



BENEMERITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE PUEBLA

Facultad de Lenguas

***Professional Practices as Developmental Processes: Effective
Teaching and Trainee's Autonomy within ELT Curriculum***

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Languages for the Degree of
Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas.

By:

Jorge Humberto Gómez Alarcón

Thesis Director: Dr. Josúe Cinto Morales



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Dedications

This thesis is dedicated to my parents who taught me to never quit and to always make the hardest of efforts to accomplish every goal in my life. To my sisters, who always gave me their unconditional support any time that I needed it. To all my professors, because without their teachings and guidance, it would not have been possible for me to realize how important and defining is teaching for the development of a society.

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First, I would like to thank my parents, because their support has helped to overcome any obstacle I have faced the last years and I know they will do unconditionally for the rest of my life.

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Third, to my teachers, because they made me understand the importance of this profession and it would not have been possible for me to see the value and importance of a teacher.

Abstract

New aims in education have made such impact that universities around the globe are modifying their programs of education. In Mexico, the Autonomous University of Puebla has updated its programs to meet the new requirements for global and modern education. One of those modifications is found at the Faculty of languages, where a series of improvements has modified the teacher education program. This change aims to improve aspects such as values, teacher development, and reflection in order to promote a higher involvement of trainees into society. However, due to ineffective practices the trainees show a lack of commitment, reflective actions and disinterest for planned results.

This research aims to explore to what extent professional practices contribute to the development of LEI students' autonomy and the achievement of ELT curriculum objectives by analyzing their attitudes and experiences. It aims to analyze to what extent autonomy is dictating the trainees' planning of career objectives and professional actions such as lesson planning and evaluation. A qualitative approach was used in order to analyze experiences, attitudes and behaviors of the participants through interviews. Results show that trainees have not acquired the abilities, values and skills which stated in the program. Furthermore, this failure in the accomplishment of objectives requires further analysis in order to design solid solutions. In conclusion, the development of autonomy has not reached its highest levels as trainee teachers are unaware of their social responsibility and commitment with the development of the society as well as their own professional growth.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

Education has obstacles that should be faced and overcome as a response to the fast rhythm the global society has suddenly adopted. Therefore, world changes suggest modification in the educational system of each country around the world (Delors, 1996). It is expected that every institution and teacher analyze changes and obstacles in order to modify the educational curriculum to make it more relevant. Thus, the system should be modified from its bare basis so that education can be more closely related to real-life situations with the purpose of allowing students to develop values such as responsibility and autonomy by consciously participating in socially-relevant activities which allow them to apply their knowledge and carry out their professional development.

Along the same line, in recent history of Mexican education, there has been a new take off inside language teaching. The represented interest from this field to general population has brought a growing interest towards the importance of learning a new language. Beside this interest, Language teaching has increased its field in Mexican education, in the implementation of teaching programs aimed at teacher development and professional purposes. Since 2009, the Autonomous University of Puebla has renewed its educational curricula by applying the Minerva educational model, so called honoring the Roman goddess of wisdom, arts and literature. This program gives new foundations to each program in the university, with the purpose of

re-adjusting politics to international parameters. Therefore, the situation in the School of Languages has changed according to the plans that have been applied years before and this is modifying language teaching in order to reach modern criteria and international standards. Many of those standards come after new theories that are meant to improve education and social development around the globe. Those standards are related to teaching approaches such as social constructivism and social competencies. It is important to remark that both teaching approaches work in different stages of development, as constructivism shapes students' learning style and allows building knowledge through social settings and competencies, therefore defining a person's ability to perform specific activities.

With the implementation of the Minerva model as it has to be mentioned, the LEI program was modified. Some of the changes were to include three subjects related to the teaching practice: Teaching practice to teach children, teaching practice to teach teenagers and adults and the professional practice. The objective was clear, to give as much practice as possible to the future English teachers in order to help them to improve before getting the BA to work professionally.

However, mentioned approaches and courses foster the teacher's autonomy represented by the social commitment and the reinforcement of values so English teachers are able to apply these later on a daily basis with students; thus, students become socially active as well as conscious and reasoning members, aware of their role and the impact they have through their actions. Finally, these aspects are part of the expected profile for English teachers and these aspects should be included by a

teacher in training after the conclusion of the Bachelor's degree in English Teaching (LEI) program.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Professional practicum does not seem to function as a developmental processes because the trainee's autonomy is not based on effective teaching practices within the ELT curriculum. This low development could be attributed to different factors, such as poor attention to expected results, avoidance of reflection, and disinterest from teachers to renew their techniques and methods to correspond to new standards. These might affect the values developed by the new professionals and misguide them from what lifelong learning is and their requirements for 21st century education.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore to what extent professional practicum contributes to the development of LEI students' autonomy and the achievement of ELT curriculum objectives by analyzing their attitudes and experiences. The development of autonomy is important, as its absence may prevent the program from reaching objectives, expected levels of development in language proficiency, and other values, such as social commitment.

1.4 Research questions

1. How do trainee teachers make decisions about professional improvement and effective performance?

2. Are students aware of their role, responsibility and the social impact of their professional activity?
3. How autonomous are students at the end of their degree?
4. To what extent does the LEI curriculum accomplish formative objectives?

1.5 Specific objectives

The objectives of this research are:

- Identify the relationship students draw between their development and the development of the community by differentiating ideas which refer to personal and social needs.
- Describe the process trainee teachers go through to settle their developmental objectives and reach autonomy by analyzing the way trainee teachers reflect on their performance and development.
- Identify the values which influence trainee teachers' practice and professional life by categorizing the level of moral development in which they are found.
- Estimate the formative achievements of the LEI curriculum within professional practices by comparing the results to the professional profile.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of the study is based on the generation of relevant data which could possibly contribute to the improvement of the BA in ELT in the way of providing to future generations of teachers and students with background related to their professional experience through modifications of curriculum and procedures of professional practices.

1.7 Methodology

This study was completed using a qualitative approach. The use of this approach allowed the researcher to gather information by using tools that are important to measure a small sample of people and their opinions. Furthermore, the approach involved the use of interviews in order to get information quickly and reliably.

1.8 Key terms

- Autonomy is regarded as the value that appears as the consequence of an integral development of conscience, moral and awareness a human being has accomplished as a result of reflection and action to improve aspects inside the individual's life and their community's as well. Kant, (as quoted in Dryden), determines that "autonomy is related to individual concepts and laws of morality, it is closely related to the capacity of acting according to our moral laws rather than following feelings or impositions from external inclinations". (Dryden, 2014).
- Conscience refers to the result of experience, in which human beings learn to differentiate good actions according to the expectations of a social group or society. It is also an exclusive human capacity to differentiate between right or wrong and it is mainly used for personal growing. (Fernández Portillo, 2005). Conscience is also an outcome of social interaction which directs actions for the performance of a profession.
- According to the British Council (2014), competencies refer to the mastery of an ability which can be verifiable using certain specialized tools. Each area of

professional development has their own competences as professional areas are different each one to the others.

- Curriculum, according to McLaren (2004), establishes the goals, means of evaluation, process and strategies used to achieve an objective. The curriculum also sets the learning experiences needed that offer opportunities to have a complete development.
- Education refers to what is built through several aspects as experience in areas where knowledge can be applied and put in practice. Dewey (1897) says that education is the process of learning through a continuous reconstruction of experiences. In addition, education is assumed as the development of skills and character for students and according to Delors (1998, p.23), education is also a social experience through which children learn about themselves, develop interpersonal skills and acquire basic knowledge and skills.
- According to Markley (2004), an effective practice is related to teachers who develop the ability to provide instruction to different students of different abilities while incorporating objectives and assessing the effective learning mode of the students. Several authors remark the importance of considering effective to those practices where teachers improve learning and decrease negative aspects. Effectiveness also refers to “having a sound understanding of the nature of how and why certain activities lead to learning, and what factors influence their effectiveness” (Kyriacou, 1997, p. 1).
- Ethics refers to “the defending, conceptualizing and recommending concepts of right or wrong behavior” (Fieser, 2014). It refers to what is correct or incorrect

for a society as a moral philosophy and principles. Ethics are directly related to moral values because they involve rules of conduct. Additionally, ethics in deeper levels can cause satisfaction to humans as it works as a guiding principle.

- Experience is regarded as the acquisition of knowledge by an individual after he or she goes through a process of learning in several happenings or events in his or her life. Experience at its best expression comes after these events generate reflection which should be handled with conscience to obtain knowledge and mastery on required skills. Similarly, the Psychology dictionary (2013) says that experience is a conscious event, the present content of consciousness, and an event resulting in learning.
- The term evaluation refers to the comparison of results with the planned objectives as (Kizlik, 2012, p. 3) say “evaluation are procedures used to determine whether the subject (i.e. student) meets a preset criteria, such as qualifying for special education services. This uses assessment (remember that an assessment may be a test) to make a determination of qualification in accordance with a predetermined criteria”. Evaluation works for purposes of grading, assessing and causing reflection as it is intended to explore different sides of students’ performance. Most important, it represents a tool which helps teachers to explore the panorama of a program during and in the end of it.
- Life-long learning represents what education should be or what is expected to be for the near future. It is founded by UNESCO and it is being adopted by new educational models, as it shares different approaches on competences. Delors

(1996) says that lifelong learning proposes that all citizens should be able to understand their environment and their culture, using education as the main motor to ignite that interest and conscious thinking. What is more, Lifelong learning is an all-purpose learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge skills and competence, continuously as a life-time process which will involve social cohesion and development.

- “Procedures are a series of actions that are done in a certain way or order” (Merriam-Webster Inc., 2014). That order is the most effective way to achieve results as it is supervised by an organization that could be government or educational organization.
- According to Mizell (2010) Professional development is regarded as the continuous pursue of knowledge and improvement by teachers to develop their teaching skills. This pursue can be constituted by a formal process such as conferences, seminar or workshops, collaborative learning members of a work team, or a course at college or university. The development of professional areas is constantly required by educational organizations and it is the main process that allows teachers to continue improving areas like knowledge, skills, awareness and methodology.
- Professional profile refers to the group of skills, knowledge, and values established as the requirements for professionals to have when they decide to enter professional fields. Kasher (2005, p. 68) makes reference to 5 main aspects that should be involved in the profile: relevant knowledge, systematic proficiency or competence, a practice of constant improvement, relevant

knowledge and proficiency, local understanding of methods and knowledge of proficiency, and ethics. For teaching purposes in LEI, the European Profile suggests 4 main pillars to create a professional profile: structure, knowledge and understanding, strategies and skills, and values. The profile aims to provide future teachers with a set of skills, knowledge and values that are based in the European Language Teacher Profile and it is closely related to Lifelong learning and competences for modern education (Kelly *et al.* 2004).

- “Quality, adapted for educational purposes, determines how much and how well a student learns and the extent to which their education translates into a range of personal, social and developmental benefits” (Grima, 2008, p. 1). This means that quality is closely related to administer aspects related to teaching and learning that will have direct effects on the outcomes of teaching and it will include important aspects as gender equality, social inclusion, competencies for life and a key role for teachers (UNESCO, 2004).
- Teaching practice refers to what professionals do, but this process has to be conducted with appropriate knowledge and skills. According to Nelson Mandela (2013) University, teaching practice aims to provide opportunities for students and teachers to integrate theory and practice and work collaboratively with and learn from other teachers. These have to be proper to the area of specialization and have to require full commitment of students. Professional practice aims to encourage teacher to reflect about their practice and the methods they can use to improve.

