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**“Situated Learning and Communities of Practice: Telesecundaria Teachers’
Perceptions. A Case of Study.**

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Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés**

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**“Situated Learning and Communities of Practice: Telesecundaria Teachers’ Perceptions.
A Case of Study”**

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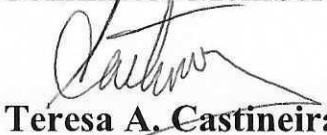
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ABSTRACT

The following research deals with the use of the situated learning approach in English language teaching. This approach arises from Lave and Wenger's theory (1991), where they state that learning is meaningful if it takes place in a real context, performing activities from the learner's real life and relating it with culture. Therefore, in order to verify this theory and to have an argumentation about it, this study was conducted with the purpose of exploring and analyzing whether teachers create communities of practice in the classroom through situated learning approach and which are the strategies to carry it out. The participants in this study were Telesecundaria teachers who responded to an interview as a research instrument. This process was carried out in the municipality of Guadalupe, Victoria, Pue. As key questions for the research, they were asked about the strategies they use to form a community of practice in the classroom as well as the advantages and disadvantages of applying this theory in their teaching. Finally, how good they consider situated learning for the progress of students. Further analysis of the participants' responses revealed their perceptions and experiences of this issue. Most of them showed favorable results in relation to what the theory establishes, however, there were those who did not consider it completely. Nevertheless, the results confirm that this approach is useful in the teaching of English and that it can serve as an example for more teachers who seek true purpose and success in their students' learning.

Keywords: Learning, teaching, theory, approach, method, English teaching, communities, context, teachers, real life.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis with all my love and affection to my precious parents for their sacrifice and effort, for giving me a career for my future and for believing in my ability as a person. Infinite thanks to my parents for their love, faith and unconditional support, even in the most difficult moments. They have been my main pillar to keep me strong during this academic journey and thanks to them I am now in the place I always wanted to be since I first stepped foot in this institution. Their love and sacrifice have been the light that guided my way through this wonderful journey. Dear parents, at this moment I give you the reward of all your effort and hope. I also mention my great respect for you and the honor you give me by presenting your surnames in this office.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

This paper aims at showing how teachers could create communities of practice in the classroom through the situated learning approach and how it may optimize the acquisition of the language of students. When talking about learning in general, it refers to the process that fosters the acquisition of competencies, knowledge and abilities to develop future opportunities (Bhasin, 2019). In Piaget's interpretation, one of the most important psychologists in learning's theories, learning is a process in which the subject constructs knowledge in several ways such as through experience, manipulation of objects, interaction with people, modifying his or her cognitive schemas of the world that surrounds him/her, through the processes of assimilation and accommodation (Piaget, 1964). During this research, I focus on situated learning which unlike traditional learning; it is a different way of building it, from the simplest and most every day as the actions we carry out in our daily lives. Situational learning emphasizes relationships and interactions with others to build understanding due to students learn by making connections to their prior knowledge (Kurt, 2021). In some previous studies, situated learning has been found to create a more effective link between learning content and the social and cultural context in which students develop. Therefore, it has contributed to improve English language teaching. For Driscoll (2005) points out that "in situated learning the construction of knowledge is conceived as a practice in experience, so learning involves engaging in a community of practice".

In connection with the above, I will address this topic, situated learning, in order to know what strategies teachers use to create communities in their classroom and which are the ways they do it.

1.2 Rationale of the study

It is also worth mentioning that another of my main reasons for researching situated learning and communities of practice is to gain knowledge as a teacher to know what the benefits of using this approach in student learning might be. I am also interested in whether this approach can offer students more meaningful language learning. Will communities of practice through situated learning be a better way to make English meaningful for both school and personal learning? That is exactly the idea I have set out to be answered throughout this research. This research focuses on teachers in a Telesecundaria school in Guadalupe Victoria, Puebla.

1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research is to explore and analyze if teachers create communities of practice in the classroom through a situated learning approach and if so, how they do it. The main objective is to report the Telesecundaria teachers' perceptions about the strategies they use with the aim of creating a situated environment in the classroom.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology that this research will use is qualitative. For this purpose, data will be collected through an interview applied to seven teachers in which they will explain the ways they have of creating meaning for their students. In addition, to know how it can

contribute to the students' language acquisition, and finally, to know to what extent they consider the situated learning approach to be adequate to facilitate the students' learning.

1.5 Context of the Research

This research takes place in a Telesecundaria school situated in Guadalupe Victoria Puebla. Teachers at this school teach English three times per week for one hour. The activities they usually do with students are checking grammar topics, answering the book or putting in practice their knowledge with some activities and exercises.

1.6 Research Questions

The specific questions addressed in this research project are:

1. What are the main strategies used to create a community of practice in the classroom?
2. Which are the advantages and disadvantages of creating communities in the classroom through situated learning?
3. To what extent is situated learning approach considered appropriate for facilitating students' learning?

1.7 Conclusions of the Chapter

Chapter 1 has presented the introduction to the study. The objectives and the research questions have been established. The following chapters of this research I will include the literature review, the methodology and the results of this study based on Situated Learning.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section cites the theoretical and conceptual references that frame the present research. To begin with, the importance of the English language and the impact it has on society, especially in the field of education, is mentioned. That is why it is necessary to take into account, as a first phase, the general concepts of English teaching and learning, since derived from these, a series of methods and approaches proposed by different authors for the correct teaching and acquisition of the English language are unleashed, especially in non-native speakers of English. This leads us to the concept of situated learning, which is described in depth to understand its way of working and teaching-learning process.

2.2 English Language Teaching (ELT) and English Language Learning

English is a universal language that is why this fact has become a compelling reason to start studying it. In fact, English has taken a very preeminent place around the world of industry, trade, cultures, and countries, but especially in general education. English language could be considered as a global language for non-native speakers which would mean that English teaching can be really rewarding for people who want to learn it. (“Why is teaching English important?”, 2017). That is why many countries, for several decades, have implemented English as an educational system that provides learners more job opportunities, school and personal development.

Subsequently, within education, English has been formed by certain standards that allow having a mechanism on how to teach English to non-English speakers. Through it,

English in education looks for a way in which learners get more knowledge, skills and develop competences. The main purpose of teaching English is language development, which means learners can develop the 4 skills in the language: listening, speaking, reading and writing (Patel & Jain, 2008). That is why, in order to teach English, the principal key is to know about the most important methodologies in English Language Teaching.

However, what does it refer to with English Language Teaching (ELT)? Collins dictionary (2021) defines this term, English Language Teaching, as “The practice of teaching and learning English for the benefit of people whose first language is not English”. In other words, it is a series of suggested methods to be used in the teaching and learning of the English language in different ways. As a result, teachers and learners have a great variety of activities of learning-teaching respectively; therefore, they are not just in a monotonous way. As identified by Anzar (2014) he mentions that all the methods have the same intentions and objectives for ELT; it is up to the teacher to choose one or another depending on ways of learning, need of students and in the contexts they are found.

2.2.1 Theories of ELT

ELT has a principal role in English classrooms that helps teachers to design meaningful techniques for the students’ learning. It is apparent that within ELT there are certain theories, approaches and methods for acquiring, teaching and learning the English language. These sets ensure the benefit of the learner and the success of the language. But first, with the aim of not getting confused among the previous terms (approaches and methods), it is convenient to know what each of them refers to.

From the point of view of Hasa (2016) the term approach “is the way in which you are going to approach a project or task” It means that an approach refers to the direction the project is going to take, or the basis on which the project will be focused. On the contrary, also for Hasa (2016), method could be considered as the sequence of certain steps to be followed to accomplish a task. Technically method refers to the way in which the project is done, it is a process.

In relation to language, Richards and Rodgers (1986) define the term approach as general premises about what language is, its naturalness and how language learning occurs or is acquired. To sum up, everything that has to do with language acquisition. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986) the term approach is “a way of visualizing the content, it is defined and understandable” (p.15). That is to say, it points out the characteristics of the subject to be taught. The method, on the other hand, “is the direct and real application of the approach; it means that the theory is put into practice” (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p.16). For them, method is procedural.

Once the concepts of approach and method, their characteristics and application are known, it is time to introduce the following contents; starting by identifying the different types of approaches suggested in English Language Teaching and describing the methods used under these approaches. More detailed information on commonly known approaches and methods in English language teaching is provided below. I will start by describing the 6 most essential approaches within English language teaching in consideration of Vanita (2017) which are The Aural-Oral Approach, The Structural Approach, The Situational Approach, Natural Approach, Communicative Approach and Eclectic Approach.

