University of Southampton

Faculty of Humanities

School of Modern Languages

Analysing Teacher Agency in an ELT Competency-Based BA Programme in Mexico, a Case Study

by

Gloria Carolina Pallanez Dávila

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in Applied Linguistics

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Abstract

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Globalisation has impacted different sectors of society, including education. There is no doubt that Competency-Based Education (CBE) has emerged due to the global economy's changes and affected the educative programs as a domino effect. Therefore, language programs have also been adapted to this model, and the term Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) has emerged. However, it is essential to understand how these neoliberal policies have impacted education, especially teachers' agency. Overall, teachers are the ones who have the final say in the decision-making about the activities performed in classrooms. I focus on teachers' agency to get a closer view of how these policies influence education. Teachers are recognised as agents in learning and teaching processes with the capability to operate within their environment. (Kalaja *et al.*, 2015). Thus, "agency is not only concerned with what is observable, but it also involves not visible behaviours, beliefs, thoughts and feelings; all of which must be understood in relation to the various context and affordances from which they cannot be abstracted" (Mercer, 2012, p. 42).

This qualitative case study aims to analyse teacher agency under the CBLT model implemented in a B.A. of English Language Teaching in a state university in the Northwest region of Mexico. The main interest is to know how teachers deal with this model in classrooms and the dynamics that evolve from this top-down policy implementation. I collected data through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and a collection of student learning outcomes. The methodology for data analysis was adjusted, using as a base Jäger and Maier (2016) approach to interpretation. Such a method takes critical discourse analysis theoretical foundations by observing the ideological route that could influence discourses. I developed an empirical methodology to focus on how CBLT political ideologies permeate the classroom through teachers' practices. The results reveal that teacher agency is hindered by imposed external systems in the CBLT classroom and provide relevant information about how the university struggles to adapt and comply with the educative indicators. Overall, this study presents the challenges teachers face while implementing the CBLT model within the actual conditions of the Mexican educative system.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Gloria Carolina Pallanez Dávila

Title of thesis: Analysing Teacher Agency in an ELT Competency-Based BA Programme in Mexico, a Case Study

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission

Signature: ....Date: 28/07/2021

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Chapter 1 **Introduction**

Due to the neoliberal policies spread worldwide, a connection between education and the world of work is increasingly being sought. Nowadays, education focuses on the learning processes linked to the employment market and the measurable assessment of student progress. In response to such demands, Competency-Based programs have been widely implemented at all educative levels, including higher education. However, it is vital to understand the effects of this policy implementation and how educators deal with such requests. In addition, language programs have also been included in this modification, and English language teachers are required to prepare for this new challenge. The university I have selected has transformed all its programmes to CBE, including the B.A. in English Language Teaching (ELT), where future English teachers are trained. Therefore, I aim to evaluate how CBE within an ELT (Competency-Based Language Teaching: CBLT) context has been conducted. For this reason, this study is positioned within the field of language learning and teaching.

This study will investigate how Competency-Based Language Teaching impacts teacher agency. The present research attempts to understand how this international policy has permeated until reaching the main educative agents, teachers. From their perspective, teachers explain how they understand this policy and describe characteristics of the CBLT model. Furthermore, they explained how they implement the CBLT model and allowed me to access their classrooms and observe how this policy is being applied. In the end, teachers are the ones who decide what happens inside classrooms and have the power to determine what is learned. While thinking about this aspect, the following research questions have been formulated:

What impact does the CBLT model have on teacher agency, as observed in a Mexican BA in ELT programme?

Specific questions:

1. What elements of CBLT are carried out?
2. How has the CBLT model been understood and interpreted by teachers?
3. What underlying notions of the social model implicit within CBLT are found?
4. Do teachers resist CBLT? If so, why?
5. What features in my particular case study indicate a custom-made adaptation of the model?
6. What kind of students' learning outcomes are presented?

Chapter 1 Introduction

This qualitative study aims to analyse teacher agency under the Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) model that has been implemented in a B.A. of English Language Teaching in a state university in the Northwest region of Mexico. The main interest is to know how teachers deal with this model in classrooms and the dynamics surrounding assessment that evolve from this top-down policy implementation.

My interest in this topic evolved when I started working for Mexico's public primary school system years ago. I decided to teach English classes that were part of a new model to be implemented. The model was competency-based. During that time, I was studying for a master's degree in Competency-Based Education, and I was interested in the implementation of this new programme. As the programme was starting, I observed different inconsistencies within the system and how teachers were trying to understand this new way of working. Later that year, I started working in Higher Education and tried to include some CBLT and assessment elements. The university I work for is implementing CBE in their programs; however, in the B.A. ELT has taken a long time due to certain resistance. For that reason, I decided to research at a different state university that had an already established CBE programme.

This research offers a critical viewpoint about the implementation of CBLT in a language teaching context. Richards and Rodgers (2001) explained that Competency-Based Language instruction implements the Competency-Based Education Model in a Language teaching context. It focuses on what students can do with language instead of what is known about language. A complete definition was adapted by Grognet and Crandall (1982) as follows: "A competency-based curriculum is a performance-based outline of language tasks that lead to a demonstrated mastery of the language that is associated with specific skills that are necessary for individuals to function proficiently in the society in which they live." Like the communicative approach, the focus is on demonstrating mastery of the language necessary for the speaker to communicate. This model could be defined as what students know about language and what they do with language in real-life situations (Griffith, 2014). Although this research does not exclusively focus on language teaching, and different subjects imparted in the B.A. were observed and analysed, I developed the study within a CBLT context in Mexico.For this reason, the term Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) will be used throughout the text. However, the institutional policies and the participants of the study relate more to the CBE term. As explained above, CBLT uses the same curriculum planning and design structure as CBE.

Similarly, inside the classrooms, students are asked to demonstrate the competence that they reached. In this B.A. in ELT programme, learners are learning to be teachers and, at the same time, are learning about the English language. English is used as the medium of instruction in the

selected university. Furthermore, the CBE methodology can be applied to all subjects in the B.A., not only where English is explicitly taught. What will be researched during this study is how CBLT impacts teacher agency. That is, how teachers conduct learning by using the CBE policy as a reference and applying it to an ELT context.

The emphasis of the CBE model is on forming "employment competencies that are required to function efficiently in rapidly changing economies and subjected to competitive pressure" (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 7). Its detailed structure specifies how the accomplishment of the target competencies will be demonstrated through specific assessments. After all, CBE is based on constructivist pedagogy, and it places the student in the centre of learning (Schcolnik, Kol and Abarbanel, 2006). This study also intends to observe if there are hidden intentions to use the constructivist side of CBE and direct it to commercial purposes. Piazza (2014) claims that states have embraced a wide variety of reforms commonly considered part of the neoliberal agenda for school improvement, aiming to make public education function as a private business: "The enterprising language and skills required in the documents assisted in producing us as experts who could operate in the market … we provided services that could be measured, recorded and evaluated" (Silcock, Campbell and Hocking, 2014 p. 9).

Within the constructivist implications of CBE, a paradigm change is proposed where the student performs the leading role, and the teacher is no longer at the centre of the stage (Mitchell, Myles and Marsden, 2019). For that reason, I decided to study teacher agency to understand what teachers do and their role in conducting their students in learning and critical thinking. It could be argued that the underlying purpose of CBE is to use the constructivist pedagogy to direct students to the labour market to enhance productivity and position countries in a better place in the global exchange. It could also be discussed that this implies taking higher education to strengthen the neoliberal economic regimen. The key elements are teachers who provide an insight into how this strategy is reflected through their agency in classrooms.

To illustrate these phenomena, a case study will be carried out in Mexico in the country's Northwest region. The university selected has been working with CBE for about 11 years. The research was conducted within a B.A. of ELT, where future English teachers are being trained. The selected university transformed all their programs to CBE, including the B.A. in ELT. As a public institution, the university must be in constant adaptation because of the procedures of quality recognition and the changes that the current world faces, which lead to continuous reforms being made.

For this reason, the university had to transform to meet the quality and innovation challenges that higher education institutions encounter. The university experienced a transition process from

a programme based on objectives and learning components that integrated knowledge, skills and professional practice to a learner-centred, competency-based curriculum. According to the programs and the international and national policies implemented, the university has approved guidelines for adequate policy implementation. Following the constructivist evaluation model, the purpose is no longer the verification of knowledge. It becomes a competency assessment where students' progress and the levels of performance, maturity, and problem-solving skills are detected and measured to develop the learning process. This aspect is observed through academic outcomes programmed for each learning interaction and compared to the target competencies required. The programme proposes some assessment instruments that allow the compilation of information about the students' learning process, such as portfolios and integrative projects. Moreover, the educative model establishes an institutional evaluation system for teachers and students to gather data that helps to adjust the development of the different educative processes. Following, I will briefly describe the political and educative context in Mexico to have a contextual view of the development of the research.

1.1 **Mexican Political and Educative Context**

From the international perspective, Mexico, like many Latin American countries, is pressured by the existence of external political forces and globalisation that restricts its autonomy. For this reason, Mexico cannot deal with transnational issues like narcotraffic, migration, refugees and environmental damage by itself. The capacity for internal control is diminished due to the weak institutions that sustain the country. Such weaknesses derive from the corruption that lies within the public system. However, significant efforts are being put in place to combat it. The penetration of organised crime into the structures of power and corruption problems and impunity have weakened the conventions of good political practice (Fernández Saldaña *et al.*, 2015).

According to OECD (2019), within the educative area, 26% of young people in Mexico obtain a higher education degree during their lifetime, and Mexico trusts them to position the country in the global market. According to the OECD document, higher education should align better with the changing needs of the economy in Mexico. Almost half of the employers draw attention to a lack of competencies. Furthermore, they consider that education is not adequate for their needs. Moreover, employers can prescribe the curriculum in higher education. They have a determining voice in deciding the contents and the methods to be used. Employers are asked about the competencies required within their field to set the structure for CBE/CBLT curriculum design. Moreover, like any business, all the processes must be measured and assessed. Such

measurement is to observe the graduates' degree of productivity and know how effective and fruitful they will become in the labour market.

Even though there is no official general coordination among higher education institutions in Mexico, one of the ways of regulating is through institutions like, for instance, PRODEP (Programa para el Desarrollo Profesional Docente para el tipo Superior) that encourages quality by offering grants for teacher development. Another way of regulating higher education is through quality evaluation institutions that provide funding to meet international educative standards' proposed criteria. This is how Mexico aligns with the international models and tries to position the Mexican educative system in the global panorama. There has been an increase in the proportion of permanent academic personnel with postgraduate qualifications. However, the proportion of hourly-paid teachers is very high, and training and professional development initiatives are not frequent. Mexico is one of the worst evaluated in the PISA test (OECD, 2019). However, there has been an improvement in higher education that, in some cases, has led to overqualification.

From my perspective, employers are the ones that indicate what competencies are needed in higher education. In Mexico, employers expose a lack of connection between the acquired knowledge and the competencies that the higher education programmes develop. For OECD, quality in higher education and the guarantee of significant relevance for the employment market holds vital importance for Mexico to reach a stable, inclusive and sustainable growth in the global economy. As a consequence, CBE was proposed by international organisations like the Tunning project (González and Wagenaar, 2006) to increase the educative standards of the country and reach the expected economic growth.

English has become the primary foreign language taught in Mexico since English is taught from basic education to higher education. To follow the recommendations of international organisations, some universities in Mexico are introducing an internationalisation process, where all classes should be using English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). Even though Mexico recognises 69 native languages, including Spanish, Mexico has put a significant amount of effort and resources to impulse the English language and positioning the country in the global exchange. The intention is to connect worldwide instead of developing and strengthening the internal context. It seems that the underlying purpose of these plans is to connect with the world through education by using CBE/CBLT and English as an international language as a platform.

1.2 Contribution of the Study

The findings in this thesis can aid in understanding more in-depth the implementation of the CBE in a language context. Also, this inquiry could lead to a better insight into how teachers act in

response to the current educative policy by obtaining a deeper understanding of the participants' lived experiences of the phenomenon. Furthermore, this research could also help identify teachers' perceptions and factors influencing their agency. Moreover, this survey could help shed light on whether these external positions push teachers and take away their autonomy or if teachers appropriate this method and embrace it in practice. Another possibility is that teachers reject such policy implementation and simulate the curriculum change. Therefore, although agency and curriculum have been a topic of research lately, there are nevertheless gaps in the literature that involve agency and CBE in an ELT context that emphasise the critical role of teachers in implementing top-down political externalist positions. The main limitation of this study is that the findings can only be generalised to contexts with similar characteristics. However, the present research might shed some light on how an international educative policy has permeated the grassroots agents of local education. In the next section, I will explain the historical context of CBE/CBLT and how it has evolved to reach Latin-American countries, including Mexico.

1.3 **Historical Context**

 Competency-Based Education origins date to the decade of the 1960s in the United States under the umbrella of Teacher Training based on Performance (Torres *et al.*, 2014). Behavioural tasks were described in detail according to the needs of the industrial and commercial sectors that demanded results; the responsibilities were outlined in long lists with their respective assessment elements. This description was the most tangible vestige of the model; however; two decades later, in the United Kingdom, the Department of Employment published: *A New Training Initiative: A Programme for Action* (*A New Training Initiative (1981) - full text*, 1981) to increase and improve the competencies of the labour force due to the economic recession at the end of the decade. After this, different countries like Australia, Canada, Ireland and New Zealand incorporated this new approach to their professional training. Consequently, the phenomena were replicated in Spain and Asian countries during the 1990s so that they might become internationally competitive in higher education and the labour market; moreover, the same happened to Latin-American countries, including Mexico (De Asís, 2007).

The model has developed over the years, and different countries have embraced this approach in their public policies. This support is derived from recommendations of various international organisations like The United Nations Educative, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Tuning Project, which work to increase the quality of educative programs internationally. First of all, UNESCO proposed several objectives for the millennium development to promote access, equity and

quality in higher education that included education through competencies (UNESCO, 2017). Meanwhile, OCDE developed the DeSeCo Project (Definition and Selection of Competencies) in 1997 to promote the Competency-Based Education Model among its affiliated countries (OECD, 2017). Furthermore, The Tuning Project has also developed through Competency-Based Education as a means to focus on a methodology to design programs with an identified degree profile expressed in competencies (González and Wagenaar, 2006).

The Tuning Project has its roots in the Bologna Process, which was developed in Europe in 1999 to favour mobility, employability, and internationalisation. However, there are different conceptions of education based on competencies, and this aspect has led to confusion and misinterpretations among the term and methodology, driving in a lack of quality of implementation and didactic definition (Díaz-Barriga, 2011). For this reason, the Tuning Educative Structures in Europe was developed to offer a methodology to implement the Bologna Process at higher education institutions (Lokhoff *et al.*, 2010). It is stated that the primary objective of the Tuning Project was not to unify or harmonise, yet to look for points of convergence and understanding based on universities' diversity and autonomy by offering a reliable methodology to implement the Bologna Process (Lokhoff *et al.*, 2010). Advocates of the Tuning Project claim that the study programs would serve as a foundation for developing reference points to make studies comparable, compatible, and transparent (González and Wagenaar, 2008).

Around 2003, the Tuning Educative Structures in Europe expanded to other countries. In the case of Latin American institutions, the effort started to reformulate the study programs to favour flexibility and mobility in education. First, during the first phase of Tuning América Latina (2004-2007), a debate among different institutions took place to develop the quality, effectiveness, and transparency of the study programs. In the course of the second phase of the Tuning América Latina (2011-2013), profiles in fifteen thematic areas included in the project were presented: Administration, Agronomy, Architecture, Law, Education, Nursery, Physics, Geology, History, Informatics, Civil Engineering, Math, Medicine, Psychology, and Chemistry) (Arrollo *et al.*, 2014). In fact, according to the foundations of the Tuning project, these Degree Profiles should be based on a consultation process with all the interested stakeholders formed by professors, students, university graduates, employers, and professional organisations, which represent an essential link with the society needs (González and Wagenaar, 2006).

According to Chong and Castañeda (2013) the competency-based education approach in Mexico arises from the failure of the federal programme titled Sustitución de Importaciones (Import Substitution) developed during the 1960s. Indeed, the plan failed since the government used to subsidise industry, and as a result, the external debt was increased. The authors explain that the

government decided to sell all the subsidised industries. It transformed itself into a party with a neoliberal model; therefore, the country was forced to strengthen education and link it with the productive sector. History has repeated, and nowadays, Mexico has been influenced by this wave of policies aiming to internationalise education and strengthen the labour force. The objective is to place Mexico into a competitive global context to attract investors interested in the qualified workforce offered by the country. By being an affiliated member of OECD, UNESCO, and being part of the Tuning Project Latino America, Mexico holds a significant commitment to the accomplishment of international standards.

Nowadays, under the current government, various structural reforms in the primary fields of the economy of the country, including educative reform, have been taking place. The educative reform includes challenges at all levels of instruction; indeed, as mentioned above, within the Programa Sectorial de Educación de la SEP (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2018), it is stated that higher education should be oriented to the accomplishment of competencies required for the democratic, social, and economic development of the country. The aim is to consolidate a national system with projection and international competitiveness that allows graduates to answer the changing needs of regional and domestic environments (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2018). The following diagram illustrates the path that the international policies take until reaching higher education institutions internationally and, thus, grassroots participation.
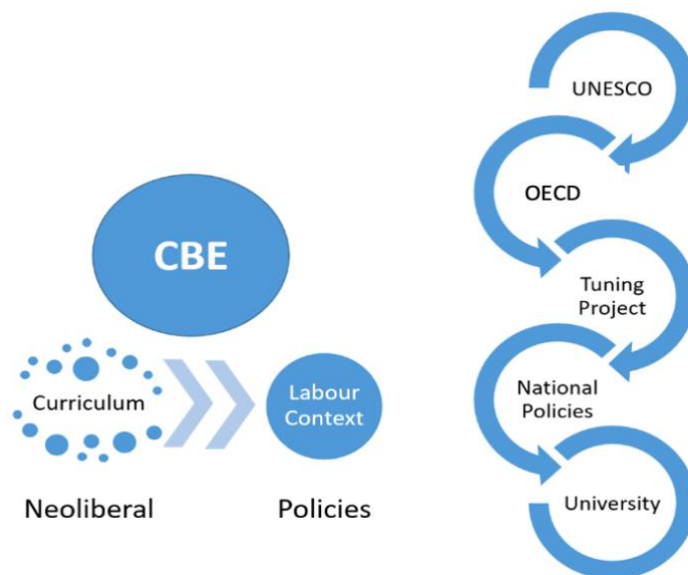
Figure 1. 1 Historical context

Figure 1.1 refers to how the CBE curriculum originated intending to link education to the labour context, with an implicit neoliberal tendency. Also, it explains how different international organisations and national policies have impacted the higher education model of the selected university.

Due to the procedures of quality recognition and the changes that the contemporary world face, continuous improvements must be made. For this reason, the University had to transform to meet the quality and innovation challenges that higher education institutions encounter. The University experienced a transition from a programme based on objectives and learning components that integrates knowledge, skills and professional practice to a learner-centred, competency-based curriculum. In this kind of curriculum, the aim of professors should not be to transmit knowledge but to facilitate its transmission. (Bader Bataineh and Tasnimi, 2014). Indeed, the new policy is based on a constructivist conception of learning where the student is the leading actor in the process and where "the development of didactic situations which stress the need to encourage greater participation in their own appropriation of scholarly knowledge" is promoted (Larochelle and Bednarz 1998, p.3).

Through this section, I presented an overview of this investigation. In chapter two, I will offer a critical discussion about CBE, CBLT and its implications for teachers and their agency. However, the particular interest of this research is the methodological approach for analysing data by using Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) and Critical Dispositive Analysis (CDA), which is one of the main contributions of this investigation and can be found in chapter three. I was able to have an in-depth view of the context concerning this case study, and I found fascinating results that will be presented, analysed and discussed in chapters four and five. Furthermore, chapter six will illustrate the most critical conclusions from this inquiry.

Chapter 2   **Theoretical Underpinnings**

In this chapter, I offer a critical position concerning the latest literature trends about the central aspects that influenced the development of this research. In the first section, I discuss CBE and CBLT theoretical foundations, teacher agency, assessment and the educative model of the university selected for this study to have a complete glimpse of the subject. Moreover, in the next section, the latest empirical studies are discussed and analysed to illustrate the relevance of the research and its unspoken implications.

2.1   **Competency-Based Education and Competency- Based Language Teaching**

The Competency-based approach has been proposed for different educative programs internationally. Nonetheless, the accomplishment of the model needs various modifications in several aspects of pedagogy practice, such as its conceptualisation, material selection, instructional strategies, as well as in the way in which data is gathered for assessment of the target competencies. According to CBE/CBLT advocates, it is also essential to place the learners' roles at the centre of learning. This is where teachers face the most challenging area. Thus, it is fascinating to observe if this transformation occurs or if it becomes a simulation or an adaptation of the model. Therefore, it is essential to note how teachers deal with this new challenge and how practitioners react to this educative policy. According to Biesta (2008), within the evidence-based models, there is a need to witness the correlation between input and output; however, he questions if all mental processes could be documented. The author states that following this approach takes beyond critical reasoning and gets us closer to technical practice. Furthermore, the danger lies in "evaluating what can be measured instead of measure what we value" (Biesta, 2008, p.43).

According to advocates of the model, the CBE/CBLT presents a standardisation of concepts that indicate the way as a map to accomplish the desired competencies (Marcelino, 2005). Furthermore, the curriculum takes content (from external standards and local goals) and shapes it into a plan for how to conduct effective teaching and learning. It is the map of how to achieve outputs of desired student performance (Richards, 2013). Nonetheless, Kumaravadivelu (2008) points out:

> Established methods are founded on idealised concepts geared toward idealised contexts. And, as such, they are removed from classroom reality… no idealised method can visualise all the variables in advance to provide context-specific solutions that practising teachers

badly need in order to tackle the challenges that confront every day of their professional

lives (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p.165).

That is to say, standardised education does not necessarily fit it the reality of students and, therefore, the reality of classroom needs. However, the educative innovations in the last 100 years have tried to overcome the so-called encyclopaedic teaching to progress from the abstract to the practical. For this reason, the model based on competencies has been proposed. Furthermore, it would be convenient also to analyse why the encyclopaedic teaching has not been eradicated from classrooms (Díaz-Barriga, 2011). For this reason, the analysis stated in this study intends to illustrate how the political pressures influence teachers, the primary agents of education. Therefore, this influence affects teachers' identities by imposing models that might not contrast with their beliefs. As Kumaradivelu (2008) states, "we have treated method as all-pervasive, all-powerful entity" (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p.165) and therefore, it is necessary to know the nature of teachers' reactions to these challenges, and what they perform in classrooms due to such demands. Through the next section, some of the components of the Competency-Based Language Teaching will be discussed, and the foundations of the topic will be presented.

2.2   CBLT and Constructivism

There are two different approaches to constructivism: cognitive constructivism and social constructivism. Piaget developed the perspective of cognitive constructivism, focusing on the internal construction of knowledge. In contrast, social constructivism, or the so-called sociocultural theory, developed by Vygotsky, focuses on the "key role played by the environment and the interaction between learners" (Schcolnik, Kol and Abarbanel, 2006, p.13). The premise underpinned by social constructivists lies in doing rather than observing. According to Duffy and Cunningham, (1996) learning is seen as a process, and it requires an active involvement on the part of the learner. Furthermore, Schcolnik, Kol and Abarbanel (2006) mention that "Construction of knowledge leads to authentic learner authorship and ownership. Knowledge becomes part of the learner, and the learner emerges empowered" (p. 14). This empowerment could be considered as an *appropriation*. Moreover, *appropriation* is defined by sociocultural theorists to "describe the learning or internalisation by an individual or socially constructed knowledge" (Mitchell, Myles and Marsden, 2019, p. 410).

Within the sociocultural theory, learning is assisted by a more knowledgeable other. This more knowledgeable other could be an instructor or a classmate who supports the student to reach the next development step. Mitchel, Miles and Marsden (2019) explain that the individual is capable of autonomous functioning and self-management, that is, of self-regulation typically mediated

through language. The idea is that students work collaboratively with peers or with the facilitator. As sociocultural theorists will say, this collaboration will enhance their skills and knowledge until they master or appropriate it.

Furthermore, the next development step is the so-called "Zone of Proximal Development", where more knowledge is offered to the learner. Moreover, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is defined by Vygotsky as "the difference between the child's developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygostky, 1978, p.85, cited in Mitchell, Miles and Marsden, 2019). Additionally, sociocultural theorists describe ZPD as a "term to describe learners' potential to solve problems just beyond their current, level under guidance." ZPD (within the EFL field) assumes that new language knowledge is jointly constructed through collaborative talk, which may or may not involve formal instruction and metatalk. The new language is then internalised by the learners, seen as active agents in their development, (Mitchell, Myles and Marsden, 2019, p. 293)

Therefore, learners could be guided by the facilitator or peers through collaborative work in the Zone of Proximal Development. That is, learners can advance in their knowledge or skills through a denominated *scaffolding* process. *Scaffolding* provides temporary and graduated support for learners undertaking a new task through dialogue with experts of peers (p. 420). Scaffolding models and provides sequence helping to guide discussions. Glasersfeld, (1995) states that concepts need to be conceived and cannot be transferred:

> The familiar and inaccurate metaphor of the mind as a container waiting to be filled is replaced by the metaphor of the mind as an agent actively seeking to satisfy its curiosity and resolve troubling issues... and knowledge is seen as a construct to be pieced together through an active process of involvement and interaction with the environment (Schcolnik, Kol and Abarbanel, 2006, p.12).

Scaffolding is a technique used to support learners through their gradual understanding of the concepts or objects. Moreover, scaffolding is an interaction between experts and students that facilitates knowledge construction. To construct knowledge, the learning environment should not impart knowledge but support it. The learning dynamic should be through an exposition of materials, experiences, and learning situations to build knowledge inductively. Moreover, scaffolding is seen as "the process of supportive dialogue which directs the attention of the learner to key features of the environment, and which prompts them through successive steps of a problem" (Mitchell, Miles and Marsden, 2019, p. 288-289). In summary, *scaffolding* could be

defined as the help and guide that the learner receives through collaborative work to foster learning.

I am in favour of the constructivist side of the CBLT approach. The student is the one that should explore and interact with the contents to experience the learning process. Such experience will aid the students in being aware of the steps to reach their learning goals. When education is focused on the students' development and students are in the centre stage, they also learn to self-regulate and become empowered and autonomous. However, the role of the facilitator is to guide, help and support. Provide students with enough tools to practise and develop their learning through the ZPD and scaffolding. Overall, the facilitator should present different content perspectives and help students become critical learners. He or she also needs enough time to trace a plan for each student's development to accomplish that.

Moreover, teachers' labour conditions and resources should be according to the time required to develop the CBLT approach. I will discuss this aspect through the development of the present study and present the perspective practising teachers have about implementing this educative policy. In this section, the constructivist side of CBLT was discussed. Moreover, in the following subsection, the distinct terminology concerning the competency term and CBLT was reviewed and analysed.

2.3 Competencies

The concept of competence is presented as "a dynamic combination of cognitive and metacognitive skills, knowledge and understanding, interpersonal, intellectual and practical skills, and ethical values" (Lokhoff *et al*. 2010, p.52). Argudin (2010), simplifies the term summarising it to knowledge in execution, and explains that being competent implies comprehending how to interpret and perform in different sceneries. However, Tobón (2008), develops the concept and integrates the fact of pertinent acting and moral engagement: "Competencies are more than knowledge in context because they go beyond acting, and besides, they imply commitment and will to do things with clarity, and understanding" (p.10). The fact that competencies integrate students' attitudes and values implies a broader conception of the term to prepare students for their sociocultural context. In summary, being competent means: performing according to the presented challenges. It is essential to mention that there is not a unified theory to sustain the competencies curriculum, and different definitions of the term emerge from different perspectives. The following table presents various definitions of the competency term:

Table 2.1 Competency Definitions

Bader Bataineh and Tasnimi, (2014)	A competency may be a task, a role, or a function which changes over time and will vary from context to context.
Acuña *et al*. (2012)	A competency is the capacity to move knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a relevant way to solve problems or perform tasks in specific context of situations.
González and Wagenaar, (2006).	Competencies represent a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills, capacities and values. The objective of the curriculum is the promotion of these competencies.
OECD (2017).	The skill to successfully satisfy the complex requirements in a determined context through the movements psychosocial prerequisites that include cognitive and no cognitive aspects.
Díaz, Arceo and Bravo, (2014).	The possibility of moving and integrate diverse knowledge and cognitive resources when in front of an untold situation, so the person needs to show a capacity to solve complex and open problems in different sceneries and moments. The person is required to reconstruct knowledge and to invent, propose a solution or make decisions around possible action courses in a reflexive way, taking into account the foundations that sustain his or her way of acting in such situation.
Lokhoff *et al*. (2010).	Competence is a quality, skill, capacity that belongs and is developed by the student. Meanwhile, learning outcomes allow us to measure the level of the acquired competence.
Acuña *et al*. (2012).	To efficiently continue developing establishing a functional equivalence among different conditions to the ones initially trained, and being able to identify and propose examples in which such practical relation maintains.