- A trainee teacher is a person who is enrolled on teaching formation programs. Merriam-Webster dictionaries define trainees as “a person who is being trained for a job” (Merriam-Webster Inc., 2014, p. 1). To be called a trainee teacher, a person has to be putting into practice all the skills and knowledge that he or she has acquired during their theoretical training period. As well, the person should be on a period of strong reflection, observation and feedback from a mentor who will provide help as needed.
- Values are related to the ethical code which conducts a professional’s life. They are defined by Schwartz as “intrinsically held ideas tied to beliefs consequence of religion, cultural background and human desires to fulfill certain objectives and actions” (Schwartz, 2007, p. 261). These beliefs have distinctive differences from profession to profession. Morals help professionals to have a view and understanding of what is socially correct and it also helps society to mark their expectations. Some values are shared by a large group of people, making it common to find differences among groups.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Education

Development of education has become one of the highest priorities among countries and this is the result of the many years of research and mind-opening processes towards highlighting the importance for humanity of being well-educated and literate. Besides, most of the greatest minds in human history have decided to be involved in educational issues and have had a word on education. "Plato states that education develops in the body and soul of the pupil of the beauty and all the perfection he is capable of" (Kumar, 2007, p. 1). Coming closer to modern times, Parankimalil (2012) says that Education is the child's development from within. Despite these definitions that include the perspective of human development, there are some others who aim to different scenarios and that exemplify more what modern education is about. For example, Dewey (1897) argues that education is not a preparation for life, rather it is the living. Education is the process of living through a continuous reconstruction of experiences (Dewey, 1897). It is the development of all those capacities in the individual which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his possibilities. That definition which is has been known for years has changed according to times. A definition of education can be assumed to be "the development of knowledge, skills or character of students" (Kumar, 2007). Nowadays, many people have been involved within the discussion of how education should be now and in the future. That discussion leads to view several aspects in which education should be involved and in which aspects it should be aiming with the purpose of improving society. Currently, UNESCO (2007) says that "basic education adopts that term such

as education covers basic needs, then it will continue to explain different levels of education and its purposes and learner's needs" (UNESCO, 2007) . We can begin to understand that education aims to cover from basic to specialized needs of learning in any country around the world. UNESCO (2007) demands that education should be delivered from an early age and it has to be provided to every child as it is universal and part of our human rights. It also has to be delivered through diverse methods as the diversification of education comes with the different ages of learners. Another UNESCO document, written by Jacques Delors (1996) and a commission which provided extensive scenarios of education and every characteristic of it related to human development, report several implications for modern education. The report begins by clarifying that education is not a miracle or cure of human problems, but one of the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war, what is more, they refer to education as not only an ongoing process of improving knowledge and skills, mainly, it is an exceptional means of bringing personal development and building relationships among individuals, groups and nations. They continue by highlighting the importance of education as education is at the heart of personal and community development and its mission is to enable each of us to develop our talents to the full and to realize our creative potential, including responsibility for our own lives and achievements of our personal aims. Furthermore, UNICEF (2000) demands that education has to be of quality and that quality has to be shown by including the following aspects:

- Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
- Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
- Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace.
- Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.
- Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

UNICEF (2000) explains that a quality education is that one where obstacles as violence, lack of facilities, and most importantly, classroom-related aspects as number, literacy, teacher preparation, have to be erased in order to provide an education with high quality standards. As a conclusion, it is important to mention that education has permeated all over worldwide organizations which are making huge efforts to rise levels of education over the world and scholar systems with the purpose of making it better for the right development of culture, human rights, peace, and society.

2.1.1 Teacher Education

The idea of teachers as promoters of learning is deeply founded within people's mind, but what is the process a teacher should go through in order to be torn into a real learning promoter? Defining teacher education begins where teachers begin their training. The International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education (2014) explains that teacher education can be considered in three phases: Pre-service, Induction and In-service. The three phases are considered as parts of a continuous process (Dunkin, 1987). These stages are complemented with the acquiring of some important aspects as teaching skills, attitudes, values, pedagogical theories and professional skills. Since teachers are needed to acquire these characteristics, they have to deal with different theories from several fields such as psychology, pedagogy, philosophy and modern media and materials. (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). All of this is done with the idea of making practice easier to confront more complex issues and to learn how to make well-made decisions. To make this to happen, teachers who arrive in the practice with different perspectives of life, beliefs and backgrounds have to put them under deep analysis with the purpose of creating a concrete teaching view.

The used programs to training teachers offer diverse ideas and propose content related to the instructional value of the society they would be inserted. Mike Rose (2013, p. 1) says "an important quality of a teacher education program, traditional or alternative, is how well it is able to draw on and develop these characteristics (The way they taught was also influenced by their personalities and by their values and background: by family or religion or positive or negative experiences

in school; by the experience of race or ethnicity, social class, gender, or sexual orientation; by political and social commitments; by the love of a subject.) . You won't see this quality mentioned in any of the high-profile reports on teacher education. These characteristics could possibly be taken into account so different educational programs offer teachers with opportunities for practice and reflection. Wallace (1991) proposes two different dimensions for teacher education as a reflective practice; the first is related to received knowledge which has to deal with scientific research with the purpose of knowing basic and advanced concepts; the second is experiential knowledge which specifically relates to the professional's ongoing experience.

For regional contexts, the desired professional profile according to the University Model Minerva's (MUM) Document of Integration (BUAP, 2006) is that of forming in each student a direct relation between their formation and national development. Graduates should be trained for professional practicum with polyvalent aptitudes, with reflective, critical and scientific thinking that allows students to adapt themselves to life-changing and work conditions with an innovative and proposal spirit giving possibilities for autonomous study and the management of their learning, aiming the access to newest media.

2.2 Professional profile

To any extent, professionals from different areas are expected to develop and acquire several characteristics for the appropriate function of their practicum and work. Authors like Kasher (2005) define 5 important aspects which professionals have to develop:

- *Systematic body of relevant knowledge.*

- *Systematic proficiency (or competence) in solving relevant problems.*
- *A practice of constant improvement, of relevant knowledge and proficiency.*
- *Local understanding of knowledge and methods of proficiency.*
- *Global understanding of the nature of the system of knowledge and proficiency (Ethics).*

About language teachers, they are expected to have certain number of competencies, skills and abilities properly applied to fit society's requirements. Teachers of any kind have been seen along history as the main authority inside a classroom until recent years, where the role of teachers has changed as a result of different theories such as humanism and behaviorism, as well as social changes that brought a different view over teaching practice. In addition, the importance of learning a new language has increased the interest for more communicative skills in a global world where people is searching to communicate with individuals from other countries.

Different institutions have proposed different profiles which contain abilities and competences that are suitable for society. For example, the European Union has created the European Profile for Language Teacher Education as a result of Barcelona meeting in 2002 where it was decided that European citizens should be able to speak at least two languages, following the modifications to education proposed by Delors in 1996 and since that breaking point, efforts have been made to give teachers the opportunity of developing themselves by entering a common core of knowledge and key terms. This profile proposes different competences related to 4 main parts:

1. Structure

2. Knowledge and Understanding
3. Strategies and skills
4. Values

These four parts should be seen, as proposed in the report, as the composite parts of teacher education (Kelly *et al.* 2004, p. 4-6).

The professional profile contains, as we can see, several aspects which seem to be similar although some of these appear to be exclusive of certain profiles. Similarly to the European Profile, in Latin-America the CLAR (Latin America Credit Reference or Tuning) which contains skills and overall qualifications that fit Latin-American needs in several professional areas. The profile contains 27 specific competencies for education besides those competencies for general purposes. Locally, the desired profile for LEI according to MUM includes a set of skills, knowledge, values and attitudes which were modified to accommodate the recently modified curriculum. These aspects have to be developed by students after they go through the course and as a result of proper training and preparation so that teachers become the projected factor of country's development and good education (BUAP, 2006).

2.2.1 European Language Teacher Profile

The European Language Teacher Profile was presented in September of 2004 as part of the integration of the European continent into the European Union. The effort consisted not only of the integration of several fields as Economy, Law, Justice and Citizenship. It also regarded the uniformity of education and language learning in most of the European countries which were participants of the European Union. The Profile was created after an extensive research involving different case studies along

some European universities. The final report presented in Southampton in 2004 included the aspects related to the case studies, the implementation, the methodology, the explanation and use of the profile. Therefore, the report proposes education for the 21st century and the implications it has with language teachers at different levels, from primary to adult teaching.

According to the report, “the profile is a non-mandatory frame of reference containing examples of good practice and innovation as well as information about language teacher education programs encounter” (Kelly, Grenfell, Allan, Kriza, & McEvoy, 2004, p. 9). It also faces the structure of educational courses, the knowledge and understanding central to foreign language teaching, the diversity of teaching and learning strategies and skills and the kinds of values language teaching should encourage and promote. The background of language teaching in Europe started in Barcelona in 2002; there was an agreement on teaching each European citizen two languages from early ages. The implications were of a major relevance not only for Europe, but for the whole world that has taken this profile as a basis for future language teaching programs. The idea of language learning and the implications on European contexts involved three fundamental aspects to develop promotion of life-long learning, improving language teaching and creating a more friendly-learning environment. The profile brought up 40 different elements for teachers to consider so they could include them in their development. The influence of this profile as a cutting-edge proposal among teaching perspectives has been offering a foundation to teacher associations and Educational Bureaus around the world whose purpose is of improving their language teaching programs. In regional terms, the closest to this is

the Tuning project, described further in the following section, which has been developing with similar purposes by a committee of different universities throughout Latin America.

2.2.2 Tuning Project Latin America

The Tuning project was presented in 2013 in Bilbao after a hard process or research in different universities along Latin America. The CLAR or Latin America Reference Credit was created with the purpose of highlighting the importance of taking into account different elements of education as student work, the volume of tasks required to develop competences, and the weighted distribution of the learning activities included in the curriculum so as to avoid unnecessary prolongation of qualifications or repetition of courses. Among the various objectives of the Tuning project we can find some like favoring the development of curricular reform into a credit-based system, estimate credit as a factor involving the promotion of quality in training processes, and promoting student mobility among Latin America universities. The CLAR also seeks to:

- *Encourage curricular innovation and continuous improvement in the quality of degree programs in national systems;*
- *Promote reflection about the time and type of learning activities required of a student in order to attain learning results and the development of their competences in a specific curricular activity;*
- *Facilitate greater academic cooperation among higher educational establishments in Latin America.*

- *Facilitate student transfer within Latin American national higher education systems.*

The expected results from this project are related with the improvement of curricular systems in Latin America education that aims to move towards students- aimed curricula. Among these purposes, the basic goal of the CLAR is to homogenize education and other areas in Latin American countries, following the example of the European Framework or reference.

The efforts to create a consistent educational model around the world has already given the first fruits which will be put under analysis and as a further reference to plan specialized curricula among different countries that seek for the well-constructed education and responsible, aware, conscious citizens (Tuning Project, 2013, p. 26).

2.2.3 LEI Profile for English teachers

After a series of efforts, authorities of the Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla (BUAP) decided to update the curriculum and applied a complete renewal for the whole institutional programs. This started to be a new model of education named 'Minerva' and which has been applied since year 2009 substituting the previous 'Fenix' program. Thus, one of the main objectives of renewing the program is to adapt the graduate profile to new requirements and to consistently train teachers who are provided with the right knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The profile includes important aspects related to knowledge of language skills, both for mother language an ESL, concepts related to methodological, psychological and psycho-pedagogical knowledge. Additionally, the required skills demand a high competence. (You really didn't say much about the profile itself)

2.2.4 Competencies

Currently, any area of profession is looking for aspects that reflect how capable a person is of performing an activity. Those aspects are called competencies, and they have become a worldwide trend to set different abilities which have to be present to perform an activity or profession. The British Council (2014, p. 1) states the following referring to competencies:

“In simple terms a competency is a tool that an individual can use in order to demonstrate a high standard of performance. Competencies are characteristics that we use to achieve success. These characteristics or traits can include things like knowledge, aspects of leadership, self-esteem, skills or relationship building”.

The use of these competencies aim to improve performance of professionals in different areas; it also facilitates the establishment of abilities a professional should master at certain levels. As Spector and De La Teja (2001, p.2) say: “competence refers to a state of being well qualified to perform an activity, task or job function. When a person is competent to do something, he or she has achieved a state of competence that is recognizable and verifiable to a particular community of practitioners. A competency, then, refers to the way that a state of competence can be demonstrated to the relevant community”. According to Richey, Fields and Foxon (2001), a competency involves a related set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable a person to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation or function in such a way that meets or exceeds the standards expected in a particular profession or work setting. The use of competencies for teaching purposes has derived into several

profiles where teaching practice has been standardized. These standards show the skills teachers should have according to their societies' requirements, and it is preferred that teachers develop competencies before taking part in education. Therefore, competencies shape teachers' abilities and skills which are required for educators to have or consistently acquire before they go into teaching practice.

2.2.5 Knowledge

Historically, humans have sought to define knowledge although just a few are able to consistently define it. Knowledge is “facts, information, and skills acquired through education or experience. It also is the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject” (Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 1). This clear definition of knowledge contrasts with Siemens (2006, p.6) who states that knowledge is a two-characteristic feature. He says that “knowledge describes or explains some parts of the world and it also is possible to be used in some type of actions” He also argues that “all knowledge is information but not all information is knowledge” This statement of knowledge explains that not everything a person could acquire along his or her life can be completely regarded as knowledge if the person is not able to put that information into practice. Another author, Hunt (2000) explains that knowledge is no more than a belief that could be true and justified. He states this to explain that knowledge is not only is something a person has in mind, but it also has to be justified and proven. The correctness of something may define if it can be considered as knowledge (Hunt D. P., 2000). Therefore, the importance of measurement through evaluation and assessment tools to identify presence of knowledge in a person, as Hunt later adds “knowledge

cannot be seen, but it should be inferred through tools like questionnaires and tests” (p. 102). Under these considerations, knowledge has a unique aspect which reflects its nature and its presence among most authors. It is seen that knowledge is something that can be proven and measured, as beliefs that do not accomplish these aspects of measurement cannot be regarded as knowledge.