Subsequently, I will continue with the methods for teaching English. Then, I will describe a list of them composed by the opinions and considerations of different authors, so in my opinion, I have chosen 12 methods to talk about in this research with their respective description.

For Vanita (2017) in her study *A Theoretical Study on the Theories and Approaches used in English Language Teaching* pointed out that the main ELT approaches focus on two main theories: behaviorist theory and cognitive theory. Within the behaviorist theory it is said that language can be like a verbal and nonverbal habit which means that language can be learned through imitation or repetition. In contrast, cognitive theory states that language is not only learned by imitation or repetition, but also by listening to it, forming one's own hypothesis and constructing new sentences. The following are the approaches Vanita (2017) considers within ELT.

The Aural-Oral Approach: Based on behaviorist theory, better known as the Audio-Lingual Approach. The belief of this approach is that learning becomes a habit if the response is reinforced correctly. This approach focuses primarily on speech although the second language is learnt as people learn the first language.

The Structural Approach: Based largely on the principles that language is primarily derived from speech and language acquisition is just a set of habits. Indicates that each word and groups of words are put together in order to form meaningful units favorable to the learners and each vocabulary is selected according to its functionality and productivity.

The Situational Approach: It was designed under the theory that proposes that language is in situations and is used according to the needs of those situations. It means that language occupies a place in a contextual environment. Thus, teachers must use and present language with meaningful situations and experiences.

Natural Approach: It focuses on language acquisition. The teacher's role is to ensure that students learn through imitation, play and following commands. Thus, providing learners a constant flow of information they can easily understand and process. Even extra information with the objective that learners become accustomed to and can acquire the second language unconsciously as they did with the first language.

Communicative Approach: This approach prioritizes communication in the foreign language through interaction; in other words, fluency is more important than accuracy. It offers learners to use real texts in the learning situation, and also allows them to translate and use the native language to perform the task successfully.

Eclectic Approach: “Defined on the principle that the teacher does not follow any particular method to teach but the teacher can follow a mixture of various methods according to the needs of the learners” (Vanita, 2017, p. 4). This method can be handled and applied according to the teacher's criteria, since it does not consist exactly of a single methodology, but here the teacher can combine certain methods into one and thus carry out a more varied and enjoyable language teaching.

To continue, within these approaches are the so-called methods, as mentioned above, these are processes and ways of applying the teaching of English. Therefore, it is convenient for teachers to know that having a methodology favors how to teach and what to

teach. That is why it is essential to know the types of methods for teaching English. Considering the works of some recognized authors such as Patel and Jain (2008), Karunakaran and Suresh (2013), Khalil (2020) and Burekovic et al. (2023) the most common and used methods in English language teaching are shown. I have applied them below, as succinctly as possible. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but it is hoped that it will enable teachers to contextualize their own practice.

According to the respective works of the noted authors, which I will mention below, some terminological characteristics and distinctions are as follows. Based on the ideas of Patel and Jain (2008) in their book *English Language Teaching*, they classify methods into only 4 essential ones: The Grammar Translation Method, The Direct Method, The Bilingual Method and Situational Method. On the other hand, the authors as Karunakaran and Suresh (2013) in their article *English Language Teaching*, they categorize methods into 6 categories which are the following; The Audio-Lingual Method, The Community Language Learning, The Total Physical Response, The Communicative Language Teaching, The Silent Way and The Suggestopedia. As well, the author Khalil (2020) in her article *Appropriate Teaching Methods for General English and English for Specific Purposes from Teachers' Perspectives* describe 6 important methods including Grammar-Translation Method, The Direct Method, Audio-Lingual, Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT /TBI) and others. Finally, personally, I consider the Content and Language Integrated Learning method (CLIL) to be one of the most essential, common and important in the methodology of English teaching because, in this method, students not only practice the target language, but also perform various reading, writing and listening activities related to the specific subject taught (Turner, 2021).

Taking into account the different methods mentioned above, proposed by the authors Patel and Jain (2008), Karunakaran and Suresh (2013), Khalil (2020) and Turner (2021) it is essential that teachers have knowledge of them, the techniques, strategies and activities that they propose for teaching English. That is why, I have built a wide list of 12 methods exposing their main ideas and showing the readers a diverse variety to execute our work.

1. **Grammar-Translation Method:** This method consists mainly in the translation of passages from the native language into the target language. In fact, learners are exposed to grammar rules, etymology and syntax of the target language in a more linguistic than communicative way.

2. **The Direct Method:** This method's aims to immerse the learner in the second language, discarding any use of the mother tongue in the classroom. All teaching is done in the target language; the emphasis is on oral expression and comprehension before any kind of reading and writing activities.

3. **Bilingual Method:** Two languages are used; one is the mother tongue, and the other is the target language. The mother tongue is used to achieve the target language. It is based on the principles of similarities and differences found between the two languages such as sounds, vocabulary, structure, etc. If the learner understands these differences, learning the target language is easier.

4. **Audio-lingual Method:** Focuses on oral skills. It aims to improve students' speaking achievement. Language items are presented to students in spoken form without reference to the mother tongue so that they can learn language skills effectively.

5. **Communicative Language Teaching Method (CLT):** It emphasizes engaging learners next to teachers in real-life situations in the classroom, so learners can understand how to communicate in the real world. CLT focuses on the fluency of learners rather than accuracy of the grammar and they acquire it gradually and naturally.

6. **Total Physical Response (TPR):** The aim is to teach language or vocabulary concepts by using physical movements to react to verbal information. The process mimics the way children learn their first language. The purpose of TPR is to create a brain link between speech and action to boost language and vocabulary learning.

7. **The Silent Way Method:** It is based on the premise that the teacher should be silent as much as possible in the classroom, but the learner should be encouraged to produce as much language as possible.

8. **Community Language Learning (CLL):** Emphasizes the importance of the learners calling them "clients" and letting them design the content of the lessons. They work together to develop the skills they would like to learn. The teacher plays the role of "advisor," while learners are encouraged to work together, interacting and helping each other personally in a supportive community.

9. **Suggestopedia:** This is a method of teaching a foreign language in which students learn quickly if they are made to feel relaxed, interested and positive. It uses music, visual images and relaxation exercises to make learning more comfortable and positive. As well as dialogues, situations and translations to introduce and practice the language.

10. **Situational Method:** It is based on the theory that language lives in situations and language is used according to the needs of the situation, so the English teacher must present language with meaningful situations. In this approach, situations are selected that are familiar to the learners, such as home, classroom, school facilities, society, etc.

11. **Task-based Language Teaching:** It is a method in which learners engage in meaningful activities making use of the target language. Turner (2021) mentions that, some activities of applying this method could be "visiting a friend, conducting an interview, ordering food at a restaurant, or calling customer service for help" (p. 258).

12. **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL):** Methodology based on the learning of foreign languages through the teaching of common subjects such as natural sciences or history. "The method employs immersion in the target language, and the content and activities are dictated by the subject matter being taught" (Turner, 2021). The activities aim to integrate the four skills, with a mix of task types that appeal to different learning styles.

Theories, approaches and methods have proven to be effective in teaching English and it is not necessary to use a specific method to achieve effective teaching, because if students vary in their learning style, the method may also be different. The most important thing is to know that a variety of approaches and methods are available to achieve impactful English language teaching and to be aware of them before you start teaching.

2.2.2 Theoretical Approaches to Second Language Acquisition.

As shown above, second language teaching methods require different techniques for learners to learn spontaneously and effectively. However, once the method that teachers consider best has been applied, how does the development and learning of learners occur when they acquire a second language? What are the bases and assertions that allow teachers to guide the teaching-learning process of a new language? In this section, I try to explore the importance of these theories in influencing the acquisition of a language, in this case English.