As it can be noted, most of the definitions concentrate on facts and visual performance. Such inclinations reaffirm critiques of different scholars towards the model where it is proclaimed that CBE holds a tenor to produce technically-oriented automatized students trained to solve simulated and predetermined situations in the classroom. Nevertheless, from my perspective, being a technician is not enough in the knowledge area, considering that unique and complex challenges where critical analysis and mental processes that cannot be dictated, traced and demonstrated through technical proof are expected.

In addition, the above definitions directly or indirectly converge in the terms: "efficiency" and "problem-solving." What is sought is that the student can adapt to different sceneries efficiently through an ethical stance. Also, the state of the art of studies involving CBLT shows some studies concerning this matter (Auerbach, 1986; Bader Bataineh and Tasnimi, 2014; Aziz, 2016; Lukindo, 2016; Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei, 2016; Dwi-Hatmanto, 2017; Ryder *et al.* 2018). However, more

studies are needed to investigate CBLT since it is a widely spread policy. Following, I present some definitions of the competency term found in some recent studies about the topic.

Table 2.2 Competency-Based Language Teaching Definitions

Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei (2016)	CBLT is an interaction of realities of language means the social context and the communication needs of students.
Bader Bataineh and Tasnimi (2014)	CBLT addresses what the learners are expected to do rather than what they are expected to learn about.
Bader Bataineh and Tasnimi (2014)	CBLT classroom must be oriented towards the ability to complete a real-world task.
Auerbach, (1986, p.413)	"CBAE/ESL reflects the shift from viewing language learning as an end in itself to viewing it as a mean for learners to achieve their own individual goals."

As can be seen, the above definitions are centred on the use of language with communication purposes derived from the social context. All descriptions address "doing with the language" rather than "learning about the language" and focus on performance. As I mentioned in the introduction, this study will not focus exclusively on language but on CBE curriculum implementation in a BA of ELT context. However, students are perfecting their language while studying the BA, and for that reason, this study is considered CBLT. Following this, Auerbach (1986) draws a framework about the state of the art of CBLT and illustrates eight key features to serve as a skeleton of the CBE model in ELT. This framework concentrates on the underpinnings of CBE applied to an ELT context. I summarised the main characteristics that she draws; however, I will discuss all the features presented in this section throughout this chapter.

Auerbach (1986) summarises the main characteristics of the theory about how CBE is applied to an ELT context. She also emphasises the focus on performance and the demonstration of knowledge as proof of learning. In language learning, she states that language is separated into chunks to make it more manageable; moreover, breaking content into manageable stages is a characteristic of CBLT. Also, the content should be based on the working market needs. The author carefully reviews the foundations of the model and its implementation.

In addition, Auerbach (1986) offers a critical perspective on the CBLT model implementation and presents critics of the model in ESL. The author directly emphasises the CBLT model's implicit neoliberal system. She discusses the CBLT theoretical assumptions or social implications in the existing socio-economic order. The author stresses the need for further debate rather than what she considers uncritical acceptance of competency-based systems. She analyses the curriculum

and relates it to the social implications that this takes. Here, the function of education is to transmit this knowledge and to socialise learners according to the values of the dominant socio-economic group (Auerbach, 1986).

I agree with her perspective since the author analyses the curriculum and its repercussions on society and how, at the same time, education is influenced by the neoliberal stance taken by a globalised civilisation. However, CBLT is focused on results and the process taken to reach the aims previously set. From my perspective, this kind of curriculum puts education in a predicament since the purposes are set by the employers' needs that require students for specific tasks, limiting learning to those skills. Therefore, I also agree when the author puts forth a discussion about the curriculum and its social implications. Furthermore, the author emphasises the need for engagement in an informed debate: "if critical thinking is to be a goal for our students, it must be a goal for us as educators in the same way" (Auerbach, 1986, p.426). The more informed and alert educators are about the model and the social implications derived from this political implementation, the more influence can have on students to exercise their critical judgment. At the same time, teachers will encourage the development of thinking skills. Thus, there is a need for a critical thinking society that could be empowered by higher education. First, however, it would be best to start with critical education models to reach such purposes. As I mentioned, I will further discuss the characteristics of the model within the present chapter. The following section will examine the CBLT curriculum design steps to have a broader context of this top-down policy implementation.

2.4 CBLT Curriculum Design

According to the model advocates, although graduate profiles consider international and national policies to start planning a CBLT curriculum, a local and national needs analysis is critical. Furthermore, the employers' opinion is considered to formulate the profile demanded by the industry. In order to begin preparing the CBLTcurriculum, the generic and transversal competencies should be considered. After completing the graduate profile, the elaboration of the didactical sequences originates.

Meanwhile, the didactical sequence displays the outlined procedures to promote the learner to attain the target competencies; accordingly, all this process should be aligned to the graduate profile and, therefore, to the regional and global society needs. Furthermore, the didactical sequence specifies the students' outcomes that illustrate the attainment of the target competencies and displays the alignment of the graduate profile with the local and global society expectations. Thus, assessment represents a determining aspect of the CBLT curriculum,

considering it is where the learning process crowns. Hence, all learning outcomes, products or pieces of evidence contribute to the competency development arranged to the graduate profile. The following figure summarises the CBLT curriculum design.
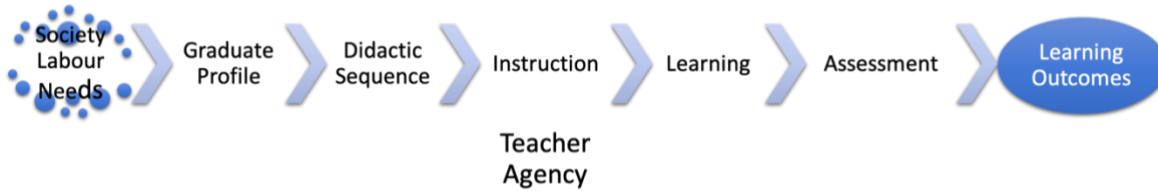
Figure 2. 1 Curriculum Design

Figure 2.1 explains how the CBLT curriculum is planned. The planning begins based on the society's labour needs, and it goes through several stages, ending in the assessment and learning outcomes. According to its advocates, all the elements of the CBLT curriculum should be carefully aligned.

Furthermore, it is essential to understand teacher agency within a model where teachers are considered facilitators of learning and asked to follow a predetermined sequence or plan. It is necessary to emphasise a list of competencies that, according to such design, teachers should fulfil to support their students while reaching the target competencies. Moreover, it would be intriguing to understand how teachers' expectations relate to their identity and professional experience. If the teacher feels "competent" to teach and evaluate through a CBE curriculum and if he or she can connect to it, follow it, accommodate it, or resist it. In addition, it is vital to understand if such method, can fit into practice to the different kinds of learning needs and teaching styles. Kumaravadivelu (2008) presents the following argument towards methods that claim to be universal, as it is the aim of CBLT, in the following excerpt:

> Our quest for the best method has always directed us toward finding a universal, ahistorical method that can be used anywhere and everywhere. Several drawbacks are inherent in this outlook. First of all, established methods are founded on idealised concepts geared toward idealised contexts. And, as such, they are far removed from classroom reality. Because learning and teaching needs, wants, and situations are unpredictably numerous, no idealised method can visualise all the variables in advance in order to provide context-specific solutions that practising teachers badly need in order to tackle the challenges they confront every day of their professional lives… Secondly, our search for a universally applicable method has been pre-dominantly and inevitably a top-down exercise. That is, the conception and construction of methods have been largely guided by a one-size-fits-all,

cookie-cutter approach that assumes a common clientele with common goals
(Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p. 167).

As mentioned above, in the specific case of CBLT, a local planning and local needs analysis is performed while conducting curriculum design; however, it is still, as Kumaravadivelu suggests, a top-down exercise. This study aims to shed light on whether these externalists' positions push teachers and take away their liberty in teaching, freedom of thought, and autonomy, or if they appropriate this method and embrace it in practice. Therefore, although agency and curriculum have been a topic of research lately, there are nevertheless gaps in the literature that involve agency and CBLT and emphasise the critical role of teachers in implementing top-down political externalists positions. Further investigations are needed where future language teachers are being formed and will face CBLT challenges within their teaching areas. As I state below, curriculum planning within competency-based education makes a detailed alignment between what employers ask for, what is taught in class, and what is demonstrated in knowledge and assessment.

As I mentioned in the introduction, this type of curricular planning puts higher education, at the service of business entities who determine what will or will not be taught in the classroom. This is evidence of how the capitalist system has infiltrated the educative actors to adapt the educative content for the convenience of the companies' economic purposes. As will be discussed later, the education aim is under debate. The debate is among those who think education aims to enlighten students' minds, open their perspectives and allow them to evolve from a mental and practical perspective, and among those who have already naturalised education to obtain employment and advance the social and economic ladder. The following section discusses the Metropolitan University's educative model to provide a more comprehensive view of the context in which this case study evolved.

2.5 **Educative Model of the Metropolitan University (MU)**

This section presents the foundations of the educative model stipulated at the university selected. Nowadays, all the programs across the university are based on this model, including postgraduate programs. To preserve the anonymity of the university, I omitted the name of the programme. However, the model focuses on students' learning and competencies, which are the CBE approach's core.

According to the programme, the change of the educative model was due to the accelerated transformation of the different scopes of social organisation, determined by economic, politic, technologic, and cultural nature. The interactions produced among such factors constitute

phenomena like globalisation and the society of knowledge. Such elements frame the most defined changes that the educative programs experiment with, especially in higher education. Undoubtedly, the CBE focus has emerged due to the global economy's changes and affected the educative programs as a domino effect. For these reasons, the university transformed its' programs to be aligned with the global educative policies.

According to the document, teachers, students, and educative structures must be flexible to adapt to the global educative policies. One of the main characteristics that the educative model of the selected university promotes is flexibility. Flexibility summarises the new way of understanding the relationships in different areas of society. In this sense, we talk about the flexibility of times and space, knowledge, assignments, and work relationships. Flexibility to adapt to new situations and labour contexts, move to different regions of countries, and coordinate with workers from other parts of the world who participate in the same business's production process. Flexibility to learn and update in any space (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 6).

According to this posture, flexibility becomes a value that the individual must own to survive in the new context. Flexibility is expressed in four areas through the document:
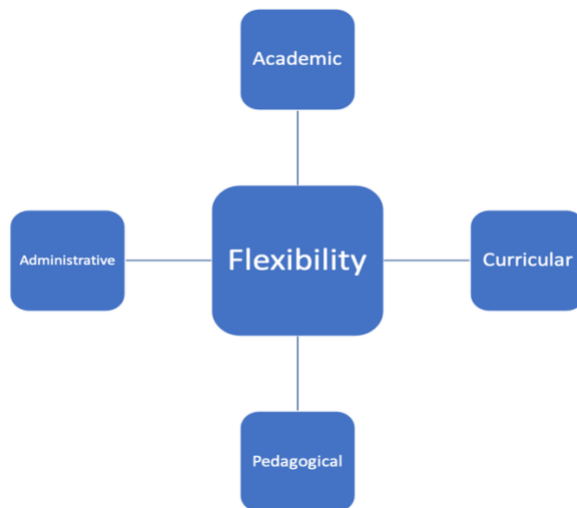
Figure 2. 2 Flexibility within the MU based on the educative model

As seen in figure 2.2, flexibility is a crucial element in the educative model in the MU. In the academic area, flexibility should predominate within the relation and organisation of the different MU academic campuses. Flexibility should also exist within the curricular area, and that implies the organization of contents, areas, subjects, cycles, and modules. Within the pedagogical area,

flexibility refers to the possibilities of change during the teaching process and the use of instruments that favour the teaching process. Flexibility implies the generation and the update of rules, procedures, and general conditions that favour the operation of study plans. Such flexibility presents several advantages, like incrementing the intra-institutional mobility and students' and teachers' international mobility. Another aspect that flexibility offers is that the programs and studies from other institutions could be recognised and credited.

Furthermore, *flexibility* is "the constant adaptation of the tasks related to products, processes, and markets that change. It is also viewed as the workers' growing autonomy that requires more skills and self-management, as well as individual responsibility." (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 6). However, using the words `products', `process', and `markets' in the definition of flexibility is a clear example of the economy's influence on the language used in educative documents, especially in higher education. This kind of language selection is due to the relationship that higher education institutions have with the labour market. The CBE approach's connections with the employment sector rule the educative models and their structure. Also, the following excerpt evidence this aspect:

> "There is a considerable demand for work positions... half-time jobs, hiring based on products and specific results, flexible work schedule and self-employment is increasing in all the societies. At the same time, the changes pointed out also generate new occupations, generally based on competencies of symbolic analysis of a high level of abstraction and communicative and interpersonal competencies" (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 6).

It is evident in the last fragment that the educative model's emphasis is to occupy labour positions (operative, occupational). This is one of the prominent critics of the CBE model. However, higher education institutions were created to enlighten society and open the pupils' minds to reflect, question, challenge, create, and serve their community. Within the paradigm shift, the student is considered the leading actor, assuming an active role in searching, analysing, and integrating knowledge. The pupil requires planning, supervision and assessment activities developed with the facilitator's guidance. The teacher becomes a facilitator; moreover, this terminology change brings a shift in connotation, no longer putting the teacher as the one who transmits knowledge but as the one who facilitates it to pupils. The document refers precisely to the paradigm change in higher education. There is a shift from a tradition characterised by high specialisation, long duration and theoretical overload that ended up with professionals and technicians "highly specialised but with a limited occupational performance" (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 6). Therefore, according to the model, the accumulation of

information and knowledge is not that important as it is the formation of general competencies needed for taking advantage of diverse opportunities of preparation for work" (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 6). The primary purpose is no longer the formation of specialised students. Therefore, the text remarks on the importance of education for work. Education focused on work is one of the main criticisms of the CBE model.

The traditional focus of education is being abandoned and substituted for another that emphasises the formation of fundamental competencies. That is, in the development of superior cognitive competencies (those that allow an efficient performance in complex situations, such as problem-solving, learning to learn and decision-making). The emphasis is also put on forming "employment competencies that are required to function efficiently in rapidly changing economies and are being subjected to competitive pressure" (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 7). In this section of the text, there is a reference to superior cognitive competencies that insist on problem-solving, learning, and decision-making. The educative model intends to go far away from the exhaustive teaching to get involved in practical education. However, at the same time, superior cognitive competencies are contemplated. Therefore, it would be interesting to observe how these superior cognitive competencies are undertaken inside classrooms. Within the text of the MU educative model, there is a tendency to promote continual learning because of the continuous change of knowledge and information. At the same time, the neoliberal tendency in education is evident in the following quote:

> "Due to the growing complexity of the production of goods and services, technical and general, society demands a more generic and interdisciplinary formation. It obligates to reconsider the standards of performance described in the student profile "(Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 8).

This fragment has a marked neoliberal tendency on this higher education programme when talking about `goods and services', `performance', and `professional profiles'. The model is planned for the nowadays world labour conditions, however; from my perspective, some aspects of critical thinking are set apart. It is evident in this document that the institution's priority is to have students prepared to obtain a job and to make them fit into the neoliberal wave. At the same time, this neoliberal model keeps growing like a snowball. Nevertheless, neoliberalism promotes consumerism, and hence, the environmental conditions are more detrimental each day. Furthermore, developing countries like Mexico only serve rich countries as suppliers of natural resources and the manufacture of goods, exploiting the geographic areas and polluting our environment. With the neoliberal focus, the capital will always be first, substituting the ethical values that must be preserved in a democratic society. I believe that the purpose of education

should open windows and doors to critical thinking that supports local and national development. The characteristics of the MU educative model have been discussed in this section. Following, I will address the sociocultural theory, which serves as a framework for the present study.

2.6 **Sociocultural Theory**

The sociological perspective examines how the mind is changed through sociocultural artefacts to which the person has been exposed. In this case, "their mental system had been reformed as a result of their participation in a culturally specified activity known as schooling". (Lantolf, 2004, p. 5). The author explains that mediational means are tools to help transform apprentices' reasoning. According to Mitchell, Myles and Marsden, (2019) the figure that has given more pertinence to the sociocultural theory in second language learning is James Lantolf, who has shown applications to the Vygotskian Theories to second language learning by pronouncing that language works as a mechanism to carry out reasoning.

The central thought of the sociocultural theory is that learning is mediated by mechanisms that enable us to transform, negotiate or regulate education (Lantolf, 2004). Some of the tools that help us modify the environment are symbolic, such as numbers, music, art, and language. We use those symbols to mediate between us and the world surrounding us. Within the sociocultural theory Van Lier (2008) developed the ecological perspective on language learning and teaching based on Vygotsky's ideas of mediation. Furthermore, the ecological perspective encourages us to reconceptualise learning as perpetually contextualised, where the language and the learner are influenced by the place, the time, the others, the goals, and the motives. From this viewpoint, everything correlates and is comprehended as an entire entity. The ecological approach lies within the sociocultural perspective of language learning. It explores the connection between the individual and its sociocultural context.

Van Lier inspires us to contemplate distinct methodologies regarding ecosystems and abandon the input and output ideas in language teaching. He acknowledges the value of integrating the zone of proximal development, considering that learning concerns the development of skills for learners to compromise and engage in a setting. According to this panorama, pedagogy should be further adjustable and eradicate the notion of ready-made models to promote improvisation based on the sensitivity of trainees' natural abilities and their inherent progress.

As a result, the ecological approach will be the lens to explore teacher agency in the present study. Some relevant studies support this view while analysing agency (Van Lier, 2004; Priestley, Biesta and Robinson, 2012; Kalaja *et al.* 2015) stating that teachers' actions depended on the environment to develop their pedagogical practices. Ryder *et al.* (2018) mention that the

sociocultural perspective is the most appropriate for capturing the ongoing complexities of workplace practices; nevertheless, agency is focused on the individual. Furthermore, the ecological approach is focused on the environment and how it affects the decisions made by individuals. Therefore, it is interesting to know how the atmosphere of the educative policy of CBE influences what is happening within the decision-making context of teaching and learning in the classroom. Agency observed through the ecological perspective is based on action-theoretical approaches where agents " critically shape their responses to problematic situations." (Biesta *et al*. 2015, p.625) and how agents, in this case, teachers, are committed to "temporal-relational context for action, not a quality of the actors themselves" (p.626). In the next section, the concept of *agency* will be presented and discussed.

2.7 **Agency**

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) mention that *agency* is the interplay between the following dimensions: Routine, which is the acquired pattern of action; purpose, which is the motivating force of the individuals, and judgment which shows engagement with the actual situations in the moment of action (Emibayer and Mische, 1998, p.963). The authors mention that the past also influences agency by offering an orientation towards the future and demonstrating a commitment to the present. That is, teachers' background experience reflects directly on their actions. At the same time, they adequate their baggage of knowledge to the present context and continue adapting what they know to future scenarios. Furthermore, authors define agency as:

> Temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments- the temporal-relational context of action- which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgment, both reproduces and transforms these structures interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations. (Emirbayer and Mische (1998).

 Furthermore, agency is not a quality that individuals possess; however, it is an action that people take based on their context and their beliefs of what fits best to each situation. Moreover, as stated by Priestley *et al.* (2012, p.3) "agency is not something that people have, is something that people do". Additionally, agency is based not on the objective reality but in the subjective reality, their reality (p. 14).

As mentioned above, quality recognition organisations invite higher education institutions to transform and meet their quality criteria. Such transformation relies on teachers' acceptance or rejection of a policy that has been required. Observing how this model has been addressed inside the classrooms is relevant. Therefore, teachers are recognised as agents in learning and teaching processes with the capability to operate within their environment (Kalaja *et al.*, 2015). A

comprehensive definition of agency is seen as "a sociocultural capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2001, p. 112). Thus, "agency is not only concerned with what is observable, but it also involves not visible behaviours, beliefs, thoughts and feelings; all of which must be understood in relation to the various context and affordances from which they cannot be abstracted" (Mercer, 2012, p. 42).

Since schools are continually required to respond to policies or educative reforms, this study intends to know how such ecology permeates educative agents by alternating with their ideologies, identities, requirements, and concrete actions. Also, the present survey intends to know if professors accept, adapt or ignore the structural changes that come as a trickle-down effect. From this perspective, professors are not perceived as individuals relegated to follow instructions but as capable of managing policies and implementing them or not in their actual and local context. I selected the ecology perspective since it allows us to observe the unique relationship that individuals construct with their environment and the effect of this relationship on their actions.

2.8   Assessment under CBE/CBLT

In broad terms, assessment is a valuation in any situation. In particular terms, the expression in education has evolved and it has become the method of instruction. In this direction, assessment is an opportunity for educating; and it reaches this approach when it serves as the base for what students can and must do to continue their education. When assessing, educators value the reality that forms part of a process and in which previous moments are a collection of information about that reality. Therefore, the following stages are about information and decision making to make a judgment. (Garcia Ramos, 1989).

Although we do not teach to approve, we train, and we learn to reach an integral formation as people (Casanova, 2008), according to CBE, assessment is the spine of education, the highest motivation, and the focus point where teachers and students focus their attention. That is to say; assessment represents the core of the whole CBE project (Klein-Collins, 2013). Therefore, assessment strongly influences the way how students learn and how teachers teach by focusing on what assessment requires (Alderson and Wall, 1993). The transition to the new curriculum paradigm urges us to reconsider the concept of assessment in order to be able to cover the different competency areas. For this reason, both teachers and students need to assume new roles within CBE by making the required changes in their own actions in order to find learning more effective and useful (Bader Bataineh and Tasnimi, 2014).

There is a clear correlation between instruction, learning and assessment under the CBE approach. Therefore, assessment, learning and instruction should be aligned with each other

(Baartman *et al.* 2007). These three elements represent a symbiosis and consequently, congruence among them needs to be preserved. According to CBE advocates, assessment is not simply the conclusion of the course, but it represents the fundamental steering component, and it is directly connected to learning outcomes (Lokhoff *et al.* 2010). Within the competency-based programs, assessment represents an influential part that must be lined with the other elements of curriculum planning like the graduate profile and the society's employment needs. The role of assessment is to confirm with substantial proof that the pupil accomplished the established competencies in the graduate profile. For this reason, it is said that assessment is a fundamental element of the CBE approach.

Therefore, it is essential to state that within CBE curriculum planning, there should be an alignment of the main elements of the model, which are instruction, learning and assessment. At the same time, these elements should be aligned with societal employment needs. In addition, congruence among these three elements should be preserved in a CBP. Since this model is based on the demonstration of competencies and the required employment skills, assessment represents the core of the CBE/CBLT curriculum. All these elements are already preestablished within curricular planning and the so-called didactic sequences where educative strategies and the assessment processes are suggested to the facilitator to help students achieve their competencies. In this case, the facilitator counts on an established guide to attaining student competencies. It is debatable if all the students should go through the same learning process to meet the target competencies or if all of them learn differently.

On the other hand, a diagnostic assessment could be applied at the beginning of the course to extend more personalised attention to each student. From this perspective, it would be essential to know what logistics teachers use to provide individualised attention to each student and if this personalised aspect of the CBE is logistically possible by teachers in classrooms. It is interesting to know if the agentic role of the teacher is relegated to a facilitator or if the teacher's position plays a determining role in the implementation of the educative policies.

 Within CBE, assessment and activities must be authentic. Authentic assessment requires the measurement of real-world tasks (Bader Bataineh and Tasnimi, 2014). In addition, Díaz, Arceo and Bravo (2014) mention that students must resolve complex and authentic tasks while using their previous knowledge to solve real problems. It would be interesting to know how this aspect could be performed in classrooms and if it is feasible in the conditions where teachers work. There are different procedural and administrative aspects that practising teachers need to accomplish to develop a class. Therefore, this study could aid in understanding whether the activities planned are authentic and if it is possible to conclude them in practice. However, Ryohei (2017) points out

another issue addressed while using evidence-based approaches, which is the fabrication and falsification of data. The author states that "as the competition to avoid penalties, stipulated by incentives, grows ever fiercer, intrinsic motivation toward education fades, and as the professional ethic of self-regulation is lost, the fabrication and falsification of evidence take centre stage" (Ryohei, 2017, p. 106). Teachers might be encouraged to fabricate data that fits the requirements of the model, intending to receive incentives or avoid penalties. The elaboration of fake data would represent a significant failure of a model where evidence-based practices are the driving characteristics of the approach. According to Kaplan (2010), assessment should be as specific as possible for students to practice the actual uses of language within the perspective of language teaching and the communicative methods. Therefore, the thematic covered in the curriculum should be pragmatic and should also be considered as the base criteria to contrast students' performance. The author mentions that outcome-based approaches represent essential advantages over standardised tests since a significant alignment between assessment and learning should be made. However, the author also pointed out that such outcome-based programs could result problematic in operating "for a variety of political, technical and practical reasons" (Kaplan, 2010, p.465).

Furthermore, when talking about CBE assessment, the "intention is to measure the skills and knowledge against a prescribed professional standard...any mismatch between what is taught and required for the world of work is clearly problematic" (Biemans *et al.,* 2004, cited in Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013, p. 13). It may be the case that the curriculum is carefully prescribed and full of activities planned for what is "authentic." If the teacher decides to add events that go away from that path and these activities are not related to the world of work, then the activities are not fulfilling the objectives of the CBE curriculum:

> If unrealistic and de-contextualised settings are used to assess learning so that the situations confronting students in the assessment are not similar to those found embodied in the complexity of most workplaces, then learners' capacity for professional practice may not be appropriately developed (Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013, p. 13).

This quote states that all the actions planned within the CBE curriculum have to be linked to the world of work. Otherwise, the activities and the time that teachers might employ in developing other areas that they consider fundamental for higher education students or that might improve students' creativity to develop aspects not yet created are considered useless.

CBE/CBLT involves formative and alternative assessments within educative programs (Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013). However, from my point of view, this is inconsistent with the

external standardised evaluations in the international rankings of education, for instance, Enlace, Exani, and PISA, where the focus is on knowledge, concepts, and critical thinking.   Furthermore, Garfolo and L'Huillier (2016) emphasise that "the real issue with Competency-Based Education is the assumption that knowledge of a skillset is the only function that higher education provides". The authors state that "there is an unseen immeasurable dimension to higher education that cannot be put into a rubric or written as a learning outcome."

Moreover, another criticism of the CBE assessment is that while dividing competencies into small chunks of objectives, this type of education limits critical thinking. Furthermore, it also limits discovery learning as well as creativity. According to (Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei, 2016), the assessment process itself imposes concentration on lower-order skills or creativity is more complicated and less amenable to quantification. Norris (1991) mentions that the model is focused on practical learning outcomes instead of looking at the process as a whole. This aspect does not guarantee that the student will develop adequately in a variety of contexts.