2.2.5.1 Curriculum

The importance of structured teaching and consequent learning is greatly relevant. Institutions and teachers have the need to follow an established program which will cover student’s learning needs according to the different levels they go through. The curriculum is similarly regarded by different institutions; the Connecticut State Department of Education states the curriculum is the guide and structure for a document. This document delineates the philosophy, goals, and objectives, learning experiences, instructional resources and assessments a specific educational program includes (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2014). Additionally, it represents an articulation of what students should know and be able to do and supports teachers in knowing how to achieve these goals. A curriculum is the base for the educational program and for the teacher who needs to follow a foundation where they will know what to teach and expect for student’s learning. Similarly, McLaren (2004) states curriculum is the name given to any educational program which states:

- a) The objectives of the program; its educational purpose.
- b) The means used to achieve these ends, meaning the content, teaching procedures and learning experiences which are necessary to achieve this purpose.

c) The means used to assess the achievement of the educational objectives. It can also be seen that McLaren includes objectives, content, means of evaluation and methodology for a specific educational program. Specifically for ELT purposes, McLaren presents two kinds of curricula, the first denominated product-oriented, aimed at measuring the final product, which will be the student's abilities and the second named process-oriented syllabus, which aims to be organized as activities that students perform. Whether institutions choose to use one or the other, it is important that they include aspects like objectives, content, methodology and means of evaluation which will help teachers to construct their classes, this being the first step to efficiently plan their lessons.

2.2.5.2 Learning theories

To start defining learning theories, we have to start by recalling learning. It is important to remember that learning is a cognitive process that involves the acquisition, change or modification of knowledge. Having this in mind, it is now possible to start to define learning theories. Most authors suggest three main theories- behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism. Additionally, Kruse (2009) describes two main currents, behaviorism and cognitivism. Kruse defines behaviorism as the focus of learning on the basic idea of stimulus-response cycle. Cognitivism, on the other hand, is defined as the handling of the mind as a black box, which has to be opened and understood as information is highly processed by the learner. Some similar theories are objectivism, instructivism, behaviorism, cognitivism, humanism, constructivism, and connectivism. Learning theories are regarded as those currents

used to understand different methods of a person's learning. These theories help teachers design their curriculum and methodology as theories closely related to learning styles (Kruse, 2009). Some theories are now out-of-date and it would be hard to understand why they are being used as there are others that take advantage of tools and changes in the students' minds. What is more, research is constantly providing new learning theories as teachers make constant efforts to understand student's manner to learn something, although learning a new language asks for specific abilities.

2.2.5.3 Learning goals

There is always a misconception of "goal", as the word is often confused with the term "objective". Thus, it is very important to make a distinction of words for this purpose. A "goal" can be seen as something a person should include in their daily life to improve their decision-making process. For example, the Oxford Dictionary (2014, p. 1) defines "goal" as the desired object of a person's ambition, an aim or desired result. The final gaining of this object of personal interest is, for educational purposes, to clarify what to expect as the final outcome of a course. Moreover, Merriam-Webster dictionaries (2014) add that a goal is something a person is trying to achieve or do. Educationally, universities like the University of California say that learning goals provide a path as well as show and demonstrate to students in which direction a course is going (Center for Teaching and Learning, 2014). Goals work both for students and teachers, although they have separate goals. According to authors Cervin & Kopp (2004), learning goals specify habits, intellectual capacities, personal capacities, etc.,

essentially, what students will know and what they will be able to do. On the other hand, teaching goals concretely serve to prove what a teacher will do. Therefore, goals are abilities, knowledge and skills a student will be able to perform and use after a period of time. Those aspects will be previously planned as those goals are what institutions intend to provide to students as the final purpose.

2.2.5.4 Objectives

The intention of courses always will be to ensure the acquisition of knowledge by students. Applying a curriculum to an ELT program includes the usage of different aspects like content, methodology, time, evaluation and, most importantly, the objectives of the curriculum. Those objectives will define the full actions of the course and path during the term, but it is important to fully understand what objectives are and how they are correctly set, as the conditions are given for a course. According to Hall (2014), an objective is a clear statement that shows the competence a student must be able to demonstrate as well as the depth of learning that is expected. Along with this, the research observatory from the University of West England (2007) says that objectives are a statement of what is intended to be achieved by the end of the research. There is a general agreement that objectives are more specific than goals most of the times, although there are definitions which place objectives and goals as synonyms. It is important to clarify that a goal and an objective, although regarded as the same, do not stand for the equal use. In addition, the Business Dictionary (2014) describes objectives as a specific result that is planned to be achieved after a term and with available resources. After reviewing all of these definitions, we can see

objectives as tangible and concrete steps that have to be met after a period of time. Those objectives are well planned and reached with the proper tools.

2.2.5.5 Lesson Plan

Teachers are always recommended to have in mind or on paper an idea of what will happen in the classroom in advance. These lesson plans are tools which help teachers to reach goals and objectives; this planning has to be the first step, as it is a detailed description of an instructor's course of instruction for an individual lesson intended to help learners reach a particular learning objective. Additionally, the lesson plan must include several aspects which are consistently mentioned by authors; The Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy staff (2010) mentions that is important to include warm up, introduction, presentation, practice, evaluation and application. In addition, CAELA (Center for Adult English Language Acquisition, 2014) defines a lesson plan as a unified set of activities that focuses on one teaching objective at a time. They mention some important components of a lesson plan, such as enabling objectives, which are the basic skills, materials and equipment, and activities. In addition, they establish some stages that have to be included in the lesson plan, such as warm up/review, presentation, practice and evaluation. Moreover, it is important to mention that having a lesson plan helps ensure that classroom instruction aligns with curricular goals and objectives and therefore enables students to demonstrate their successful learning on unit or curricular assessment. In addition, lessons not only shape how and what students learn, they also impact students attitude towards language learning (Duncan & Met, 2010).

2.2.5.6 Evaluation

The term evaluation has the more complex meaning among similar terms as assessment and testing. The meaning of evaluation is often confused in some educational circles with terms as assessment and testing, but the appropriateness of the term is as Kizlik proposes: “evaluation is used to constantly compare the results achieved by students with the intended results previously proposed as the goals” (Kizlik, 2012, p. 2). In addition, evaluation works as well for purposes of appraisalment, which means evaluation measures strengths and weaknesses of several aspects of the program and the organization (Longwood University, 2014). Both authors regard the importance of evaluation as a measurement tool for teachers to be aware of the achievements and failures during the middle and at the end of the course. For students, it works as an igniter for critical thinking and self-reflection processes in order to make improvements that will help them to meet the goals that are expected for students during the course. Evaluation is a part of the different measurement tools where we will also include assessment and testing as complementary parts to complete a circle that will cover each educational aspect with the purpose of comparing progress and learning according to the expected goals.

2.2.5.6.1 Formative evaluation

The existence of different evaluation tools derivates from the existence of two different main kinds of evaluative processes, which are formative and summative evaluation. Although their purpose is to evaluate, they offer different ends and it is teacher’s duty to know which one to apply. Formative assessment is an on-going

process which must be carried out by gathering, analyzing and interpreting evidence (Why Do We Evaluate?, 2014) . The use of formative evaluation aims to explore aspects related to the development of abilities and it is also done implicitly by the continuous gathering of information. In order to make a clear disposition of the terms and what they are used for, we will establish parameters such as those of Garrison, Chandler & Ehringhaus (2009). Formative assessment helps teachers and students monitor the progress that has been accomplished, but at a stage where it is still possible to make modifications to reach a proposed goal. On the other hand, summative assessment has a periodical appearance to determine what the student has learnt and what he or she has not. The use of these means of evaluation is proposed to be a joint part of evaluation. Furthermore, as both serve different purposes, the periodical appearance is something common in most of the educational institutions and teachers apply both to complement each other.

2.2.5.6.2 Summative evaluation

Similar to formative evaluation, the use of summative evaluation allows the teacher to understand students' performance after a term. Although the differences are notorious, if both formative and summative will be used for the same purpose, summative evaluation will be more apt to use evaluation tools as tests and score grading exams for the purpose of evaluating certain skills and knowledge (Kizlik, 2012). Some authors regard the use of summative evaluation as non-appropriate for all the students. Consequently, Shabaam (2005) says that the use of a formative evaluation would be better for young learners as it does not make use of score-grading tests and the expectation for accurate linguistic production deriving on an

anxiety-reduced environment. Each kind of evaluation serves a useful and specific objective. There will be authors who decline the use of one or another mean of evaluation, but the appropriate use of each one is important to prevent difficulties.

2.2.5.6.3 Assessment

The use of assessment provides the teacher with several options to know about student's progress after a period of time during a course or class. Angelo (1999) says that assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. This process is carried out by gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence systematically (Angelo, 1999). Primarily, assessment is applied to determine if learning meets expectations, planned goals and standards. The methods teachers use to evaluate differ according to the needs of the students or the requirements of the program. Besides, Kellaghan and Greaney (2001) define assessment as the procedure or activity that is designed to collect information about the knowledge, attitude, or skills of a learner or a group of learners. Assessment is present in several educational areas and authors like Shabaam (2005, p. 34) state "*assessment is needed to help teachers and administrators make decisions about student's linguistic abilities, their placement in appropriate levels, and their achievement*". We can see that the use of assessment is not only concerned with teacher's use, but rather with the whole system as Shabaam (2005) states that assessment methods were selected and established from the higher levels of educational systems around the world. Assessment has been changing into a more completely established characteristic of modern classrooms, as it is growing as a daily-based integrant of a teacher's tool.

Appropriateness of assessment is also relevant as the tools have to be considered appropriate for every student's characteristics and abilities. Therefore, the use of assessment tools has diversified into diverse aspects which serve different purposes, primarily to measure knowledge, skills, and attitudes of students.

2.2.5.6.4 Testing

We have talked about processes of evaluation, as summative and formative, which aim to compare the progress of a course with the expected objectives. Complementing assessment, testing appears as a very important tool which, according to Merriam-Webster dictionaries (2015) is something, most of the times a tool, which functions to measure different aspects like skills, knowledge, intelligence and capacities of an individual or a group. Furthermore, according to the Free Dictionary (2015), testing is a procedure for critically evaluate the presence or quality of something, for this specific case, the presence of those aspects mentioned already by Merriam-Webster. Moreover, the Minnesota Department of Education (2014) says that testing is used in schools to measure student's achievement. It is possible to see that all authors agree on describing testing as a tool which works to assess student's progress. Roediger III, Putnam, and Smith (2011) argue that testing is used by schools to assess with the purpose of merely assigning grades to students or even to rank them according their abilities. The use of testing as the tool which will complement assessment derivate in knowing what a teacher should improve. They highlight the benefits of testing, avoiding falling into the repeated idea of testing as a

tool only used for assignment of grades. Finally, testing completes what assessment is if the teacher makes efforts to apply these tools sometimes considered as necessary evils.

2.2.6 Method

Being a teacher is a part of a practice that involves special aspects that are important to consider. It is very important to be able to know what the profession is and the main functions it involves for anyone who decides to enroll in any mode of teaching. One of the parts that have a significant effect for teachers as designers of courses is teaching methods as they dictate the path that teachers have to follow during the lesson, according to the needs of the classroom. Teaching methods are different theories which serve as a foil for reflection that can help teachers in bringing to conscious awareness the thinking that underlies their action. When teachers are exposed to methods and asked to reflect on their principles and actively engage with their techniques, they can become clearer about why they do what they do. They become aware of their own fundamental assumptions and beliefs (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2000, p. 12). Methods help teachers know their abilities and where they stand within their professional practice, but most important, methods help teachers reflect on their practice and the probabilities they have to use different techniques. Teachers are able to choose a method of their preference according to experiences

that will help them decide what to do as they progressively understand the dimensions of teaching. That is, methods involve teachers to become aware of the implications of teaching, as methods provide with the implications and principles of teaching.

2.2.7 Experiential learning

Different theories suggest that learning comes from cognitive skills or experience as happens with experiential learning. This theory bases that learning occurs as students are submerged to situations where they put on practice prior knowledge. The University of Illinois (2013, p. 1) establishes the following principles for experiential learning:

- Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis.
- Experiences are structured to require the student to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results.
- Throughout the experiential learning process, the student is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative and constructing meaning.
- Students are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, soulfully and/or physically. This involvement produces a perception that the learning task is authentic.

- The results of the learning are personal and form the basis for future experience and learning.
- Relationships are developed and nurtured: student to self, student to others and student to the world at large.
- The instructor and student may experience success, failure, adventure, risk-taking and uncertainty, because the outcomes of the experience cannot totally be predicted.
- Opportunities are nurtured for students and instructors to explore and examine their own values.
- The instructor's primary roles include setting suitable experiences, posing problems, setting boundaries, supporting students, insuring physical and emotional safety, and facilitating the learning process.
- The instructor recognizes and encourages spontaneous opportunities for learning.
- Instructors strive to be aware of their biases, judgments and pre-conceptions, and how these influence the student.
- The design of the learning experience includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes and successes.