The importance of the function of language in the learning process cannot be omitted. Language plays a fundamental role in unifying a broad and complex notion and in providing individuals with outlets for developing diverse skills and abilities (Nath, 2010). For Vygotski, a famous and influential psychologist, the language is a means for communicating with the outside world (Mcleod, 2018). He believed that language is a man's great tool to develop social interactions and it is only for communicating proposes. According to him language plays two critical functions in cognitive development; 1) It is the means through which adults transmit information to the youngest, and 2) Language itself becomes a very powerful tool of intellectual adaptation. In turns, the definition of Noam Chomsky (cited in Hakim, 2018), says that language is the inherent ability of the native speakers in understanding grammatical sentences. A set of finite or infinite sentences, it means limited or unlimited ones. Over time, many linguists and psychologists have developed a range of learning theories through a second language is acquired. Some of those learning theories can be summarized as follows:

1) Behaviorism: Zhou and Brown, in their book *Educational Language Theories* (2017) mention that this theory postulates that the process of learning a language is carried out through the imitation of a series of concrete stimuli; learning is a consequence of these stimuli. For Zhou and Brown (2017) “Behaviorism is primarily concerned with observable and measurable aspects of human behavior” (p. 6). This theory emphasizes the behavioral changes that result from the stimulus-response associations made by the learner. And according to John B. Watson and B. F. Skinner, principal originators of behaviorist approaches to learning, everything is learned through the process of trial and error (Zhou and Brown, 2017). That is, the learner emits a response to a stimulus (observable or not) and if he receives a reward, verbal or not for his response, it is positively reinforced and after several repetitions, it is consolidated as a form of behavior. In the opposite case, negative reinforcement or misbehavior, the learner may see that what he is doing is wrong and, therefore, will stop doing it (Archer, 2014).

2) Monitor Theory: The leading exponent of this theory is Stephen Krashen who in 1982 expounded his theory on the second language acquisition process; the monitor model. Krashen’s theory of second language acquisition is made of five main hypotheses: The Acquisition-Learning hypothesis, The Monitor hypothesis, The Input hypothesis, the Affective Filter hypothesis and the Natural Order hypothesis (Schütz, 2019). According to Krashen (1982) describes the five hypotheses as follows:

- **The Acquisition-Learning hypothesis:** Argues that adults, for the most part, have two pathways for developing competencies in a second language. The first pathway is language acquisition. It is a subconscious process since those who acquire a

language are not usually aware that they are acquiring it. The second is language learning. It means conscious knowledge of learning the second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them and being able to speak based on them.

- **The Monitor Hypothesis:** Krashen insisted that acquired knowledge is responsible for fluency and intuitive judgments about correctness. A learner will use the monitor through learned knowledge to correct and check that what he or she says is grammatically correct. This implies that formal rules, or conscious learning, play only a limited role in second language performance. Acquisition and learning are used in a very specific way. Learning only comes into play to make changes in the form of our utterance, after it has been "produced" by the acquired system.
- **Input Hypothesis:** This hypothesis claims that language acquisition takes place through comprehension input (CI). Comprehensible input is available when students or learners can understand messages and their attention is focused on meaning. Besides that, comprehensible input will only occur if the inputs' forms and structures pitch one level above the level of the student. A mechanism is devised to explain how L2 learners gradually acquire the language beyond their current level of proficiency (i+1) through contextual and extra-linguistic information. The input hypothesis emphasizes acquisition rather than learning (Zafar, 2010).
- **Affective Filter Hypothesis:** This hypothesis has to do with the motivation factor. It claims that in order for a learner to get success in acquiring knowledge, CI is necessary but not sufficient due to a 'mental block' that prevents acquirers from using the CI input they receive for language acquisition. This mental block is called an affective filter. The affective filter is considered low if the learner's motivation

and self-confidence are high. If this is the case, then more input is available for acquisition (Krashen, 1982).

- **The Natural Order Hypothesis:** Grammatical structures are acquired in a natural and predictable order. This is because language learners tend to acquire certain grammatical structures first and others later. In this statement it is reported that children acquiring English as a first language tended to acquire certain grammatical morphemes, or function words, earlier than others.

3) Cognitivism: Cognitivism considers knowledge basically as symbolic representations in the minds of individuals (Sarmiento, 2007). Thus, the representations, constructed by intelligence, are organized by the subject in conceptual, methodological and attitudinal structures. According to Novita (2003) cognitivism is a cognitivist theory that is based on the thought process behind the behavior. It means that the learner's mind retains the information of the theory in a consciously way. Moreover, it focuses on how people think, how people understand, and how people know. According to Ibáñez (1999) for Piaget, the acquisition of language is constructed through the symbol or image, that is the non-communicable representation, private, inherent to the individual mechanisms of thought and therefore a product of internalization. After that the language is coming as part of the symbolic function and of the deferred imitation and imitation of the mental image.

4) Social constructivism: This theory is characterized by describing learning as a process in which social interaction is a key to the acquisition of knowledge. Social constructivism is a theory of learning proposed by Vygotski in 1968. According to Vygotski, language and culture play an essential role in human intellectual development. That is, learning concepts are transmitted through language and are interpreted and understood through experience

and interactions within a cultural environment (Akpan et al., 2020). Vygotski believed that learning takes place primarily in social and cultural setting. In Davis (2017) it is reported that constructivism suggests that successful teaching and learning depends largely on interpersonal interaction and discussion.

There are many other theories that discuss and explain the processes of second language acquisition. More different points of view and perspectives that help us to understand such acquisition, but they all coincide in the same purpose. They describe the process or processes that allow a person to learn something. These theories seek to understand, anticipate and regulate behavior through the design of strategies that facilitate access to knowledge.

2.3 Situated Learning (SL) as an Approach

To start with, the own context can be a learning scenario, real life situations a tool to apply what you have learned and use issues as a technique to work on them looking for solutions. This way of learning works perfectly for learners to acquire English as a second language and also as a technique that teachers use to teach meaningfully. It is considered as an approach or method for acquiring the language through teaching by real life situations in English Language Teaching. Therefore, the situated method is one of the main bases to carry out the so-called Situated Learning at school.

According to the approaches and methods in ELT exposed above, The Situational Approach and The Situational Method are essential parts of Situated learning approach which refers to the relation between the previous knowledge and aptitudes of the learners with the contents they learn at classroom with the aim of getting a meaningful learning

experience. To the extent of learning more about this approach, here are some of the views of recognized authors in situated learning giving their opinions and points of view, which will be discussed below.

Firstly, it is known that a Situated Learning Theory was originally proposed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in the 1980 decades. The general concept they propose about Situated Learning Theory is that learning occurs within an authentic context, culture, and authentic activities. It provides the idea that learners learn better in collaborative groups and when the activities learners do are based on real-life experiences (Dyack, 2020). In order to be more specific, Jean Lave and Étienne Wenger in their book *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (1991) affirm that the learning depends on the context, activity and the culture it is in; what makes that learning is situated. For example, when children learn about fruits and vegetables, instead of looking at them in the book, it is better learners learn them in some spaces like in the garden, at the market or in the kitchen preparing food with the intention of having a context and the learning turns meaningful. Situated learning refers to the socio-cultural context as a key element for the acquisition of skills and competencies, seeking the solution of daily challenges always with a collective vision. According to this theory proposed by Lave and Wenger in 1991, instead of dealing with abstract things, it allows both students and teachers to learn in communities of practice. Unlike other types of learning, this theory is concerned with creating active participation in the practices of a community. (France, 2021)

Other authors, such as Brown et al. in 1989 (cited in Pappas ,2015) also make known their point of view regarding Situated Learning. In the year of 1989, they proposed a

theory about situated cognition called “The Situated Cognition Theory” in which it holds that the fact of knowing is inseparable from the real action (Pappas, 2015). It means that the acquisition of knowledge cannot be separated from the same context the knowledge is occurring in. To make it work, it necessarily involves the active and conscientious participation of the learner. Furthermore, in the same year, Brown et al. (1989) used these ideas to develop a proposed model of instruction that has implications for classroom practice.

Regarding the instructional model, Herrington and Oliver (1995) argued in detail that meaningful learning will only take place if it is embedded in the social and physical context in which it will be used. This assertion stems from the belief that many of the activities that learners perform have no relation to those performed by professionals. Therefore, these authors created the situated cognition model to achieve authenticity. This is a method whose main objective for teachers is to enculturate students in authentic practices through activity and social interaction so that they can obtain a meaningful learning experience in the classroom. There, students are exposed to observe the community in which the practices take place. His belief regarding this model is that learning is much more effective for a learner because it provides authentic activities in which learners develop cognitive and metacognitive skills.

Similar to Lave and Wenger in 1991 and Brown et al. in 1989, Díaz Barriga (2006) also speaks about situated learning. Diaz Barriga (2006) in her book entitled *Situated Teaching* presents a teaching proposal whose objective is to lead students to acquire meaningful learning where they find meaning and usefulness to what they learn in the

classroom. According to her, situated learning is a method whose main purpose is providing learners cases that represent problematic situations of real life in order to be analyzed, studied and solved (Díaz Barriga, 2006). The idea of this author is that it is also important to consider the learners' previous knowledge as well as those ones in which the learner will apply his or her knowledge. Continuing with Díaz Barriga (2006) bases her proposal on 3 approaches which I will explain below:

1. **Experiential learning and reflective teaching as proposed by Dewey (2000):**

Experiential learning is based, according to her, on the fact that “all authentic education takes place through experience” (Díaz Barriga, 2006, p.23). Thus, experiential learning is active learning that uses physical and social environments in order to have meaningful experiences to create a strong relationship between school and life.