Nevertheless, there is an interesting debate about the educative ideologies, where the focus is not on education *per se* but on the fragmentation between teaching and learning. "We are witnessing a growing trend to avoid 'education' and to focus exclusively instead on 'learning and teaching', narrowly conceived as being of 'quality', 'evidence-based', measurable and having a presumed 'impact' on student learning outcomes "(Webster, 2017, p.61) . The discussion regards whether higher education has the objective of forming democratic citizens or if the interest is merely for commercial purposes.   "Such tendencies reduce training to tangible outcomes, teaching and learning to visible operations, is very adaptable to interdisciplinary research, hybrid business and the globalised society" (Ryohei, 2017, p. 102) with the primary aim of survival. According to Webster, "educative teaching ought to be understood as a philosophically and scientifically informed art undertaken by professionals who are democratically and intellectually free to make their own professional judgements in pursuit of the public good" (p.71). Furthermore, democracy is defined as "intellectual freedom which needs to be fought for" (Walters, 2016). This fight is in the sense of being politically active rather than passive: "Education is primarily moral and political in nature, and therefore professional educators ought to be able to deliberate critically and intelligently in order to make professional judgements, rather than simply be compliant unthinking 'appliers' of dogmatic principles which are not supported by education research" (Webster, 2017, p.71).

There are various assessments, and the variety depends on the target of the activity presented. The first type is the summative assessment; this kind of assessment is made at the end of a stage of teaching and learning to verify results. It determines if the objectives were achieved or not. In

the end, teachers assign a grade to students. However, it does not allow the student to improve since this type is designed to determine whether the student has mastered the competency or not (Bader and Tasnimi, 2014).

Valuation of students' previous knowledge, background, and perspectives are considered in the diagnostic assessment, the second type. Its primary objective is to know the students' starting point and acknowledge that learners do not bring an "empty box" but carry experiences to their learning process. The diagnostic assessment is made at the beginning of learning to identify aspects that could complicate the process intended to develop. Within the Competency-based Model, previous knowledge is essential to achieve competencies. This type of assessment is made to determine the student's level of proficiency in order for them to know what they need to do to meet the competency standards. (Bader and Tasnimi, 2014). The facilitator and the student know where further effort can be redirected (Lokhoff *et al.*, 2010).

The third type is the formative assessment which aims to build and enhance competencies in learners. Formative assessment is concentrated on the value of the process, with immediate feedback and a search for constant improvement. Formative assessments are employed to define how well a learner is improving along the path to competency and need to be persistent and explicit to render data about strengths and weaknesses (Bader and Tasnimi, 2014). It stresses the positive aspects and detects mistakes when they are produced. Therefore, process equals performance, and the result is the outcome of a process. The pupils learn by doing the task and then having the facilitator provide feedback (Garfolo and L'Huillier, 2016). Continuous information about the competency acquisition process should be offered. For this reason, students must be able to constantly produce and communicate messages in a way that the teachers can provide support to develop their competency level (Zabala and Arnau, 2008, cited in Moreno T., 2010)

Within the Competency-Based Model, it is essential to indicate that assessment will be fulfilled through products or learning outcomes according to the standards established in the programme. The standards guide the structure of the course and offer clear criteria for the level of expected performance (Díaz, Arceo and Bravo, 2014). Performance must be done according to the terms and criteria of quality that had been established previously (Argudin, 2014). Additionally, the evidence needs to demonstrate the stage of the competence to develop, and it must be tangible. Clear criteria and rubrics must be established to indicate what is expected of students and the processes that must be followed to achieve the target goal. A *rubric* is a scoring guide used to evaluate performance, a product, or a project. It has three parts: 1) performance criteria, 2) rating scale, and 3) indicators. Rubrics define what is expected and what will be assessed. They indicate that the evaluation will be according to specified criteria, making grading and ranking simpler,

more transparent, and fairer. Educators today use rubrics to refer to a category of behaviour that can be used to evaluate performance (Cooper and Gargan, 2009).

Feedback takes an essential role since it represents an opportunity to learn. Furthermore, the assessment process must be valid, transparent, and impartial. Some instruments for assessment are, for instance, portfolios, observations, discussions, teacher-constructed performance tasks, interviews, debates, mind maps, projects, self-assessment, and journals, that will allow students to classify, group, compare, and perfect.

Other competency assessment strategies are self-evaluation and peer evaluation. These approaches aim to form self-critical, reflective students able to recognise and learn from their own mistakes. This kind of assessment allows learners to develop and improve their understanding of their learning process to develop their independence and self-regulation (Stevens and Levy, 2005, cited in Velasco-Martínez, Díaz-Barriga and Tójar-Hurtado, 2017).

2.9   Assessment for Learning

As stated, the evaluation objective is to know and identify what a student knows and what he or she can do. However, some characteristics like grading apply directly to summative assessment that has the primary purpose of summing up numbers or grades that each individual accomplishes. The difference between summative and formative assessment is that the second one evaluates what the students know and can do to plan learning activities that could help the student improve (Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013b). This way, students will be informed about their process and feedback, which will help them learn about their qualities and accomplishments. This information will aid in knowing how they can develop their skills in the future. A different kind of assessment called assessment for learning (AFL) has a premise that all types of assessment should support students' learning. It has a holistic and non-fragmented focus on assessment philosophy. This approach developed by Sambell, Mc Dowell and Montgomery (2013) proposes it as an integrative alternative that takes the most critical assessment points and incorporates them. Although CBE does not mention the term AFL as a classification of assessment procedures, I decided to integrate it as part of the topic's current tendencies. However, I consider that AFL intends to balance the different kinds of assessment and discuss the overuse of certain sorts of evaluation. Furthermore, the foundations of this approach are described in figure 2.3:

Figure 2.3 Assessment for Learning based on Sambell, Mc Dowell, and Montgomery (2013)

As figure 2.3 explains, within AFL, authentic assessment should be emphasised instead of the reproduction of knowledge and reductive measurement. The concept of authenticity refers to the activities that should be the most similar to what the student should face and not only focus on reproducing knowledge. The degree of authenticity and real activity depends on its practicality and complexity. Also, feedback is a vital part of AFL. The teacher is asked to provide abundant formal and informal feedback to students. Feedback is a crucial activity in teaching and learning practices. However, practising teachers need time to provide quality feedback as expected to implement this approach.

In CBE assessment, the "intention is to measure the skills and knowledge against a prescribed professional standard...any mismatch between what is taught and required for the world of work is clearly problematic" (Biemans *et al.,* 2004, cited in Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013, p. 13). It may be the case that the curriculum is carefully prescribed and full of activities planned for what is "authentic." If the teacher decides to add events that go away from that path and these activities are not related to the world of work, then the activities are not fulfilling the objectives of the CBE curriculum:

> If unrealistic and de-contextualised settings are used to assess learning so that the situations confronting students in the assessment are not similar to those found embodied in the complexity of most workplaces, then learners' capacity for professional practice may not be appropriately developed (Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013, p. 13).

This quote states that all the actions planned within the CBE curriculum have to be linked to the world of work. Otherwise, the activities and the time that teachers might employ in developing other areas that they consider fundamental for higher education students or that might improve students' creativity to develop aspects not yet created are considered useless.

It is crucial to consider the real possibilities and resources teachers count on to develop activities or assessments that emulate labour reality. By actual conditions, I mean the classroom's physical conditions, the number of students, the time constraints that might affect the curriculum development, and the teachers' workload, among other situations that might occur and influence the development of the standard rhythm in the classroom. When the curriculum is so determined and detailed and the standards have previously been established, the classroom dynamics are more complex because of this lack of flexibility. In addition, the present "society needs people who can recognise and identify issues as situations shifts rather than people who only know how to work to specific and rigid rules" (Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013, p.13). Furthermore, although the model *per se* is denominated as flexible, it would be necessary to observe whether this flexibility also applies to activities and assessments in changing contexts.

How teachers were educated, the beliefs that teachers and students hold towards assessment, and the numerous prerequisites of assessment policies, among other factors, have contributed to having summative assessment dominating classrooms. Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery (2013) point out that "this type of curriculum delivery structure has indeed generated activity, but it may well be an activity that is focused on the accumulation of marks, within a regime of frequent demands that students are required to manage" (p. 33). The focus is on the assessment shreds of evidence that, if completed, students can tick that box and move forward to the next activity until they fulfil all the course requirements, having as a goal the completion of the tasks required instead of experiencing meaningful learning.

Moreover, the global competitiveness factor and the emphasis on individual achievement have reinforced this summative aspect of the assessment. "We also consider the imperative of students to obtain good grades and a good class of degree in a competitive employment market, it can be seen that it is not an easy task to shift current practices to place less emphasis on summative assessment" (Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013, p.33). This aspect may show a rivalry between summative and formative assessment; however, their purposes diverge.

On the one hand, a formative assessment's objective is learning with an improvement focus where mistakes are taken as a learning point and a critical vision to improve the elements that need more emphasis. On the other hand, summative assessment determines a grade or mark based on students' performance, and it determines if the student accomplished or not the

previously established requisites. This way, summative assessment is the "final judgement" of students' performance. This final judgment is why students and teachers focus on this kind of assessment since it is the one that "matters" at the end for official documents and educative agents. The following citation supports this claim: "Assessment defines what students regard as important, how they spend their time and how they come to see themselves as students and graduates" (Brown and Knight, cited in Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013, p. 33).

On the other hand, it would be expected that some of the already structured mechanisms in the education system in Mexico adapt to be congruent with the CBE policy to have the diverse institutional processes coordinated among each other. Nevertheless, this synchrony does not exist in some cases. For instance, CBE has a basis that the student learns through a combination of all assessment types, mainly through formative assessment. However, it is necessary to conclude with a number assigned by the teacher at the end of each semester. The Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) requires a number for official documents. This requirement provides power to summative assessment, and it is now a tradition that has prevailed in the Mexican assessment system.

Furthermore, "These structural conditions at the societal level can lead to assessment dilemmas such as formative assessment being neglected or under constant threat (Knight and Yorke 2003, cited in Sambell, Mc Dowell and Montgomery, 2013, p. 34). Formative assessment is under continuous threat since teachers are pressured to impress on students the love to learn and provide authentic learning and assessment. Additionally, students develop and self-regulate at their own pace.

Higher education institutions tend to suggest that all processes have to be evaluated. The suggestion also involves that the learning outcomes are listed in the curriculum. Due to employers' pressures and quality assurance agencies that demand transparent processes and detailed descriptions, such practice has been accepted. Teachers have this structural pressure that demands time, numbers, judgments based on final performance and policies that do not support formative learning. Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery (2013) claim that the AFL focus recognises the challenges of summative assessment. However, they propose a balance in using the two types of assessment by valuing grades and offering ways to make time for formative assessment. "If students can see that assessment tasks require real, valuable learning, they also see the opportunity to gain worthwhile knowledge or skills" (p. 37). However, despite this different focus, structural changes in the education system have to be made. Otherwise, teachers will still experience the same pressures and, thus, the same results.

Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery (2013) mention that summative assessment takes teachers and students much time. If we add large classes, only marking absorbs most of the time. Students' assignments bring even more workload to teachers since they expect feedback for the work they also took time to accomplish. According to the authors' advice, summative assessment should be carried out as a "checkpoint activity" during the semester. However, the summative assessment should not influence all learning processes.

2.10 **Teachers' Role under CBLT**

Contrary to traditional education, where teachers transmit knowledge, teachers become facilitators and learning guides under the approach of Competency-Based Education. Their role goes further than a lecture, and they become "coaches" by motivating, guiding and selecting materials and activities that support their students to reach target competencies. Educators must be aware of their learners' needs so that all of them feel welcome in class (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). According to Griffith (2014), preparation becomes a fundamental teaching element. Consequently, teachers must dedicate considerable time to creating the activities needed to reach competency requirements. Also, time is required to assess student's performance and to provide direct, precise, and personalised feedback (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

According to its advocates, the competent teacher is the one who has acquired and progressively perfected his or her capacity to know (to know the contents and processes, to know their students and their institutional and cultural environment). This cognitive ability, or the cognitive dimension of their personal and professional competence, implies the capacity to understand of the world (Vázquez, 2007). At the same time, the model specifies the so-called teachers' competencies, which describe characteristics that teachers must develop to carry out an adequate execution of the CBE model. In aspired instructors' profiles, teachers' competencies are stipulated to be developed by the facilitators. This aspect makes me reflect on whether teachers' personality and personal attributes should be accommodated to determining expectations leaving behind teachers' identity and the functional characteristics that could contribute to students' improvement. Different situations in each class cannot be addressed through rigid procedures, an aspect that requires teachers to readjust the educative process. That is why such an agentic role is characterised as a combination of art, technique and improvisation. Furthermore, the following quote supports this argument:

> When evidence-based education integrates research and practice in order to make itself useful to policy, it supports top-down and externalist positions, shunts aside the

professional nature of teachers and educative researchers, and revokes the autonomy of specialists (Ryohei, 2017, p.105).

This trickle-down effect is received by teachers, who are the main actors of education and design. These ecological pressures influence their actions. Consequently, teachers and researchers tend to see it as an inappropriate and violent intervention in their proper practice. As a result, educative practice and research are motivated not intrinsically but by penalties and "incentives", losing creativity and dynamism (Ryohei, 2017, p.106). Nevertheless, Palincsar (1998) points out that teachers tend to go back to the traditional teacher role. Here, it is essential to understand the ideologies that teachers hold about education and the methods they know and are convinced can aid students in developing their learning and conscience.   At the same time, (Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei, 2016) claim that many areas of the model are impossible to operate. Furthermore, (Moreno, 2010), states that if the teacher is not convinced that CBE is a good idea, nothing will move, and those are valid reasons for not operating. Moreover, the author continues mentioning that CBE will be developed where people learn how to develop it, not when CBE is on a paper or discourse.

Moreover, Kumaravadivelu (2008) presents a strong argument about teachers' resistance when discussing the dichotomy of researcher teachers and practising teachers. The author states the differences between theorists and practitioners, mentioning that this dichotomy is transformed into a hierarchical division between theorists and practitioners in the language teaching field. Such dichotomy drives us to believe that all the theory is appropriated by practitioners and executed in classrooms. However, the author states that teachers reject "artificially transplanted" methods and that they rarely follow the suggested approaches, as it is indicated in the following excerpt:

> Unfortunately, the hierarchical relationship between the theorist and the teacher has not only minimized any meaningful dialogue between them but has also contributed to some degree of mutual disrespect. The artificial dichotomy between theory and practice has also led us to believe that teachers would gladly follow the principles and practices of established methods. They rarely do. They seem to know better. They know that none of the established methods can be realized in their purest form in the actual classroom primarily because they are not derived from their classroom but are artificially transplanted into it. They reveal their dissatisfaction with method through their actions in the classroom (p. 165-166).

According to this view, practitioners reveal their dissatisfaction with the method by implementing what they believe fits their classroom the best. Their resistance is manifested through the actions

they plan for their classes. Moreover, such activities differ from the proposed method. Therefore, practitioners display their opposition to the method through their agency in classrooms. "Teachers' conceptions of how language works, what language is for and how language is used by people affect what and how language is taught in the ELT classroom" (Hall, 2011, p.68).

From my perspective, language teaching and learning is a real art. Teachers are artists trained with different approaches and guide a student to learn. Teachers are there, observing, analysing the student's needs and adapting their curriculum and material to create the scaffolding required for students to demonstrate their learning. Such an art also allows the students have confidence in themselves and lose the fear of making mistakes, reinvent themselves, and grow. The "methods" are intended in a prescriptive way to provide learning solutions for the teacher and ideas on how the educator can address X or Y situations in the classroom. Phabhu (1990, cited in Hall, 2011) proposed that any attempt to find the "best" method was illogical given that teachers quite reasonable adapted and combined individual methods to accommodate contextual influences and their own personal beliefs".

However, no single method can be followed 100% and provide the expected results. Instructors are the only ones who have that possibility. Postmethod envisages teachers assuming an 'enhanced' role, with the freedom and power to make informed decisions based on local and contextual expertise (Hall, 2011, p.114). They observe the context, analyze the characteristics of the students, help them grow and then use the language so that students' ideas come to life through language. A language is a key that opens infinite communication channels and endless development possibilities. And language teachers are there to provide students with a path that leads them to open the various locks they may face.

From my point of view, as long as teachers preserve and cultivate this sensitivity to and support their students in improving their linguistic competence, we can say that the postmethod is alive. However, if teachers dedicate themselves to only covering the contents of a textbook, filling pages and allowing the methodologies of external agents to reign in their classroom, the inevitable "Death of the method" might occur. Applied linguists have begun to speak of 'The Death of the Method' (Allwright, 1991), of the 'Postmethod Condition' (Kumaravadivelu, 1994) or a move 'Beyond Methods' (ibid.; 2006; 2012). Initial forms of Postmethod practice may be identified as 'principled eclecticism' in which teachers purposefully plan and adapt their classroom procedures by absorbing techniques from various methods and using them for specific and appropriate purposes (Rivers, 1981). However, Akbari (2008, cited in Hall 2011) acknowledges that not all teachers have the time, resources or the willingness to shoulder the commitment and

decision-making Postmethod asks of them and implies that the 'death of Method' often leads not to a Postmethod era, but to the substitute of methods by textbook-defined practice.

Within the context of public universities, there exists liberty and autonomy in teaching practices. That is, teachers are free to decide how the activities in the classroom will be developed. In addition, public universities in Mexico are autonomous institutions. Therefore, a follow up inside of teachers´ classroom would be considered as a disruption, and teachers' authority must be respected. In the end, practising teachers are knowledgeable and have the freedom to decide what fits best for their students and how this could be carried out in classrooms. Students, under this approach, are not only the passive "receptors" of information, but their task is to take an active position during their learning process, as well as to prove their competency level with tangible results. Students should not expect the teacher and the classroom to be their unique source of information; instead, students become apprentices. Students take an active role in their learning and work to become autonomous. They learn to think critically and to adapt and transfer knowledge through a great variety of sceneries (Griffith, 2014). The student must accurately know the expectations and the competencies that he or she would have to demonstrate through concrete evidence. For that reason, clarity in curriculum planning is a critical element for the model since it is the aspect that will guide the cognitive and practical processes of the students. Within CBE, individualised processes for each student are promoted, allowing their progress and self-regulation of learning. Additionally, students, under the CBE approach, are the ones who regulate their learning using the different kinds of assessment, judge their learning progress and their classmates as well. I this section I discussed the latest literature trends about CBLT approach, agency and assessment. The next section summarises the empirical research in the area of CBE/CBLT and teacher agency.

2.11 **Empirical Research**

The paradigm change in education toward learning centred models leads us to reflect on whether the modification has only been at a curricular level or whether the change has been substantial in teaching and learning practices. Although CBE/CBLT is not a recent topic, its implementation in international public policies is relatively new. As a result, a significant formalisation of this model in the educative sector has been made. With this in mind, this study intends to analyse how teachers embrace this challenge, especially in a language teaching context. Nowadays, there are studies about different aspects of English Language Programme implementation in the world. However, there is little about teacher agency under the Competency-Based Education Model in a

language context. The following survey includes studies that reflect an interest in this topic, and in some cases, these studies address teacher agency; however, they do it indirectly.

Concerning the studies that reference the evaluation of the programs and their implementation, the work of Lukindo (2016) concluded that teachers know the essential elements of the model. However, they were unsure how to evaluate under the Competency-Based Language Teaching Approach; nevertheless, they continued assessing traditionally. Furthermore, Pamplón Irigoyen and Villalobos (2015) also discovered that traditional or teacher-centred methods were practised inside the classrooms. The study describes current practices used by teachers, and according to the results, these practices are not aligned with the programme's guidelines. As possible causes, the study mentions that teachers did not know the precepts they were supposed to follow, which leads to some questions regarding training and follow up. Furthermore, Dwi-Hatmanto (2017) found that the Competency-Based language Teaching approach was partially implemented. Concerning assessment, the results suggest that the practices did not correspond to the ones instructed in a Competency-Based model. Consequently, the author recommended professional development opportunities for teachers to improve their teaching practices. Moreover, Pamplón and Villalobos (2015), Lukindo (2016), Velasco-Martínez, Díaz-Barriga and Tójar-Hurtado (2017) also identified developmental needs of teachers regarding competency assessment. Robles-Haros and Estévez-Nenninger (2016), Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei (2016) agree on this aspect, stating that the educative policy has as a primary challenge the pedagogical training of teachers for the continuous development of programs to move from a traditional classroom to a CBLT classroom.

In contrast to these views, the study Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei (2016) examines the outcomes of learning under the implementation of competency-based language courses in this university based on teachers' perspectives and teachers' attitudes towards the model. Findings revealed that the programme's implementation of CBLT has been almost successful. Regarding assessment, students stated that they knew the target competencies and the stage they were located to reach them. However, the study does not give any more details about this aspect. It does not describe the learning outcomes that were collected; furthermore, it does not explain the instruments carried out for assessment and the kind of assessment that is being developed in practice.

Meanwhile, different studies about implementing competency-based education have been developed using quantitative and qualitative methods in other subjects. Nonetheless, the discipline that seems to present more advances in the standardisation of processes is Medicine, as it can be observed in work produced by Hawkins *et al.* (2015), Parra Acosta *et al.* (2015), Touchie and Ten Cate (2016). Hawkins shows that concerning the implementation of CBE assessment, different practical and logistical challenges have been addressed. For instance, lack of structural

models and an increment in administrative requirements and inconsistency in how competencies are defined, developed and assessed. Moreover, the researcher suggested that detailed assessment may become cumbersome for programme leaders to manage and that educators may spend more time administering a competency-based programme than ensuring the quality of the learning experience. Lukindo (2016) also claimed that this teaching method is time-consuming and challenging due to the large classroom sizes that most public schools have.

 As teacher-trainers, we should consider the current challenges that teacher trainees will face by instructing them about the methods they will need to perform their labour practice. This argument was brought by Aziz (2016), who found that teachers who hold a B.A. or Master's Degree in English Teaching did not guarantee the use of competency Based methods in classrooms. The author mentions that their professional qualification was not a factor that influenced the implementation of the model since teaching was not competency-based. On the other hand, Alderuccio (2016) demonstrates that it is a fact that teachers resist curriculum innovation in Competency-Based Education. This resistance is to the new social order implemented in the teaching and learning process. Consequently, these aspects directly influence the methods that the teachers utilise in the classroom, which is key to the success or failure of the programme.

Biesta, Priestley and Robinson (2015) present a study that aims to know the dynamics of teacher agency and the factors that contribute to its promotion and improvement. Through a qualitative methodology with an ethnographic design, observations and semi-structured interviews were employed to analyse policy texts and teacher networking mapping. The study found a disconnection between the purpose and the method. It was also found that teacher discourse was being diminished. Therefore, imposed external systems alter the school dynamic by carrying out a change without a clear philosophy of education. It is concluded that the shift requires acculturation and a restructure.   The authors speculate that teachers are focused on the instrumental spectrum and are worried about completing the tasks needed. This situation puts teachers far away from the intellectual commitment of their job and the responsibility to teach, school, and society.

Kalaja *et al*. (2015) explores the relationship of teachers with their professional environment and the evolution of their beliefs as English as a Foreign Language Teachers (EFL). The researchers collected data in two stages. Twenty- three novice teachers were asked about what being an EFL teacher implied and about their goals within their professional area. Participants wrote reflective essays as they were studying, and after they graduated, they continued writing a piece twice a year for their first four years. The study shows that in many cases, teachers' classroom activities

were not according to their ideals, and their actions depended on the environment to develop their pedagogical practices. This dependency was frequently shown in negative terms that exhibited repression of their agency. They looked at themselves as individuals who were forced to act in a certain way without an option to choose.

In another study regarding agency from the perspective of teacher identity within the context of language teaching, Ruohotie-Lyhty, (2013) collected data through in-depth and follow-up interviews that encouraged reflection about some modifications on their teaching philosophy and professional relationships. An experience-centred approach to narratives was utilised. It was found that significant encounters, that is to say, life touching and empathic feelings towards the lives of their students, influenced the participants' self-perception and that these were determining factors that affected their teacher identity. Therefore, these meaningful encounters touched their emotions and their agency in their teaching practice. The authors concluded that identity was linked to feelings, method and self-trust. That is to say; the way teachers perceived themselves changed because of their feelings towards their students. At the same time, this identity shift reflected their teaching methodology or agency since they felt capable of adapting teaching to their students' context.

Ryder *et al.* (2018) studied agency within complex policy structures involving an educative reform through the socio-cultural perspective focusing on the individual and his personal goals. The researchers explored agency through semi-structured and extended interviews that allowed teachers to express their tensions. Purposive sampling was used to ensure a wide variety of teaching experiences and teachers' educative backgrounds. The results show contradictions in teacher agency like loss of independence and confidence, subversion, and creative anxieties.

Regarding studies that take agency within the framework of curriculum change, it was found that most of the reviews are focused on teachers' beliefs which affect their agency in the classroom. Greany and Waterhouse (2014) studied the development of leadership concerning curriculum innovation through a methodology of interviews and observations in a pilot programme for school leaders. The study shows that teacher agency depended on administrators' leadership to face fundamental reforms. In addition, Priestley, Biesta and Robinson (2012) through an ecological perspective about agency found that it varies from context to context depending on the environmental conditions. However, beliefs, values and attributes appear to be significant factors that teachers put into action depending on the situation.

The above studies allow us to know about the implementation of competency-based education in a language setting (CBLT) in different parts of the world. Most of the studies focus on general aspects of the model; however, none describe agency in assessment within a CBE/CBLT

programme. The literature shows that most experts agree that the institutionalised programs have become a simulation rather than an actual practice. In addition, they seem to agree that the primary reason for this failure is a lack of knowledge of the Competency-Based Education Model. Also, some other logistic challenges were presented through the literature, such as lack of time, big size classes, and an increment in administrative procedures. Although the assessment process was not the primary focus of attention in any of the studies, the literature suggests that the objectives of Competency-Based Education regarding this aspect were not reached. Therefore, this is an area of knowledge and practice that needs exploration since there is a lot to know about how teacher agency within the assessment process under the CBE model is in a language teaching context.

During this section, the primary literature trends regarding the topic were discussed and analysed from a critical position. Moreover, in the following section, the methodology was carefully detailed to understand the data collection procedures and how the method to carry out the analysis of the data was used.

Chapter 3 **Methodology**

In this chapter, I first present the ontological and epistemological position I embraced for conducting the present research. Then, a thorough description and explanation of the research design and the research instruments are included. A brief but necessary section is dedicated to the unit of analysis of the study. Next, the research context where the study was conducted is described. Moreover, this chapter provides examples of how the research was carried out in practice through a pilot study. The pilot study was conducted to inquire about the methodology for gathering and analysing the data and giving a more representative picture of the ongoing reality at the university selected. The other sections included in this chapter cover the timeline for the study, the data collection methods, my role as a researcher and ethical considerations, the participants, and the data analysis and interpretation.

3.1 **Ontological and Epistemological Position**

The principles that guided this study are based on ontological and epistemological assumptions within an interpretivist position of reality. Thomas, (2016) defines *ontology* as "the examination of the nature of the subject that we are researching" and *epistemology* as "the study of the procedures via which we can discover knowledge" (p. 321). This study holds an interpretivist position of reality since it considers individuals and their context to understand a phenomenon from different perspectives: "The social world- is not straightforwardly perceivable because it is constructed by each of us in a different way" (Thomas, 2017, p.110.). That is to say, multiple realities and agentic behaviours are recognised and understood through the eyes of the participants (Cohen, Lawrence and Morrison, 2011).

My questions stem from a wish to understand the way in which the CBLT educative policy is being undertaken by teachers and to have a glimpse of how they see and interact within their context. I observed the ontological reality from the participants' viewpoints, practising teachers who deal with this policy implementation daily. My position involves different ways of exploring the phenomenon and seeing reality. Those are observed in the way that participants interact with others. According to Thomas (2017), " The main point about interpretivism is that we are interested in people and the way in that they interrelate- what they think about and how they form ideas, how their worlds are constructed" (p.110).

The data was collected from different angles to understand the context in which teachers work and how they tackle the challenges presented. Data collection methods were planned to

understand the particular, contributing to building a framework of "multiple realities" (Thomas, 2017). Within such an interpretivist position, the researcher aimed to be an insider, interacting with participants. The interviews let me know more in-depth about the participants' opinions, ideologies, and beliefs about the phenomenon. I observed some classes that allowed me to witness the reality of practising teachers and how they deal with this international policy in their classrooms. I analysed perceptions, feelings, ideas, thoughts and actions, as heard or observed, and as part of the interpretivist stance taken within the present study.