We can see that experience is the central role of this theory and the perception has a relevant role as the students need to experience and feel real situations that allow them to have a better knowledge of the applicability of experience. The University of Colorado Denver (2014) provides its view of experiential learning as a process through which students are expected to develop their abilities with the use of

activities that involve professional work experiences out of academic settings. These experiences can be offered through practices, internships, experimental learning programs that have to be properly assessed. The university argues that for real experiential learning to occur, there should be 4 main characteristics: reflection, critical analysis, synthesis, and opportunities for students to take initiative and to engage intellectually in a designed learning experience that includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes and successes. Consequently, we can see experiential learning as the introduction of students to real situations, where they are allowed to put into practice the set of skills and knowledge they have acquired after a period of study in their degree. These settings are projected to prepare students to enter real life practice in a very effective way.

2.2.8 Abilities

The definition of ability starts as an easy-to-do topic as this term is used as a very common word for everyday language. The use of this term has implications which relate it with something definitely basic as being able to perform a task or activity, especially through innate or acquired talent (Business dictionary, 2014). This general argument, demonstrates that superficially, to define ability seems to be an easy task for anyone. However, there is a definite need to go deeper into the term to understand implications of ability. Carroll (1993) relates ability with “potential”. He argues that an ability is shown as potential or potential for performance, although that performance should be measured as attaching ability to a person and does not necessarily reflect the real potential of a person. Nonetheless, we are still attaching the potential to that person. “Potential” by Carroll (1993) helps to understand that ability shows the

potential a person has to perform an activity, no matter that the ability could have been acquired naturally or unnaturally. Widgor and Gardner (1982) are clear to state that an ability is how well a person performs a defined task if he or she does his or her best. Although Carroll agrees with them by mentioning that it was not necessary to show ability 100% of the times required, as long as the person shows the capacity to perform an activity 1 out of 100 times, we can say that person has the ability. Consequently, there is a need for measurement in order to express how able a person is to perform a specific activity or task the person has the ability to perform.

2.3 Quality in education

The discussion about the presence of quality in education among many educational systems around the globe has derived into different reports which highlight the importance of granting a quality education that serves to prepare students with main characteristics. First, quality refers to the outcome of a process and that outcome is an attribute of the system as much as the product itself, from its processes, its people and the way they work (Bayne-Jardine, Hoy, & Wood, 2001). There are aspects which define a non-quality education, as Koichiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, says an education that is regarded as irrelevant to their needs and interests cannot be an education of quality. He adds that an education which leaves young people alienated from the challenges and pleasures of learning, or places them in an environment of exclusion, rejection, violence and discrimination, cannot be an education of quality (Matsuura, 2005). These aspects must be prevented to appear in systems trying to reach quality. On one of its several papers, UNICEF (2000) establishes that an education of quality should include the following aspects:

- Learners who are healthy, ready to learn and supported by family and community.
- A proper environment, providing safety, equality, protection and easy access to resources and facilities.
- Meaningful learning, through the teaching of relevant topics as skills for life, literacy, health and nutrition, and peace.
- Properly trained teachers in the use of child-centred methodology, assessment and abilities to engage education as well as reduce disparities.
- Real objectives, that incorporate knowledge skills and attitude, and are related to the national education objectives

Finally, it is very important to remark that UNESCO relates aspects of quality education to the 4 pillars, which are learning to be, learning to know, learning to do and learning to live and to live with others suggested by Delors (1996) in his commission's report, where quality education is argued to be constituted by these 4 pillars..

2.3.1 Attitudes

Defining attitudes is difficult. Some authors even avoid proposing a definition as there are so many and there is not an agreement among authors about what exactly this term means. Although there is an open discussion on how attitudes have to be

defined, a consistent characteristic of attitudes can be found, and that is behavior. Chaiklin (2011) expresses that it is important to know two different currents that affect attitudes, which are sociological and psychological. He states that psychological currents expect to change something through attitudes, while sociological currents expect to change the same object through changing behavior. Earlier, Allport (1935) defined attitudes as a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on the individual's response to all objects and situations to which it is related. Pickens (2005) affirms that when attitudes are explained it is just trying to explain how a person reacts, behaves and feels towards an object. He says that attitudes are the set of personality, beliefs, values, behaviors, and motivations towards a situation which is related. He explains that attitudes help us define how we see situations as well to define how we behave towards situations. Furthermore, Culbertson (1968) affirms that attitudes involve three things: an attitude object, a set of beliefs and a tendency to behave. He adds that recently, researchers discovered that attitudes don't always square with behavior as some people would express different attitude to some actions, although these actions bring a non-expected consequence. In conclusion, attitudes show the way a human reacts and feels towards an object or situation; those reactions would be influenced by experience and how this motivates a person's reaction.

2.3.2 Values

Human beings are individuals with free will and they decide the direction of their choices and the view they have of the world. Schwartz (2007 p. 1) regards values as "beliefs tied inextricably to emotion, not objective, cold ideas" as consequence of

beliefs about religion, cultural background and human desires to fulfill certain objectives or actions. Frequently, these ideals are what define the description of what is important to us and how we can use them to give truthful meaning to our actions and decisions (Turner, 2004). Both authors agree in terms of having values as individuals see the world around them, giving a predominant view of the world according to where the majority of our values lay. In education, values are set to be taught as a significant part of an educator's profession. Harecker (2013) argues that it is important to raise young's awareness of having values and their corresponding relationship to the world they live. Students should be allowed to broaden their horizons not only intellectually but morally as well (Muráriková, 2011). Teacher educators should have in mind that trainee teachers are raw material in development and in fact as Muráriková says "teacher candidates should be exposed to systematic theoretical moral stimuli not with the purpose of changing their values but to understand the moral value of their work" (p. 255).

2.3.2.1 Autonomy

In recent years, there has been a discussion of how autonomy should be defined and what aspects it must include. It is of a high level of complexity to find the balance among authors as consequence of the different point of views raised in the discussion. From general views, Kant (1996, p.89) refers to autonomy "the property of the will by which it is a law to itself independently of any property of the objects of volition". Applied for educational terms, Jimenez-Raya, Lamb and Vieira (2007, p. 1) define autonomy as "the competence to develop as a self-determined, socially responsible and critically aware participant in (and beyond) educational environments,

within a vision of education as (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation”. They include aspects of morality and the relation that exists between society and education as long as the participant is aware of the consequences and the relation the individual autonomy has with the participants of society. For educational purposes, authors such as Benson (1997, p.22) states that “autonomy is the act of taking charge of one’s own learning”. This definition establishes a sense of an independent individual although there are no reference to values and conscience. In addition, Holec (as cited in Benson, 1991, p.22) who defines autonomy in general terms as the learner's willingness and capacity to control or oversee her own learning. So, for this purpose, the capacity of each person to handle their own learning is expected to occur with the benefits of well-managed and planned learning.

The definitions of autonomy within the framework of the Minerva University Model curriculum (MUM), as part of the expected profile that is planned for all students to develop their own autonomy as part of the expected values stated by the international frameworks adopted by the university. The idea of autonomy as a value lies in considering that students and novice teachers are expected to plan their own objectives, tasks and materials according to their experience, conscience and personal goals. Therefore, the ideas here presented have been established to frame the new parameters for the development of autonomy in the classrooms where languages are being taught. It is now expected that learners of English not only develop the proper competences related to the use of English, but also be able to become citizens of the world by developing their abilities, competences, consciousness and understanding of the world around them. These definitions set up

the frame where autonomy is developed and implemented by the students and teachers within the current policies of teaching and language learning developed by the European Council.

2.3.2.1.1 Professional Autonomy

There are new foundations about what implies to be autonomous, which is not only with the fact of learning something, but to understand that autonomy is also involved with the development of people as professionals on action. Professional autonomy each person presents demonstrates the capacity to make their own decisions even though these could change the practice of their own work. For example, there are situations in different countries where it is possible to notice a contrast between what is to be expected for teacher autonomy and what things are expected to change. Countries like France and the USA offer their teachers the possibility to perceive the same autonomy as lawyers or doctors. In contrast with other countries, such as in Latin America where the teachers are told what to do by their supervisors and principals, constraining the communication among teachers and parents (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). The value of being conscious and to analyze the professional development leads to these changes which are not related to the curriculum installed by the institution. This fact of being able to decide what the necessary modifications would be within the teaching practice establishes what is important to find in the Professional Autonomy.

2.3.2.1.2 Cultural awareness

There are perspectives on what being culturally aware means. The fact of being a language teacher and a language student offers the opportunity not only to acquire a second language, but a second culture as well. New perspectives about language teaching asks teachers to be involved in the students' process to understand different cultures (Kelly, Grenfell, Allan, Kriza, & McEvoy, 2004) as well as being able to understand every aspect by themselves. Being culturally aware is defined as "gradually developing inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of your own and other people's cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures both connect and differ. Such awareness can broaden the mind, increase tolerance and facilitate international communication" (Tomlinson & Musuhara, 2001, pp. 21-27). This aspect involves experience in a high level, due to the necessity of understanding and reflection involved. Students and teachers learn together by the experience by being in contact with different cultures' situations, creating conscience for understanding the world outside the classroom. In terms of language teaching, what teachers are expected to practice nowadays is the development of conscious and experience according to their students' needs despite the situations that are applied according to the curricula or regulations from upper levels.

2.4 Teaching Practice

The term practice is defined as a) "*carry out, apply*", b) "*to do or perform often, customarily, or habitually*", and c) "*to be professionally engaged in*". (Merriam-Webster Inc., 2014, p. 1). Within the environment of teaching, it defines that students in the teaching English degree apply their knowledge in the practices they are required. This

environment involves that each student understands the meaning of their practice and that teaching needs of deep analysis. The National Capital Language Resource Center (2003) says that this style of practice involves the appliance of theory inside a classroom and the posterior analysis and reflection of this practice which allows modifying the practice according with the results. It expresses that the classroom is the laboratory where teachers relate teaching theory to teaching practice. As result of that practice, in the moments after leaving the classroom, students should be able to reflect and analyze the whole practice as a process that will help them recognize their strengths and weaknesses. This process could be applied with the assistance of a peer, a mentor or individually as long as the student reflects on the whole lesson and every part of it, taking action for the forthcoming lessons.

2.4.1 Reflection

The definition of reflection comes from two different terms that make this possible to understand what it is for, self-awareness and introspection. According to Boud, Keogh & Walker (1985), reflection is an active process of exploration and discovery which very often leads to much unexpected outcomes. As we searched for a new form of expression, we began to exchange experiences about what had led us to become so committed to this project. The authors mention how highly strong feelings affect this activity, since our feelings can be considered as barriers that could possibly distort perceptions. In addition, reflection is strongly related to experience although it is constantly dismissed by teachers who believe reflection is taking place continuously and effectively (Boud, Walker, & Keogh, 1985). It is relevant to see Grundy's argument

about reflection. She considers experience of a person within the context of a group of autonomous learners with a common learning objective or purpose. There is a slight agreement about the appliance of conscience on the thoughts and work that each person develops. For terms of professional development, at the end of this process it is important to remark that students are expected after each practice to apply this ways of reflection on their work, does not matter the nature of the results at the end.

2.5 Effective practice

The recent standardization of teaching practice has led to establishing how it has advanced and how this is achieving its objectives. The effectiveness of teaching practice represents a variety of aspects that authors mention to explain what is involved in teaching and can be considered as effective. Hunt, Viseman and Touzel (2009) define effective practice as an aspect that basically includes the use of strategies successfully, as well as behaviors related to academic achievement. These aspects are involved with knowing when, where and with whom these strategies should be used. They also argue that effective teaching needs high and well-informed and reasoned decision-making. This includes effective reasoning and reflection. Another characteristic of effective practice is provided by Kyriacou (1997) who says that effective teaching practice involves having a sound understanding of the nature of how and why certain activities lead to learning, and what factors influence their effectiveness. Teachers who aim to be effective use a whole range of skills, to make sure learning occurs effectively. He says that only a combination of subject-matter knowledge and an understanding of the nature of effective teaching itself can provide a solid base for effectiveness. Additionally, Markley (2014) say that an effective

teacher is the one who demonstrates knowledge of the curriculum, provides instruction in variety of approaches to varied students and measures student achievement. The constant mentioning of field knowledge and the use of appropriate skills to provide instruction no matter the subject or variety of students' abilities, and the use of measurement tools to prove students' achievement.

2.6 Moral Law

Each person on this planet as participant of the society has an obligation to distinguish between good and bad actions. The magnitude of this law is universal and applies for every human being. Kant (2004) cited in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy says that this law is nothing more than rules that human acts must accomplish in order to reach the final purpose of every man. The law allows to every human to meet their objectives. However, moral law is the complete judgment of human beings applying their conscience and this decision will mark the change within their actions and final results within their practices and work. Applied for language learning context, the term moral law is involved with being aware of what is related to handling everyday with the forming and education of future citizens and the major impact that a teacher has. Developing this idea of moral law for oneself and for students has taken high priority in order to turn language classes into a place of life education.