2. **Regarding the second approach, Schön's proposal (1992):**

It is mentioned that the training of students focused on “learn by doing” (Díaz Barriga, 2006, p.28). This means that students learn by doing or performing what will make them experts.

3. **The educational metaphor of sociocultural constructivism:**

It finds the classroom as a teaching-learning context. From this perspective, the key to school teaching and learning processes lies in the communities of practice of the teacher's educational activity, the students' learning activities and the object of that teaching and learning. Therefore, from this perspective, it is assumed that the student approaches knowledge as an active and participatory learner, constructor of meanings and generator of meaning about what he/she learns (Díaz, 2006, p.34).

With these three pedagogical proposals, the author justifies situated teaching focused on what she calls "authentic educational practices" in which cultural relevance and social activities become the main criteria for defining what learning is meaningful and situated.

Driscoll (2005) also points out that in situated learning, the construction of knowledge is conceived as a practice of experience, so that learning implies involvement in a community of practice. In this way, the social context becomes relevant because learning takes place in it and by allowing students to apply what they have learned in relevant real-life situations, they favor the contextualization of learning, allowing it to become a meaningful teaching.

2.3.1 Characteristics of Situated Learning: Communities of Practice

Situated Learning Theory argues that learning is an essential part of everyday practice in workplaces, family, and other social settings. It also locates "communities of practice" as the context in which the individual develops community-specific identities and practices (Handley et al., 2006).

Drew (2019), originally based on Lave and Wenger's theory, explains the main characteristics of this theory that help us to have a broader perception of how situated learning occurs and how such communities of practice are carried out. Thus, he considers the following key features of Situated Learning.

1. **Based on sociocultural theory:** Situated learning theory adopts a sociocultural view of learning. It considers that knowledge is defined and agreed by a society or

community. Inside the community, it is important to know how to use the knowledge in order to be an effective practitioner.

2. **Learning should take place in communities of practice:** Because learning is constructed in social contexts, the fact of learning from others is the most effective way to acquire knowledge and have a meaningful experience. This fact causes a bigger impact in learners according to their process of learning.
3. **Learners start out as Legitimate Peripheral Participants:** According to Lave and Wenger's theory, learners have to follow actual practitioners in order to learn from them. In this way, learners gain experiences, develop skills and competences. This is what these authors refer to as their concept of "legitimate peripheral participants" in which learners do not yet belong to the community of practice. To do so and to belong to the community of practice is to be constantly practicing and assuming some responsibilities as a learner.
4. **Learners slowly become full members of the community of practice:** This is the moment in which learners become full members of the community of practice. In other words, learners have a complete experience in the practices and show further progress in their learning. This means learners progressing to full participation.

In fact, taking into consideration all these main features of situated learning, at the same time, takes us to know more about how it works and how a theoretical learning turns into a practical learning. Social interaction within an authentic context is critical because learners become involved in a "community of practice" that highlights beliefs and behaviors to be acquired. As beginners move from the periphery of the community to its center, they become more active and engaged within the culture, so they assume the role of experts (Park, 2009).

2.3.1.1 Communities of Practice:

If something is essential in situated learning, it is the so-called "communities of practice", because they are a fundamental element and one of the bases for this theory has a high impact on students' learning and on the teacher's experience. The concept of community of practice (CP) was proposed originally by the aforementioned authors, Lave and Wenger, (1991) by defending the idea that learning implies and requires participation in community and also that the acquisition of knowledge was considered a social process.

Similarly, Wenger considered that learning is a collective and cooperative fact that seeks the benefit of all, and not only limited to considering learning as an individual process. The concept was proposed mainly as a critique of the traditional models of learning, which tended to abstract learners from their actual contexts of practice and interaction. As an alternative, Lave and Wenger proposed learning to be understood as a natural and unavoidable feature of life and as a fundamentally social process.

Consequently, there are many authors who also try to define this concept taking into account the main idea of Lave and Wenger (1991). As Vásquez (2011) who makes us understand this concept by sharing the idea that a community of practice is formed with the existing relationship between the practice performed in daily work and the actual practice. It combines everyday work and learning, taking into account that they are abstractions of real life. In other words, it is a society that gives a particular value to abstract knowledge in everyday practice and helps to understand everyday work and offers a favorable view to the worker in the workplace.

To make it clear, in accordance with Wenger (2002), communities of practice are groups of people who share a common concern, set of problems or interest about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area through continuous interaction. Within these communities of practice, groups do not necessarily work together every day, but the interactions that occur in their meetings bring value to them, as they discuss their experiences, aspirations and needs while sharing time, information, insights and advice, and helping each other to solve problems.

In Huysam (2002), for authors Brown and Duguid (1991) communities of practice are social structures in which learning, working and innovation are combined during relevant activities. The community of practice departs from the idea that learning is only an individual process. In contrast, a community of practice perceives learning as a social form that comes from the experience of participating in the daily life of diverse communities (Ostermann, 2015).

In conclusion, this concept of community of practice takes us to another dimension in the learning. CP allows teachers to apply the knowledge in real environments, to put in practice our abstract knowledge and to see it reflected by ourselves. No one learns a new practice alone; people learn a new practice simply by doing it, but always guided by at least one person with more experience in that practice. No one learns to be a lawyer, doctor, research scientist, or banking professional outside of a community of lawyers, doctors, research scientists, or banking professionals. Therefore, one must create learning environments where one can have access to more experienced professionals in a given domain in order to achieve truly meaningful learning (Vasquez, 2011).

2.3.2 Participation Roles in Situated Learning

Teacher-students relationship is one of the most basic and important aspects in the teaching process. Each member of this relationship plays an essential and specific role at time of learning and acquiring knowledge. Inside it, an enjoyable and harmonious environment can be produced by the role each of them makes. In situated learning, it may be that the role of each member is even more important.

2.3.2.1 Teacher's roles

The teacher is the mediator between the learner and the knowledge. The role is that one where the teacher is facilitator and collaborator. Teachers must know all what has to do with the learner such as their needs, beliefs, thoughts, interests, and perceptions. That is why he or she has to look for strategies choosing real problems focusing on what learners know and have lived. The teacher's role is to guide and direct the learner's mental activity to construct his or her own learning from real life experiences and opportunities (Perez, 2017). In the same way, the fact of coaching belongs to the role of teacher in situated learning because it consists in observing learners when carrying out a task. He or she is a guide who intervenes and provides support for learners when it is necessary (McLellan, 1999).

2.3.2.2 Learner's roles

Perez (2017) discusses the roles that students should play in situated learning where they are conceived of as primarily responsible for the task of discovering, knowing, linking and contributing their knowledge to reality. The learner must have the commitment and the responsibility to participate in all the tasks that the teacher will teach them with the objective of acquiring the necessary and significant knowledge so that the student can apply

it in their real life. He or she must be accompanied at every moment of the learning process, know and develop their skills in the face of a problem so they can feel capable of solving a problem, increase their motivation and be willing to learn from and for reality. For learners, the fact of working in situated learning makes them learn academically real-world situations that most of the times learners experience. This inspires learners to make connections between the knowledge and their lives (Davtyan, 2014).

2.3.3 Evaluation in Situated Learning

The last stage of general learning is the evaluation process; this process is always carried out most of the times at the end of the content. It refers to the process of determining the grade or level, even skills that learners achieve towards the contents of a course. According to Damalie et al. (2022), evaluation is a common tool for measuring the performance of projects, workshops, programs and any other activity, in order to plan and review performance before, during and after workshops and training events to measure results in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and cost (p.7). Educators use a variety of methods and tools in order to evaluate academic readiness, learning process and know the needs of the students. It is planned in advance in order to follow the evaluation purposes such as get information about the progress of learners, measure the effectiveness of programs and measure the level learners get once they have studied a certain theme.

In this case, evaluation in situated learning context plays an essential role in learning. Knowledge is the product of activities, context, and culture it is developed in; therefore it needs to be evaluated as such. The evaluation is based on a dynamic,

continuous and ever-emerging assessment about the learning process, the learners' progress and the learning environment in the classroom (McLellan, 1993). There are many considered strategies for evaluating in situated learning. However, I will mention below two of the more recognized authors who propose strategies, and the ways teachers should consider for evaluating the progress of learners in situated learning context.