I also analysed the epistemological factors of teachers' agency from the researcher's angle, who will voice the professor's challenges, compliances, and appropriation of the CBLT approach in the classroom. The role of the researcher was to analyse and interpret the ontology and epistemology of teachers and their classroom work. The main aim is to report the context of the multiple realities and the ecology in which teachers' agency occurs.

Interpretivism implies that the social world is a set of constructed symbolisms by each individual in a different manner, and "each of us does this differently with symbols-words, and events-carrying different meanings for each person and in each situation" (Thomas, 2017 p. 110). As will be explained later in the present chapter, Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) were used to analyse the data collected. The type of analysis selected implies an interpretivist position about reality by studying the symbols, words and actions to understand the paradigm this research embraced. The next section will discuss the type of study that framed this inquiry.

3.2 Research Design

This qualitative case study analyses how the educative policy of CBLT was implemented in a classroom setting. Case studies are well documented in the literature since they "portray, analyse and interpret the uniqueness of real individuals and situations through accessible accounts" (Cohen, Lawrence and Morrison, 2011, p. 129). Furthermore, case studies are a meaningful and reliable research method (Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis, 1980). A critical element in this research is the semi-structured interview, which employs questions to build upon the participants' responses, the class's observations, and the collection of students' learning outcomes that exemplified the processes developed in the classroom.

Furthermore, this inquiry is organised within an emergent design, which means that "the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and some or all phases of the process may change or shift after the researcher enters the field and begins to collect data" (Creswell, 2012, p. 182). Moreover, I organised it into themes or categories that cut across all other data sources by using multiple data sources. I relied on thick description for the categorisation of the themes when

analysing the results, which refers to understanding a piece of behaviour- a nod, a word, a pause, for example, in a context and using one's "human knowing to interpret when one describes it" (Thomas, 2016, p. 211). Additionally, thick description captures the essence of interpretative analysis in synthesising reporting, reflecting and meaning-making (Thomas, 2016).

I decided to work through a case study since I was interested in knowing the case as a whole. Also, "the subject of the study is the case, but the object of the study is what the researcher is particularly interested in investigating that has theoretical significance, relevance and possible pedagogical implications as well" (Duff, 2019, p. 309). That is, the particular interest of the present research was, as stated in the introduction, teacher agency in assessment within a CBLT programme in a higher education institution. In addition, this research is a typical case study which means that "the event is the primary focus, and the case is of secondary importance…in applied linguistics, a case can also be positioned as a class, a curriculum, an institution, a speech community, a piece of text or a collection of text types" (Rose, McKinley and Briggs, 2020, p. 7). A case study allows going in-depth on the particularities that might illustrate the internal processes evolving in this higher education institution. However, it is not the objective of the case study to be generalisable since each case is influenced by diverse circumstances that make it unique. Nevertheless, it could be an excellent example of how international policies in education are developing in a real scenario. Within a case study, the context determines the particular actions of the case. However, this particularity sheds some light on how the phenomenon develops within this specific ecology. Moreover, "a case study is about the particular rather than the general". Although a case study is not generalisable, Foucault mentioned a three-dimensional view or *"polyhedron of intelligibility". Polyhedron of intelligibility* means looking at the phenomenon from different perspectives so "a more rounded, richer, more balanced picture of our subject is developed" (Thomas, 2016, p. 5).

The case study is not a method in itself, "instead, it is a focus, and the focus is on one thing, looked at in-depth and from many angles" (Thomas, 2016, p. 9). For that reason, I observed different kinds of phenomena in detail by triangulating diverse sorts of relevant data, "The use of multiple methods helps to improve the credibility of our research… triangulation is defined as a practice of supporting validation of data by using two or more sources for cross verification. This practice gives us a more comprehensive understanding of social phenomena" (Rose, McKinley and Briggs, 2020, p. 243). It is critical to emphasise that the focus was on an ecological view, in which, according to Thomas (2016), it is impossible to disentangle the function in a constellation of phenomena simultaneously. Everything is connected, so it is not easy to assess the effect of changing one variable. Things tend to stay in equilibrium. Furthermore, within the analysis of the results, my role as a researcher was to deliver more detail in the teachers' context since, in a case

study, "you should be able to smell human breath and hear the sound of voices" (Thomas, 2016 p. 7).

The first stage of this study was exploratory to gain familiarity with the context. At the same time, the study was denominated interpretive because it is an approach that assumes an in-depth understanding and deep immersion in the environment of the subject. Moreover, interpretative researchers understand that the social world is indivisible. It is complex, and we should study its completeness (Thomas, 2016). Also, it is essential to emphasise that a case study is not a method *per se*, but "a container, a wrapper, for a situation or a set of circumstances, and it may contain a range of phenomena to be analysed" (p. 203). For this reason, I decided to go in-depth by researching fundamental aspects that illustrated the event and shed some light on the motives for teacher agency in CBLT assessment in classrooms.

3.2.1   Research Instruments

This case study involved a detailed description of the setting and individuals, followed by analysis of data using Critical Discourse Studies (CDS). The researcher interpreted and classified the information to analyse it. Results discussion was arranged through an interpretation of the themes interconnected. At the same time, data were triangulated with the different sources of information using it to make a coherent justification of the topics and add validity to study. In the following, I describe the instruments used to gather relevant information for this inquiry.

3.2.1.1   Semi-structured interviews

Interpretative inquirers collect data through interview transcripts, informal observations, and the collection of students' learning outcomes. The interviews I conducted were semi-structured. The questions included in the semi-structured interview can be found in Appendix *C*. I interviewed teachers and administrators who hold a vital role in the development of the model in the selected university. In a semi-structured interview, you provide the structure with a list of issues to be covered, and you have the freedom to follow up on points as necessary. Also, semi-structured interviews offer much of the ease of conduct of structured interviews but require a degree of flexibility and "careful listening skills to ask further questions about specific responses the researcher finds interesting. These allow for new ideas to form within a predetermined framework of themes" (Rose, McKinley and Briggs, 2020, p. 116). I decided to use this kind of interview in case participants chose to emphasise and expand on specific topics or on what they believed to be relevant to the case. In addition, in a semi-structured interview, "the process is more free-flowing and indeterminate" (Edley and Litosseliti, 2019, p. 198) and permits participants to explain and develop aspects that could be of interest for the study. Furthermore, I

also conducted two group interviews, one with three students from the fourth semester and another one with students from the sixth semester, to gain an insight into the attitude that students hold towards the model. According to Edley and Litosseliti (2019), the merits of conducting interviews are the following:

- Discovering new information and consolidating old or established knowledge
- Obtaining different perspectives on the "same" topic (sometimes described as multivocality) in participants' own words
- Gaining information on participants' views, attitudes, beliefs, motivations and perceptions on a topic; "why" people think or feel the way they do
- Examining participants' shared understandings of everyday life, and the everyday use of language and culture of particular groups
- Brainstorming and generating ideas
- Gaining insights into how others influence individuals in a group situation (group dynamics)
- Generating a sense of rapport between the researcher(s) and the researched

In this segment, I discussed the reasons for selecting semi-structured interviews in my research design. The next subsection reviews the use of classroom observation methods within the present case study.

3.2.1.2   Classroom Observations

I had access to observe different classes and how teachers employ their agency in classrooms to impact students learning. "Observations in social research are the actions of watching, recording and in qualitative approaches, interpreting and reflecting on human activity and behaviour" (Rose, McKinley and Briggs, 2020, p.92). In addition to the interviews, observations were the critical elements of the present research to go in-depth into the reality in classrooms and how teachers cope with the CBLT curriculum in practice. The classroom observation sheet I used is available in *Appendix B.* Teachers, students and administrators allowed me to document their work even though the selected university is public, and teachers have the liberty of following any teaching methodology and practices they want. In other words, teachers do not have an obligation to allow any external person into their classrooms. Nonetheless, they facilitated some projects, learning outcomes, and documents needed for the study.

3.2.1.3   Students' Learning Outcomes

In order to verify if the CBLT policy and its assessment premises are employed within the classroom context, I asked students for some examples of their learning outcomes. Some students

did facilitate their learning evidence, and I was able to examine, compare and contrast them with the assessment premises of the CBLT educative policy. I basically observed if the kind of learning outcome presented was congruent with the type of outcomes suggested by the CBLT approach. In section 3.10, I carefully explain how I analysed these data using Critical Discourse Studies and Critical Dispositive Analysis through an empirical methodology that I designed for the aims of the present study.

3.3 Units of Analysis

The above investigations suggest a simulation of the educative policy; therefore, this research was designed to analyse teacher agency, specifically assessment. What this study intended to offer was classified into three units of analysis:

1) Teachers' acceptance of the policy
2) Custom-made appropriation of the programme
3) Teachers' resistance to the programme.

These units of analysis are later explained in the analytic chapters. The possibilities were examined within a context of a trickle-down effect to observe how the educative policy has permeated among the stakeholders until grassroots participation, in this case, teacher agency in classrooms. Furthermore, the present research occurred naturally; therefore, the information was gathered by talking directly to people and seeing them act and behave within their context. In this study, I, the researcher, collected data by examining documents, observing behaviour, and interviewing participants; which are the essential characteristics of qualitative research (Creswell, 2012).

Nevertheless, prolonged engagement, which allowed for establishing trust, encompassed 35 hours and 15 hours of class observation over four weeks, as well as the semi-structured interviews with the participants in the field and the collection of the students' learning outcomes. Moreover, data triangulation was completed by using multiple data sources and contrasting them with the established CBLT programme. In addition, a pilot study was conducted to ensure the reliability and validity of the present study by using techniques described by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

3.4 Research Context

Interviews, observations and the collection of learning outcomes were conducted at a Public State University located in the Northwest of the country. Data collection was registered for four weeks

from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. As mentioned before, the selected university is in Northwest Mexico, and it is near the border of the United States. Due to such geographic position, the so-called "*returned students*", immigrants to the United States, who in most cases were forced to return to Mexico due to migration policies, decided to study the BA of ELT. However, the BA in ELT is open to any student that accomplishes the desired profile. It offers a Bachelor of Arts, Engineering, four master's degrees and two technical programs in its educative offer. Also, five campuses geographically spread inside the state impart the BA in ELT.

The BA in ELT was created within a CBLT curriculum, and it has worked with the model for eleven years. Consequently, the selected university holds a consolidated programme that could provide a mature panorama of the examined phenomenon. The graduate profile explicitly describes the following competencies:

- Apply the most effective methods for English as a Foreign Language (EFL)
- Use tools to facilitate learning, oral skills, and reading and writing in English.
- Relate the historical and sociocultural processes that contextualise the use of the English language.
- Design educative plans and programs for English Language Teaching with specific and academic purposes
- Facilitate the acquisition of the linguistic-communicative competence of the Standards of English from primary education to higher education.
- As an admission requirement, students present 450 points on the institutional TOEFL test.

The graduate profile and the curriculum seem to be coherent. Indeed, according to the graduate profile, students are prepared for curriculum design and assessment within a CBE curriculum, and the programme explicitly contemplates subjects about CBE education and assessment:

- Basic and Generic Competencies
- Learning and Teaching of a Second Language
- Socio-historical and cultural areas for ELT
- Curriculum Design, methodology, and materials for ELT and Learning.
- Pedagogical- administrative area

Furthermore, students are requested to complete a minimum of two professional practices that they can select. Moreover, students must fulfil 480 hours of social service, such as teaching in different schools and collaborating with experienced teachers, among different options related to the ELT area. In addition, it is essential to point out that students have the opportunity of writing a thesis to obtain credits to earn their BA in ELT degree.

In this segment, I described the research context. In the next section, the transition to a CBLT model will be briefly explained from the participants' perspective to contextualise the paradigm change at the Metropolitan University. Also, I will explain how the CBLT originated in the university selected and how the training process was carried out.

3.4.1 Transition from a programme based on objectives to a CBE and CBLT at the Metropolitan University

This section describes the creation of the educative model and BA's design in English Language Teaching (ELT) at the Metropolitan University. The Metropolitan University's educative model used to be objective-based or what participants recall as the *"traditional model".* There was a need to change the educative model to improve elements that the Metropolitan University "was missing". For this reason, different Mexican educative organisations, like COAPEHUM, evaluated the ins"Itution and detected problems in the objective-based model. To improve the "weaknesses" that the institution presented, these organisations suggested the Competency-Based Education Model at an institutional level. These educative organisations oversaw the Metropolitan University's training to a CBE model transition. However, the BA in ELT did not exist at that moment, and it was developed during this transition period. A team of experts in the ELT area gathered to create the BA in ELT programme. The group decided to consult different employers within the ELT area to build the desired student profile according to the labour market needs. After that, the construction of the curriculum and the didactical sequences started.

In fact, as it will be discussed later, one of the participants of the present study mentioned that the English teachers present a *constructivist profile,* which does not happen in the rest of the Metropolitan University undergraduate programmes. According to the participant's perspective, English teachers, especially those who studied a degree in English teaching, are trained to develop skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) and demonstrate them in practice through methodologies such as the communicative approach. Furthermore, a second participant added that she worked with a PPP (presentation, practice and production) and was also familiar with production and demonstration skills. Such methods are based on foundations that evidence learning, making English teachers understand competency-based education. Furthermore, there was plenty of training at the administrative level. The participants pointed out that all teachers are trained in the educative model when they start working for the Metropolitan University. Teachers receive a 20-hour course on the model, including assessment in CBE.

Students also receive a 4-hour training course in which they are explained about the model and students' expectations. According to the participants, the educative model's conformation was

taken within an outstanding leadership that made things possible. At the same time, the Metropolitan University was an example for other institutions in the country that asked them for advice about the transition to a CBE model implementation.

The higher education public system in the Mexican context works by gathering funding from the state and the federal government for the university's operation and basic needs. Teachers and administrators align to achieve the growth of education and science in higher education. In a way, I could perceive that the "problems" that the Metropolitan University presented were that teachers focused on their expertise area. However, they lacked educative skills. According to the educative organism's perspective, this aspect did not allow students to develop, so the university programs kept on the traditional wave. Therefore, the academic organisations suggested a constructivist approach that, at the same time, would link students to the labour market. They proposed CBE as an alternative to the traditional education at the Metropolitan University.

3.5 The Pilot Study

In order to attain comprehension regarding the fieldwork and experiment some of the data collection instruments and tools, I conducted a pilot study with two full-time experienced professors at the selected university. Given the importance of assessing the methods proposed to gather the data, I decided to develop such pilot study to observe any bias or problems that may arise. Therefore, this section begins by stating the problem, research questions and aim of the present study, and then a brief description of the two selected teachers for the pilot study is presented, including their statements about CBE which were identified from the interviews. Finally, results will be stated concerning teacher agency and an analysis of the strategies used for assessment. At this stage, a content-based analysis was performed in order to know the teachers' agency regarding this aspect.

3.5.1   Statement of the Problem:

The statement of the problem, research questions and aims guiding the pilot study were similar of the research project. The Competency-Based Education Model in the B.A. of English Language Teaching at a university in the Northwest of Mexico entered into force eight years ago. In spite of the training programme that has been carried out, the implementation of the model during this transition period is unknown. The questions that arise from this problem are the following:

Main research question

What is the impact that CBE has on teacher agency while assessing Higher education in Mexico?

Specific Questions

1. To what extent do teachers know the precepts of the CBE model?

2. Is CBE perceived by teachers, students and administrators as an imposition or as an opportunity? Why?

3. Which are the instruments used by teachers to develop the assessment process according to the Competency-Based Education Model?

4. Do teachers accept the curriculum change, appropriate it, or resist it? How?

The aim of the Study

As can be inferred from the research questions, the purpose of this qualitative study is to analyse teacher agency in assessment during the implementation of a Competency-based Education model that has been implemented in a B.A. of English Language Teaching in the Northwest region of Mexico. The **specific objectives** are the following:

1. To identify the knowledge that teachers hold about the CBE model.

2. To interpret the perceptions of teachers, students, and administrative staff about the CBE model.

3. To identify the instruments carried out by teachers while developing the assessment process inside the classroom.

4. To analyse the actions carried out by teachers while implementing the CBE model.

3.5.2   Pilot Study Participants

The data gathered provides information which leads to a profile of each participant. This data is organised with the purpose of retelling teachers' narrative, classes observation and learners' outcome collection. With the intention of confirming the methodology and the outcomes of this inquiry, a pilot study was conducted. The interviews, class observation and learning outcomes and feedback collection were completed with the purpose of illustrating the sort of instruction as well as the assessment offered in classrooms. To protect participants' identity, they were assigned with an alias. Also, an informative research sheet, as well as a consent form, were read and approved by the participants to join the study.

Gabriela

Gabriela was selected for participating in the pilot study since she has plenty of experience within the ELT area and with CBE. Additionally, although her initial undergraduate studies and work experience were in a different field, like various English Teachers in Mexico, her beginning practice teaching English emerged because "she knew the language". Therefore, her Masters' and PhD focused on education and applied linguistics. Gabriela holds a full-time position, and her primary contact working with CBE was precisely at the selected university. During her interview, the professor relates that she took a twenty-hour training course regarding the educative model at the University. However, Gabriela declares having a fundamental notion of the CBLT model because of her Masters' Degree and her expertise as an English instructor.

Catalina

Catalina was purposefully selected to participate in the pilot study because besides being an experienced English teacher; she is a crucial element on the CBLT implementation in the selected university. Just like Gabriela, Catalina also holds a BA in a different field; however, she is certified as an ELT teacher from two foreign universities. After that, she studied a Masters' Degree in Education, and she has been working for the BA in ELT for five years, primarily in the fields of methodology and didactics. Nowadays, she is a full-time professor and has administrative responsibilities.

3.5.3 Data Collection Methods

3.5.3.1 Semi-Structured Interview

For the pilot study, I used the semi-structured interview instrument designed for the research project. Consequently, I asked teachers for an appointment to perform the interview, and I reserved a quiet place for originating the conversation. The first interview was Gabriela, and it took 35 minutes and 12 seconds. The professor was very cooperative with the interview and answered all the questions kindly. I let both professors decide when and what time to meet for the interview, and we met at the library in a reserved area. Since the design of the instrument was semi-structured, this allowed me to accommodate and add questions derived from her answers. I used my cell phone to record the interviews with an application for I phone called *voice recorder*. Nevertheless, when I arrived home, I was not able to play the conversation from my cell phone until I found out how to pass it to a computer.

The second interview was with Catalina and lasted 56 minutes and 03 seconds. Since she is a full-time professor but also has administrative responsibilities, there was plenty to talk about. We had

finished the interview and continued talking about the topic when new aspects about assessment emerged, and I thought that what she was revealing was relevant information for my research, so I asked her for permission to record again. We were enjoying the chat and talking about the subject and this second part of the interview lasted about 17 minutes and 36 seconds. Finally, I made transcriptions of both interviews using *Express Scribe.*

3.5.3.2   Class Observations

Meanwhile, class observations were carried out by previously notifying and agreeing with the teacher; however, not to alter the natural environment, the researcher did not mention the exact date and time when the observation was going to take place to avoid biases in the investigation. The intention was to inquire behaviour as it occurs typically. Also, the researcher noted behaviours of the object of the observation and did not interact with the teacher nor students; that is to say, it was a nonparticipant observation. Furthermore, the researcher purposefully did not control or manipulate the setting being observed and worked hard at not affecting the observed situation in any way. The main purpose of the observation was to record how the teacher deals with CBE in a natural environment, and how assessment is used in class.

3.5.3.3   Students' Learning Outcomes

I asked the participants to hand some examples of their students' learning outcomes and if there was feedback provided. Both participants sent me one example of learning outcomes and their feedback to them. They also sent me a screenshot of the platform that they use so I could document how feedback was provided to students.

3.5.4   Data analysis in the pilot study

I reiteratively examined the data gathered (teachers interviews transcriptions, didactical sequences, learning outcomes collections, observers' notes, facilitators feedback). Then, through an inductive approach, in the interview transcriptions, I coded with different colours the patterns I found regarding the research questions derived from this study and triangulated the different kinds of data:

1) Semi-structured interviews transcriptions
2) Didactical Sequences
3) Learning Outcomes

In the next section, I explain some patterns I found during the interviews about specific topics. I gather the information that both teachers revealed during the semi-structured interviews and exemplify it with an excerpt of the transcription.

3.5.4.1   Teachers Knowledge about the CBLT model

It is interesting to indicate that both teachers comprehend the model and are able to explain the CBE principles. Both teachers went further, not only explaining the precepts of the model but also indicating how they implement them in the selected university. Moreover, during their interview, the participants demonstrated to discern the sorts of assessment, as well as the mechanisms to address them. They explained that students are not assigned with numbers, and personalised feedback is delivered. They also expressed that they manage a digital platform and that they have access to the didactical sequences as well as predesigned rubrics. For them, it is evident that CBLT does not only rely on knowledge but real performance.

Excerpt 1 of Gabriela's interview:

"All teachers when we start to work here, we have to take a course of the model. They explain that the model is flexible, student centred and also the competencies. It is a course of three days of 8 hours daily where they talk basically of the axes of the model. They explain what competencies are, what skills development is, why the model is flexible. It is flexible because it allows you to have exchanges with national and foreign universities. They explain to you that the model is competency-centred in several sections but talking about assessment; they explain you the diagnostic assessment, summative and formative assessment. They explain very well what each of them is, and the69nterncs that exist to help you assess within the model, we don't grade with numbers. We grade with Outstanding Competent, Advanced Competent, Basic Competent, and not approved."

 Contrary to the result of the research developed by Pamplon Irigoyen and Villalobos (2015) and Lukindo (2016), teachers know the statues of the model as well as the kinds of assessment and types of instruments under the CBE approach and are able to provide examples of its implementation and application. Also, Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei (2016), and Robles-Haros and Estévez-Nenninger (2016) suggest that teachers need more training about the model. However, in this particular case, the professors demonstrated to grasp the status of the model satisfactorily. As a matter of fact, this was the case for the faculty in the selected institution, since they all receive training to follow the CBE model and most had been implementing it for some time.

3.5.4.2   Teachers' Perceptions of the Model

Overall, the participants general opinion about CBE is favourable because, as they suggested, CBE helps to understand the way in which pupils are going to work in the labour field, and also students become aware of their learning and identify their learning style. Moreover, when students get to the subjects of didactics and methodology, they can associate the methods presented in the way in which they are learning. They claim that each of the activities has theoretical underpinnings applied in practice and that CBE presents several mechanisms to face the employment area. They both openly state that CBE has positive aspects to offer because the strategies of the course should be concentrated on students' learning, not on the teacher. Although Gabriela's general opinion towards the model is favourable, she pointed out that there is no rubric for every activity performed in class. She explained, however, that through the online platform, teachers have access to predesigned rubrics for oral presentations as well as for assessing written reports, for instance.

For Catalina, CBE is as a valid programme that came to change paradigms in the way that the student learns, and where students are assessed holistically. She claimed that students must know "how to be, know how to act, and know how to know". Moreover, students must demonstrate in a comprehensive way that they have the knowledge and that they acknowledge how to implement it and share it. Also, according to her perspective, self-assessment assists students in identifying where their vulnerabilities are and support them to recognise what domains demand further focus. In her experience, by their semester, students already know how to self-assess; it is no longer "the teacher assigned me a 10," but, "I earned the 10 for the following reasons."

Excerpt 1 from Catalina´s interview:

"*For me, the model remains in force, it is good, and it came to change... Before, the centre of attention was the teacher, now the students are the centre. The most important thing is that the student learns... How do I accomplish that the student learns and becomes competent?, that in the end, the student has the skills and not only the knowledge, and that the student keeps developing, but that for me is the important aspect.*".

Excerpt 2 from Gabriela's interview :

"*I see a lot of positive aspects, in the end, we need to comprehend how we are going to function in the labour field...It is not only the development of skills in the operative sense, but each thing that is seen in the classroom has its theoretical foundation, and the model gives you a lot of tools to face the labour field.*"

The above data suggests contradictions to the results found by Alderucio (2016), who manifests a flagrant teachers resistance to the model. Although it is important to mention that this pilot study cannot demonstrate generalised conclusions, teachers, in this case, did not show resistance to CBE. However, it would be interesting to know how the results change with a larger participant selection.

3.5.4.3   Disadvantages

When asked about the possible disadvantages that the model could imply, Gabriela considers that sometimes the student can feel too comfortable and relaxed with CBE ,and she believes that with an exam students would at least feel pressured to study. She mentions that, for students, CBE could be "pretty light", as they can fall into bad habits like imitating what other students respond without reading or documenting themselves. Hence, there is where the predicament lays. However, she mentions that with CBE the student is the one who must produce, in other words, the model is learner-centred. Furthermore, Gabriela believes that the student who is eager to learn and study takes advantage of this model because it is possible to develop skills, but it entirely depends on the student.

For Catalina, one of the negative aspects of the implementation of CBE is when teachers simulate to be working with CBE, but they continue working with teacher-centred models. Therefore, if the teacher is not engaged, no method will work. Notwithstanding, she considers that it is difficult to accommodate to changes where the teacher is not the centre of teaching. When talking about teachers of all disciplines at the university, she considers that many of the instructors are not formed as teachers, therefore; they are not trained to transmit knowledge in the best way, and they continue teaching the way they were taught. All teachers are trained about the model, but not to be educators.

Excerpt 3 from Gabriela's interview:

"Sometimes it is difficult because there is not a rubric for everything... in the digital platform we have rubrics for oral presentations, essays... there are many predesigned rubrics. Many rubrics don't have the points that you are interested in, and you take out the aspects that are not working for you (you inform this to the student) because for my class this is what works. I adapt it to the elements that I want the student to know, and what is important for me to assess. Another negative aspect is that teachers don't use rubrics, for example: did you hand in the assignment? Yes, ok. Another negative aspect could be if teachers don't give feedback to students."

Interviewer: And do you have time for giving feedback?

"Yes, to provide feedback one always has to have time, we can also give virtual feedback."

Excerpt 2 from Catalina's interview:

"A negative aspect is when I (teachers) simulate that I am working with a CBE model, but I continue working with a teaching model. If there is no teacher commitment, in any method, it is not going to work. Then, it is difficult to adapt to changes where you are no longer the centre, in order for the student to become the centre, and that is a disadvantage... I can be a very good professional, I can have a lot of skills in my professional profile, then as I don't have the formation as a teacher what I do is: I teach the way I was taught. Then, I don't have a methodology, and if I go and say: you have to teach this way… they go… how? I have been teaching 15 to 20 years the same way, and now I have to change. So, it is not easy, and it is not because they don't want it is because they are not formed as teachers. Regarding my profession, I could be very up to date, but as teachers, I keep on using the same strategies as when I started 20 years ago."

Both professors talked about sensitive aspects about the model. Robles-Haros and Estévez-Nenninger (2016) reinforce the importance of teacher agency in the implementation of any programme, mentioning that teachers' commitment towards any model is essential for its accomplishment. Catalina's perspective becomes crucial since she is not only a professor working with CBE, but also an administrator of the CBE programme in charge of all the disciplines in the selected university. This way she brings a general vision of the implementation of the model in different fields. She mentions that they have been working with this model for eleven years and that there are still teachers that continue teaching traditionally. She affirms that the change relies on the teacher. However, Catalina also emphasised that not everything can be assessed or demonstrated through learning outcomes. In the next section, this and other assessment elements will be discussed.

3.5.4.4   Assessment

Gabriela mentions that she uses peer-assessment, collaborative work, rubrics, oral presentations, roundtables, debates, teamwork, teacher presentation among other assessment mechanisms. In addition, Catalina revealed that she uses synoptic tables, mind maps, and searches for activities to avoid copy-paste, and where students can reflect on their learning. About assessment, Catalina states that she does not use percentages. She continues explaining that if teachers only evaluate knowledge, they are not helping to educate that person. For her, all her activities have the same value. The grading system that it is used at the institution is: *outstanding competent, advanced competent, intermediate competent, essential competent and not approved.* According to her perspective, if students are demonstrating that they are outstanding competent, and, in the test, they obtained intermediate competent, the student is outstanding Other areas that she assesses are, teamwork, attitude, homework, daily work and demonstrating a commitment to the class.