2.6.1 Morality

The fact that every human being is under a supreme code of behavior and this applies all over the world brings the question about what is the difference between

morality and moral law. To understand these similar terms it is needed to have in mind that these are just two sides of the same issue. The ethical values involved within the two of them just differ on the magnitude which will be applied. According to Gert (2012 p.1) , morality refers *“to an actually existing code of conduct put forward by a society results in a denial that there is a universal morality, one that applies to all human beings”*. The difference becomes more clear in the last part, which states *“Morality has also been taken to refer to any code of conduct that a person or group takes as most important”*. Morality comes from the autonomous sense of each human being and does not relate to the group discourse that moral law could have. That means morality and moral law are applied at different levels; while morality takes on the personal discourse, moral law is implemented at group levels, which means this is regulatory for every individual within a community while morality is constructed by the individual. This sense of being ruled by high codes established by society creates the purpose that every human should not only offer himself the opportunity to grow and develop personal and professionally, but offer society that develop through positive actions and influence on the surroundings of each person.

2.6.2 Conscience

Every human being in this world has the natural and exclusive capacity to distinguish among all the situations that can be considered right or wrong. This ability is clearly a way of personal growth and it has derived into two variants, which are naturalist and conventionalist. Each one of these describes the presence of conscience in humans and the different characteristics that each one possesses. Naturalist theory says that conscience is part of the natural human behavior and its

rationality. On the other hand, conventionalist says that conscience develops along the years little by little as result of social factors. This theory suggests that humans are born without the capacity to distinguish between good and evil because this is a process learnt with time and life (Fernández Portillo, 2005). That is, in terms of experience, reflection and autonomy, conscience is the result of what humans learn after different situations every day, and after a process of reflection and analysis, the results are applied daily in their lives. Educators and trainee teachers develop their conscience according to their experiences, and that is the main reason developing experience is included in their practices before entering real life situations.

2.6.3 Deontology

Understanding that every human being is part of a society and with that comes responsibility, it is to understand that we are guided by the moral law and the morality we have as persons. Nevertheless, these aspects control situations related to the pure human nature and not those fundamental aspects of moral for the professional development. The science that takes this under its field is called “Deontology”, which is defined by the Stanford Dictionary of Psychology (2004, p.1) as “*those normative theories regarding which choices are required, forbidden or permitted*”. It also says that Deontology is the part of moral theories that control our choices including the evaluation of these according to what we ought to do (Larry, 2012). In contrast, Deontology is also defined as “*ethical theories that place special emphasis on the relationship between duty and the morality of human actions*” (Parwani, 2014, p. 1). It is possible to infer that every profession is under a code of conduct that represents how the theory will evaluate the relation of the duty and the actions professionals

perform. Applying this to language teaching context brings the reflection of how teachers have related their practice and duty to morality. The constant changes and knowledge applied as a result of several years of researching have created a scenario where teachers find it difficult to be able to relate practice and morality properly. The difficulties in the way of upgrading language teaching according to new studies have brought discussions of what role a teacher must follow in order to be effectively in fields, language and morality.

2.6.4 Ethics

The field of ethics refers mainly to moral philosophy and values. Ethics is constantly referred to as moral philosophy because it is concerned with what is good and bad, right or wrong. Ethics deals with the constant decision-making and the major concerns include the nature of human values and standard human actions (Parwani, 2014, p. 1). Generally speaking, Ethics involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behavior, although it derives into many kinds of ethics, as meta-ethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics (Fieser, 2014). One of the most important presenters of ethics as moral law's part was Immanuel Kant, who established ethics as the system of morality, which will conduct actions. This system functions as a person searches not for an individual happiness, but for the common good among personal benefit. Kant (1996, p.89) argues that some actions are right or obligatory, irrespective of their consequences, and other ideas are wrong, irrespective of their consequences. Ethics can be as the conduct through human will is expressed, that expression of will is influenced not by the person's beliefs, but by the moral law and its basic purpose (Tännsjö, 2013).

2.7 Professional Development

It is required for every person who will be involved into the professional field to improve and to continuously develop new abilities and skills which will help him to be a better professional. Kasher (2005, p.67) defines 5 important aspects which professionals have to develop.

- *Systematic body of relevant knowledge.*
- *Systematic proficiency (or competence) in solving relevant problems.*
- *A practice of constant improvement, of relevant knowledge and proficiency.*
- *Local understanding of knowledge and methods of proficiency.*
- *Global understanding of the nature of the system of knowledge and proficiency.*

He also argues that a professional involves all the aspects above; that a professional is not defined by what he does, but the practice is the one that defines him by determining what is to be done within the proper field. This professional development, applied to the teaching practice, is seen as teachers who adapt their knowledge to constant changes and new outcomes. These challenges represent opportunities for teachers to focus their work aiming at the development of the student according to their needs and the needs of the community. Professional development is constituted by a formal process defined by seminars, conferences, or workshops; collaborative work also plays an important role as it is present during college or university years, as well as informal settings, such as work colleagues, independent reading and research (Mizell, 2010). This represents the impact a teacher committed to her work should represent, although these represent different scales. It is a fact that a teacher should be always improving and developing his skills, and not only be

satisfied with that, but also by staying on the track of perfection in order to provide the best of the benefit for the students and the community which are directly related to the influence a teacher exerts.

Life is marked through several events that affect human's knowledge and skills. The experience is a highly required value nowadays for every professional, as in this case it is with English Teachers. Experience is defined as "*the fact or state of having been affected by or gained knowledge through direct observation or participation*" (Merriam-Webster Inc., 2014, p. 1). The agreement with other authors is the description that experience is represented by the acquisition of knowledge. More specialized publications say that experience is "*the conscious event, the present content of consciousness, and an event resulting in learning*" (Psychology Dictionary, 2013, p. 1). In addition, experience is the familiarity with some skills or abilities most of the times acquired through time by practicing and after some practice it has improved the capacities of each person (Business Dictionary, 2013). Experience is defined by receiving a benefit which allows professionals to improve their abilities after reflecting on performance. As part of their development, each professional in different fields is required to gain experience through a series of practices which will bring opportunities to gain knowledge and to apply the theory they have received during the previous instruction. Inside a smaller context, LEI students are required to gain teaching experience by participating on programs of Social Service and Professional Practice, these are regulated by the university and by the regulations established on Minerva University Model curriculum.

2.7.1 Life-Long learning

Different perspectives have converged upon the fact that it is important for the world to have a complete and fruitful development through the very basics, which could be regarded as the educational levels around the planet. UNESCO formed a commission presided by Jacques Delors which had as main goal the re-statement of education as the base where the stability of the society lies on. In the report, there are presented different purposes of education in the 21st century, searching for the development of citizens that are able to understand what happens not only in their surroundings, but also able to comprehend what happens in the world as we are citizens of an unique place. Those purposes are to overcome inequality, society tensions and set education in the heart of both personal and community development. He says that the main purpose of education is to enable us to develop our talents to the fullest of our potentials, including responsibility for our own lives and achievement of our personal aims. In addition, there is the need to reform what lifelong learning is; there is a need to make education able to change according to the changes in the nature of work, but it must also constitute a continuous process of forming whole human beings - their knowledge and aptitudes, as well as the critical faculty and the ability to act. It should enable people to develop awareness of themselves and their environment and encourage them to play their social role at work and in the community. To understand the concept of lifelong learning is necessary to understand that education will bring opportunities to people that need of greater choices to develop. New life requirements ask us for a better understanding of other people and

life situations at a large. The commission developing these concepts also established the four pillars of education which are according to Delors (1996):

- Learning to live together, that establishes the understanding of others through respect, empathy and dialogue.
- Learning to know, which combines sufficient knowledge with the possibility of deep study on several subjects.
- Learning to do involves the acquisition of competency on areas like cooperative work, solution of problems, and the development of skills.
- Learning to be emphasizes the need of a greater independence and judgment, combined with a strong sense of responsibility.

The first, although it is not included with the three pillars related to education, is one part of lifelong learning as learning to live together requires individuals to learning how to love and understand other's history, traditions, and spiritual values (Delors, 1996). Nowadays, the new Minerva Model curriculum has taken as a base what the commission has given as foundations towards education during the 21st century. The educational model is founded on the 4 pillars although the university has added two more pillars in order to adequate higher education to Mexican contexts.

2.7.2 Research

Each new professional is expected to be able to manage the new knowledge that is constantly generated; this task does not end there, as these new teachers are also expected to develop their research sense as part of the new demands of Minerva model. Vieira (as cited in Smith ,2001, p.6)who says that "*teaching becomes a sort of*

research and research becomes a way of teaching. "Teachers as learners become involved in a process of autonomization, thus feeling more empowered to take charge of their own course of action" (Smith, 2003, p. 6). The term research defines the generation of new knowledge or the creative new use of the already existing information. This could include previous researches of the same topic or its synthesis of these (University of Western Sydney, 2013). The purpose of this use could be in several ways and it depends upon the researcher. *"Research is the studious inquiry or examination especially through experimentation and examination aimed at the discovery and interpretation of new facts"* (Merriam-Webster Inc., 2014, p. 1). The development of research could be regarded as the presence of autonomy and the work that it represents could be ignited from the conscious plan to improve each person's professional development. Researching is nowadays an activity that requires people to use, produce or modify existing knowledge in order to improve perspectives about language teaching. This activity is a students' requirement, not only to know themselves, but also to be aware of the existing ideas within their fields so these are of great significance for them.

2.7.3 Action research

One of the most important aspects related to the development of language teachers is the acquisition and application of skills in action research. Kelly, Grenfell, Allan et al. (2004, p.74) explain in the European Profile for Language teacher Education the importance of this term for every trainee teacher. The report states the following:

- Action research involves trainee teachers identifying a particular issue or problem encountered while teaching, gathering information about it, developing a plan of actions, evaluating its results and sharing them with colleagues.
- Action research encourages reflexivity and an enquiring approach and gives teachers a substantial theoretical framework for resolving difficult issues.
- Action research shows trainee teachers how evaluation, dissemination and requests for feedback from colleagues help integrate research findings into teaching practice.

This particular situation offers trainee teachers their total autonomy as the purpose of action research is making trainee teachers able to find and create solutions to problems and difficult situations encountered during English lessons, all of this completely done by themselves. For this purpose, trainee teachers have to be trained in how to incorporate Action Research in their professions. It has to be possible for each teacher to find real value of researching after reflecting and analyzing on the different aspects implemented during classes (Kelly, Grenfell, Allan, Kriza, & McEvoy, 2004)

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides information on important aspects of the research methodology used for this thesis. It also explains the design and writing of tools used during the process of research, as well as the processes of collecting, processing and interpreting information. The chapter presents the participants who voluntarily agreed to take part of this research as well as their characteristics.

3.1 Research Methodology

This research was carried out using a qualitative approach, making use of interpretative methods which allow different information gathered from participants after the application of an interview to be examined. The qualitative approach was chosen because of several advantages that can be aimed to different purposes, for example, an in-depth examination of phenomena details. It also provides depth and detailed sights as it goes deeper than analyzing ranks and counts by recording attitudes, feelings and behaviors. In addition, this kind of research creates openness by encouraging people to expand on their responses, so it can open up new topic areas not initially considered. Another advantage is that it simulates people's individual experiences and settles conditions to provide a detailed picture that can be built up about why people act certain ways and their feelings about these actions. Finally, it attempts to avoid pre-judgments as it can explain why a particular response was given if used alongside quantitative data collection.

Within qualitative research, there are several possible methods to collect data. It is, for example, possible to use observations, case studies, and interviews. In order to

achieve the purposes of examination of detailed and in depth understanding of autonomy in the professional practices, in depth-interviews were used.

3.1.1 Interviews

The importance of using interviews lies, according to Weiss (1995), on the opportunity these give the researcher to delve deeper into participants' perceptions and interpretations of those perceptions. It is possible to discover how they were inclined by actions and their reactions. This study had as its objective to understand how participants understood their perceptions of the events related to their teaching experiences. Therefore, the interviews were necessary to find more precise information regarding how trainee teachers perceive their profession.

Interviews allowed exploration of the views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008) of novice teachers in their experience during previous months in their professional practices. Interviews also helped create knowledge through the communication between the interviewer and the interviewees, as interviews are contextual, narrative and pragmatic (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

3.2 Settings

To make a great significance on the formation of future teachers in the country and the state, the study was placed at the Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla (BUAP), which is a central public university in the Mexican state of Puebla. The university is located in the city of Puebla, the largest and most populated city in the state. The city, as well as the country, is under the direct circle of influence from the United States. It is added to the situation that Puebla is the most important city in the

southeastern and central area just a step below Mexico City, containing most of the prestigious universities and colleges in the area. The city is a very important focus point for professional education, and consequently it is highly inhabited by students who seek education in one of the many colleges of the city. As consequence, the demand for qualified and certified teachers of English is elevated, as a result of both the pursuit of professional development through the English language and the influence made by the United States. As a result, the university has become one of the most important centers of education, making its ELT program one of the most solicited in the country.