In 1993 McLellan mentions that Collins (1990) suggested a scenario for integrated learning and evaluation in a computer learning environment as a model for evaluation in a situated learning environment. In this model the author includes three types of evaluation measures which are diagnostics, summary statistics and portfolios. Two of those measures of evaluation are described below:

1. **Diagnostics:** It is the second major function of measurement. It basically consists of the teachers' continuous assessment of the progress of learners, skills and capabilities. The teacher should adapt all their methods or strategies according to the needs of learners. The diagnostic function shows the level of students regarding certain characteristics, while the diagnostic functions identify the weakness of students' learning (Kumar et al., 2016).
2. **Portfolios:** It consists in learners' products obtained by contents that reflect the process of learning and development over time. Portfolios show the growth of the learners' talents, progress and showcase their skills through a collection of authentic performances. Also, learners are asked to reflect on their work, and engaging in self-assessment and goal setting. The previous are two of the most authentic skills learners need to develop to successfully manage in the real world (Mueller, 2005).

On the other hand, from the point of view of Díaz Barriga she talks about an authentic evaluation according to her proposal which she calls “Centered-performance”. Within this form of evaluation, there are also three mechanisms: rubrics, the electronic learning portfolio and self-evaluation as a reflective and self-regulatory practice (Muñoz, 2015).

Authentic Evaluation: Something that works perfectly with experiential and situated learning is authentic evaluation. In this case, just as in situated learning, there are authentic teaching activities, so assessment requires being authentic too. As stated in Koh (2017) authentic assessment is a test of achievement or intellectual ability where students demonstrate deep understanding and complex problem solving by completing authentic tasks. These tasks replicate real-world challenges and performance standards faced by experts or professionals in their field. According to Díaz Barriga (2006), one of the main characteristics of authentic evaluation is that it differs from performance-centered evaluation because the latter one only demonstrates that learners possess certain behaviors and skills in specific test situations. However, authentic evaluation goes beyond assessing behaviors and skills; it focuses on application and performance in real-life contexts. In other words, it is meaningful performance that demonstrates learners' understanding of how they solve and intervene in issues of real social and personal relevance. Briefly, the author says that the most important principle of authentic evaluation is evaluating contextualized learning.

2.3.3.1 Authentic Assessment Strategies

Within authentic assessment, some strategies that help students learn in a meaningful way are the following: portfolios, observation and/or self-assessment guidelines of a performance, situational evidence of a performance, class journals, and rubrics or assessment matrices. But these strategies will be authentic only if the educational experience and the assessment are connected to relevant real-life issues. (Díaz, 2006). Authentic assessment only makes sense if it really represents a motivation for students, that is, if they feel capable in the world inside and outside school. Among all the authentic assessment strategies, rubrics, portfolios and reflection and self-assessment resources for the student and the teacher are the most representative in Díaz's book.

1. **Rubrics:** They are guides or evaluation instruments that show the mastery of performance according to progressive, qualitative or quantitative levels that a person shows with respect to a production process (Torres and Perera, 2010). Within the rubrics, there is a wide range of criteria that progressively qualify a performance. They are evaluation tools for assessing authentic activities, especially because they serve to measure the work of students according to "real-life criteria". This strategy allows the evaluation and self-evaluation of processes and skills for the resolution of complex problems, communication skills, interaction, etc.
2. **Portfolios:** Paulson et al. (1991) find the portfolio concept to be an intentional collection of students' work in which they present their efforts, progress, and achievements in a given area. Portfolios are another strategy of authentic assessment because they allow assessing what students do, since through them, students show performance in an authentic task. Some characteristics of portfolios

as a form of assessment is that it shows the gradual increase and learning achieved since it allows measuring learners in procedural terms. The role of the learner in this authentic form of assessment is to demonstrate that he/she is able to perform a certain task such as writing an essay, solving a problem, among others. Like rubrics, these activities become an authentic assessment if the demonstration of the intended learning occurs in real-life scenarios.

3. **Self-Evaluation as a Reflective and Self-Regulatory:** Brown and Harris (2013) (cited in Andrade, 2019) defined self-evaluation as a descriptive and evaluative act carried out by the student in relation to his or her own academic work and skills. It refers to the ability to notice the own actions, in order to improve behavior and thinking in the future. Self-assessment can be seen as a form of self-generated feedback that leads the learner to evaluate and reflect on his or her own work lucidly, honestly and with a fairly deep level of introspection. In ideas of Díaz Barriga (2006) self-evaluation of learning goes beyond reflecting on the performance of a work done or asking the student to assign himself or his partner a grade he believes he deserves at the end of the course. It implies the elaboration of sustained judgments and ethical and responsible decision making.

These and many more authentic assessment strategies can be used to assess the learning and content studied in authentic activities within situated learning. It is known that with the aim of carrying out the assessment, an order must be followed so that there is no imbalance. That is to say that in this case, if we work with authentic activities, a form of authentic evaluation will be used in the same way.

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the followed processes to obtain information in order to cover the research topic; whose main objective is to report Telesecundaria teachers' perceptions about situated learning and the possible ways in which they create a situated environment with their students. The chapter also describes in detail the methodology, the context, the participants and the research instrument that was used for this study. Finally, the data collection procedures and data analysis are explained.

3.2 Research Design

This investigation used a qualitative methodology. Based on the arguments of Creswell (2014) qualitative research is an approach that explores and understands the meaning of the points of view of a group or individuals who participate in a social phenomenon. What constitutes qualitative research involves purposeful use for describing, explaining, and interpreting collected data once the information is obtained (Williams, 2007). In ideas of Kothari (2004), qualitative research is the one related with investigating human behavior, when researchers are interested in knowing the reasons or opinions why people behave in a particular way or think in certain things. The author also affirms that qualitative research is designed to find out how people feel or what they think about a particular situation. That is why in this study about teachers' perceptions about situated learning; I will use a qualitative approach with the aim of knowing if teachers use the situated learning approach for

creating communities in the classroom. Following the qualitative methodology, an interview is administered for teachers in order to obtain the information.

3.3 Context

This research took place in the Telesecundaria “Guadalupe Victoria” located between streets 5 de Mayo and 8 Sur, Guadalupe Victoria Puebla. According to the school authorities, the institution consists of 3 grades distributed in 5 groups each, a, b, c, d and e. Each group has approximately 30 students. Also they provided that the school facilities consist of 4 single-story buildings. It has 15 classrooms in total, a library and a practice laboratory, a school administration, a school cooperative and two sports fields. Each classroom has a desk for teachers and 35 seats for students, as well as a storage room for cleaning. Each classroom has technical equipment: screen, projector and locker. As for the academic staff, some of the teachers are originally from the town, and some others from other places near to the school. Finally, regarding to the staff, there is a director who oversees the school, 3 male teachers and 12 female teachers with time of experience. The working day for teachers is from 8 am to 2 pm with a 30-minute break in between.

The way of working in the institution is as follows: According to some of the teachers, the institution has adopted a new system for the school day between its professors and students on campus due to the restrictions of healthy distance due to Covid-19. That is why they now work with a hybrid system. That is, each group is divided in half, in which, the first group goes to face-to-face classes while the second half does not, and vice versa. Now, in relation only to the English classes, teachers teach English just twice a week.

3.4 Participants

The participants in this research were 7 teachers from the Telesecundaria School who shared their perceptions and points of view. The population of this study was composed of 7 participants in total, 3 males and 4 females. All of them from different ages, years of experience and school of origin. Below, I provide an in-depth description of these participants.

Table 1: Data of participants

Teacher's Name	Age	Experience	School of Origin
Mr. Fuentes	30	5 years	Escuela Normal Superior del Estado de Puebla
Mr. López	28	2 years	Escuela Normal Superior del Estado de Puebla
Mr. Martínez	45	20 years	Escuela Normal Superior del Estado de Puebla
Mrs. Rivera	45	18 years	Escuela Normal Superior del Estado de Puebla
Mrs. Osorio	34	12 years	Escuela Normal Rural Carmen Serdán
Mrs. Salas	29	7 years	Escuela Normal Rural Carmen Serdán
Mrs. Rivera	40	18 years	Escuela Normal Superior del Estado de Puebla

3.5 Instrument

The instrument was created by the researcher to be directed to teachers who teach English at the secondary level. This was done according to the research questions to obtain the

required information that would help to know the perceptions and points of view that teachers have about the strategies they use to create community among their students.