She explains that teachers assign a numeric equivalent that they report at the end of the semester; however, during the semester, she evaluates based on competency elements:

Outstanding Competent-   10

Advanced Competent-   9

Intermediate Competent-   8

Basic Competent-   7

Not approved   6

In her opinion, students must advance in their competence and have to prove that they acquired the competence, as a consequence, their grade increases.

Excerpt 4 of Catalina's Interview:

"Something innovative for me is that you are not evaluating only knowledge, you thoroughly assess the student in a holistic way, where you take into consideration all those aspects that can help students develop as humans. Because you can have very intelligent or skilful students but they don't know how to be, you don't see them as professionals. You can say, yes, he knows a lot but still does not know how to develop. Competencies in this sense come and give you the opportunity to assess students in all the aspects, not only in acquiring knowledge. The student has to fully demonstrate that he knows, that he has the knowledge and that he knows how to apply it and also share it."

3.5.4.5   Description of the Class Observed

Gabriela

The course observed was English Phonics and Phonology, and it was a block of two fifty-minute sessions together from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM with a ten-minute break. The class observed was about students' presentations in pairs about phonics and phonology. Students had previously researched the topic given and prepared a power point presentation. The teacher suggested the following guidelines: Explain the theoretical foundations, provide examples and bring an exercise for classmates to practice. The class began with the teacher greeting students and asking the teams to stand up and prepare for presenting. During the presentation, the students followed the guidelines by explaining the theory, giving examples and implementing an exercise.

Meanwhile, Gabriela was listening to the display and asking questions for them to develop further specific aspects of the topic. Next, the teacher made sure that the rest of the students understood the issues presented by asking presenters to elicit examples from students and providing feedback

at the same time. The class was student-centred, and the presentations were a learning outcome. However, the teacher did not seem to have any assessment rubric at the moment of the performance, and she was not taking any notes. After the class, and for purposes of the investigation, I asked the teacher if she was able to provide examples of how students were assessed during this activity. The teachers provided me with examples as seen in the next figure.

Figure 3. 1 Assessment Criteria

Catalina

The course observed was Advanced Grammar, and it was a block of two fifty-minute sessions together from 7:00 AM to 8:40 AM. The topic of the class was grammar: future. The course started by eliciting students' plans for the weekend. Gradually, students uttered sentences and wrote them on the whiteboard. After that, based on students' expressions, the teacher discussed the grammar rules with students. The first fifty-minute block of the class was directed by a deductive grammatical presentation within a teacher-controlled environment alternated with students' responses and reflections about the topic. Following, the teacher divided the students into pairs and provided them with a handout containing grammatical exercises for students to discuss and complete. The teacher offered a reward to the team that answered all the items correctly. Next, students were engaged in the activity and were debating all the questions. When students completed the task, the teacher elicited answers from the students and asked them for the reason of their choice. Then, the teacher gave them feedback; meanwhile, students were self-assessing their responses. After that, the teacher tried to engage all students in the discussion and reflection, and finally, the teacher asked them to tell her which pair did not have any mistakes to give them the reward she

agreed at the beginning of the activity. Both teacher and students in general held a favourable attitude towards the class, and it was reflected on students' engagement towards the course.

The following illustration displays an excerpt of the didactical sequence resembling the class observed. It proposes an activity where learners were going to present a twenty-minute simulated class to teach future verb time. Nonetheless, Catalina explained that she changed the strategy since the course is not about language didactics, it is about applied grammar. Thus, Catalina accommodated the didactical sequence to the aim of the course.

Figure 3. 2 Didactical Sequence

3.5.4.6 Examples of Learners' Outcomes and Assessment:

The following are examples of learners' outcomes and how Catalina assessed them. To protect the participants' identities, the teacher as well as the students' names were erased. First of all, the exercise is a comparative chart of the simple present and the present continuous grammatical rules where students are asked to synthesise and demonstrate the distinction between the two grammatical forms. As can be observed in the screenshot of the online platform, the teacher does not give a numerical grade as stated, and there is a section for the feedback provided. In the first case, the reason for the category was explained, and in the second example, the teacher congratulated the student for the quality of the work.

Figure 3. 3 Student's learning outcome feedback 1

Figure 3. 4 Student's learning outcome feedback 2

As it can be noted in the didactical sequence, Catalina gave students the instructions for elaborating the learning outcome suggested. On the other hand, the teacher gave feedback to students through

the online platform, although it was not as indicated in the didactical sequence since the rubric was not shown to the student. However, in the first example, the criteria for delivering the student's grade was explained.

Contributions of the pilot study to the research project

The most remarkable enrichment of the pilot study to the actual data collection methods involved being aware of the amount of data collected, the necessary applications for recording and transcribing semi-structured interviews, as well as an exploration of the most appropriate data analysis procedure for the study and the instruments for data analysis. Moreover, I performed the data analysis using N VIVO to learn how to use it to classify information. Another contribution was that I decided to ask students themselves and not the teachers for the learning outcomes to have more irrefutable evidence of what occurs in the assessment process. I also decided to interview more students in two group interviews to have a broader view of the context.

3.6 **Timeline**

In this section I briefly describe the schedule for completion of the present research by stating the goal and the accomplishment dates.

Goal	Dates
Teachers' interview	February 2019
Class observations	March 2019
Group interviews (with students)	April 2019
Students' learning outcomes collection	May 2019
Interview transcriptions	March – April 2019
Group interviews transcriptions	April – May 2019
Analysis of interviews data	March – October 2019
Analysis of group interviews data	April – October 2019
Analysis of class observations	March – October 2019
Analysis of students' learning outcomes	May – October 2019
Further data triangulation	November 2019 – May 2020

3.7 Data Collection Methods

As mentioned above, to answer the research questions, the method used for gathering data in this qualitative study was developed in two stages: The first stage being exploratory and the second stage interpretive, as suggested in their study by Pamplón Irigoyen and Villalobos (2015). A preliminary phase was performed to organise a documentary analysis of the programme and the current educative policy. Furthermore, a semi-structured interview was applied to a purposive sample of teachers, students and administrative staff. The purpose of the interviews was to inquire about the perspectives that participants held about the studied phenomenon. Although the questions and the order of the presentation were previously established, questions were open-ended, and the interviewer recorded the essence of each response (Gay and Airasian, 2003). Also, data was gathered through class observations and a collection of learning outcomes that evidenced students' development concerning the specific competencies determined by the programme. The study carries out nonparticipant observations based on the research questions; "nonparticipant observers are less intrusive and less likely to become emotionally involved with participants" (Gay and Airasian, 2003, p. 199). The interviews were conducted face-to-face with the participants to elicit their views and opinions, which were recorded as a reference for data analysis.

The data gathered provides information which leads to a profile of each participant. This data were organised to retell teachers' narratives, class observations and students' learning outcomes, and the feedback provided by teachers to complete the assessment process. Furthermore, to confirm this inquiry's methodology, and as previously presented, a pilot study was conducted. Consequently, the interviews, class observation, students' learning outcomes, and feedback collection were completed to illustrate the sort of instruction and the assessment offered in classrooms. To protect participants' identities, they were assigned an alias. Also, an informative research sheet and a consent form were read and approved by the participants prior to joining the study (see Appendix A).

Class observations, just as for the pilot study, were conducted only after notifying and agreeing with the teacher that I could observe their class at some point. The researcher did not mention the exact date and time when the observations would take place to ensure the most natural environment possible to maintain objectivity. This required from the researcher not to control or manipulate the observed setting in order to avoid affecting the observed situation in any way. The aim of the observations, as previously mentioned , was to explore typical behaviour regarding teacher agency in CBLT and to record how teachers dealt with CBLT in a natural environment and how assessment was used in class. As the researcher did not interact with the teacher or

students, it was nonparticipant observation. The classroom observation sheet used to collect data can be found in Appendix B.

The information gathered was organised with the assistance of a qualitative data analysis programme (NVIVO) to code and aid to organise to analyse the information. Since this is a mainly qualitative thesis, other statistical software was discarded, and NVIVO works well with different qualitative research designs. It also allows the researcher to code both transcripts and audio files. Moreover, such software aids in finding underlying themes in research and helps researchers with time-consuming transcriptions and the organisation of the data analysis process. The software allows the researcher to code information in nodes, an aspect that fits my study since a critical discourse analysis was followed.

This case study involved a detailed description of the setting and individuals, followed by an analysis of data. The researcher interpreted and classified the information to analyse it. Results discussion was arranged through an interpretation of the themes interconnected. At the same time, data were triangulated with the different sources of information to make a coherent justification of the topics and add validity to the study. The questions used as a base for the semi-structured interviews can be found in Appendix C, and examples of class observation notes in Appendix D. The interviews were in Spanish, the participants' mother tongue, to obtain a deeper meaning of the phenomenon; the original excerpts in Spanish used as examples in the analytical chapters can be found in Appendix E. To protect participants' identities, they were assigned an alias.

3.8 Researcher's role and ethical considerations

I followed the University of Southampton ethical review (ERGO) in order to complete the present research. Ethical clearance entails a process which involved completing an online form first in which various questions about the research are asked (Thomas, 2017). I committed to carrying out my research within a comprehensive ethical framework. The consent forms approved by the ethics board can be found in *Appendix A.* To access the researched university, I first addressed a letter to the Dean asking permission to conduct my PhD investigation project in the BA in ELT programme. I provided copies of the ERGO ethical review to explain the objectives and the ethical considerations underpinning this study. The ERGO documents helped to explicitly acknowledge what was being studied and to justify the reason why the study was carried out (Thomas, 2017). The university approved my request; following, I explained my research and the ethical standards of the University of Southampton to the Head of the BA in ELT. Access and acceptance were facilitated and documented through a letter.

This study was based on a deontological view of ethics which "involves treating people as ends in themselves rather than as means" (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 76). Informed consent forms were handed to all of the participants of the study and the procedures were explained. Also, they were informed that they had the right to freedom and self-determination, and to withdraw from the research at any time without any repercussions. The participants were provided with information about the study and about their expected roles and activities. I explained the research aims and stated that the universities and the participants' names were confidential. They were fully informed about what was expected and the risks involved. Their consent to take part was voluntarily and without any coercion. Consents were recorded in writing.

Furthermore, anonymity and confidentiality principles were also stated throughout the informed consent; "confidentiality means that you know the participants' names but promise not to divulge them, while anonymity means that no one will know the participants' names" (Gay & Araisan, 2003 p. 194). This study was undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency in the research context; "the main thing, though, is a recognition that participants have rights and should have a stake in the process of research" (Thomas, 2017, p. 44), and I made sure that such rights were clear to each of the participants of my study. Each participant was given a copy of an information sheet where I stated the investigation aims, the benefits of participating in the research and their confidentiality. I also explained to them that they could withdraw from the study if they did not feel comfortable participating. Furthermore, I treated participants as partners, since "now, and especially in applied social science, we think of the people with whom we research as participants or even partners rather than subjects" (Thomas, 2017, p. 44); and they accepted and signed the consent form. In addition, they collaborated to enrich the present study.

I explored the area and talked to different teachers about my project and I invited two of them to test the methodological procedures for a pilot study. I had a sense during the pilot study that teachers were trying to portray a perfect image of the university, so in the semi-structured interviews, I carefully explained the ethical considerations to all the participants, and I tried to gain their trust. Furthermore, I asked them to feel free to talk about the reality that they live in their classrooms and their work environment. I did not want them to see me as a threat but as a person to voice their concerns and what they value about the programme. I gained the participants' trust when I provided the ethical guidelines I was going to follow. In addition, I reiteratively explained the confidentiality principles that were going to be part of my research. The independence of the research and the researcher from the selected university helped to clarify any conflicts of interest that might evolve. My goal was to encompass trust and that the

participants did not see me as a threat. I was "honest and open in all my dealings with research participants" (Thomas, 2017, p.45).

However, I was aware that my role as a researcher could bring bias to the study since my master' studies were in CBE, and I have participated in the design of numerous programmes under such an umbrella. However, I aimed to illustrate what teachers, who are the primary executors of any educative policy, achieve under these circumstances from a critical and holistic view. Therefore, to improve validity and reduce bias, I aimed to not only gain participants' trust, but also to accept my own biases, use verbatim observation and interview data, observe inconsistent or incongruous results for explanations, and triangulate several data references. I truly believe that being clear and ethical in the eyes of the participants and myself allowed for more valuable information to be gathered enriching the results and reflecting their everyday practice.

3.9 Participants

I designed a non-probability study since the sample selected was purposive. That is to say, "sampling is seen as a series of strategic choices about with whom, where, and how one does one's research" (Palys, 2008, p. 697). Teachers and staff administrators from a BA in English Language Teaching in the North West Region of Mexico were chosen by identifying who the major stakeholders of the programme are and who could be affected by it. They were selected because they could contribute by providing relevant information about the proposed research topic and setting. The site was purposefully selected since CBLT had been their mainstream programme for about eight years, an aspect that would provide more detailed information about a well-established programme. The strategy used for purposive sampling in this qualitative research was criterion sampling, which encompasses all cases that meet some valuable criterion for quality assurance (Gay and Airasian, 2003). For this study, four to five experienced teachers were selected since they were giving classes in the BA. As part of the administrative interviews, I interviewed the Head of the BA, and the Academic Administrator of the University. The researcher sought individuals who could articulate their views and opinions clearly, were familiar with the study's circumstances and were open to exploring different panoramas in their practice.

3.9.1   Participants' Descriptions

I will describe the participants and their academic trajectories in this section. All the participants and the university selected were assigned a pseudonym to protect their privacy. The chosen university will be named Metropolitan University for the aims of the present study.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Flor

The first participant is Flor. Flor was kind to participate in this study and presented a great attitude and openness to collaborate in this research. She even mentioned that it was her duty to work with other researchers in their studies since she was a researcher. Flor holds an excellent reputation as a full-time university teacher among the students and other teachers. She is a dedicated teacher, very well prepared and professional in every sense. Flor's first bachelor degree was business administration; however, she could not finish at that time. She got married and dedicated herself to her family. Time passed, and she decided to continue studying, applying for the BA in English Language Teaching in the Central State University (also a pseudonym), combining her family and her studies, completing her studies in 2005.

Time went on, and when she was working for a private school, she started her Master's studies. Her master's courses were on Competency-Based Education. The government offered scholarships for teachers to study for this specific Masters' degree online. Years later, she started to work in higher education at Central State University as an English teacher. She completed her Master's degree, and a year and a half later, she began her studies for a PhD in applied linguistics that she was about to complete by the time the present study was conducted. Later, she started to work at the Metropolitan University administration for about four years while continuing working at Central State University. In the administration, she helped to review the didactical sequences of CBE programs when the university was on the transition from a plan based on objectives to a CBE programme. Years later, she got the coordination of the department she was working for in the administration. Unfortunately, the university administration changed, and she continued working in a full-time teaching position in the recently created BA in ELT at the Metropolitan University. She has been working at the Metropolitan University for about three years. Flor is coherent and has plenty of experience in CBE design and implementation; her perspective brought a more open view of teacher agency in CBE/CBLT implementation.

Gabriela

The next participant is Gabriela. Gabriela is very kind, coherent and articulated. I asked Gabriela to participate in the study since she also holds a full-time position in the BA of ELT, but again, she has administrative responsibility. She is currently reviewing all the didactical sequences that teachers elaborate through all Metropolitan University undergraduate programmes. The didactical sequences are the descriptive letters of what teachers could do in classes to help students reach the desired competencies. Gabriela also enrolled in a different bachelor degree initially; she holds a major in Economy. However, she ended up teaching English. The BA in ELT programme is

relatively new in the state. Back then, knowing the language was enough for teaching the English language classes at the Metropolitan University.

Time went on, and she had the opportunity to be certified as an English teacher by a Canadian University. She also obtained a different certification in English Language Teaching from an American University. Gabriela is persistent, and since she enjoyed teaching more than working with numbers, she continued studying for her master's Degree in Education with an emphasis on new technologies. When she finished her master's degree, she began to teach in the BA of ELT at the Metropolitan University as a full-time professor in methodology, technology and didactics. Also, she worked for the administration of the Metropolitan University's main campus for about two years. She was also involved in coordinating educative processes by reviewing didactical sequences. She still holds that responsibility.

Additionally, she has two groups in the BA in ELT. She is a teacher, and she is also in charge of the CBE/CBLT programme. She was chosen since her opinion as an administrator, and full-time teacher in the BA is relevant to my study. She worked on the CBE didactical sequences design for about eleven years. She received CBE training in the early stages of the CBE transition of the Metropolitan University when different international organisations prepared the university for this change. She knows all the aspects of the educative model, the CBE approach and implementation. I invited Gabriela to participate in this study since she is one of the critical elements for implementing the educative model in the Metropolitan University, and she holds the view of an administrative and a practising teacher in the BA of ELT.

Laura

The next participant is Laura. In addition to working for the Metropolitan University, she also works for elementary education in the mornings. She holds an hourly-paid position at the Metropolitan University. She teaches one subject in the BA, and the rest of her load is as an English teacher at the university. I decided to interview Laura since not all teachers hold a full-time position in the BA, bringing a broader view of the natural context and teacher agency in CBLT. Also, Laura is straightforward. She was direct and assertive when she talked, and concrete while developing her answers during the interview. Students love her because Laura is very dynamic and practical, and she has a connection with them.

She studied the BA in ELT at the Central State University, and after that, she began her master's studies in Competency-Based Education, but she has not finished yet. Like Flor, she was also a part of the government's scholarships for teachers to study CBE, and she mentioned that she took advantage of this opportunity. The two programmes that she works for (the elementary school

and ELT BA) use CBLT. She was interested in participating in this study from the beginning. She was the first to reply to my invitation and provided all the additional information I needed for the research. She has an excellent attitude, and that is reflected in her classes. Her perspective for this study is essential since it can explain how hourly-paid teachers deal with this policy implementation.

Diana

Diana is the Head of the BA of ELT. She is in her late 30s and studied the BA in ELT at Central State University. Like Flor and Laura, Diana studied for a Master's degree in Competency-Based education. In her interview, she detailed that she has worked in pre-school, elementary, and secondary, and now she is dedicated to higher education. Diana has been working in higher education for about nine years. She mentioned that when she began working at the Metropolitan University, the CBLT programme was already implemented, so she did not resist. She adapted to what the university aimed to accomplish. Her current position as administrator and a practising teacher brought a more comprehensive view of the context of teacher agency in CBE in a Mexican environment.

Mariana

Mariana is a young teacher, very dedicated to her work and organised. Like Laura, she is an hourly-paid teacher and teaches one or two classes in the BA each semester. Mariana also studied the BA in ELT at Central State University. When she finished her BA studies, she decided to start a master's Degree in Teacher Formation. Mariana is currently working on her research project to get her degree. Although Mariana knows that CBLT is also used in the elementary school where she works, the participant confessed that she had not internalised CBLT from the beginning. She states that the model was hard to understand since the education that she received was provided following a different model. She continued working with CBLT as "God illuminated her". She was invited to participate in this research since she can shed some light on CBE teacher interpretation and agency.

Clara

Clara was a key element during the developing process of the university's educative model. Clara directed the teams of experts that created the curriculums for all the undergraduate programmes in the CBE model transition. She is an authority on the model and a reference in the university. In addition to her administrative role, Clara offers an insight into the model implementation and teacher agency. Also, she provides an overview of her experience working with CBE as a practising

teacher. Although her studies and primary expertise are in Ecology, she was in charge of creating the BA of ELT at the Metropolitan University.

Her experience involves higher education. She holds a BA in Ecology, a Master's Degree, and a PhD in Social Sciences in the environment and society. She started working with CBE in the research and graduate programmes department. After that, she began developing the educative model. Clara says that although she did not study education, her leadership, teamwork, and strategic planning skills were the aspects that the authorities saw on her to coordinate the programme. However, an expert in the field provided the educative element and cognitive part. She describes the process of developing the educative model as gratifying. When Clara talked about her experience creating the BA in ELT at the Metropolitan University, she mentioned that the BA of ELT curriculum was designed simultaneously as the university's educative model. She noted that developing the BA in ELT was effortless since English teachers usually already embrace a constructivist view. As noted, Clara provided vital information during the development and implementation of the model.

Catalina

The next participant is Catalina. Catalina is very approachable and was very keen to participate in the study. Catalina holds a Master's Degree in Education with a minor in Linguistics, and she is currently studying for her PhD in Modern Languages. Her topic is Blended Learning in ELT. She is about to obtain her BA degree in ELT by experience since her first major was in business administration. Her expertise with CBE started at the Metropolitan University; however, as she expressed, it was easy for her because her master's degree orientation and the English classes are student-centred. She comes from a "PPP approach to teaching: "present, 85practice, and produce". Therefore, she believes that being an English teacher facilitates working with CBE.

For this study, I decided to interview students to have a broader perspective of teacher agency on CBE at the Metropolitan University. The students were invited to participate based on my observations of classes. It is essential to point out that students invited showed to be coherent and have a critical perspective. I decided to have two group interviews with the fourth-semester students and another with the sixth-semester students. I interviewed a total of 7 students around 20-23 years old. I created table 4.1 to describe each participant's nickname, position in the Metropolitan University and background studies, and a more general idea of the teachers' profile.

Table 3.1 Participants Position and Background Studies

Participant	Position	Studies
Catalina	Full-time professor	Business Adm./MA in Ed/ PhD in Applied Linguistics (student)
Flor	Full-time professor	ELT BA/MA in CBE /PhD in Applied Linguistics (student)
Diana	Administrative/Full-time professor	ELT BA/MA in CBE
Gabriela	Administrative/Full-time professor	Economy/ELT(Experience)/MA in Ed
Clara	Administrative/Full-time professor	Ecology/MA in Social Sciences/PhD in Social Sciences
Laura	Hourly-paid	ELT BA/MA in CBE (did not finish)
Mariana	Hourly-paid	ELT/ MA in Teachers' Formation
7 students	Students	ELT BA students

3.10 **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

This research was analysed through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Before deciding on the analysis approach, I reviewed different methods to reflect on the sort of analysis that best suited my type of data and the aims of my research. For instance, in content analysis, a frequently used method in humanities and other areas that study written words, the report's findings are in numbers and percentages. This way, identifying tendencies and relating different variables can be simplified. In addition, this method helps determine patterns, recurring themes or categories of the thrown data, and this qualitative examination most regularly signifies an inductive procedure, although it is also probable to follow a deductive method based on a pre-established theoretical framework to classify data (Patton, 2002). This approach could be a valuable tool for the results, especially in identifying tendencies. I did not select this procedure since my analysis intends to go further and observe the background of the social practices in the educative area to know the impact of the ideologies influencing education and the main actors of implementation.

A different results interpretation procedure reviewed was Discourse Analysis. Discourse analysis has an ample acceptance in various disciplines, but especially by the sociologists, anthropologists, and philosophers (Coulthard, 2014)**,** and within the linguistics field as well because it is a methodology that studies the written and spoken discourse to know and understand how language is used in different contexts. Discourse analysis estimates how language, both spoken

and written, portrays social and cultural panoramas and identities (Gee, 1999). In addition, it is at the same time an analysis of language beyond the sentence with the aim to understand how the words that are uttered can modify the meaning and the uses of speech; "the analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions... the discourse analyst is committed to the investigation of what the language is for " (Brown and Yule, 1983, p.1). That is to say, this kind of analysis aims to understand how language behaves and the interactions manifested depending on the context in which they are pronounced. This kind of methodology enlightens the consideration of how people perceive themselves (identities) and their reality revealed in language. Such analysis presents an exciting challenge; however, I did not select this kind of methodology since I consider that my research questions are oriented toward going further in words; not to observe the language behaviour, but to know the ideologies that take teachers to act in the way they do within an ELT context. Therefore, CDA was the one that fitted the most to my type of research.

CDA represents a critical attitude when targeting the different topics and searching for reflection about what is happening in the educative system from the so-called commercialisation of education. Also, this approach can provide significant answers to my research questions that cover aspects related to power reproduction or resistance of the educative actors. CDA can be employed in any discipline; therefore, it is not exclusive to linguistics or applied linguistics; still, it takes language elements to grasp conclusions. Van Dijk (2009) proposed to change the name of CDA to Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) because there is no similar analysis covering all the elements that CDS embrace. His motivation to suggest a change in the denomination of this analysis goes beyond since CDS analyse discourse not only as an autonomous verbal object but as truly social, cultural, historical or political practice (Van Dijk, 2009).

CDS analyse in-depth the preestablished intentions not openly mentioned by the actors of power directed through different discursive processes to persuade or lead specific group(s) within the population. For this purpose, CDS utilise any method that is pertinent to the objectives of inquiry (Van Dijk, 2009) and hold the aim of contributing to the social strengthening of the dominated groups, especially in the domain of discourse and communication (Van Dijk, 2009). In addition, CDS focus on analysing those language structures that could trigger social consequences and influence the social beliefs and, thus, the receivers' actions. Since CDS are positioned on the side of the oppressed, its focus is on the discourse properties associated with the expression, confirmation, reproduction or impugnation of social power as members of the dominant groups (Van Dijk, 2009). Such analysis must "describe and explain how the institutions of dominant groups promulgate, reproduce and legitimate the power abuse" (Van Dijk, 2009, p. 121). Given

this panorama, CDS are valuable to study the connections linking the instruction, learning and curriculum, as well as ideologies and power and their consequences on the classroom process and teaching-learning activity (Bukhari and Xiaoyang, 2013).

This approach to data analysis "begins with an interest in understanding, uncovering, and transforming conditions of inequality" (Rogers *et al.* 2016, p. 369). The CDS tendency originated thanks to the work of diverse authors that brought their professional experience in different areas of knowledge. Their work converged in common topics and analysis where the inquiry was beyond the explicitly mentioned. These recognised leading scholars are Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teu Van Dijk, and Paul Chilton, who at the same time have collaborated with Margaret Wetherell, Michael Billin, Christina Schaffner, Theo Van Leeuwen, Gunther Kress, among other distinguished scholars, all in the area of linguistics but following different inclinations. At the same time, such influential personalities have been impacted by acknowledged social theorists like Foucault, Bourdieu, and Habermas, who began to observe language from a semiotic perspective to expose social criticism. Consequently, each author has presented a different path for CDS, considering the diversity of thought and procedural methods.

For this reason, it is essential to emphasise that CDS are not a merely linguistic discourse analysis but a different review that observes the social situation from a step back, always taking a position on the side of the oppressed. Therefore, the researcher should take distance from the data, frame the information into the social context, and adopt a critical and political posture towards the studied phenomenon. It is also essential to indicate that, according to Van Dijk (2009), the CDS methods are chosen to contribute to the social strengthening of the dominated groups, especially within the discourse and communication area (Van Dijk, 2009).

 On the one hand, CDS study the relationship between language and power; consequently, different topics about domain, manipulation, and control emerge derived from such interaction (Wodak and Meyer, 2016). Wodak and Meyer explain that the ideologies of powerful groups legitimate the dominant structures of society, "ideology represents an essential aspect of the establishment and conservation of unequal relationships of power" (p.30). They explain that language does not have power solely by itself, but it obtains power derived from the use of influential people. As a consequence, "some groups in society are privileged over others, and this privilege leads to differential access to services, goods, and outcomes" (Rogers et al., 2016, p.368). Therefore, CDS allow the analysis of top-down pressures and resistant possibilities to unequal relations of power that emerge in social conventions. According to this perspective, the dominant structures stabilise the agreements and make them look natural; such conventions are taken for granted (Wodak and Meyer, 2003).