The English teaching program is available at the School of Languages, which nowadays works with the formation of teachers in one of two languages, English or French. Furthermore, the English program aims to develop teachers who are able to give ordinary people the capacity of speaking a second language, as well as having the flag of acquiring moral values and being conscious teachers who do not only teach languages, but also teach citizens to acquire ethical values, morality, conscience and a humanitarian vision. Those teachers start their experience by enrolling themselves in the practicum course that is carried out by an advisor. This practicum demands students complete a total number of 240 hours of teaching as part of their preparation. Those hours are divided into 60 teaching hours, and 180 for teacher activities like planning, meetings and advisory sessions. The research was developed entirely in the facilities of the school, during a period from February 11 to February 14, 2014. The interviews were outside of class, so students did not have problems with time and concentration. They were taken into a classroom which was not in use to avoid noise and prevent distraction for students. During the interviews, students were only accompanied by the

researcher, who explained to the participants the aspects of the activity, such as number of questions, main topics and areas of knowledge, as well as procedures needed for the completion of the interview.

3.2.1 Participants

This study was designed with a qualitative approach; this approach required a small sample of a population, therefore, 5 participants made up the sample needed for this research. The study included answers from all 5 participants, all of them Mexican and living in the city; there were 3 males and 2 females. They were aged 22-23 years old. These participants were previously notified of the nature of this study, as well as the purpose and objectives, including the future use of their answers. By the time these interviews took place, the participants were students in the English teaching degree in the School of Languages; all of them were participants of the institutional professional practicum program and were also experiencing their first steps as teachers. None of them had a year of teaching experience. The mandatory characteristic to choose a participant was the participation in a professional practicum program aimed toward teaching, which had to be supervised by a tutor in charge of the program and the trainee. All of the participants were teaching in elementary levels in different public schools in the city and were complying with the requisite of professional practicum in order to obtain the degree in English teaching.

3.3 Instrument

The creation of the instrument began when the necessary background information was collected and all objectives were established. Before the pilot interview,

the tool was originally designed to be based on 20 questions, but it was proven to be incomplete and not able to cover all aspects intended for this research. Consequently, it was decided this research to be based on a set of 21 questions related to aspects such as experience, personal perspectives and opinions about personal and professional development, certification and class planning (See Appendix 1, p.89). The tool used was designed using the English profiles for English teachers from the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and BUAP. The profiles highlight the relevance of values, morals, ethics, deontology and autonomy, as well as knowledge of content subject as teaching, reflection and reflective practice. The use of these bases gave the tool an open range of support to each question.

The tool is divided into 4 parts containing a different number of questions each. Those 4 parts are objectives, lesson plan, evaluation, and reflection. The first part, objectives, aims to study aspects related to students like professional objectives, future plans, trainees' teaching impact awareness, moral values, acquirement of experience, and most important, knowledge of the importance of teaching practice for society.

The second part aims to study how students plan their lessons and what considerations they have to take into account to build a class according to what they had acquired during their years of study and internal practicum at school.

The third part of the interview asked participants how they had evaluated the two majorly impacting aspects like progress in students' learning and progress of their own performance and practice as teachers. That is how they have assessed their

performance before entering a classroom to teach a lesson, while in front of the class and at the end of teaching a group of students by making use of the appropriate evaluation tools which will guide the teacher to discover very important aspects such as weaknesses and strengths.

Finally, the fourth part of the interview was structured to ask about reflection and how students decided to improve aspects which they had found difficult or hard to manage themselves. It also was designed with the purpose of asking students how they got the appropriate information to make important improvements as part of that reflection which supposedly had shown them important aspects every trainee teacher needed to improve because they felt they had to or an advisor had told them to do so.

3.4 Procedure

The study started with the visualization of a problem where LEI students were not capable of acquiring all the intended skills and competencies of the profile. Then it was necessary to verify that previous research could provide support and a solid base to what the future study would be. In addition, it was necessary to review data in order to border the study and its objectives, so it could be validated. The next step was to generate statements that could give a preview of the aspects to study. After the review of the literature, the author created research questions which were stated according to what was necessary to be studied. The creation of the research questions was followed by the search for the potential participants that for this case were 5 for the study and 2 for piloting the tool. The previously mentioned statements later became the questions used in the tool.

Piloting of this research began with a 15 question tool. The participant of this interview was a female, aged 22 years old by the time she was interviewed. She had the required characteristics of having been teaching at that time, whether it was part of a professional practicum or a paid job. After the interview, it was found that tool's questions needed improvement. Such questions as numbers 5, 6, 7, and 15 needed to be re-written as the participants found them difficult to understand. In addition, the general structure of the tool had to be re-arranged in order to create a sequential progression of the environment where students could go deeper and deeper into the topic as the interview progressed. After having corrected the questions, the tool was piloted once again; the participant was a woman who had more experience than the previous participant, regarding the question it was found that it was suitable for the interview. Finally, the findings of the piloting were applied immediately after the application of the tool.

The application of the tool took place during a week of February 2014 and all participants were interviewed during their free time in the school. After the interviews and after all information was gathered, it was transcribed and arranged with labels to highlight important information. Having done all this, the analysis of the data was conducted using an interpretative method since this method allows understanding of the gathered information after interviews were applied. Also, this method allows the researcher to examine participants' experiences related to their natural context. The interpretative method allows focusing on data so it can be labeled, categorized and assembled into data banks (Denzin, 2009). The analysis began right after the completion of the interviews; after the subject had answered all the questions, the

researcher proceeded to analyze the recordings, first by creating categories which would be used to arrange information that was based on the answers collected during the questionnaires and the interviews. Then, after having arranged the data in the 4 established categories, it was analyzed, searching for patterns which would show the possible relation of the subjects' answers with the situation they were experiencing in their professional practices. In addition, the categories created set the basis to build the charts where the information and its interpretation would be translated in order to be presented in a future.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Every participant of this research was previously notified of the nature of this study. They were explained that they would be asked about important aspects regarding their professional practice and their objectives as English teachers and future shapers of a society. All of the participants gave spoken permission to be recorded and these recordings will be transcribed, analyzed, reproduced and presented in the future for the sake of this study.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS

In this chapter, collected data is presented, interpreted and discussed in order to understand the participant's autonomy. The relationship between personal and social needs is discussed and contrasted with the level of performance, achievements, and commitment in order to determine the impact of the curriculum and the professional practices on the autonomy of future English teachers. This chapter presents the discussion in 4 categories, which are lesson planning, evaluation, reflection and developmental objectives.

4.1 Planning

Objectives are necessarily linked to the satisfaction of social needs. Therefore, the existence of planning implies awareness of the professional responsibility teachers have to produce effective learning, and lesson planning suggests an intentional attempt to responsibly satisfy learning needs.

A class is just a small fraction of a long string of lessons, each with its own objective which leads, if successful, to achieve the proposed goals in the curriculum. This process begins by establishing the objectives for a class and, then, planning how they will be accomplished.

4.1.1 Lessons

Lesson plans are tools and detailed descriptions of an instructor's course of instruction which are intended to help learners achieve a particular learning objective (TEAL, 2010). Accordingly, the ELT Program states trainee teachers have the ability to

consciously plan a lesson with all its components. This is related to several values such as responsibility, empathy, ethics, reflection, collaborative work, commitment, creative participation, and autonomy.

The participants of this study were asked about their lesson planning as well as the importance a lesson plan has in the learning and teaching process. The results are presented in chart 4.1 below.

Chart 4.1 Lesson Planning

Question	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
Do you plan every lesson?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, I do.	Yes
What is the purpose?	Base and guideline	Requirement	Guideline and necessity.	Guideline	Guide: skills children must have.
What is the importance?	Not so important	Important, but doesn't work	Simple format to have a control	Yes, but modified	Very important

As can be seen, although all of the participants used a lesson plan, it was not seen as a tool. All participants used a lesson plan at some point of their practices, but they only found it useful for some aspects, such as controlling the class, guiding, and accomplishing different requirements. Apparently, the experience accumulated along their teaching experiences has not created the necessity of planning; therefore, it is not seen as part of their professional responsibility. Furthermore, they do not make the decision of planning, but they are influenced by external factors such as fear to punishment or some kind of appraisal. Thus, planning reflects low levels of autonomy.

4.1.2 Presence of curriculum in lesson planning

The trainee teachers were asked about the aspects they considered when planning a lesson. Also, the consideration of curriculum for planning was addressed in one of the questions in order to determine the relationship they established between social needs, other subjects and their planning process. The results are presented in chart 4.2

Chart 4.2 Aspects considered in Lesson Planning

Question	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
Aspects	Warm-up and focus, Age, curriculum	Topic, activities, games, control and music, interests, age, behavior	Level, timing, extra activities, curriculum	Context, age, level, number of students, material and environment, format of curriculum.	Objectives and behavior.
Curriculum	Yes, as a guideline.	No	Sometimes	Format	No

As can be seen, the aspects considered by trainees when building a lesson plan differ from one participant to another. It is difficult to find some consistency in the aspects for each lesson plan; a lack of experience or irregular training in lesson planning can be observed. Another important aspect to mention about lesson planning, and a weak point of trainee teachers, is decision-making based on curriculum structure. The low presence of curriculum-based decisions could represent that not all of participants are conscious of the needs their students have and, thus, they decide to

take their practice towards inappropriate directions. On the other hand, the fact that trainees are considering some aspects for their planning shows knowledge is present in them, although it needs to be well conducted and guided by mentors during teaching practice.

In sum, trainees seem to have very ambiguous references about the role that curriculum plays in planning and that it is closely related to the satisfaction of social needs. They can hardly perceive the connection of the aspects they considered to curriculum and their responsibility as professionals and the decisions they made.

4.2 Method

Teaching methods are referred to different theories which serve as a foil for reflection that can help teachers in bringing to conscious awareness the thinking that underlines their action (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2000). When teachers are exposed to methods and asked to reflect on their principles and actively engage with their techniques, they can become clearer about why they do what they do. They become aware of their own fundamental assumptions and beliefs. Accordingly, trainees were asked if their actions were influenced by methods and how these helped them manage each of their lessons. The results are presented in chart 4.3 below.

Chart 4.3 Method Importance

	Subject 1	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
Method is used	Believe so	No	Yes	No
Label	Repetition	Improvisation/Ask questions	Focus on talking	Communicative
Importance	Believe so	Yes	Yes	Not very

Research shows there are aspects which evidence the lack of a teaching method. Those who decide to teach under the guidelines of a method are not correctly following the principles. Indeed, trainees ignore many important aspects of their reality as teachers. It is remarkable that 4 out of 5 participants have decided to use a method or to follow parts of them as they argue that only one element is sufficient to cover the main aspects of a lesson and that these elements are enough help to teach a lesson.

Another important situation to highlight begins with the dubitative attitude students take when they are asked about the importance of teaching methods. For instance, 2 of the participants argued they were not completely sure about the effectiveness of the use of a method. Only two of the trainees considered teaching methods to be an essential part of lesson planning. It is significant that trainees do not explore the extensive variety of teaching methods, and they ignore their possible usefulness instead.

Trainees have not been made aware of the importance of using a method which will help them to harmonize their practices with all the vital elements like the planning, the appliance of that planning, the evaluation of the outcomes and the reflection that would provide with the aspects that need to be improved. In fact, trainees followed a method but did not know how to call it. This represents a risk since they were trained to become teachers and of the subjects they worked with methods and their characteristics their teachers did not ask them what method they used.

4.3 Evaluation

Evaluation is a process which allows constant comparison between the results achieved by students and those intended results previously proposed as goals (Kizlik, Applied Science Education Group, 2012). The application of the appropriate evaluation tools provides useful information about several aspects which teachers may find totally functional to apply. In their educational program, trainee teachers are taught to have evaluation procedures as part of their planning and to follow these in order to help them reflect on accomplishment of their objectives. Therefore, in the interviews, participants were asked what evaluation tools they had used and the aspects that were involved within the evaluation process.

Primarily, the participants were asked if there was any evaluation or evaluative tool they had applied after they had taught a lesson, especially to analyze if the results from the evaluation helped them determine progress and the place they were along with their students. The results can be seen below in chart 4.4.

Chart 4.4 Evaluation Focus and Method

Question	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
How did you evaluate?	Ask questions	Ask questions	Exams, personal sessions	Apply a test	Tests
What did you evaluate?	knowledge students produce	students' learning	Students	students' learning	students' learning and understanding

The use of tests and questions denote that trainees prefer a summative assessment instead of formative. This could be related to the urgency to report results as a way of fulfilling the requirements set by authorities instead of tracking the development of their students. This can also mean that trainees are not accomplishing the other part of their teaching practice which dictates a teacher should be interested in forming students in other areas during the time the students are under the teacher's influence.

All of the students interviewed mentioned summative tools as their main method to evaluate their students; most of these tools had a questionnaire format. This manner of evaluating does not allow teachers to include aspects such as conscience and reflective processes related to themselves and to their students' as teachers expect that results gathered from summative evaluation would provide with a full report of what is happening inside a classroom and during the lessons. In addition, aspects like the use of language, consistency, and behavior are commonly left out by the teacher. As a consequence, students get used to working in order to get a grade at the end of a course rather than paying attention to the whole learning that is expected to be acquired along the course. This kind of behavior does not permit ignition of a different way of thinking in students, who follow repetitive processes expecting a good grade without stopping to reason about their learning.