The instrument used to carry out this research consisted in the elaboration of an interview with 11 open-ended questions, among which I seek to know what activities and strategies teachers implement so that students interact with each other. According to Mathers et al. (2000) define the interview as “an important data collection technique that involves verbal communication between the researcher and the subject” Interviews are primarily done in qualitative researches and are used to get information about a determinate topic. Interviews occur when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers. (Quad, 2016)

In this instrument, aspects and observations on the behavior of students when working in teams, the benefits, challenges or difficulties and the context in which students develop and whether teachers find it feasible to combine both the school and social contexts are also questioned. The instrument also helps to determine whether or not it is feasible to work in teams and, if so, what are the advantages and benefits for the students. Likewise, the instrument allows us to know if the teachers are familiar with the situated learning approach and if so, what activities they suggest to put this way of learning into practice. Subsequently, the instrument questions teachers about their point of view in considering situated learning as an effective way of teaching English. Finally, as the eleventh question, it asks the participants to give suggestions or recommendations to new English teachers so that their future teaching will have a positive impact on student learning. As can see, the above is a brief description of the research instrument in this project.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Once the interview was designed and organized, the Telesecundaria school principal was asked for permission to conduct this research on campus with 7 English teachers participating. Once permission was obtained, I met with the teachers to explain in more detail the purpose of this interview and the role they play in it. I also answered any doubts they might have. Once they accepted to participate in the study, I asked teachers again to apply for this interview via zoom, in order to not interfere in their work schedules and at the same time to record their answers. Teachers accepted and I agreed with each one to determine the day and time they would be interviewed. These interviews were carried out on different days and times due to the itinerary of each teacher. The range of interview days was from March 4th, 2022 starting with the order of the teachers in the table above and ending on March 18th, 2022 with a maximum interview time of 30 minutes. This was due to the explanations and arguments of each teacher.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data collected from the Telesecundaria teachers were divided taking into account the three research questions that led to this research. To explain this, the first research question has two items and its objective is to identify the strategies teachers use to create community within the classroom. The second question has two items and helped to identify the advantages and disadvantages of creating community in real context. And finally, the third question has three items and its objective is to find out to what extent teachers considered if situated learning adequate to facilitate students' English learning. Findings of this research will be presented in chapter IV.

3.8 Conclusion of the Chapter

In this chapter the methodology and research design applied in this study were described in detail. Such as the characteristics of participants, of the instrument used to collect the data and finally, data collection procedures and data analysis were explained too. The results will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of presenting and interpreting the results obtained once the instrument was applied to each participant. In addition, the positions and perceptions of teachers based on their way of teaching were made known in accordance with what the theory indicates. Information that was indicated in the objective set out in this thesis. The results are presented below based on the order which the participants were interviewed and the follow-up designed in the research instrument.

4.2 Overview of Study

The purposes of this research was to explore and analyze if teachers create communities of practice in the classroom through the situated learning approach as well as which are the strategies they use for creating a situated environment in the classroom.

In order to answer the research questions, I built an instrument that allowed me to ask participants the following questions:

- What are the main strategies used to create a community of practice in the classroom?
- Which are the advantages and disadvantages of creating communities in the classroom through situated learning?
- To what extent is situated learning approach considered appropriate for facilitating students learning?

The instrument contained a series of questions that lead the participants to expose their perceptions and positions towards this objective. Although the participants were very fluent in English, they all chose to carry out the application of the instrument in Spanish. By using their mother language, they felt more confident in answering and would find it easier to express their answers. Having collected all the information from the participants, the information was analyzed for the main purpose of this research: to figure out if teachers knew and made use of the theory of situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991) in their teaching and if so, what strategies they used to foster situated learning with their students. The results are going to be presented and explained in detail in the following section.

4.3 Results

The aim of this section is just to show the most relevant information about the answers teachers provided in the interviews emphasizing their perceptions of situated learning and communities of practice in the classroom. Thus showing what they consider, think and carry out when teaching English to their students. The analysis is based on the interview made to participants (See appendix 1). According to the data obtained, information is organized as follows, as well as the transcription of main ideas of each participant's answers.

In this part of the section, there are the main questions of the research instrument to be analyzed. For each selected question, there is a table with the transcription of the responses from the 7 participants, as well as their interpretation.

Table 2: Activities in the classroom

Activities for setting students to work on in teams and solve together.

Mr. Fuentes	“According to the content, if the content lends itself to teamwork. But they are usually activities that lead to resolution and integration, precisely.”
Mr. Lopez	“Simple tools such as word search, crossword puzzles, in which students can support each other.”
Mr. Martinez	“Research activities or for some experiment or exercise resolutions.”
Mrs. Rivera	“Activities in accordance with our work plan. Having the material ready”
Mrs. Osorio	“Activities in pairs, such as solving exercises, reading comprehension, making material, writing texts, etc.”
Mrs. Salas	“Vocabulary exercises, puppet theater activities, lotteries, board games.”
Mrs. Rivera	“Readings, reading comprehension questions, information graphics such as charts or maps, presentations, and speaking.”

Some of the teachers' responses agreed that the activities they have available for teamwork are mostly where students get together to solve a given exercise. Where there is support among students, and that it is also of full attention of the student

Table 3: School and social contexts

Combining school context with social context for students' learning.

Mr. Fuentes	“Of course, it will always be beneficial. They are two things that are closely related, so it is very beneficial to take into account the student's context, what interests him/her, within the school context.”
Mr. Lopez	“Yes, indeed. Learning applied to real life is very relevant when teaching students productive things, not just pure theory. It is important to create that bridge between the theoretical and the practical and that it bears fruit in the medium and long term.”
Mr. Martinez	“Yes it is important because the school context allows the student to have access to information and combining it with their home allows them to develop better.”
Mrs. Rivera	“Yes, it is very important, because by taking a problem of the community in which we are, they propose a solution from all the learning they have already acquired.”
Mrs. Osorio	“Yes, it is beneficial, but when it is well designed, because we have to know our students very well to know what their interests are and so they experience it themselves.”
Mrs. Salas	“Yes, it is very important because when we link the community to the content of our subjects, students have shown better results because their learning becomes more experiential.”
Mrs. Rivera	“In my opinion, it is right to combine both, on the one hand to contextualize with what they live on a daily basis and on the other hand, to show them what is beyond their context.”

All the teachers agreed that combining both contexts, the school and the social context, brings benefits to the student, such as knowing their interests, developing better in both contexts and putting into practice what has been acquired theoretically. For teachers, this allows students to broaden their knowledge and have a more critical thinking.

Table 4: Strategies for community.

Strategies for creating community within the classroom.

Mr. Fuentes	“Activities that carry some didactic meaning, such as a game, dynamics, or fun activities. The idea is that they do not always stay with the same ones. Precisely so that in the long run, this sense of community is achieved”
Mr. Lopez	“They work in groups, or in pairs and in randomly way.”
Mr. Martinez	“Always use the social-emotional aspect in the classroom where the children can talk, communicate, express any problems, and this allows them to empathize with each other. ”
P4	“Generate trust from them towards me and among themselves. Or to implement a game
P5	“I use tutoring, as those who have an easier time with the subject help those who have less ease.”
P6	“I try to make the strategies playful, such as board games, verbal games, songs, vocabulary. Because these are materials that the students conceive better and are manipulable for them. ”
P7	“Encourage values, tolerance, and respect. Because sometimes students

are shy and embarrassed, so I encourage this so that everyone can participate without feeling exposed. Fun activities and games.”

Most of the teachers agreed that some strategies to create community in the classroom are to involve students in fun activities, such as games and dynamics, and to engage in meaningful learning. Engage in activities that are not so common always having coexistence and respect among them.

Table 5: Students' behavior.

Behavior of students when working in teams.

Mr. Fuentes	“There is always someone who falls into laziness. A lot of work needs to be done in pairs. Those who have a little more skill in the content can help those who have a harder time understanding.”
Mr. Lopez	“Some people find it easier because they already know each other. But in some cases they are very honest in saying that someone on the team is not working and they pull them aside.”
Mr. Martinez	“Sometimes they are not as proactive, some wait for the partner to finish so that they just copy. Teamwork is 75% effective.”
Mrs. Rivera	“If the group is new, it's a little difficult to work together because they don't know each other. But if they already know each other, it is easier for them, and they organize themselves when doing a job.”
Mrs. Osorio	“They like to work in teams, but they prefer to choose who they work with. Because there are some who do not like to work with colleagues who are on the tightrope.”
Mrs. Salas	“I consider my group to be very heterogeneous and I see a willingness to learn, they like working with manipulative material and they work with

	different students. Although there is always someone who likes to work individually.”
Mrs. Rivera	“Most of them are relaxed, and I see that they are free when it comes to team activities, although there are those who are more individual and do not like to be in a team, but they know that they have to work together.”