According to Van Dijk (2009), discourse is crucial in reaching the dominance of the minds and, hence, approaching the domain and control of people's actions or agency. Discourse is analysed not only as an autonomous verbal object, but as a situated interaction, as a social, cultural, historical or political practice (Van Dijk, 2009, p. 22). Therefore, CDS values what is said and what is behind the speech. Discourse is analysed as an object of persuasion or manipulation to reach the planned by the aristocracies of power. For the author, control of the minds implicates the indirect control of actions so that the influential people's discourse ends up indirectly leading other discourses that will aid the interest of personalities that remain in command. We are placed in the face of control over others' speech. People are not free to talk or write when, where, to whom, about or how they want to; but they are controlled partially or entirely by other influential members, such as the state, the police, the media, or a commercial company interested in suppressing freedom of text and conversations. Otherwise, they have to talk or write in the way they are asked to (Van Dijk, 2009). As a result, CDS reveal the hidden intentions behind discourses to shed light upon the reasons for discursive decisions the elites of power elaborated toward the oppressed. When who speaks can influence the mental models, the knowledge, the attitudes, and the ideologies of the receptors can indirectly control the future actions of these people, "the action control through the mind control is the ultimate way of power, especially when the audience is not aware of this control, such in the cases of manipulation" (Van Dijk, 2009, p. 128)

Within the educative scope, Rogers et al. (2016b) carried out a state-of-the-art CDS research, revealing a highlighted tendency to use Fairclough's three-tiered framework. The authors suggest exploring different lenses or authors in CDS in education to have different viewpoints about the issue. Consequently, the present study took an eclectic approach influenced by the different methodologies offered, considering essential aspects and needs of this empirical study. Agency per se has not been studied through CDS; neither teacher's influence on the implementation of the educative policy. For this reason, this approach can provide knowledge and shed light upon the actual processes and how the policy has infiltrated and influenced the educative actors. According to Moreno-Mosquera (2016), teachers' discourse is added to the power discourse so that the reproduction processes present at schools are naturalised. The present study could also contribute to this gap in knowledge.

 I chose to work with CDS since CBE has implicitly been designed to serve the neoliberal theories that have promoted globalisation and the mobility and exchange of material goods and human capital. Such policy (CBE) has become the academic discourse that translates such ideologies and makes them absorbable to the academic actors trying to influence their minds and, therefore, their agency. According to Silcock, Campbell and Hocking (2014), "the competency documents have power because they are part of a legal system... we are subjected to the forces in the

document: they direct us to behave and conduct ourselves in ways that comply with our statutory obligations... reflecting our human agency" (p. 8). By controlling the academic actors, such ideologies can permeate into the masses that the educative systems, public or private, have access to. As a researcher, I decided to take a critical position on such a phenomenon to reveal the results of this ideological indoctrination focusing on teachers and how this event has impacted students. According to Elyas, Abdul and Badawood (2017), teachers are forced to make operational decisions on what to teach and how to teach it, and students are made aware of the role of culture in language learning. Students are at the end of the process. They become the *product* of this structure to be inserted into the labour market. As Van Dijk (2009) suggests, CDS are about critically educating pupils, preparing future students to act as expert consultors instead of replicating others' information. Therefore, CDS propose that the relationship between academic work and society should be studied and considered, and educative practices should be based on such account.

Piazza (2014) claims that states have embraced a wide variety of reforms commonly considered part of the neo-liberal agenda for school improvement, aiming to make public education function as a private business, "the enterprising language and skills required in the documents assisted in producing us as experts who could operate in the market ... we provided services that could be measured, recorded and evaluated" (Silcock, Campbell and Hocking, 2014 p. 9). My decision considered the design, the aim and the research questions of the present study that addresses topics of reproduction, appropriation and resistance of the academic discourse in action.

CDS offer the tools to attain such immersion critically and decipher the educative discourse, unveiling how it has permeated teachers' minds, who, in the end, become powerful entities of a massive manipulation. It would be interesting to discover how these ideologies penetrate students and if they keep them away from critical and analytical thinking and approach them to a serial production that, in the end, will be ready for the market. In the end, students are the last link in this ideological chain. By shedding some light on this aspect, we could establish how effective the efforts for managing and controlling the educative policies have been. At the same time, it would be interesting to know if students resist this phenomenon or if they reproduce or absorb such ideologies. The issue regards whether students take a critical role in becoming democratic citizens or if they are passive receptors of information forced to systematically present technical or theoretical knowledge tests and proofs to be inserted into society.

3.10.1   Data Analysis Methodology: Critical Discourse/Dispositive Studies

The methodology for data analysis was adjusted using as a basis Jäger and Maier's (2016) approach to interpretation. Such a method takes critical discourse analysis theoretical foundations by observing the ideological route that could influence discourses, in this case, the academic conversations. Moreover, the author refers to dispositive analysis through a Foucauldian approach to theory and interpretation. Although he does not deliver a particular methodology for such a procedure, the author underlines the need for a method to know the path that ideologies underlying knowledge could take in observed practice. Furthermore, Machin and Mayr (2012) mention that there have been calls for CDS to make more effort to connect analysis to processes of production:

> Such additions to text analysis will better allow us to understand how discourses have lived in society. If we want to reveal power processes through language in order to challenge them, then they must be understood not only at the level of text but also in how they are assembled in institutional contexts and how they take on and are used by people in everyday life (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 14).

Therefore, the present research focused on how the ideologies permeate the classroom through teachers, students, and assessments. However, before I explain the central terms of CDS, it is essential to define the term "dispositive" under this analytical approach. According to Jäger (2003), a dispositive is a context in a constant evolution of elements in speaking and thinking in action and materialisation. Another definition he presents is the following: "By dispositive (building on Foucault 1980, 194) we mean a constantly evolving synthesis of knowledge that is built into linguistically performed practices (i.e. thinking, speaking, writing), non-linguistically performed practices (vulgo "doing things) and materialisations (i.e. natural and produced things)." (Jäger and Maier, 2016, p. 113). Moreover, "the dispositive as a whole comprises the net that is spun between these linguistically performed elements. Its linguistically and non-linguistically performed elements are interrelated and unable to exist on their own. Together, they constitute reality" (Jäger and Maier, 2016, p.113). To visualise the concept of the dispositive, we should imagine a triangle or a circle that would be rotating over time (Jäger, 2003). This figure would be compound by three essential points:
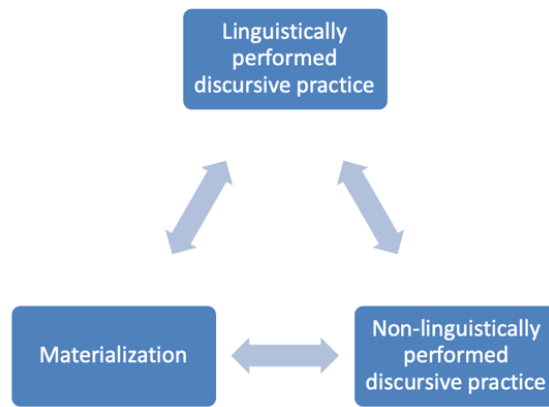
Figure 3. 5 The Dispositive (Jäger, 2003, p.95)

Three main elements conform to the dispositive: The linguistically performed discursive practice and the non- linguistically delivered discursive practice. The actions understood as non-discursive practices are elements that convey knowledge in each case. Furthermore, the actions precede knowledge and are invariably accompanied by knowledge. Finally, the manifestations and the materialisations represent the discursive practices (objects).

Jäger and Maier (2016) mention that the work of Foucault's (1979) and Kemperer's (2001) could be read as dispositive analysis, although they did not provide an explicit methodology. Furthermore, the authors propose working the non-linguistically performed discursive practice through ethnography and participant observation. Moreover, the materialisations can draw on multimodal discourse analysis and artefact analysis methods. However, "an explicit methodology for combining these approaches has yet to be developed" (p.134). It is central to develop an explicit method concerning concrete research projects; therefore, the methodology found in this study could contribute to shortening the actual distance between critical discourse studies and empirical social research. The difference in this study lies in the kind of data gathered; therefore, the data analysis would also be different. In addition, the data analysis occurs in the educative field, presenting a different perspective of practising educative research, particularly, within an ELT context. The data gathered completes the triangle of the device proposed by Foucault and resumed by Jäger. Therefore, the methodology proposal for analysing the components of the dispositive are arranged as follows, taking into consideration the data gathered during the present research:
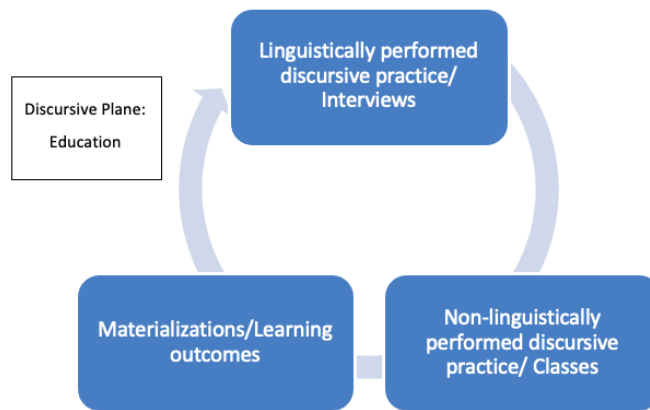
Figure 3. 6 Circle for Empirical Examination

The discursive practices that lead to primary knowledge are the interviews of the participants. Furthermore, the actions understood as non-discursive practices are elements that, in each case, convey knowledge. Moreover, the actions precede knowledge and are invariably accompanied by knowledge. In this research, the activities were documented by observing the classes at the BA. Finally, the assessment shreds of evidence are the manifestations and materialisations representing the discursive practices. In the following sub-sections, the elements of the dispositive analysis are exemplified with actual data gathered from the present study:

3.10.1.1   Linguistically Performed Discursive Practice Example

Interview Extract

Patricia: "We have the rubrics, that maybe not all of them are used, but we have them. Then the student knows what is expected from him from the beginning when you ask for a mind map; then, the bibliography of the didactical sequence is also another resource. Then, I know what is expected of me and what I must do to develop such content or learning. I believe that students have enough tools, have the online platform, have spaces to look for digital bibliography, students have the library, and maybe they would like to have more bibliographies. Still, there is the bibliography, there are didactical sequences, there are rubrics, and there is a facilitator... I do consider that they have enough tools to work."

3.10.1.2 Non-Linguistically Performed Discursive Practise Example

Figure 3. 7 Observation Excerpt Example

3.10.1.3 Materialisation of the ideology Example
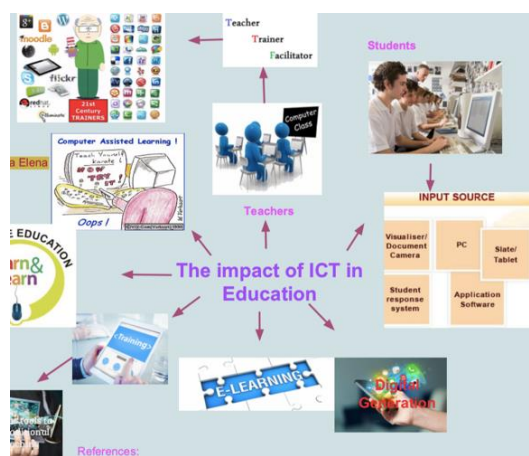
Figure 3. 8 Students' Learner Outcome: Mind map

As seen above, the dispositive forms a triangle in which the discourse, the actions and the manifestations or materialisations are linked. The present research includes the three essential elements for the dispositive and completes the circle for empirical examination. Jäger (2003) explains that materialisations exist because power and knowledge have been acting; otherwise, materialisations lose power. For this reason, the methodology utilised in the present research contributes to filling the gap in knowledge between CDS and empirical research manifested by the author and found in the current study. The following are questions proposed by Jäger to ask about the analysis of the discursive components of the dispositive: How could knowledge underlying the actions and the discursive practices be rebuilt?   How can we get to the manifestations and the materialisations to analyse the devices, and how could we process the material to determine the underlying knowledge?

The methodology implemented in this study has been proposed to include the three elements described in the dispositive to answer these questions. The primary research, the interviews, and

the group interviews are taken as the discursive practice. Furthermore, to start probing the interviews with CDS, it is necessary to identify the called discursive strands, which are the thematically uniform discursive processes. Also, it is critical to demonstrate that each discursive strand could be compounded by various discursive fragments, which are a text or several parts of the text. At the same time, these fragments could be entangled, so the analyst's job would be to identify, order and clarify the discursive strands. It is essential at the same time to highlight that the discursive plane refers to the societal ubication from where the discourse is emitted, for instance, from the educative level. Nevertheless, my analysis emphasised the ideological discursive posture; that is to say, the ideological ubication from which the individuals, groups and organisations participate in the discourse and value it (Jäger, cited in Jäger, 2003).

Once I explained the main terms of CDS, I also considered some areas Jäger and Maier (2003) proposed to analyse an article. However; I modified this guide to examine the three components of the dispositive above mentioned as follows:

The first step was to describe the discursive plane briefly. The discursive plane within this study is language teaching and learning—the following analyses the structure by valuing the material processed concerning the selected discursive strand. Then, the researcher can proceed to the fine analysis of the discursive fragments and the fine analysis of the discursive posture. The next step is to attain an international examination in the studied sector by asking the following question: What contribution provides the educative system with the acceptance of the nowadays economic regimen?

The material processing was made as follows (guide adapted by the researcher):

Once data was collected, the interviews were transcribed and processed with the support of the programme NVivo. Some specific topics or discursive fragments were assigned, as well as some possible discursive strands. Then, the ideological affirmations were identified based on the content described in the Jäger's guide for processing the material. The guide was adapted to process the interviews gathered from the participants as follows:

The researcher needs to understand the kind and form of argumentation. The investigator should also comprehend the implications and insinuations within the discourse and should be able to understand any types of collective symbolism, idioms, popular sayings, stereotypes, as well as vocabulary and style. The researcher can ask the following questions to comprehend the ideological affirmations based on the content: What underlying notions of "neoliberalism" could be manifested in the discourse? What kind of underlying comprehension of "CBE" could be found or transmitted in the interview? What underlying awareness of "CBE assessment" could be seen

or shared in the interview? What elements of "acceptance, resistance, appropriation" could be manifested in the discourse? What is the perspective of the future that the interview transmits? Then, based on the above steps, it was possible to find the central affirmation in the discussion, its general message. To conclude, the interpretation of the research discursive thread is made regarding the material that has been used (structure and fine analysis). The following excerpt provides an example from the research data to illustrate the analysis of the discursive practice:

"I see a lot of positive aspects. In the end, we need to comprehend how we are going to function in the labour market... It is not only the development of skills in the operative sense, but each thing seen in the classroom has its' theoretical foundation. The model gives you many tools to face the labour field."

In this fragment, the participant argues formally and logically about her acceptance of the CBE ideology. In addition, the words *labour market, skills, operative, and labour field* reflect the language that has permeated higher education due to neoliberalist ideas. At the same time, she mentions the phrase: we need to comprehend how we will function in the labour market... and again, *"the model gives you many tools to face the labour field."* It can be observed how professors have the idea that the purpose of higher education is to obtain a job in the labour market instead of forming critical and democratic students that could improve the society in which they live. These are indeed the actual conditions in our country. It is evident how the neoliberal ideologies have penetrated education agents converting universities into entities of labour training to "launch products ready for the market". The implications I observe are that such thinking is seen as something given and should be that way because of the conditions that the neoliberal social model states.

Classes were documented through observation sheets to analyse the second component of the device (the actions, understood as non-discursive practices, *see Appendix B)*. The analysis of the actions performed in class was carried out by asking the following reflective questions: What underlying notions of "Neoliberalism" could be manifested in the activities performed in the class? What kind of underlying comprehension of "CBE" could be found or transmitted in the actions performed in class? What sort of underlying perception of "CBE assessment" could be found in the actions carried out in class? What elements of "acceptance, resistance or appropriation" could be found in the activities performed in class? The following paragraphs provide examples from the research data to observe how non-discursive practice was analysed by using the present guide.

Class Description

The course observed was Advanced Grammar, a block of two fifty-minute sessions together from 7:00 AM to 8:40 AM. The topic of the class was how to express the future. The course started as a regular English Class by eliciting students' plans for the weekend. Gradually, students uttered sentences and wrote them on the whiteboard. After that, the teacher discussed the grammar rules with students based on students' expressions.   The first fifty-minute block of the class was directed to deductive grammatical presentation within a teacher-controlled environment alternated with students' responses and reflections about the topic. Following this, the teacher divided the students into pairs and provided them with a handout containing grammatical exercises for students to discuss and complete. The teacher offered a reward to the team that answered all the items correctly. Next, students were engaged in the activity and debated all the questions. When students completed the task, the teacher elicited answers from them and asked them about their choice. Then, the teacher gave them feedback; meanwhile, students self-assessed their responses. Afterwards, the teacher tried to engage all students in the discussion and reflection. Finally, the teacher asked them to tell her which pair did not have any mistakes to give them the reward she agreed to at the beginning of the activity. Teachers and students generally held a favourable attitude towards the class, reflected in students' engagement with the course.

Data analysis

During the class, some aspects of the ideology of CBLT were observed. I analysed the didactical sequence and saw an adaptation of the plan of the course and the actual class. The professor mentioned that she adapted the activities of didactical sequence to what she believed could be more interesting for her students. Nevertheless, the constructivists' precepts remained in the activities developed in class. The class was controlled and directed by the teacher. She allowed the discussion and the reflection on the answers given. The sentences uttered by students were about real-life situations, connecting students with their reality.

Moreover, the connection of class activities to real-life situations is an essential element of constructivism. Another element of the constructivist model is learning through the environment and a more knowledgeable other. This element could be observed in class since students worked in teams/pairs to solve the class situations through collaborative learning. The professor used a inductive grammar method instead of just presenting grammar to the class, an aspect that promotes critical thinking. However, behaviourism was also present when she offered a reward for the class.

Chapter 3 Methodology

The teacher used a "self-assessment" strategy when asked about students' answers and mistakes for assessment. Students took the time to reflect on their responses, reflecting knowledge of the CBLT assessment. After that, she offered general feedback for students to check their answers. From this observation, it could be interpreted that the professor accepts the constructivists' ideas of the CBLT education model and implements them in the classroom. Moreover, the professor also seems to accept the assessment elements that the model proposes by using peer and self-assessment strategies in the activities in class.

The third component of the device, materialisation, is the **students' learning outcomes** or shreds of evidence of learning within the present study. The analysis of these materialisations was carried out by asking the following reflective questions: What kind of underlying comprehension of "CBLT assessment" could be found within the learning outcomes? What elements of "acceptance, resistance or appropriation" could be found in the learning outcomes? Is there any feedback provided? If so, how? As follows, I provide an example of the materialisation of the ideology and the analysis. To protect the participants' identities, the professor's, as well as the students' names, were erased. The student learning outcome is an exercise of a comparative chart of the simple present and the present continuous grammatical rule. I present a screenshot to observe the learning outcome and the feedback provided in the online platform:
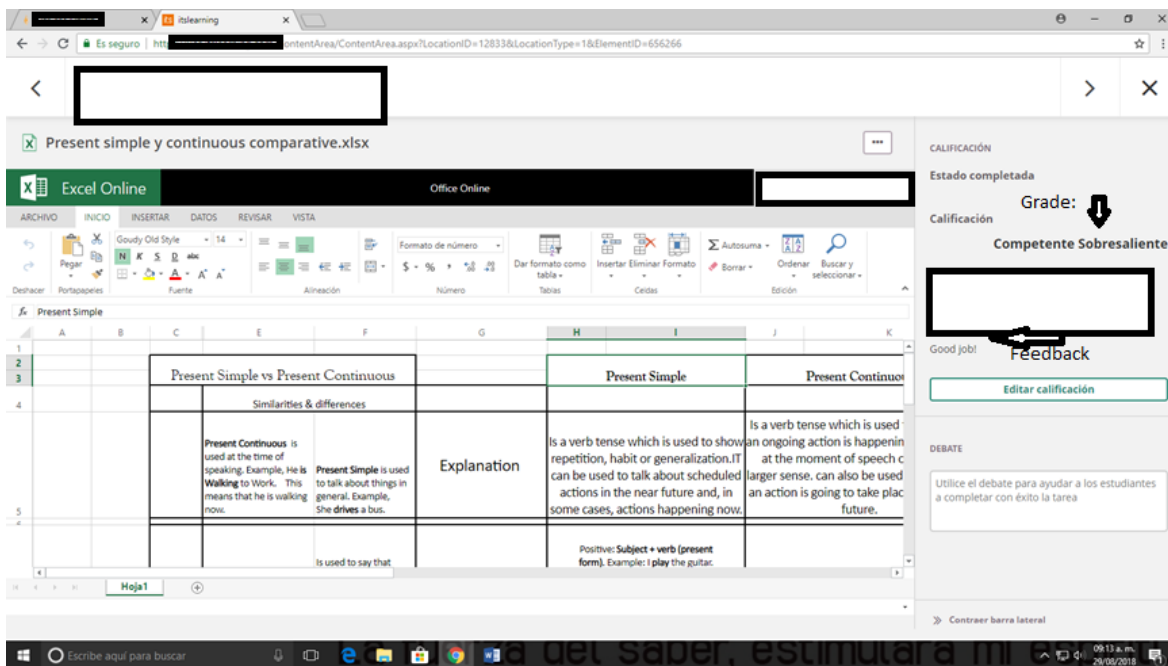
Figure 3. 9 Student's learning outcome feedback 3

Materialisation Analysis Example:

From this example it can be observed how CBLT is reflected in this student learning outcome since students are asked to synthesize and demonstrate the distinction between the two grammatical

forms. *Synthesize* and *demonstrate* are verbs that express levels of comprehension, according to Bloom's taxonomy. Bloom's taxonomy is used to plan the didactical sequences within CBLT and to require students a higher level of thought.

As can be observed in the screenshot of the online platform, the teacher does not give a numerical grade, as stated. The screenshot refers to advanced-competent or intermediate-competent, another aspect of CBLT observed. The grades under CBLT are expressed in categories instead of numbers. Moreover, according to the model, a detailed description of the elements that students accomplished or did not is delivered. Moreover, there is a feedback section provided on the online platform. There was a brief explanation for the grade obtained. The idea of CBLT is that teachers give students a rubric with an explanation of the category reached. Also, students under this approach could improve their grade category throughout the semester. However, the structure of this CBP does not allow students to self-correct and advance at their own pace, as stated in CBE/CBLT.

In summary, the professor seems to accept the constructivists' elements of the CBLT manifested in the learning outcome through the activity provided that demands higher-order thinking skills. However, in this example, feedback is not as detailed as expected in the CBLT model. Moreover, the structure of the CBP does not allow the student to self-correct. In addition, it does not allow students to work at their own pace. These elements reflect aspects of resistance toward the requirements of the model due to the time challenges that are faced.

Once the three elements of the device, 1) the discursive practices: the interviews, 2) the non-discursive practices: the classes, and 3) the materialisations: the students' learning outcomes, were analysed separately, a triangulation among them and with the CBE policy of the university was carried out as follows by asking the following reflective questions: What elements of the CBLT policy can be observed within the interviews, the classes and the learning outcomes? How have the neoliberal ideologies permeated within teacher agency and assessment? What elements found within the interviews, the classes, and the learning outcomes seem to contradict the precepts of the CBLT policy? What features indicate if teachers accept, appropriate or resist CBLT? To conclude, the interpretation of the research discursive strand is made regarding the material that had been used (structure and fine analysis).

I triangulated the three elements of the dispositive in order to observe how the CBLT policy was reflected in the interviews, the classes and the students' learning outcomes presented in the analysis. Acceptance of the ideology was reflected in the data since teachers are aware of the CBLT approach and procedures. The constructivist elements of the approach were manifested in the discursive and the non-discursive practices. In addition, the language of commercialisation in

education was present in the excerpt reflecting the success of the neoliberal ideology in reaching teachers' beliefs and agency. Appropriation was reflected in the non-discursive practices, where teachers adapted the materials and adjusted the time for reaching the contents required. Resistance could be observed in the lack of detailed feedback that seems to contradict the precepts of the CBLT policy.

In this section, I presented the procedures for data analysis using an empirical methodology that I proposed for critical dispositive analysis. I exemplified how I analysed the data to have a broader perspective of the processes carried out. While conducting the present research, some unanticipated categories emerged from the data, and these will be presented in the following section, and developed in the results chapters.

3.10.2 Emergent Categories from the data analysis

While developing the present research, some unexpected information arose from the data. I included this information since the categories emerging from the data analysis were an essential part of the development of the present study. The emergent categories were not directly part of the CBLT model. However, the following emergent categories affected teacher agency. It is crucial to emphasise that such information added value to this research, and the participants were open to sharing their opinions and experiences with the researcher. The emergent categories are presented in the following chart and will be explained and expanded in chapter 6:

Imposed External Systems that Impact the CBLT classroom such as: Quality indicators and a standardised test applied to all students three times during the semester.
CBLT Instruction and Assessment Linked to Teachers' Economic Stability.
A Cutting-edge Model within a Traditional Framework.
CBLT within the Mexican Education System: Incongruences.
CBE seems to be beneficial for "lazy" students.

Through this methodological section, I explained the steps I carried out to conduct this research. I described how I had access to the research site, the ethical parameters that I considered, and the pilot study I conducted to get to know the area and examine the context before carrying out the research. The pilot study gave me a glimpse of the data I got from the research. In addition, the methodology to analyse the data displayed a three-dimensional vision of the phenomenon to be

studied. Moreover, I was able to observe the context from different angles to know how the policy of CBLT has permeated the educative agents in the selected university. The following two chapters, following this methodology, reveal the fascinating results found in this research

Chapter 4   **Findings and Discussion: Compliance**

The last chapter describes the methodology followed and the data analysis steps. I talked about dispositive analysis and proposed a method to explore different data kinds through the lens of critical discourse studies. I presented the context and the participants that allowed this research to evolve (see Ch.3). Since this is a case study, I intended to draw each participant's picture and the context of this investigation through my narrative. I organised the results based on the objectives and research questions. In addition, the headings relate to the categories established during the data analysis. Also, I considered the following elements: the interviews, the observations of different classes, and the learning outcomes, tangible evidence of learning performance. As discussed in chapter three, the emergent categories that evolved from this research were discussed from the sociocultural theory's theoretical point of view and the CDS perspective. Within the CDS perspective, I presented a methodology that considers different data kinds reflecting how the ideology has passed through the participants' discourses and their actions and tangible students' learning outcomes. Due to the amount of data presented in this research, the CDS analysis will not be presented. However, I considered the questions in chapter three to analyse the data.

Firstly, I discuss the attitudes teachers present about the model and the elements of CBLT that they carry out. I describe the features that teachers comply with about the CBLT model. By *compliance,* I mean what they verbally manifest in support of the model and what they performed through their teacher agency during the classes I had the opportunity to witness. Compliance also implies that teachers have internalised the neoliberal ideas underlying CBLT, as evidenced through this chapter. I will observe other compliance elements in the materialisations of the competencies, which are the students' learning outcomes. This chapter starts by answering the first research questions that imply approval of the CBLT ideology inherited in education. I will present the research questions below, which will be analysed considering the three elements of the dispositive. As explained in chapter four, the three elements of the dispositive are: the linguistically performed discursive practices/interviews, the non-linguistically performed discursive practices/class observations, and the materialisations/learning outcomes (see Ch, 4 section 4.6). As mentioned in the methodology, the interviews were analysed using NVIVO 12. Although the pilot study had provided categories in advance, new categories emerged from analysing the results. All of the categories discussed in this chapter relate to teacher agency in a CBLT classroom.

According to Thomas (2017), it is challenging to present the findings separating the results from the analysis and the discussion in social research. Since the present research is an interpretative study, the findings are presented, analysed and discussed within the same chapter. I organised the results and analysis into two branches to answer the research questions proposed. In the present chapter, I present the data that answers the following questions: What elements of CBLT are carried out? How has the CBLT model been understood and interpreted by teachers? Do teachers resist CBLT? What kind of learning outcomes are presented? As is typical of critical discourse studies, I will analyse the data to find implicit discourses. In this case, I will focus mainly on neoliberal trends to detect the internalisation of ideology. I also will focus on the constructivist ideas that teachers practice. The interviews were in Spanish, the participants' native tongue, to have more accurate information about the phenomenon. I translated the excerpts to English for the means of the present research. However, the original version of the interview extracts is in Appendix E.

I experienced certain difficulties and challenges. For example, when I was expecting to observe teachers, the teacher did not show up a few times or had to change the class plan to accommodate other commitments. Also, only a few teachers sent me examples of learning outcomes. Therefore, I decided to ask students for the learning outcomes to have a more complete and authentic view of the CBLT experience. Overall, the participants collaborated openly with the data collection, which did not represent a significant challenge. In the next section, I present teachers' attitudes towards the CBLT model and the elements that teachers carry out in classrooms. I illustrate the data analysis and discussion considering the three elements of the dispositive analysis: the discursive practices, the non-discursive practices and the materialisations (see section 3.10.2). I integrate the three elements of the dispositive in the findings' analysis and discussion.