It was very important for trainees to understand the results they had obtained from the applied evaluation. Once they had evaluated, it was important to analyze how trainees determined the effectiveness of their teaching; consequently, they were asked

about how they were able to verify that there was learning and that both teaching and evaluation were effective. The responses can be seen in chart 4.5

Chart 4.5 Effectiveness criteria

Question	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
How effective was the teaching?	Ask questions. Answer or repeat	Answers from students	Assessment, evaluation, producing. Objective test, objective evaluation. Apply a test and exam. subjective assessment	Give a kind of test. Feedback. Understanding	Answer construction. Fluency. Talking efficiency. Comparison of students

As seen in chart 4.5, the effectiveness of teaching and evaluation was determined through the responses the students gave in tests as 3 participants argued that they were able to determine language learning by looking at students' answers. Although two trainees gave a strong weight to production of language and understanding it, a reductionist approach was privileged.

In conclusion, evaluating tools used by trainee teachers only measure superficial results such as memorization and information that does not go deep into the students' learning and reasoning of the language. Trainee teachers do not see the whole

panorama which could show them what their results could be up to the point they are applying evaluation.

4.4 Reflection

To understand the principles of autonomy, it is important to understand that reflection plays an important role in trainee’s development as teachers. Reflection has a vague meaning for students who insure reflective sessions take place in their daily lives and although it might seem true, the implications of reflection and self-reflection are not completely present in their practices.

The analysis of the way trainees reflect is inevitable and it is very important to understand the concept of autonomy and its relation with the expectations trainees have as future English teachers. So the participant trainees were asked if there was reflection on their practices, and if there was any, what aspects were analyzed. All of the results are presented in chart 4.6.

Chart 4.6 Reflection

Question	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
Do you reflect?	Yes	Yes	I always try to do it.	I make a list	I don't dedicate too much time.
What aspects do you evaluate?	Language, students' learning and impact of activities.	Empathy	Everything	What things I did well or wrong	My presentation, my fluency, what I do wrong, classroom management

It is possible to say that the way trainees reflect does not seem to be the most complete and appropriate for teaching purposes. The series of events which lead to reflection and then to experience is in some cases overlooked, mainly because of the failure to set objectives and to plan how to attain them. All of the participants mentioned that they reflect on their work as teachers, although there is no consistency in the aspects they analyze. All the participants focused on analyzing their performance, and stopped there. The need for that analysis might come from the lack of experience which causes them trouble and affects their practices, mostly related to having problems with classroom management.

The aspects primarily analyzed focused on their performance and mistakes of the teacher, such as tone of voice, attitude and right or wrong actions in the classroom. Although there were parts missing in the reflection, students argued they were able to identify their weaknesses and strengths as seen in chart 4.7.

Chart 4.7 Reflection and weaknesses

Question	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
What are your weaknesses?	Classroom management, boring activities	Lack of experience.	Class control. Maybe Writing.	Follow all the steps, complete the lesson plan	My presentation in front of the students, my fluency
What is your practical solution?	Look for more information and activities	Lose fear	Practice	Practice	Practice
What do you research?	Internet: songs and images				

As part of these, trainees indirectly mentioned that including key components of a lesson plan was their main failure. The mentioning of aspects such as student's learning, presentation, language appropriateness, presentation and poor classroom management was general and all participants had a word about how these topics were the most common in their minds after they had reflected.

Another aspect that may be relevant is the fact that students do not highlight their strengths, but rather they go directly to talk about their deficiencies as teachers. Only one of the participants mentioned one of his strengths, although most of the participants said that they had completely analyzed their performance. This low importance that trainees give to strengths shows that students' reflection only aims at certain aspects, but not the complete scenario. However, students follow their reflection and try to take advantage of it by recording the things they are doing and improving, although their solutions may not seem practical, they try to face and solve their problems.

Finally, as reflection provides new insights of performance and actions, it was important to know what conclusions are reached by trainees. They were asked about what were their main ideas after they had reflected on their practices. The results are shown in chart 4.8

Chart 4.8 Self-evaluation as a Reflection Component

Question	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
What do you do to improve your teaching?	I need more creativity. Need to improve language	I had never worked with children, but they had understood	Be more confident, speak louder, record myself sometimes,	I think I'm good explaining but sometimes I get lost.	Think of what I did wrong, I reflect.

	proficiency.	my class.	empathy		
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The results show that students have got interesting conclusions, although one participant was not clear about what he found out after reflection. The other participants highlighted positive and negative aspects they considered important to improve. The fact that trainees are identifying their weaknesses might mean that there is an interest to improve and to commit to their duty as teachers.

4.5 Developmental Objectives

Autonomy is related to the effectiveness and responsibility trainees apply to their teaching practices by defining the consciousness, satisfaction and social contribution, which enhance teachers to be active participants in solving problems and proposing different solutions in educational environments. Thus, autonomy is mainly analyzed in this section; it plays an important role in setting objectives as it involves reflection, assessment, experience and capability of tracing a path of action.

The ELT Program at BUAP establishes a set of competences which trainee teachers should be able to demonstrate at the end of the degree, presented as a graduate profile. For instance, under the parameters of the MUM curriculum, a teacher who completes the ELT program is able to plan, apply and evaluate different curricula or courses. Moreover, the profile implies a constantly growing ability to identify and solve problems that promotes the maturity of the individual within professional and

investigative fields. They will also be able to demonstrate an ability to reflect about their learning and preparation.

So it is intended that trainee teachers will plan their objectives keeping in mind different aspects which were acquired during their studies at the ELT program. Thus, trainees were asked about the existence of objectives and which these were. In addition, they were asked what they were planning to become as teachers in the future, especially if these were related to professional settings. Results are shown in chart 4.9.

Chart 4.9 Objectives and Plans

Question	Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5
Objectives	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Objectives	To acquire more experience.	Not teaching	Teaching abroad	No	Work for the government
Future plans	Master in pedagogy.	Doesn't plan to continue	Teaching abroad	Master and PhD Degree	Teaching in public education

Results show that students are aware of the necessity to develop themselves as professional individuals, although there is little commitment with the development of themselves as teachers for the sake of a community and the improvement of education and therefore, with the design of effective actions.

As can be seen, the analysis of collected data shows that 4 out of 5 subjects have objectives related to teaching, although they strongly emphasize setting those objectives in fields where they only prioritize personal development, rather than seeking communitarian development. Those same 4 participants argued that a teacher is regarded as a role model for the community and that work done by teachers represents

a high impact on the community they are influencing. We can see as Subject one said in extract 1:

[The teacher's always gonna be the big example for everyone, not just for students but also for parents, for every almost every person in a society because when you are teacher it means you are an educated person, you have values and you gotta be a respected person.]

To the question “what objectives do you have as a teacher within the professional field?” participants focused on giving details about their future and probable goals as teachers, showing that most trainee teachers do not have clear ideas of what their path of action will be for the future, as can be seen in extract 2.

[I consider that to me I would like to have a master's in pedagogy and I do not know. I consider preparing more myself in teaching English because I love it so much.]

The little variety of responses and the narrowness of their content showed that trainee teachers had not analyzed their course of action for the future, which had to be defined by their reflection and needs analysis, as well as a subsequent identification of strengths and weaknesses. From all the responses obtained for the mentioned question, only subject #5 stated an interest to be a participant of education where he can face a more realistic educational situation, becoming more helpful for the development of society. This might demonstrate a low level of autonomous development as objectives do not aim to provide others with effective education

because the main goal of setting professional objectives is to effectively apply all knowledge, skills and values acquired during LEI degree.

As can be seen, trainee teachers argue that having objectives is mainly useful to acquire better working conditions. This would not, however, represent the expected conditions for education and social development in the MUM curriculum. Objectives represent the starting point which will help students foresee and plan the future actions in which they would be involved as teachers. It is important to mention that this process begins by defining the objectives that personally or professionally will be achieved after a teacher first defines the context in which he or she will be working, but these should be the result of deep and extensive reflection.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, the conclusions for the exploratory study of the contributions of professional practices to the development of LEI students' autonomy and the achievement of ELT curriculum objectives are presented. Also, this section attempts to answer the research questions and discusses the limitations of the study, the directions for improvement of the study and its implications.

5.1 Findings

First of all, the results show that novice teachers make no decisions about professional improvement and effective performance. They follow instructions and fulfill the requirements made by other teachers or authorities. They do not make the decision of planning lessons on their own initiative, as the efforts they make to attain goals are rather weak, and they do not estimate if each effort made takes them to the achievement of such goals. In short, novice teachers seem to be unaware of the benefits of planning for professional upgrading, as they perceive it as a requirement rather than a necessity, which, in turn, prevents them from evaluating actual attainment, which is unintentionally performed.

Furthermore, trainee teachers do not seem completely aware of their role, responsibility and the social impact of their professional activity. Although trainees are aware that a teacher's role is that of a model and leader for society and for their students, they are not planning future actions with the purpose of obtaining proposed and effective results. Their immediate actions are not oriented toward professional

improvement, and they do not prioritize learning as a social benefit. Some trainees have not even planned their own future as teachers with immediate results and action. In sum, if they cannot develop their tasks and actions as self-determined, socially responsible and critically aware teachers in (and beyond) educational environments, within a vision of education as (inter)personal empowerment and social transformation, the development of autonomy may be estimated as low.

The principles of the MUM and the objectives of the BA in ELT program imply that all students and graduate students must achieve a high level of awareness, social commitment and autonomy. However, apparently, the program has not thoroughly accomplished its purpose as the interviewed students, who had covered the total of the required credits did not display an entirety of the proposed abilities, knowledge, values, and attitudes that would allow them to fully proceed as teachers.

Additionally, for instance, trainee teachers did not prove to have the required knowledge of methodological and psycho pedagogical principles, along with the fact that they were not completely committed to the responsibilities of the profession or the requirements of reflection, awareness of the planning processes and evaluation of both course stages and professional development.

In sum, the evidence leads one to conclude that trainee teachers interviewed do not cover the profile's values such as justice, responsibility, honesty and empathy because they are not acting in the most adequate way. Indeed, even though professional practices include all the activities, possibilities and opportunities to display autonomous decision-making after all teaching practice accumulated, trainee teachers

are still unaware of their social responsibility and the procedures which could take them to accomplish expected outcomes. Thus, they still need a great level of influence of external factors to implement planning and make decisions, which means that neither previous teaching supervision and experiences nor professional practices have had the impact expected on the development of trainee teachers' autonomy.

5.2 Implications

Inconsistencies in planning, reflection and the setting of professional objectives during the development of the professional practices represent a gap in the formative process and professional development of future English teachers. Inconsistent previous experiences along their studies may be inferred as long as they seem unaware of the process involving planning, implementation and assessment. If the problem is not corrected with the inclusion of appropriate supervision, the achievement of the professional profile stated in the LEI program is at risk, and the satisfaction of social needs may not be feasible. Thus, this may represent an opportunity to include appropriate supervision in order to closely follow how trainees notice weaknesses and strengths and face challenges during their first participation as teachers.

5.3 Limitations

Even though this qualitative study allowed in-depth examination of autonomy within the development of professional practice, the construction of detailed sights, as well as the provision of a detailed picture of why teachers act in certain ways and their feelings about these actions, still has some limitations which should be addressed. Moreover, this study does not represent the totality of students enrolled at LEI because

the nature of the qualitative approach only allowed working with small groups within specific contexts in order to delve deeper into the social phenomenon. Therefore, the use of other approaches which allow having a closer look at larger groups of trainees would be advisable.

5.4 Directions for improvement

As mentioned above, future studies are suggested by using other methods and approaches to obtain a wider view of the problem in order to possibly make a generalization. It is also necessary to examine trainee teachers in other different settings and at different stages of their career to obtain results which could provide further information of the formative program and its impact on teachers' autonomous development.

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Appendix 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE



Name:

Gender:

Date:

1. Do you plan every lesson you give? What is the purpose of doing so?
2. Do you consider it is important to follow a lesson plan? Why?
3. What aspects (e.g. Method, objectives, time, and students) do you take into account for building the lesson plan?
4. Do you take into consideration the Curriculum as the guidelines to plan your lesson? Why?
5. Is it important to use a specific teaching method for your lessons? What teaching method is your favorite?
6. What do you consider is more important after a lesson is over, that students have learnt something or that you accomplished with the lesson in the appropriate time and previous planning?
7. How do you determine your class has been effective, that is, your learners have improved their speaking, listening, reading or writing? How do you evaluate the results?
8. Do you receive feedback after each teaching practice?
9. If so, what do you do with that feedback? How do you use it?
10. If not, what do you do?
11. Do you dedicate time to reflect on your own practices?
12. What aspects do you evaluate from your own performance?