Most of the teachers coincided that when students work in teams, there is always someone who contributes less or waits for others to solve the problem. However, there are also those who are more individual or who prefer to work with those who already know each other. On the other hand, teachers mentioned that having them work randomly benefits them because they understand each other.

Table 6: Benefits of Community.

Benefits to students' learning when interacting in community.

Mr. Fuentes	“Prepare for real life, get better learning, understand and learn the content better and have more attention to it.”
Mr. Lopez	“Meaningful learning and a knowledge network. In other words, they all add up.”
Mr. Martinez	“Collaborative work allows the student to understand each other. It also facilitates communication”
Mrs. Rivera	“They learn to socialize, to have more self-confidence and when it comes to presenting their work, they do it in a better way.”
Mrs. Osorio	“Solidarity and empathy are strongly encouraged, because they support others and do it for the betterment of all. They share different procedures, help each other and create friendships.”

Mrs. Salas	“Significant learning is acquired when they are contextualizing, complement their skills and abilities, there is co-evaluation and they learn to relate and live together.”
Mrs. Rivera	“Adaptation to teamwork.”

In teachers' perspectives, the benefits for the students of interacting together allow them to be more confident with themselves, to learn more meaningfully, to open up, to socialize and to live with others. In this way, teachers said students adapt to collaborative work and gradually forge values such as empathy and solidarity.

Table 7: Challenges of Community.

Challenges in getting students to work in teams.

Mr. Fuentes	“The main challenge for us as teachers is to make students understand that the point of teamwork is to help each other. To monitor that everyone works equally. And the thinking of the students by leaving the responsibility to the one who has the greatest facility.”
Mr. Lopez	“I consider that it could be attitudes, behavior, availability, responsibility, and lack of commitment to get things done.”
Mr. Martinez	“That students don't work, or that they don't focus on the objective of the work”
Mrs. Rivera	“Discipline, cause sometimes in the teams there is a person who does nothing, or sometimes they are playing, and the others get desperate and end up giving up nothing.”

Mrs. Osorio	“Involve students who have more difficulty. Rhythm of learning, compliance and responsibility.”
Mrs. Salas	“Communication and adaptation among members. There may be differences in the way of working, learning styles and interests. As a teacher, to have all the necessary resources to carry out the activity that I propose.”
Mrs. Rivera	“That it becomes a mess, or the fact that you have to keep an eye on them. Make sure everyone works, participates and complies.”

As expert teachers, they mentioned a number of difficulties in monitoring students' teamwork. Among them, attitudes, behavior and responsibility of each student. As well as the learning style, self-interests, commitment, discipline, communication and adaptation of the students. It is very important for them to know how to monitor these factors in order not to have a failure in teamwork.

Table 8: Situated Learning as Strategy.

Situated learning as an effective strategy for teaching and/or learning English.

Mr. Fuentes	“Yes, of course. Seeing it working, yes”
Mr. Lopez	“Yes, I think it is very good and fundamental for teachers and students to understand this linkage of putting into practice what is taught.”
Mr. Martinez	"Yes it is. It's a way for the student to see the benefit of learning as they relate the importance of the language to something practical in their life."
Mrs. Rivera	“Yes, in this way they see a little more clearly that what they are learning, they are applying it the exercise.”
Mrs. Osorio	“Yes and no. Yes because it's like when we learned to speak by talking. And learning English is learning it by using it, but in our real context we

	don't put it into practice outside of school.”
Mrs. Salas	“Yes, it is effective because we are guaranteeing reflective and autonomous students, but as long as we do not lose sight of the fact that it must be focused on the needs presented by our students.”
Mrs. Rivera	“I think it is a good strategy, because the brain somehow sees a certain situation, so they can imagine, deduce what the content is going to be about.”

On the one hand, teachers accept situated learning as a strategy that leads students to understand their learning more clearly through practice. They can link and relate what they learn with what they live in their daily lives. They learn by doing. On the other hand, there is who postulated in a dilemma, the teacher mentioned that for this strategy works, its use and application must be very well designed.

Table 9: Situated Learning in personal lives.

Ways which learning through real context influences in students' personal lives.

Mr. Fuentes	“Knowing how to act in society, if we give a solution to a problem, in this way they are prepared to know how to mentalize, talk, and communicate with those around them to reach an agreement.”
Mr. Lopez	“It influences in that it is already something that stays with them for life. They have already acquired the learning, now they put it into practice and it can bring advantages for their future education and academic growth.”
Mr. Martinez	"Again, it helps them to develop more, to be more prepared for any situation that comes their way and to link what they learned in school and what they are now living in their real life."

Mrs. Rivera	“Benefits in their short and long term plans. And that they are functional in what they decide to do later.”
Mrs. Osorio	“It is as I mentioned, if it is well designed, it will work, otherwise, it will not work, and it will influence in the productivity of their work performance”
Mrs. Salas	“To help them perform better and that their meaningful learning will lead them to make good decisions in the future.”
Mrs. Rivera	“In his whole way of life, although I think it also influences the family. Because the student can learn 30% at school and if he shares it with the family, it could be completed to 100%. Otherwise I think it would affect future decisions.”

On teachers’ perceptions, situated learning not only has an academic guarantee but also a personal one, because thanks to its constant use, students have a better vision for the future, a better performance and knowledge of how to act in society. Students have good proposals for a solution to a problem and improvement in communication and performance because it is already a learning that stays with them for life.

Table 10: Tips and suggestions.

Suggestions and tips to a new English teacher.

Mr. Fuentes	“Never forget that he or she was also a student and to be attentive to the emotions of the student body.”
Mr. Lopez	“Try to manage new technologies. Something that is playful for the teenagers and he/ she perhaps leaves aside the demands. And to look for and guide collaborative work.”

Mr. Martinez	"Know the students, their characteristics, know that not everyone learns at the same time. And that he/she makes continuous evaluations to determine the progress of students."
Mrs. Rivera	"Prepare with technology and develop playful strategies so as not to lose the student's attention."
Mrs. Osorio	"Know your group well, their interests and needs. Create a stable, affective and empathetic environment. But never forget that he is the teacher and has a responsibility."
Mrs. Salas	"Be empathetic and patient with the students. Keep in mind that the foreign language is complicated to learn. Include playful activities and know that the strategies must revolve around the characteristics of our students."
Mrs. Rivera	"Be disciplined, know what you are going to teach, be prepared, be empathetic with the students and maintain the line of respect between the teacher-student relationships."

Finally, they expressed their suggestions or advice to a new teacher. They expressed that what a future teacher should take into account for effective teaching is to know about new technologies, to be empathetic and understand the students, to know enough about the group of students and their interests and characteristics. As well as being creative, disciplined and never forget that he/she is the one in charge of the students.

4.4 Discussion of Results

Regarding the participants' responses, the majority agreed that teaching through situated learning brings significant learning to students. They also agreed that it does not only stay in the classroom, but that students have the opportunity to exercise it and put it into practice in their own real contexts. This was the purpose given by the creators of this theory, Lave and Wenger (1991), and now, once the research has been carried out, the majority of

Telesecundaria teachers affirmed that this theory does indeed produce results in student learning.

In addition, throughout this research I was able to identify connections and similarities between the theory and the teachers' arguments. This allowed me to discover and give my opinion that this theory is very helpful and supportive for students' learning. This under the statement of the aforementioned authors Lave and Wenger (1991) where they determine that learning depends on the context, the activity and the culture in which it is found; which makes it coherent that learning is situated.

In 1991 Lave and Wenger exemplified situated learning in the following way; when children learn about fruits and vegetables, instead of looking at them in the book, it is better for them to learn them in some spaces such as the garden (Lave & Wenger, 1991). And indeed, this theory is confirmed by participant 1, who in his interview shared that in order to introduce students to a real context, it is first necessary to establish the situation to be experienced, how to solve it and, of course, the topic to be addressed.

Mr. Fuentes presented the following situation: *"My students are learning jobs and professions in English and to get deeper into the topic, we are going to do an activity together. The situation is as follows: suddenly two cars collide; we will need a doctor, a fireman, a lawyer, a mechanic, etc. In this situation, the students practice their role as well as contextualize the topic and make more sense of it. So, this is where they not only evaluate the topic, but also put it into practice in something usual and every day, and at the same time look for a solution together."* So in this way I was able to interweave and evidence what the theory establishes and what teachers have shared about their experiences with it. Likewise, personally, this research has allowed me to create a more critical thinking as a future teacher, because the interaction

with the teachers gave me a lot of knowledge and their experiences helped me to visualize the work and responsibility of a teacher.