4.1 CBLT elements in practice: Teachers' attitudes towards the model

Throughout this section, I describe and analyse the aspects that respond to my research questions: What elements of CBE are carried out? What attitudes do teachers present towards the model? First, I explore whether participants see CBLT as an opportunity or imposition. This aspect is to know teachers' attitudes about the CBLT model as a good starting point to observe if practitioners are willing to embrace the model or question it. Also, I explore what CBLT approach elements were observable in classes in order to see how the precepts of the method are reflected in classroom practice. In addition, I discuss the humanistic elements involved within the CBLT curriculum which were part of the elements that teachers approve about the approach.

4.1.1   CBLT: Opportunity or Imposition?

Almost all participants in this study mentioned they perceived CBLT as an opportunity instead of an imposition. Only one participant said it was an imposition. However, she mentioned the beneficial aspects of the model. In the following, I present some examples and analyses through CDS of such acceptance of the CBLT policy in the following excerpt.

> Gabriela " For me is an opportunity, from the beginning... it probably was because we were in the English area, we have already learned to work with the development of skills. Then, when they started to train us to move to competencies and talk about how to develop skills, we already had training, we understood... What do I have to do to develop one skill or another? It was then an opportunity to apply it to English Language Teaching and any other subject you could teach. And, it was not an abrupt transition where you say: how do I do this? Then, opportunity? Yes. You can do many things inside and outside the classroom, as opposed to traditional teaching that did not allow it many times." 1

In this excerpt, Gabriela expresses her approval of the CBLT model. She confirms that CBLT is an opportunity for teachers to do a better job during their classes. Gabriela emphasises that being an English teacher enables working with CBLT since they develop and demonstrate the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). For her, it was not a difficult transition. She mentions that it was an opportunity to open her vision to other subjects using the model she works within the English classes. This aspect relates to the results shown by Azis (2016), stating that having a BA in ELT does not guarantee that teachers know how to work with competencies. It is a fact that teachers received training in CBE, and they related what they were learning to their experience developing skills because of their constructivist backgrounds. Also, Gabriela expresses her approval towards CBLT when she compares CBE to traditional teaching mentioning that formal education did not allow her to take out her students outside the classroom. Her expressions bring the idea that by having a constructivist framework, like CBLT, she is liberated by teaching to perform differently from traditional education. The following excerpt reflects how, according to Patricia, CBLT represents an opportunity to improve instruction.

> Patricia: "Oh, yes, it (CBLT) is a growing opportunity when used appropriately. With enough tools for the student to achieve...the student can self-regulate and manage his knowledge during the whole semester. Then, if there is no facilitator, it would be easy to enrich the knowledge. For that reason, I believe the model is an opportunity be used with all it has." 2

Patricia also mentions that she sees CBE as an opportunity to grow. She explains that the model provides all the elements students need to learn. Patricia emphasises and puts a condition when she mentions the expression *"if the model is used appropriately;" "when used with all it has".* According to Patricia's perspective, these two expressions might suggest that not all students take advantage of the CBLT model that presents all the elements students need. She clearly expresses her approval of the constructivist ideas underlying CBLT. She believes the model offers a range of opportunities for students to learn, and she even mentions that students do not need the facilitator because all the knowledge is there for them. In the following quotation, Patricia talks about the attitudes that teachers hold about the CBLT model:

> Patricia: "I believe there is no resistance to the model at this moment. It is now in an observation stage of what is good and what does not work. We will start revising and upgrading the study programmes since the topics have become obsolete. Then, in that way, all programmes from 2014 will have a modification. I believe this modification will help us see what the model provided and what has to be modified." 3

Patricia expresses that she does not believe that there is teachers' resistance towards the model now. She even mentions a revision stage of the programmes to analyse the contents and renew them. When she talks about the programme, she refers to the didactical sequences and the curriculum modules. So, the next upgrade of the programme will continue using CBLT but with upgraded content. She reaffirms that she does not find resistance in the following quote:

> Patricia: " I do not think there is resistance at this moment. It was probably at the beginning; I do not remember. When I got here in 2011, I did not resist because I was new in the institution and adapted to what the institution provided, but I think that a teacher who had more years in the institution could have noticed that resistance." 4

Again, Patricia mentions that she does not believe there is resistance to the model. However, she also states that she did not show any resistance in her case since she was new to the institution. She instead adapted to what the institution asked. Here again, the approval of CBE in teachers' perceptions is observable. This participant holds a master's degree in Competency-based education. It allowed her to practice and evolve her ideas on this topic in the institution. She also mentions that she did not show any resistance in her case but believes she might have noticed that resistance for teachers who had more years working for the institution. In the case of teachers of the BA in ELT, there was no resistance to implementing the CBLT curriculum since teachers were hired with the CBE-specific profile. The BA in ELT was created simultaneously along

with the educative model. Patricia explained her position when she was hired at first, mentioning that she adapted to what the institution required of her. In the following quote, Clara explains her attitude toward the CBE approach:

> Clara: "I always see it (CBE) as an opportunity; as an administrator, it was an opportunity to do things differently and make my institution grow. I never saw it as an imposition." 5

I perceived a compliance attitude towards CBLT through all the interviews. Almost all of them mentioned it was an opportunity, and in general, they noted that CBLT brought them the chance to do things differently. Also, my perception was that the participants interviewed had a goal to make their institution grow and better position among the state's universities. The following excerpt exemplifies this aspect:

> Flor: For me, it is an opportunity that my institution allows me to see my student as a whole... for me is an advantage; I love it. Yes, I work a little more because teachers' commitment is higher; you see more facets of students. You see more colours, and you must attend to all of those colours. You wait if the student had a situation at that moment until he catches up, then you accept it and see how you evaluate that aspect that he has been losing. It is more work, but I think it is better. You are considering the individual and not only a group. We are people"6
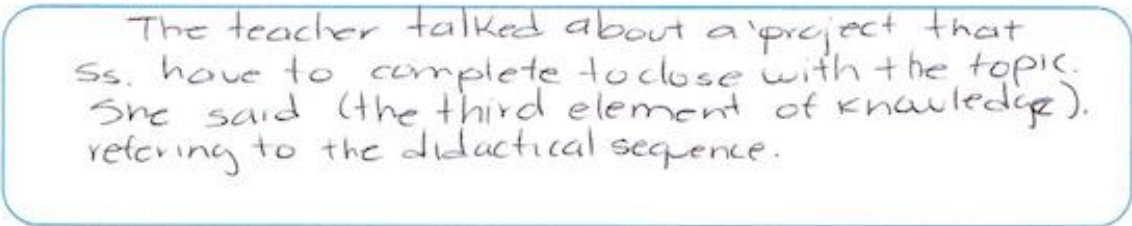
Flor's excerpt shows how the teacher believes that CBLT is much better than teacher-centred education. She expresses that it is advantageous to see students as human beings and have this framework to be sensitive to students' problems. She also mentions that it is much more work; nevertheless, she maintains this commitment with an optimistic attitude. She uses the words or phrases: *"I love it, colours, attend, accept, better, individual, people"*. From here, one can deduce that Flor's approval of the essence of the model is high. However, in the next chapter, I will present "different colours" of the CBLT model at Metropolitan University to help understand more the context in which CBLT is implemented. As could be observed in the examples presented, teachers seem to hold an accepting attitude towards the model, and they highlight favourable aspects of CBLT addressed in the following excerpt:

> Alejandra: "I think I am more in favour than against; I see that it has many advantages…. When evaluating, it is more specific for students; it is easier to know what they must do and what they have to achieve. I think that is good." 7

4.1.2   CBLT Elements Reflected in Classes

Another element of approval found in the interviews is that CBLT is more specific when assessing and what is expected from students becomes clearer. In this way, Alejandra sees CBLT as an opportunity. In addition, It is also evident that teachers and students manage the terms referred to in the CBLT curriculum, as observed in the subsequent two figures:

Use of Assessment
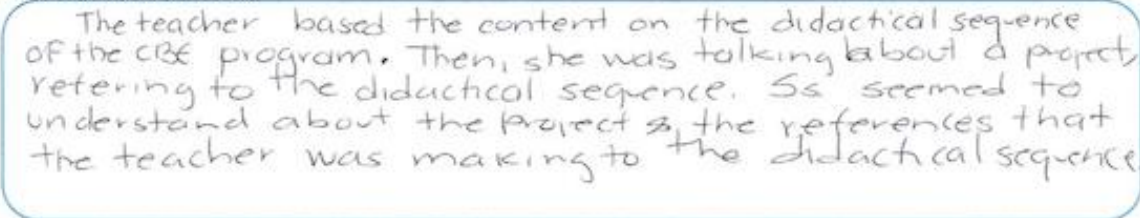
> The teacher talked about a project that Ss. have to complete to close with the topic. She said (the third element of knowledge). refering to the didactical sequence.

Figure 4. 1 Observation note for Flor 1

Transcription: The teacher talked about a project that students must complete to close the topic. She said (the third element of knowledge referring to the didactical sequence).

Is CBE observed? How?

> The teacher based the content on the didactical sequence of the CBE program. Then, she was talking about a project, refering to the didactical sequence. Ss seemed to understand about the project & the references that the teacher was making to the didactical sequence

Figure 4. 2 Observation note for Flor 2

Transcription: The teacher based the content on the didactical sequence of the CBE programme. Then, she was talking about a project, referring to the didactical sequence. Students seemed to understand about the project & the references that the teacher was making to the didactical sequence.

Flor explained the activities the students would carry out and reviewed the didactical sequence. According to advocates of the model, CBE presents a standardisation of concepts that indicate the way as a map to accomplish the desired competencies (Marcelino, 2005). It is the map of achieving outputs of desired student performance (Richards, 2013). While reviewing the didactical sequence, Flor referred to the integrative projects that students were going to hand in, and she

based on the didactical sequence that she was holding. This aspect reveals that students are aware of the kind of learning and assessment they are going through, as observed in the last two figures. The teacher follows the path traced by the didactical sequence established by the Metropolitan University. This aspect reveals acceptance of the CBLT ideology and how it has been carried out in classrooms. It also reveals a reproduction of the CBLT didactical sequence. It shows how the policy efforts in training the model have been implemented in classrooms. It can be observed how teachers try to follow the programme established by the education entities and how, at the same time, in this case, what the teacher can bring to the class based on his ideology and experience has been diminished. Hawkings et al. (2015) speculate that teachers are focused on the instrumental spectrum and are worried about completing the tasks needed. This situation could put teachers far away from the intellectual commitment of their job and the responsibility to teach, school, and society. This aspect is evident when the participant talks about the CBLT curriculum, didactical sequence, and the elements students need to complete the project required (see Ch.3 section 3.1.3 for a definition of didactical sequence). In the next section, the humanistic side of the CBLT approach will be discussed.

4.1.3   CBLT: Humanistic Side

Another element of the CBLT approach that teacher participants resalted about the model was that within this approach the students are seen as whole entities. That is to say, students' personal issues are taken into account and teachers become mentors in order to help students in an integral way. These CBLT elements are part of the approval attitudes that teachers hold about the model. In the following excerpt, Flor explains the humanistic side of the approach:

> Flor: "I love it because we see the student as a human being. I like to think that I am working for humans and would like to contribute to being happier. If people are happy, we will live better, be more self-confident, and live and produce. Even when you push your students to give an extra, they perform better if you do it and know that you are interested in them. It is a win-win relationship. I do not get involved a lot with students. I do not think they need another friend, but I like that they feel that they interest me a lot, that their being and their happiness is important to me." 8

Teachers seem to approve of CBLT because it sees students as a whole. Moreover, this aspect comes up in the different interviews, which take this humanistic approach to teaching, and forgets about the coldness of the numbers and statistics of traditional education. It brings the

teacher closer to the student and breaks that barrier between teacher and student that the conventional education stereotype had. Although she mentions that she worries about students, Flor also says that they do not need another friend, but Flor is interested in them and likes them to know that she cares for them. Another evident element while observing classes is that teachers care about students. They try to see students as a whole person and try to be flexible in case a student presents problems in their learning, as observed in the following fragment:

Other comments
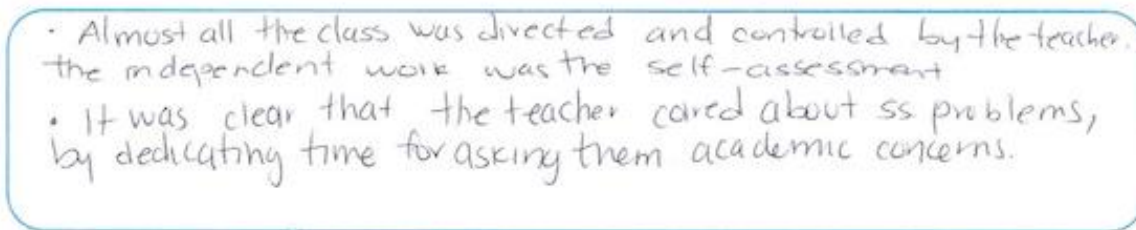
Figure 4. 3 Observation note for Gabriela

Transcription: Almost all the class was directed and controlled by the teacher. The independent work was self-assessment. It was clear that the teacher cared about students' problems, by dedicating time for asking about their academic concerns.

According to Ruohotie-Lyjty (2013), significant encounters, life-touching and empathic feelings towards their students' lives influence the teachers' self-perception. These were determining factors that affected their teacher identity. Within the educative model of the Metropolitan University, the flexibility towards students' problems and academic concerns is manifested. This flexibility reflects how the educative model's humanistic side has permeated teacher agency in classrooms, as observed in the previous observation note. In the next section, the neoliberal ideas underlying the approach will be analysed.

4.2 Underlying neoliberal ideas

In this section, I present how the participants expressed their compliance with the neoliberal ideology implicit within the CBLT model. Gabriela emphasises the next compliance factor in the following citation:

Gabriela: " I see a lot of positive aspects because we need to know how we will function in the labour area. If they tell me about the development of skills, for example, if I am being trained as a teacher, and they train me to develop teaching and learning strategies, I will be able to transmit that and apply it in the classroom... Now, it is not only skills development in the immediate sense. Each thing taught has its' theoretical foundations, such as previous reading and previous discussion, and then you go to the practical stage. Then, yes, I think it gives you many tools for facing the labour area." 9

Gabriela agrees with Patricia that CBLT offers a range of possibilities for students, and she adds that everything done in the classroom has its theoretical foundation. However, Gabriela's notion about the purpose of higher education is to help students function in the labour area. She uses the expressions: *"function"', "labour area" (twice), "trained".* It is clear evidence of the neoliberal ideologies inserted in higher education policies by taking these ideologies for granted and promoting them to students. Teachers seem to value the constructivist ideas of CBLT and accept the neoliberal ideologies that CBLT implies. CBLT comes as a whole package, including pedagogical tools that offer liberating resources for teachers and students. However, it also means a design directed to commercialise education.

Nonetheless, teachers seem unaware of this aspect, revealing a lack of a critical attitude towards their work and activities. According to Moreno and Mosquera (2016), teachers' discourse is added to the power discourse to naturalise the reproduction processes present at schools. The last excerpt is an excellent example of the CBLT ideology's reproduction in teachers' discourse by accepting CBLT and their students' function in the labour area. It is also observable how, through her speech, Gabriela shows her appropriation of the CBLT ideology. From the sociocultural perspective, she has internalised the ideology of the CBLT, which includes the neoliberal path to society. According to Van Dijk (2009), when who speaks can influence the receptors' mental model, knowledge, attitudes,and ideologies, also can indirectly control these people's future actions. When political discourse can change educative agents' ideologies, the actions carried out in the classes also reflect this ideology. According to Van Dijk (2009): "The action control through the mind control is the ultimate way of power, especially whe' the audience is not aware of this control, such in the cases of manipulation" (p.128). As noted, it is natural in the teachers' discourse to express approval towards the neoliberal ideas infiltrated in higher education. The participants replicate the ideologies generated by the elites of power, which are having higher education to the employers' service using constructivist pedagogy.

4.3 **"The Good Teacher has always Worked with Competencies"**

This section presents examples of how teachers relate being a good teacher with working with competencies (for competencies definitions, see chapter three, section 3.1.2). It is a clear example of how these top-down ideologies are influential and have penetrated teachers' minds, hence in teachers' actions. The following citation is another example of how teachers have internalised CBLT while Flor and Mariana express their opinion about what a good teacher is:

Flor: "A very personal opinion is that the good teacher has always worked with competencies. It was accomplished to separate this vision of preparing students to incorporate them into the world of work. The student had to be treated as an integral being; I think the good teacher has always treated his students by a competency model because you not only see a grade in the student (at least that has always been my perspective). For me, assessment is formed by many things, and I have always said, the grade, the number is cold...for me, the student has a lot to teach. But I think a good teacher has always acted by competencies, is seeing your student as an integral human being, and not only a person with reading skills, reflection and a grade, it's over. No, I think that is much more than that." 10

Mariana: "I believe that we always have worked with competencies. They have a name now, but I feel that we always have worked by competencies. I feel that working by competencies is more organised because the teacher can see what he wants to achieve and what is wanted and could be reached. Then, if it is well organised, and the teacher understands it well, he can reach all the competencies established in the programme or the curriculum, I do not know, and obviously, reach those objectives... Another positive aspect is when one can `read' the competencies. There is a way to follow, a direction. You are not lost because a teacher who is not working within a CBE programme can often make their way or see the themes without landing them or linking them. And that is very important because you help the student see the complete picture of what he will learn and why."11

Mariana and Flor believe that the "good" teacher has always worked with competencies. For them, the topics need to be linked to practical reality. Mariana likes that CBLT is a guide on where and how to go in her classes. She mentions that it gives teachers a direction on where and how to work in lessons. She said it is easier for students to see the complete picture of where they are

heading and what is expected. For Patricia, the student has the opportunity to have everything structured, giving an endless world of possibilities.

Moreover, students can take their knowledge further because there are no limits to experience in practice from them. They did not mention that students take these opportunities, but they said that the structure and the knowledge are served to develop their students' competence. Having such a structured plan represents how teachers no longer have that responsibility because somebody else outside their classroom planned the didactical sequence for them. A *didactical sequence* is a suggested class plan showing how facilitators could develop classes and the learning outcomes teachers could ask students (see Ch. 3 section 3.1.3). These didactical sequences are published on the Metropolitan University webpage, and any person can have access to them, including students.

According to Marcelino (2005), CBE presents the standardisation of concepts that indicate how to accomplish the desired competencies. Such standardisation is offered through the didactical sequences. The curriculum takes content (from external standards and local goals) and shapes it into a plan to conduct effective teaching and learning. It is the map of achieving outputs of desired students' performance (Richards, 2013). However, Kumaradivelu (2008) argues that "established methods are founded on idealised concepts geared toward idealised contexts. Furthermore, they are removed from classroom reality… no idealised method can visualise all the variables in advance to provide context-specific solutions" (p.165). However, the participants in this study mentioned that they could adapt the method to their students' circumstances, which is what their agency relies upon. In addition, teachers connect being a good teacher with working with competencies. This aspect exemplifies how teachers have appropriated or internalised the CBLT by including competencies in the "good teacher" identity. As stated, *"a good teacher has always worked with competencies".*

Flor uses the expression: *"preparing students to incorporate them into the world of work".* This expression is another example of how the reproduction of power manifests in teacher discursive practices by linking what is seen in the classroom to the employment market. What is behind what Flor and Mariana pronounced represent how, according to Van Dijk (2009), the manipulation of the aristocracies of power has reached their planned objectives. For the author, control of the minds implies the indirect control of actions so that the discourse of the influential people, as is the case of teachers, leads indirectly to other discourses that will aid the interest of personalities that remain in command. By influencing teachers and their agency, the reproduction of power could be easily replicated in their students, as I will discuss later. In the following quote, Patricia talks about the learning process in class and assessment:

> Patricia: "I like students can know the contents and take them further. If the teacher presents a specific topic, let us say that the international alphabet for sounds, the IPA (International Phonetics Alphabet), the student will have the opportunity to take that knowledge they see in class and investigate more and self-regulate, see more information, consult maybe with the facilitator, search other strategies, other dynamics."12

Patricia likes the idea that while working with CBLT, students can take the contents seen in class and research them to enrich their learning. However, as I will discuss in the next chapter, students do not seem to use this resource. In the next section, I will discuss what the results displayed about the assessment within a CBLT context in the present case study.

4.4   CBLT Assessment

In this section, I debate how the assessment elements were observed within the data gathered. I start by analysing the use of rubrics within the reality of teachers in section 4.4.1. Then, other assessment elements and a discussion of the use of summative and formative assessment within the CLBT approach are discussed in section 4.4.2.

4.4.1   Use of Rubrics

One of the elements that are proposed as part of the assessment elements of CLBT is the use of *rubrics.* As seen in chapter three, a *rubric* is a checklist that mentions the specific elements required in an assignment and how it would be evaluated. It is a tool used to measure the level and quality of a task or activity. In a rubric, a criteria description is made to evaluate students and the score awarded to each criterion (See Ch. 2, section 2.8). In the following quotation, Patricia continues explaining aspects that she sees as beneficial about the CBLT model implemented at the Metropolitan University:

> Patricia: "We have the rubrics, that maybe not all of them are used, but we have them. Then the student knows what is expected from him from the beginning when you ask for a mind map; then, the bibliography of the didactical sequence is also another resource. Then, I know what is expected of me and what I must do to develop such content or learning. I believe that students have enough tools, have the online platform, have spaces to look for digital bibliography,

> students have the library, and maybe they would like to have more bibliographies. Still, there is the bibliography, there are didactical sequences, there are rubrics, and there is a facilitator... I do consider that they have enough tools to work." 13

Patricia, Mariana and Flor also emphasised the use of rubrics, stating that rubrics are specific and available in the system for teachers and students. Mariana says that rubrics are excellent for facilitating teachers' work, but sometimes teachers think that using rubrics is more complicated. Being fair with her students removes many problems and helps her deliver feedback easier. Marina, Flor, Gabriela, and Alejandra mentioned that rubrics are a valuable element of CBLT. Also, Flor noted that she uses electronic portfolios for her students and further projects in her classes. These projects serve to expose students to future situations that they would face. For example, Gabriela emphasises that she enjoys this holistic approach to teaching and learning because the teacher can evaluate students' attitude towards learning, affecting their grades. Within CBLT, the pupils learn by doing the tasks and having the facilitator provide feedback (Garfolo and L'Huillier, 2016). The facilitator should offer continuous information about the competency acquisition process.

For this reason, students must be able to produce and communicate messages consistently so that the teachers can provide support to develop their competency level (Zabala and Arnau, 2008, cited in Moreno T., 2010). The participants mentioned how they could see students' messages about their competency development, which are the students' learning outcomes they use. The previous quotations reflect the participants' approval of the CBLT assessment elements.

Following on, I will take a quotation from Mariana's interview, where she describes how she uses the rubrics to assess students within the CBLT model.

> Mariana: "The rubrics are good... I feel that they are good; they are feasible. I feel that they save time if you do them well... sometimes you say: you have to do this project. How am I going to assess that project? Well, I am going to do a rubric. But sometimes, we do very complicated or detailed rubrics when I feel that the function of the rubric is to ease the teacher's work. I feel that, yes, you can do a checklist. It is much fairer for the student, and even though the feedback is not always 100% positive, the student can perceive and say: "oh ok, I was wrong, I can improve in this... The other way, without a rubric and only with the number, the student does not know." 17

This excerpt shows that Mariana approves rubrics in the CBLT assessment procedures. She mentions that she uses rubrics to be fairer with students and give them feedback. Hence, Mariana states that rubrics make her work more manageable. Even though it could be additional work if the teacher designs very complicated rubrics, Mariana believes that rubrics or checklists help her and her students through the assessment and feedback process. Although Mariana mentioned that CBLT was an imposition, Mariana likes how CBLT helps her design her classes better. However, higher education institutions suggest that all processes must be evaluated. The suggestion also involves that the student's learning outcomes are listed in the curriculum. Due to employers' pressures and quality assurance agencies that demand transparent processes and detailed descriptions, such practice has been accepted. However, Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery point out that "this type of curriculum delivery structure has indeed generated activity, but it may be an activity that is focused on the accumulation of marks, within a regime of frequent demands that students are required to manage" (p. 33). This influence is evident in Mariana's interview when she is worried about having a transparent process while assessing her students. She mentions that rubrics have eased this procedure for her and her students. The following quote is from Patricia's interview in which she expresses her compliance with the CBLT approach and the educative model of the Metropolitan University.

4.4.2 Summative and Formative Assessment

According to the participants of this study, there is an underlying belief that the use of certain elements is not allowed within the CBLT approach because of the summative elements that they imply. They mention that the emphasis of the CBLT curriculum and assessment is on formative assessment. In the following interview fragments, the participants continue expanding their opinion on the assessment elements involved within the CBLT approach.

Flor: "I like the rubrics, of course, I do exams because that is another misunderstanding: - in CBE, you do not make exams-... Of course, you take exams, but the questions have to be elaborated differently. I like to put them in hypothetical situations, expose them to their future practice and ask them. I always ask for an electronic portfolio integration at the end. Attendance is very important; for me, a student is formed with all class interactions. You learn different ways of working and solving problems, and not problems in the negative sense, but in the situations that arise." 14

Here, Flor explains what she considers critical aspects of assessment. She states the importance of tests in CBLT, revealing that CBLT and exams do not necessarily contradict. Flor emphasises that the questions should be elaborated from a different perspective. During this part of the interview, Flor tells how she approaches teaching and learning by highlighting how to connect students' assessments to their future practice. Therefore, it is evident how she accepts this part of the CBLT policy and the educative model of the Metropolitan University. It is also apparent that the notion of approaching students for their future practice is also taken for granted by accepting the model's intention to direct students to the labour area. Gabriela also talks about the benefits that she sees about assessment in the following extract:

Gabriela: "Something innovative for me is that you are not only evaluating knowledge. You holistically evaluate the student. You consider all those aspects that help you develop as a human being because you can have brilliant students, let's say... very skilful in the knowledge area. Still, they do not know how to be; you don't see them as professionals. You say he knows a lot but does not know how to develop. Competencies in that way come and allow you to say, "Well, assess the student in all aspects, not only on acquiring knowledge." And it is difficult for the student at first to demonstrate that he knows. But later, he gets used to it. He gets used to knowing that he has all the competencies: you have to know, you have to know how to do, you have to demonstrate me everything, not only on a sheet of paper show your knowledge, that maybe you have it recorded, you have a good memory, but you do not know how to apply it, you do not know how to share it. There is where the student learns to do this, and you do this, you have to demonstrate to me thoroughly that you know how to apply it, and how to share it." 15

Here, Gabriela mentions that she likes to be able to assess students holistically. She Indicates that for her, this aspect is innovative. She approves this part of the assessment proposed by CBLT. The teacher assesses students in all aspects. She mentions that students must know and understand how to apply and share their knowledge. She remarks on demonstrating the competencies, as CBE assessment is fulfilled through learning outcomes according to the standards established in the programme (see Ch. 3 section 3.3.1 for an explanation of learning outcomes). The standards guide the course structure and offer clear criteria for expected performance (Diaz, Arceo and Bravo, 2014). According to CBE advocates, performance must be done according to the terms and criteria of quality that have been established previously (Argudin, 2014). The evidence must demonstrate the competence stage to develop, and it must be tangible. However, according to

Saadi, Saedi and Karbalei (2016), the CBE assessment process concentrates on lower-order skills, and creativity is more complicated and less amenable to quantification. Norris (1991) also states that the CBE model focuses on practical learning outcomes instead of the whole process. This aspect does not guarantee that the student will develop adequately in various contexts. This focus on outcome-based approaches risks studying what can be measured and demonstrated, limiting critical thinking in Higher Education institutions.

