré a la sierra, entonces llegó a la sierra y “Vas a ser directora comisionada y con grupo”. Ok entonces dije “¿Y ahora qué voy a hacer? Y el hecho de que me quedaba en la comunidad, pues como no tenía otra actividad qué hacer, pues realmente te entregas el cien, doscientos y trescientos por ciento a tu labor porque en la tarde nos reuníamos mis compañeras y yo a, por ejemplo, a estudiar todo lo matemáticas, física, química, las materias más

[...]; como telesecundaria, en ese entonces realmente no había el perfil que hubiera 'maestros de telesecundaria' sino que la mayoría era o maestros que venían de primaria que estudiaron la Normal Superior, algunos eran maestros de primaria que entraron como piloto cuando surgió la telesecundaria [...] otros compañeros eran de diferentes especialidades.

Interviewer: ¿Qué más puedes agregar de esta experiencia?

Participant: En telesecundaria, llevas todas las asignaturas, entonces si había el problema en que los compañeros decíamos 'híjole, sabes a mí se me dificulta matemáticas', 'sabes, es que yo soy de ciencias', 'yo soy de inglés, yo soy de español'; entonces nos apoyábamos y de alguna manera modificamos el Sistema porque por ejemplo decíamos '¿sabes qué? Se me atora muchísimo química, bueno entra a mi grupo da química y yo voy a entrar a tu grupo y yo voy a dar inglés [...] era un acuerdo interno, o sea eso no se tenía qué hacer pero nos funcionó de tal manera que a pesar de que estaba la escuela en la sierra, la escuela de hecho llegó a ser muestra a nivel nacional por el compromiso que teníamos también todos los compañeros. [...] Cuando surgió el programa 'Escuelas de Calidad', nuestra escuela fue seleccionada para ser una muestra a nivel nacional de que estábamos obteniendo Buenos resultados con los niños académicamente (Y) al ser monitoreados, tuvimos que realmente retomar el programa o la modalidad como tenía que ser [unclear words] porque habían revisiones cada mitad de año donde llegaban, nos filmaban, nos grababan nuestras clases, y luego se iban con nosotros a decirnos 'esto estuvo bien', 'esto estuvo mal', revisaban libretas con el más alto desempeño, tu planeación dice que tu trabajaste volumen, (...) si era mucha presión porque lo administrativo era revisado muy minuciosamente, entonces era complicado.

Interviewer: ¿Qué otras actividades tienes en el futuro de forma personal o profesional?

Participant: Número uno es actualizarme, porque voy a cumplir como docente 17 años, ahorita en octubre pero dentro del sistema tengo 20 años pero tengo 43 entonces me faltan 17 años con la nueva Reforma (para jubilación) y si lo veo de esa forma no puedo quedarme así, realmente requiero actualizarme con la tecnología, con el idioma, con todo, porque me van a ganar, porque va a llegar el momento en que no voy a servir, va a llegar un momento que no voy a poder

transmitirlo porque ya los niños van a venir ya con el chip integrado, si ya nos tocó la generación Tablet y eso es lo que veo en los niños que ellos si quieren más el uso de tecnologías quisieran que fuera todo más interactivo entonces si requiero actualizarme (...) el idioma siento que de forma personal es fácil quedarte con el nivel que tengo, si ya no lo utilizo para otras actividades pues ya me estanco con este nivel si requiero entonces estar en cursos para practicar si no se te olvida y más que ahorita los niños siento que en otras generaciones tenían mayor fluidez y ahorita veo que con cosas súper sencillísimas les están contando muchísimo trabajo respecto al idioma (...) y de posgrado lo quiero más enfocado, como ya nos cambiaron la jugada y ahora va a ser Nuevo Modelo Educativo pues entonces también quiero enfocarlo a la parte humanista como la parte emocional, de disciplina en el aula, de cosas que tengan que ver con programación neurolingüística.