4.5 Conclusion

As a conclusion of this chapter, I can express that the results obtained have fully covered the research questions. The results indicated that the main strategies to create a community of practice in the classroom are mainly playful and entertaining activities for the students, as well as considering the advantages and disadvantages of creating communities of practice, since it must be considered that there are students with different ways of working, which facilitates or hinders teamwork. Finally, it has been confirmed that teachers do indeed consider situated learning theory appropriate for student performance and learning. In the next chapter, the conclusions of the whole study will be described in more detail.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, the main findings of the whole research are going to be presented in detail. As well as the answers to the research questions are presented along with some conclusions to corroborate whether the objectives of this project have been achieved. The following is a brief summary of the research process and its respective conclusions, as well as its limitations and some guidelines for future research. Finally, a brief conclusion related to the academic and personal environment is appended.

5.2 Overview of Study

This article aimed to show how teachers could create communities of practice in the classroom through a situated learning approach. Therefore, this topic was approached in order to know the perceptions of Telesecundaria teachers (participants) about the strategies they use to create communities in a situated environment within their classroom. Subsequently, to know which are the ways through they do it. Later, through this research carried out, apparently favorable results were shown, which facilitated the handling of information when analyzing and reporting responses from the participants in previous chapter. In this case, this paper shows in detail what are the main strategies used to create a community of practice, advantages and disadvantages of creating communities through situated learning and to what extent the situated learning approach is considered appropriate to facilitate students' learning. Based on the results obtained according to the perceptions of the participants are as follows.

5.3 Answering the Research Questions

By means of the research questions, it was possible to arrive at concise results during the research on this topic. These results were analyzed and reported in detail in the previous chapter, because they were the participants' own responses. However, in this section, a precise and relevant answer to each research question will be presented along with a conclusion based on the results obtained previously. The first RQ focuses on strategies for creating a community of practice, the second one on the advantages and disadvantages of these communities of practice, and the third one on how effective situated learning approach is for students' learning.

5.3.1 What are the main strategies used to create a community of practice in the classroom?

Most of the teachers' views agreed that the main strategies for creating a community of practice in the classroom are to carry out playful and entertaining activities for students as long as they involve teamwork and provide meaningful learning. Activities that have something new for them and that are not so common to do, such as games, talks, solving interesting problems for students, where they get to know themselves and above all that they enjoy doing them. These strategies aim to provide not only academic learning to students, but to provide them with meaningful learning at the time that they learn or unlearn, thus growing as learners and autonomous people.

5.3.2 Which are the advantages and disadvantages of creating communities in the classroom through situated learning?

According to the teachers' perceptions, the advantages of interacting in a community are numerous, such as the social development among themselves, as they are more likely to live together and get to know each other better. Be prepared for real life issues and not just of school ones. Another advantage is that they are more likely to develop skills such as teamwork, communication and bonding among themselves. Generate self-confidence in solving problems and see their own performance as well as mutual support in helping and guiding those who find it more difficult. Finally another advantage is slowly building themselves into people with values and judgment. On the other hand, some disadvantages were also identified. Mainly the different learning styles and interests of the students, adaptation to teamwork, lack of attention at the time of practice, laziness and the fact that one student does more work than the other. Another disadvantage for them was the behavior in the responsibility and discipline of each student. Although working with communities of practice has points for and against, the teachers were more convinced of the benefits and advantages that the community brings with it.

5.3.3 To what extent is situated learning approach considered appropriate for facilitating students learning?

From the teachers' point of view, they all agree that using the situated learning approach is an effective way to lead students to meaningful learning and this through constant practice. As well as that this greatly influences not only their school environment but also their personal environment as long as this learning is the result of good planning and design of the approach in the students' content. After all, the participants affirm that working with the theory of situated learning and the use of communities of practice make learning more

playful and enjoyable for the students. It awakens new interests in them and leads them to develop not only as professionals but also as autonomous individuals who are aware of their social and work environment.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The present study was limited by some aspects throughout the research. The first and main limitation was that the research was conducted in times of pandemic, which in a way limited the physical contact between the participants and the researcher. This led to conducting the interviews via zoom, which led to a further limitation since on more than one occasion; the Internet prevented the interview from being conducted at the established time. The third limitation was the number of participants; the researcher had planned to interview 9 participants, of which only seven answered the call. On the other hand, during the interviews, there were participants who in addition to answering the questions gave extra information, which on several occasions caused the participant to lose the coherence of his answers and took time to return to the topic. However, despite these limitations, the research was conducted in a timely and successful manner.

5.5 Directions for further research.

As directions for future research would be to find and properly select the topics in the theoretical framework to be related to the results obtained after the research and thus reach a more accurate conclusion. Another recommendation would be to have a larger number of participants in order to obtain more information and more points of view. Expand the research instrument to obtain more useful and accurate information for the research. Similarly, if the researcher will conduct interviews as a research instrument, apply them

personally with the participants so that their performance and better interaction can be observed.

5.6 Final conclusions

In learning and teaching English as a foreign language it is necessary to have knowledge of the various methods and forms of teaching in which this can occur. That is why knowing these teaching methods allows the teacher to adapt to the students' learning styles and interests as well as to devise a variety of activities to provide effective learning for the students. Normally, the most commonly used English teaching methods are those that involve grammar exercises, oral production or language management. On the other hand, the method or approach that allows students to put their knowledge into practice in real contexts should also be considered, which is the situated learning approach. It is of utmost importance to employ this type of teaching since it allows students to develop in real contexts, using their target language and relating it to their daily lives in order to give more meaning to their learning.

Through the results obtained, it has been proven that in the view of the teachers, this approach brings great benefits to the students and that through a community of practice, working as a team and solving problems together, the students have the opportunity to prepare themselves better as learners and showing their acquired learning, in this case the handling of English as a second language. It will lead them to be people who will soon go out to face reality and perform in their society. This will allow them to act wisely and know how to handle every situation they face in their day to day life using their acquired learning.

5.7 A Final reflection

Having done this research project has been very helpful for my performance as a student. It has also provided me with knowledge and points to consider as a future teacher. The fact of starting first with a deep investigation of the topic, filled me with ideas about what I would find in the next results, if they could be favorable or not, or if my research could be useful or not. But here's what research can yield and how it takes shape as it is conducted. However, despite some difficulties mentioned above during the research process, I managed to obtain concise results and above all favorable to my research topic, which was what I had most pending. Finally, with these results and responses from the professors who were my participants, I have gained knowledge from their own experiences which nourishes me and leads me to consider expert ideas for my future work performance. They provided me with ideas on how to work and consider students, how to prepare myself to be a good teacher and above all how to teach the new generations. That is why through this research I have visualized and planned better my profession, taking into account each and every one of the points learned by myself when researching the topic and carrying it out. I am satisfied with what I found in this research and knowing that the topic I chose will contribute a lot to those who are interested in it and wish to approach it.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH INSTRUMENT



**BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA
FACULTAD DE LENGUAS
LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS
PRIMAVERA 2022
INSTRUMENTO DE INVESTIGACIÓN (ENGLISH)**



THESIS TITLE: "SITUATED LEARNING AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: TELESECUNDARIA TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS: A CASE STUDY".

TEACHER INTERVIEW

INSTRUCTIONS:

The purpose of this interview is to gather information for the development of a thesis project. Please read the following questions carefully and answer them honestly. Answer these questions according to your own opinion and experience.

1. What activities do you set the students to work on as a team and solve together?
2. Do you find that combining the school context with the social context is beneficial to students' learning? Why?
3. What strategies do you use to create community within the classroom?
4. How do you describe the behavior of students when working in teams?
5. In your experience, what might be the benefits to students' learning when interacting in community?
6. What might be the challenges in getting students to work in teams?
7. During your career have you heard about situated learning? Yes No
8. If YES, do you consider situated learning to be an effective strategy for teaching and/or learning English? Why?
9. How can you take advantage of the real-world context in the English classroom?

10. In what ways do you think learning through the real context can influence students' personal lives?

11. Qué sugerencias y consejos recomendaría a un nuevo profesor de inglés para asegurar de que su enseñanza tenga un impacto en el aprendizaje de los alumnos?

Al responder a esta entrevista, acepta que la información recopilada se utilice únicamente con fines de investigación. Le agradezco su tiempo y su participación. Si tiene alguna pregunta, póngase en contacto conmigo en la siguiente dirección: irlanda.hernandez@alumno.buap.mx, o al Tel: 2451225882.