13. What are the weaknesses and strengths you have as an English teacher?
14. How do you strengthen (reinforce) your weaknesses in the classroom?
Trough practice? Searching information? Co-evaluation? Self-evaluation?
15. What do you do when you have doubts or problems?
16. Are your teachers helping you to improve as a teacher inside the classroom?
17. How important is to us, as English teachers, to obtain international standards in language proficiency? Have you got any international English certification?
Will you get any in the future?
18. What is the importance of reaching international standards in ELT?
19. What are your objectives as a teacher within the professional field?
20. What impact do teachers have for communities?
21. What ethical principles do you think guide your teaching practice?
22. What moral values are the most important to consider as teachers?
23. Why? Who gets the benefits?
24. What ethical principles do you think guide your teaching practice?
25. What moral values are the most important to consider as teachers?

Appendix 2: SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

PARTICIPANT #3 NAME: MARCO ANTONIO

INTERVIEWER: Marco, please tell me, do you plan every lesson you have given so far?

MARCO: Yes I do. I plan every lesson that I have given to all my students for example in my mentoring class. So in this period I have to do my lesson plan. So it is inferred that I have to plan all my classes

INTERVIEWER: What is the purpose of planning every lesson?

MARCO: Well, I think the purpose of doing this lessons plan is to see the skills I'm looking for and all the skills that the children must to have, so I think that's the purpose for me

INTERVIEWER: Do you consider this is an important step before teaching?

MARCO: Yes, absolutely. That is very important. If you are not prepared in order to give a class you will lose all the important things giving that class so it's very important to plan that.

INTERVIEWER: and what aspects do you consider to build these lessons plan?

MARCO: The important things that I have to look for is for example I don't know giving all the students the main objectives of my lesson plans also the behavior of those children and for example, as I said, giving all the objectives of my lesson plans.

INTERVIEWER: Do you use a specific teaching method for your lesson?

MARCO: Actually, I don't use a specific method for teaching but probably one of my method is very communicative, well that is a method but I consider that is the most important thing to be a communicative teacher with the students and giving a communicative method to those students.

INTERVIEWER: And after that lesson is over and after you have applied the lesson what do you consider is more important after the lesson is over, that the students have learnt something or that you have accomplished with the full planning and every step included in the lesson plan?

MARCO: Well, I think when the class is over the most important thing that I have to look for it's the feedback that I gave to the students. I want the students to give me what did they learnt and what did they understood so one example of that is for example that the students must give me some exercises or results and to give me their personal feedback also giving me the I don't know the results of the exercises the results of what they understood and so on

INTERVIEWER: How do you evaluate that feedback? How do you evaluate that students have learnt?

MARCO: The way I evaluate them is how do they construct that answer for example in a question of present simple topic at the end of my class for example I want my students to give their personal information and the manner I evaluate them is the fluency of how they talk and also could be the efficiency of how do they do it.

INTERVIEWER: and do receive feedback from mentor and teacher?

MARCO: Yes, I receive so many feedback from my mentor. They tell me what I did wrong and what are the expectations that the lesson plan must give to my students. So they give me a lot of feedback.

INTERVIEWER: How do you use that feedback?

MARCO: The way I use that feedback in order to help me of course, that my teachers tell me what I have to do. I applied the feedback for example the way I give the feedback to my student and my different skills my students have to show me for example listening skills, writing skills that is a part of the important feedback.

INTERVIEWER: Do you dedicate time to reflect on your practices?

MARCO: I don't dedicate so much time on that kind of feedback because I always look for the results and the results are at the moment and also I know that the feedback is important in the lesson plan but during that class I look who is the better student and who is the worst.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think from your own point of view or about the things you did well or the things you did wrong?

MARCO: I consider the things I do right for example my presentation in front of the students my fluency at the moment of talking and the things that I do wrong is for example the management of the class.

INTERVIEWER: And what do you do to strength that weak point? What do you do to improve?

MARCO: In order to improve my management I think the only way to improve is to keep practicing. For example in situations where students are for example yelling or running I have to control that situation, but a situation must appear in future experience. So the only to improve is practicing and keep continuing that way of practicing.

INTERVIEWER: Do you consider that your teachers are helping you to improve inside a classroom?

MARCO: I don't think so, because within a classroom in this case of participating in front of the class the teacher, who is in charge of the classroom, doesn't appear, doesn't interfere in my classes and the teacher doesn't tell me ok you are doing this wrong .

INTERVIEWER: And what about the teachers you have here in the faculty? Do they help you?

MARCO: I think (that) they help me giving me tips how must. Well, how I can improve that skill of manage the class they are giving me tips but at the moment of applying those tips could be difficult.

INTERVIEWER: How important is for us as English teachers to attain international certifications in language proficiency and certifications in ELT?

MARCO: I think is very important because that is proven if you are capacitated in order to give a class you have to have a paper that certificates you and I think it's very important.

INTERVIEWER: Are you planning to get one kind of certification?

MARCO: Yes. I'm planning to get one of those kinds of certifications, Cambridge or TOEFL.

INTERVIEWER: Have you thought about your professional objectives as teacher?

MARCO: If I have solved?

INTERVIEWER: If you have thought about you professional objectives.

MARCO: Yes. My professional objectives from my point of view is working for the government, working for the SEP as far as you know we are, well SEP is public enterprise, company dedicated to education but the thing is that I know that teachers are not well paid so that could be a problem for me. But, yes my future plans are giving classes in a SEP classroom.

INTERVIEWER: What are the benefits? Who gets those benefits of your correct preparation?

MARCO: For both community and my family, my own person, but those are the benefits of working to the community. If you are a good teacher you give to your students a good manner of giving classes so that is a important thing in the society. Personally, I can improve myself so keep practicing and keep giving classes to the students will give me those benefits.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think is the impact of a teacher inside a community?

MARCO: The impact of a teacher inside a community, for example is to develop the students to be good students. So also the impact of other teachers that they are not capacitated or prepared is, for example if those teachers that are not well trained they see those teacher who are well trained and they can copy all the strategies so that is one of the most important impacts.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think are the ethical principles that must guide teaching practice?

MARCO: One of the most important is to be patient. So that is one of the most important things.

INTERVIEWER: What values do you think are also important in teaching?

MARCO: The values, well I can talk about the values, is to be. I think the most important is the punctuality and also could be for example. Well, I think the punctuality is the most important that it is proven that if you are punctual giving a class the students will respect you

INTERVIEWER: Ok that was the last question I really appreciate your help, thank you.

PARTICIPANT #4
NAME: MARCOS

INTERVIEWER: February 14th 2014. I'm with Marcos Castillo Parra, he is going to answer some question about professional autonomy and development, do you plan every lesson that you give?

MARCOS : Yes, I do.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think is the purpose of doing this?

MARCOS : Well, I think it is to have an idea of what you are going to give to your students. I mean I don't like so much but you sometimes it is necessary to have a good class. So I try to follow a simple format, because most of the time the classes don't go the same way you plan.

INTERVIEWER: Do you consider that is it really important?

MARCOS : I think it is important because you need to have a control. You know like a list of your topics, but I think most of the time it is not. So, it is not the, how can I say? It is no so effective, it is just a planning but as I was telling you, most of the time you just don't realize everything you just on you plan.

INTERVIEWER: And what aspects do you need to consider in a lesson plan? What characteristics of the group? Of the level? Of you?

MARCOS : I think it is important to have the level because you need to know your students very well. You know timing also is important because you have to program your activities, how long are going to take some activities. I always consider an extra activity in my lesson plans because sometimes you just do not. You waste your time very quickly and you need an extra activity.

INTERVIEWER: Do you consider the curriculum or the program is important to use as a base for the lesson plan?

MARCOS : Well, I think it is. I mean, supposedly the curriculum is the base you know, the bases you have to follow this but sometimes is not the best way you have to like maybe improvise. Yeah it is important to follow your curriculum.

INTERVIEWER: After a lesson is over, what do you consider is more important that the students have learnt something or that you have accomplished your lesson plan?

MARCOS : Of course the students, I mean if you are working for results for you I think you are not being a good teacher. I think the most important thing in education is students. I mean if the students learnt something, are happy if they don't they are not happy. I think I didn't a good job I didn't have a good class. So I think the most important part of this is students.

INTERVIEWER: How do you know that your students have learnt or that they are satisfied with what they have learnt?

MARCOS : I mean besides the assessment, besides the evaluation I think the real thing when you really know they are learning is when they start producing, when they start talking, when they have doubts, when they start raising their hands. I think that is a key that is how you realize they are learning.

INTERVIEWER: Do you use a specific kind of evaluation or assessment?

MARCOS : I prefer the, not the objective test, objective evaluation. I rather the subjective because I think the learning styles on every students is different, so if you apply a test and exam, sometimes the results could vary. I think it is valid to have a, sometimes a personal session with them, maybe if you are more comfortable so I prefer subjective assessment.

INTERVIEWER: What about you? Do you receive feedback from your mentor, from your teachers?

MARCOS : Most of the times. I mean I'm starting and I'm not a perfect teacher, I mean I wish. You are always going to commit some mistakes when teaching. I think feedback is important and it is necessary to you to prove your teaching skills. Most of the time I receive it.

INTERVIEWER: How do you use it? How do you analyze the feedback?

MARCOS : You got to check on your weaknesses. You have to improve your weaknesses when your mentor tells you: you have to speak hard, you have to speak louder, maybe why you are stick behind your desk? You have to move, to monitor your students. I try to make some notes about this, like ok I have to improve this, I have to correct this something like that. That is the way I work when I have feedback.

INTERVIEWER: From your own side, do you reflect on your practices? Do you think about what you done well and what you have done wrong?

MARCOS : I mean I always try to do it but sometimes when you think that your class perfect you just feel comfortable. You just go to bed happy but sometimes, always happen that you have a horrible class where every student is yelling, they just did not listen to you and you are frustrated about this. You know you need to improve a lot of things but do not know how to start. I think that is the exact moment when you have to look at your feedback and try to reflect, why did you do wrong? Why is this not going well?

INTERVIEWER: What aspects do you think are the most important to be evaluated? From your own side what you pay attention to?

MARCOS : You have to make a complete evaluation because I can tell you, ok I liked evaluating speaking but in language learning it is whole. So you have to evaluate not only speaking but writing, reading, even the comprehension. Sometimes, when you are learning a new language you always memorize things which you are not thinking in that language, you are just reproducing what you heard so I think the evaluation has to be a whole, you have to evaluate all the aspects.

INTERVIEWER: About your performance, what aspects do you need to evaluate?

MARCOS : I think I'm good when speaking and giving some advices to my students. I think my weakness could be having control of the class. I mean it is not so easy to have control of the class, because sometimes the age, sometimes the level, I mean is different between the ages because it is not the same working with kids, or secondary school, or a high school is always different. Maybe in writing, I think most of the time, my big mistake is not having the control of the group.

INTERVIEWER: What do you do to improve that?

MARCOS : I try to be more confident, I try to speak louder because I think my volume when speaking is not the enough sometimes because when you are working with a big class, 45 boys

it is difficult to speak hard and you are not used to speak louder. So I try to record myself sometimes when I'm giving class and then I'm trying to put on my students' shoes, like what happens if I'm behind the, I'm the last student I can hear the teacher.

INTERVIEWER: Are your teachers helping you to improve that?

MARCOS : Well, yeah, the mentor who is always observing me. I think this is my big weakness because they always tell me: you have to speak louder, so this is how I realize this.

INTERVIEWER: How important is for us as English teachers to have certifications in English Language?

MARCOS : I think it is important, I do not know but I think around the world but more here in Mexico, the paper talks as we said in Spanish because when you have a certification it is easier to get a job. So sometimes you can have a good level, you can have experience working with or in a school, but you must have papers, I think it is very important to have a job here in Mexico.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think is the importance of reaching international standards in ELT.

MARCOS : It is also important, sometimes it is difficult for us to find a job in another country because of our culture, because sometimes we are afraid to take that risk. I think it is a good opportunity I mean I would like to be Spanish teacher in another country (and) that would be great. It is important to have certifications.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have objectives as teacher?

MARCOS : Yeah, I want to, one of my goals it would be to be a teacher in a foreign country, maybe to teach Spanish, maybe English in another country to make a career as a teacher in another country. That is one of my biggest goals.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think is the impact of a teacher inside a community or inside a school?

MARCOS : The teacher's always gonna be the big example for everyone not just for students but also for parents, for every almost every person in a society because when you are a teacher it means you are an educated guy, you have values and you gotta be a respect person.

INTERVIEWER: What values do you think are important within teaching practice?

MARCOS : There are a lot of values, it is a whole it takes the context. You have to be respectful, you have to respect other people, respect your job, you have to love your job, and if you love your job you always are going to be a good teacher. I think that is maybe the biggest and most important value but there also a lot of values, maybe reliable, confidence, I can count 100 and it would not be enough.

INTERVIEWER: What ethical principles should guide teaching practice?

MARCOS : You have to respect your students and respect yourself. I mean you have to get involve with your students but just in a professional way, because when you are teaching when you are teaching younger girls, it is really easy to get involve with them in an extra official way. You have you be very careful that way, you have to be very professional when you are teaching and you have to respect and try to be respect and that is the most important thing.

INTERVIEWER: Ok Marcos that was the last question, thank you so much.