In Mexico, school education ranges from preschool to high school. Educative programs at these levels are competency-based. By the time the students participating in this research reached university, they went through competency-based curricular programs. In her interview, Gabriela suggests that it is difficult for students to work with CBLT assessment initially, even though they have a CBE background. Although the students went through curricular models based on competencies, it is still difficult to adapt to the assessment system when they arrive at the university. This aspect also came up as a topic in the different interviews, and I will discuss it in the next chapter. However, her compliance attitude towards the model is evident through the words, *"innovative, competencies give you the opportunity, demonstrate and apply".* When her word selection is analysed, she keenly understands the CBLT approach and assessment process, which she has appropriated, and manifested through all her interviews. In the following excerpt, Gabriela talks about the difference between summative and formative assessment:

> Gabriela: "Within the student-centred model, you start building, based on these tasks and other things you grade. The student builds up his grade, but you say, "oh well, you did ten assignments and did not hand in one than your average is ..." no, it is not that what in the competency model." 16

Gabriela explains the difference between CBLT and summative assessments in the previous quotation. She mentions that in CBLT, the teacher does not assess students through an average and using numbers. This aspect might reflect a belief that averages, and competencies are in contradiction. Nevertheless, CBLT includes summative assessment as a final judgment on students' performance. The evaluation's objective is to know and identify what students know and what they can do. However, some characteristics like grading apply directly to summative assessment that primarily sums up numbers or grades that students accomplish. The difference between formative and summative evaluation is that the second one evaluates what the students know and can do to plan learning activities that could help the student improve (Sambell, Mc Dowell and Montgomery, 2013, p.3). This way, the facilitator will inform the student about their

process and feedback, which will help them learn about their qualities and accomplishments. However, as developed in the following chapter, it is necessary to conclude with a number assigned by the teacher at the end of each semester according to the government's regulations, which forces the use of summative assessment. Furthermore, "these structural conditions at the societal level can lead to assessment dilemmas such as formative assessment being neglected or under constant threat" (Knight and Yorke, 2003, cited in Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, (2013, p.14). Gabriela does not explain how she assesses and how this assessment does not become subjective.

> Patricia: "The model has as a benefit the different ways to assess, the summative, peer-assessment, learn from your classmates, have constant feedback. Also, the ability to self-regulate, search for more information and consult with the facilitator. It is to look for different ways to evaluate linearly from the teacher to the student, but the student can also give feedback to the teacher, consult, and approach his classmates. The process of teaching and learning is not that rigid." 18

Patricia manifests her approval of the CBLT model and assessment in the last fragment by explaining *"the benefits"*. She explains the different assessment types and how they can see students' competence through different angles and not only in a *"linear"* path from the teacher to the students. The participant explains that the student can also deliver feedback to teachers and interact with other students. In addition, Patricia emphasises that the process of teaching and learning is "*not rigid*." Students also talk about the paradigm change in the students' and teachers' roles that have impacted teacher agency, as evident in the following statements.

> Students: "Now they (teachers) are too open in the way we work because they require us to be the ones who work. They do not ask us to be perfect but demonstrate what we know."19

In the last sentences, students also show their approval of the model by explaining that teachers are now more open in their work. Students know their role is to work and demonstrate within the CBE approach. Contrary to teacher-centred education, where teachers transmit knowledge, teachers become facilitators and learning guides under the CBE approach. Their role goes beyond a lecture; they become coaches by motivating, guiding and selecting materials and activities that

support their students in reaching target competencies. The last fragment shows how CBE ideology has also permeated students' ideas of how a teacher-student relationship should be. In this sense, the efforts in managing and controlling educative policies have been practical. Students do not seem to resist this phenomenon; on the contrary, they also seem to approve and be passive receptors of information that, in the end, they will transfer to their future practice. Students also talk about the student's and teacher's paradigm change in the subsequent expressions.

> Students: "At a professional level, we do not have to depend on the teacher. We have everything written; we must do our part because the teacher is not here to guide us. He is here to support... not to be like mom or dad... is seeing the teacher more as a facilitator... The teacher will never say, "this is what I want, and do not do more than that. On the contrary, they say: do not do less than this. You can do it until here, but I would like you to do it until there.".20.

The last fragment reveals the attitude that students hold towards the model. It also indicates that"the CBLT model has permeated teachers' and students' agency and way of working and thinking. Students mention that they have all the information they need to learn and do not need to rely on everything from the teacher. They noted that the teacher is more like a facilitator who reflects their acceptance of the CBLT paradigm change on teachers' and students' roles. Furthermore, this student demonstrates his approval of the teachers'-students' role paradigm change by explaining that "*teachers are not like moms or dads"* and that teachers are the ones that support, but students are the ones who work. It is also evident how students are aware of the kind of educative model they are involved in and can express and detail notions of the CBLT approach. At least they are aware of the constructivist side of the CBLT approach and how they are the ones that take responsibility for their learning. In the following quotation, Gabriela expresses the benefits of the CBLT model.

> Gabriela: " For me, competencies remain in force. They came to move our perspective and change us this way. You, teachers, were the centre of attention before, but now it is the student... the most important is to see how the student learns. Then the focus is: In what way will I achieve that the student learns? It is not my focus on what I will teach them, but on how I

will accomplish that the student is the one who learns and that he is competent and has the skills at the end, not only the knowledge"21

Gabriela: "The student is more self-conscious of what learning is. He focuses on learning and learns to self-assess, which will help him learn. It is not simply teachers transmitting knowledge; they are learning different and have better learning styles. At least our students in the BA that work with didactics, that work with methodology. Then they learn to associate – oh, I understand why I am learning this way. And that is one of the major benefits that I believe it has: the student identifies the way he learns... For teachers, you do not focus much on what you think but on how your students learn. There should be more learning than teaching."22

In the previous fragment, Gabriela talks about the differences she observes through working with CBLT. She explains how teachers' and students' roles have changed throughout this education model at the Metropolitan University. What Gabriela enjoys and sees is that students are aware of their learning style and of how students can reach their competencies. She mentions that at least in the BA in ELT at the Metropolitan University, she observes that students connect what they learn in the didactics class to their learning style and reflect on their process for acquiring knowledge and teaching competencies. She seems to understand the paradigm change of teachers' and students' roles since she mentions that teachers' focus should not be on themselves but their students learning and how they can reach competencies.

4.5   Materialisation of the ideology: Students' Learning outcomes

Through this section, I will present the learning outcomes collected from the students. The learning outcomes represent the CBLT ideology's materialisation (see Ch. 4 section 4.6.1) that demonstrates that the pupil has acquired or not the competence. Although it is not the purpose of this study to make a direct relationship between competence and students' learning outcome, it demonstrates how the CBLT ideology has permeated into teachers' minds and has allowed the implementation of this policy. This section intends to clarify the connection between CBLT ideology and the tangibles results representing the policy's materialisation.

As stated in the methodology section, I analysed the type of students' learning outcomes presented and their relationship with the students learning outcomes suggested within the CBLT

ideology. For an accurate perspective of the phenomenon, I asked students to send me examples of their learning outcomes presented during the semester. I took a screenshot of the students' learning outcomes, omitting the students' names for privacy. For participants to develop their answers more accurately, their native language, Spanish, was used during the semi-structured interviews. I translated the excerpts to English; however, the original version of the interview extracts is available in *Appendix E*.

4.5.1 Rubrics for Students' Learning Outcomes

The Metropolitan University is specific with the kind of learning outcomes requested under the CBE model that they carry out. For this reason, they have within their online system-specific rubrics that they suggest for evaluating students' learning outcomes. Teachers have access to a rubric for:

a) Mind maps
b) Oral presentation
c) Synoptic table
d) Essay
e) Comparative chart
f) Written Report
g) Summary
h) Timeline
i) Research Project

The following two figures are screenshots from the Metropolitan University's rubrics for teachers to adapt to their needs. These represent two examples of how the learning outcomes are assessed and how the category (grade) is delivered. All the rubrics are available for teachers and students within their online system.

RÚBRICA					
NOMBRE DEL CURSO:					
CLAVE DEL CURSO:					
FASE(S) EN LA QUE SE UTILIZA LA RÚBRICO :					
EJERCICIO :	MAPA MENTALES				
FASE ESPECÍFICA QUE SE EVALÚA:					
FECHA LIMITE DE ENTREGA:		FECHA REAL DE ENTREGA :			
NOMBRE DEL ALUMNO:					

ASPECTOS A EVALUAR	Competente sobresaliente (10)	Competente avanzado (9)	Competente intermedio (8)	Competente básico (7)	No aprobado (6)
Uso de imágenes y colores	Utiliza como estímulo visual imágenes para representar los conceptos. El uso de colores contribuye a asociar y poner énfasis en los conceptos.	Utiliza como estímulo visual imágenes para representar los conceptos. El uso de colores contribuye a asociar los conceptos.	No se hace uso de colores, pero las Imágenes son estímulo visual adecuado para representar y asociar los conceptos.	No se hace uso de colores y el número de imágenes es reducido.	No se utilizan imágenes ni colores para representar y asociar los conceptos.
Uso del espacio, líneas y textos	El uso del espacio muestra equilibrio entre las imágenes, líneas y letras. La composición sugiere la estructura y el sentido de lo que se comunica. El mapa está compuesto de forma horizontal.	El uso del espacio muestra equilibrio entre las imágenes, líneas y letras, pero de se observan tamaños desproporcionados. La composición sugiere la estructura y el sentido de lo que se comunica. El mapa está compuesto de forma horizontal.	La composición sugiere la estructura y el sentido de lo que se comunica, pero se aprecia poco orden en el espacio.	Uso poco provechoso del espacio y escasa utilización de las imágenes, líneas de asociación. La composición sugiere la estructura y el sentido de lo que se comunica.	No se aprovecha el espacio La composición no sugiere una estructura ni un sentido de lo que se comunica.
Énfasis y asociaciones	El uso de los colores, imágenes y el tamaño de las letras permite	Se usan pocos colores e imágenes, pero el tamaño de las letras y líneas	Se usan pocos colores e imágenes, pero el tamaño de las letras y líneas	Se usan pocos colores e imágenes. Se aprecian algunos	No se ha hecho énfasis para identificar los conceptos destacables y

Figure 4. 4 Rubric Example

4.5.2 Materialisation of the CBLT ideology: Examples of Students' Learning Outcomes

The materialisations section illustrates teacher agency by the learning outcome they require students to hand in class. As I mentioned previously in the methodology section, I asked students to hand in their learning outcomes to illustrate the students' assignments. I asked students for their learning outcomes to have a more realistic view of the Metropolitan University phenomenon. The students' learning outcomes I collected match the above criteria that the Metropolitan University asks for. For this reason, I decided to write this section in the present chapter demonstrating aspects of the CBE policy that teachers carry out in practice. To illustrate this aspect, I classified the following figures according to the type of learning outcome.
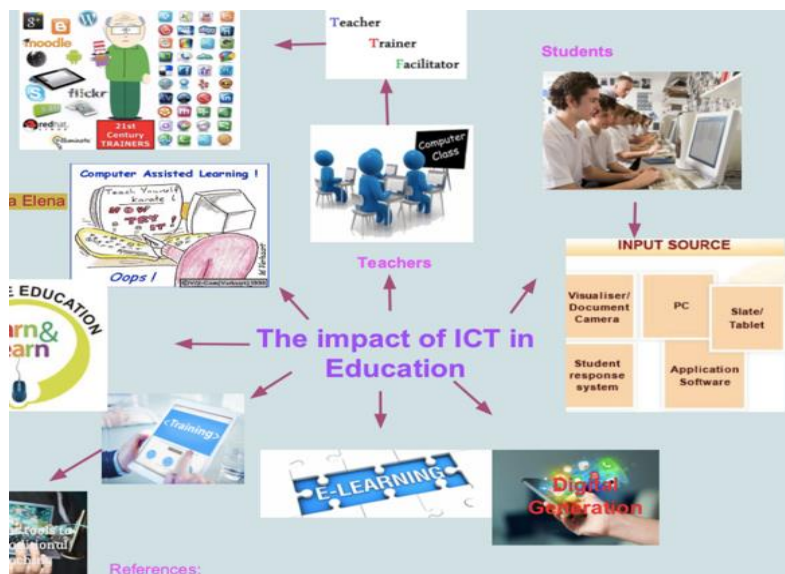
Figure 4. 5 Student's Learning outcome: Mind map example 1
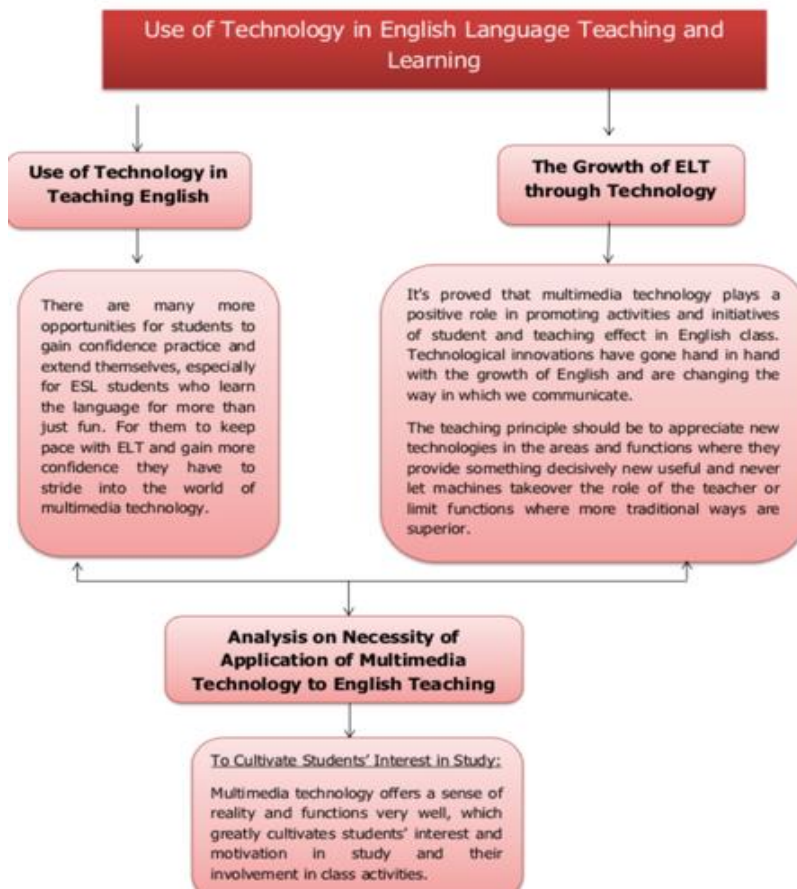
Figure 4. 6 Student's Learning outcomes: Mind map example 2
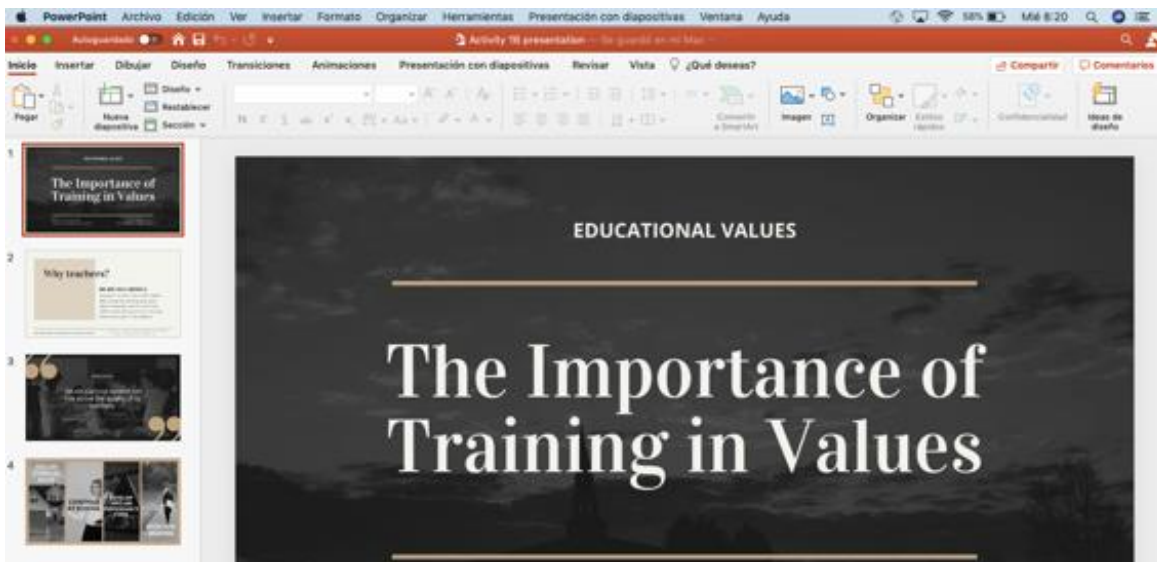
Figure 4. 7 Students' Learning Outcome: Oral presentations

TIPOS DE ENUNCIADOS

Objeto Directo

Se enlaza al verbo sin
Necesidad de ningún índice
explícito de su función. El
Objeto directo carece de
Rasgos diferenciales
Respecto de las unidades
Que desempeñan el oficio
De sujeto explícito.

¿Dónde está el **objeto directo?**

1. Identifica el verbo.
   Nosotros subimos el volcán.
2. Contesta ¿Qué? o ¿Quién?
   ¿Qué subimos?
   El volcán.
3. ¿Qué es el objeto directo?
   El volcán.

Objeto Indirecto

El objeto indirecto es
Compatible con cualquier
otro adyacente en la misma
Oración y suele designar
En la realidad al destinatario
De la noción evocada por el
Verbo. Por ejemplo
"Escribió **a su amigo**".

1. ¿Qué es un objeto **indirecto?**

1. Nos dice **a donde** va el objeto directo
2. Nos contesta **a quien** y **para quien** la
   acción del verbo.
Por ejemplo:
Juan me compró a mí un helado ¿Para quién compró el helado?
   Para mí.
Gina te dio a ti el dinero. ¿A quién le dio el dinero?
   A ti.

Figure 4. 8 Student's Learning Outcome: Synoptic table

Definition of inclusive education

Inclusive education consists on valuing all students equally, increasing the participation of students and reducing the exclusion from their cultures and communities. We have to erase those barriers so students can learn and participate in class. "Inclusive education is viewing the difference between students as resources to support learning, they are not problems to solve. The school is in charge of developing values and achievement." (National College for Teaching and Leadership,2002)

Why is important to be inclusive?

Inclusive Education is about finding ways to design programs and classes to have all children participating and learning equally. What kind of teacher are you if you don´t look different ways of teaching so your classroom is involved by all the kids?. Inclusive helps you to create an environment full of love, friendship and mutual respect between the students and the teacher. Some benefits that we can find from being inclusive is that all children are able to be part of their community and develop a sense of belonging to a social group. Inclusive Education also provides better opportunities for learning, children with different abilities are better motivated when

Figure 4. 9 Student's Learning Outcome: Essay

Simple Present	Present Continuous
Usage of Tense: We use the imple present for things that are true in general,or for things that happen sometimes or all the time.	**Usage Of Tense:** Present Simple should be used when an action is taking place while speaking or a temporary situation like : Now,Longer Actions in Progress ,Near Future,Repetition and Irritation with "Always"
Affirmative Form Depending on the person the simple present tense is formed by using the root form or by adding -s or -es to the end. **Example:** Mario works very hard.	**Affirmative Form** Subject + to be(am/is/are) + base + ing **Example:**I am going. You are sleeping.
Negative Form: The simple present negative is don't(do not)/doesn't(does not) + verb (base form) **Example:** She doesn't drink coffee. I don't like my neighbor	**Negative Form:** Subject + to be(am/is/are) + not + base + ing(present participle). **Example:** I am not going.We are not going.
Interrogative Form: We use do/does in simple present question + verb (base form) + ? **Example:** She doDo you play basketball? Does he work in the bank?	**Interrogative Form:** to be (am/is/are)+ subject + base + ing (present participle). **Example :**Are you going?Am I going?

Figure 4. 10 Student's Learning Outcome: Comparative chart

Summary: Moral Values

As human beings it's important to understand how we behave, why do we act in that way and what can we do about it. Do we act by our own believes or do we care to much about other people thoughts? What role does society plays in moral values? Do kids react differently from adults? We all deal with moral values because we all have feelings and critical thinking.

What are moral values?

Overriding love that parents feel for their kids, the sympathy and empathy we experience when we see people we love suffer. The anger we feel when someone threat us in a rude way. Positive feelings, admiration and guilt or shame. Moral values deal with our feelings, thoughts and perceptions of how we see life, how we deal with problems.

Lawrence Kohlberg, he believed that he was able to demonstrate through studies that people progressed in their moral reasoning, for example their bases for ethical behavior.

Figure 4. 11 Learning Outcome: Summary

1861 — Benito Juarez declared the Public Institution Law, which establishes the obligation to give education attention to disable people.

1920 — Medical-pedagogical focus for the attention to child population with different capacities.

1925 — Creation of the Psicopedagogical department, looking for the best reinforcement in the students.

1935 — The SEP was created in 1921 but it didn't interfere with the education of disabled students until 1935.

1937 — The National School for blind people and the National School for deaf people were created among others.

1940 — The conduct clinic is founded with the purpose of analyzing the explaining the personality of the child.

1953 — The Secretaría de Salubridad y Asistencia (SSA) founded the Rehab Direction.

1970 — The Dirección General de Educación Especial (DGEE) is founded.

1982 — Programa Inmediato de Reorientación Económica

2001-2006 — The goal is to achieve a better justice to give rights and opportunities.

2002 — Among 16,000 schools in Mexico provide services from kindergarten to middle school.

2003-2004 — Basic education in Mexico includes 9 years of study, primary education 6 years and secondary 3 years.

2007-2010 — Government data states that USAERs provided special education services to 328 children with autism.

2012-2018 — Mexican government initiated the General Guidelines for special education service.

Figure 4. 12 Learning outcome: Timeline

Within the above examples of students' learning outcomes, it is observable that the CBLT ideology has permeated into teacher-agency, demonstrated through the kind of learning outcomes they request. The above examples match the students' learning outcomes suggested by CBLT and the Metropolitan University. Teacher agency is reflected in the students' learning outcomes since they illustrate the process developed and how students are asked to demonstrate their knowledge. In this way, the student's learning outcomes suggest compliance with the CBLT ideology on teacher agency. Hence, the student's learning outcomes materialise how the CBLT ideologies have penetrated teacher agency in classrooms. The materialisations close the dispositive triangle, suggested by Foucault (1980, p.194) and described in the data analysis methodology in chapter 3. *Dispositive* means a constantly evolving knowledge synthesis built into linguistically performed practices, non-linguistically performed practices and materialisations. "It's linguistically, and non-linguistically performed elements are interrelated and unable to exist on their own. Together, they constitute reality" (Woodak, Meyer 2016, p. 113).

As observed, the kind of learning outcomes presented in this section obeys the type of learning outcomes requested by the CBLT policy and the Metropolitan University's educative frame for assessment. The kinds of assessment and student learning outcomes the teacher should ask for are stated in the didactical sequence teachers have to guide students to reach the target competencies. However, according to Sambell, McDowell, and Montgomery (2013), higher education institutions tend to suggest that all processes must be evaluated. The suggestion also involves the students' learning outcomes listed in the curriculum, as in the Metropolitan University case. The authors continue stating that such practice has been accepted due to employers' pressures and quality assurance agencies that demand transparent processes and detailed descriptions. Teachers have this structural pressure that demands time, numbers, and judgements based on final performance and policies that do not support formative assessment. In

the following chapter, I will further discuss this aspect, where teachers comment on the workload this represents.

4.6 **Conclusion**

In this chapter, it was clear that teachers seem to have internalised the constructivist side of CBLT, including assessing their students. Participant teachers and students are aware of the CBLT ideology and the regulations for its application to classroom practice, contrary to the studies that show that CBLT has become a simulation because of the lack of knowledge of CBE (Pamplón Irigoyen and Villalobos, 2015; Robles-Haros and Estévez-Nenninger, 2016; Lukindo, 2016; Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei, 2016; Velasco-Martínez, Díaz-Barriga and Tójar-Hurtado, 2017). Participants also seem to have internalised the neoliberal tendencies within CBLT manifested through the discursive practices.

Teacher agency is conceptualised within an approach where teachers are considered facilitators of learning and asked to follow a predetermined sequence or plan. As mentioned above, there is a list of competencies that, according to CBLT, teachers should fulfil to support their students while reaching the target competencies. I could draw from these results that the teacher relates their identity and professional experience to their agency. As shown in the interviews, teachers feel "competent" to teach and evaluate through the CBLT curriculum and manifest approval of the constructivist and neoliberal ideas within the CBLT ideology. Also, teachers seem to approve of the theoretical foundations of the CBLT approach; as Kumaravadivelu suggests, "Our search for the universally applicable method has been pre-dominantly and inevitably a top-down exercise. The conception and construction of methods have been primarily guided by a one-size-fit-all cookie-cutter approach that assumes a typical clientele with common goals" (p.167). In addition, Phabhu (1990, cited in Hall, 2011) proposed that any attempt to find the "best" method was illogical given that teachers quite reasonable adapted and combined individual methods to accommodate contextual influences and their own personal beliefs.

According to what I observed during the classes, teachers take some elements mentioned in the CBLT education model. They integrate some of the CBLT features into their courses; however, the classes continue to be teacher-centred. Lukindo (2016) concluded that teachers know the essential elements of the model. However, they were unsure how to evaluate under the CBLT approach; nevertheless, they continued assessing traditionally. This is not the case at the Metropolitan University, as stated above. However, the classes continue to be teacher-centred. Pamplón-Irigoyen and Villalobos (2015) also discovered that teacher-centred methods were practised inside the classrooms. As possible causes, the study mentions that teachers did not

know the precepts they were supposed to follow. This is different from what was observed in the Metropolitan University, where teachers and students know and are trained in the CBLT educative model. The students, guided by the teacher, participated in theoretical discussions about terms in some classes. In general, the lessons I observed were about the teacher delivering content.

No single method can be followed 100% and provide the expected results. Instructors are the only ones who have that possibility. "Postmethod envisages teachers assuming an 'enhanced' role, with the freedom and power to make informed decisions based on local and contextual expertise"(Hall, 2011, p.114). They observe the context, explore the attributes of the learners, allow them to develop and then employ the language so that students' ideas come to life via language. *Language* is a key that unlocks unlimited communication channels and endless growth opportunities. Moreover, language teachers equip pupils with a pathway that guides them to open the various locks they may encounter.

Instructors tried incorporating CBLT assessment and the students' learning outcomes accepted in the education model. Although I cannot conclude that teachers internalise the CBLT scheme, I have shown the components in complying with the CBLT tenets in the three elements of the dispositive that mirror the reality materialised in classes. From my point of view, as long as educators maintain and develop this sensitivity to and help their learners improve their linguistic competence, we can convey that the postmethod is alive. However, suppose instructors dedicate themselves to covering a book's contents, filling pages and allowing the methodologies of external agents to reign in their classroom. The inevitable "Death of the method" might occur in that case. Applied linguists have started to speak of 'The Death of the Method' (Allwright, 1991), of the 'Postmethod Condition' (Kumaravadivelu, 1994) or a move 'Beyond Methods' (ibid.; 2006; 2012). Initial forms of Postmethod practice may be recognised as 'principled eclecticism' in which professors intentionally prepare and adjust their classroom practices by absorbing techniques from various techniques and using them for specific and appropriate purposes (Rivers, 1981). However, Akbari (2008, cited in Hall 2011) recognises that not all professors have the time, resources or the willingness to shoulder the responsibility and decision-making Postmethod asks of them and suggests that the 'death of Method' often leads not to a Postmethod era, but to the substitute of methods by textbook-defined practice. Based on the classes I observed at the MU, teachers adapt their classroom procedures to their available time and their students' needs. Even though teachers demonstrated that they understand the CBLT model's theory, other factors that interfere with the model implementation will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 **Findings and Discussion: Challenges**

I answered the first three research questions in the previous chapter. The aspects that teachers comply with the model were exposed and discussed. Moreover, in this chapter, I will analyse the data gathered to answer the questions: Do teachers resist CBLT? If so, why? What features in this case study indicate a custom-made model adaptation? What are underlying notions of the social model implicit within CBLT? It is essential to mention that the CBLT policy implementation is not just black and white. That is to say, CBLT should not be polarised in this context since, according to the participants' responses, it brings some educative tools that can enhance learning. Therefore, teachers work hard to use the model's tools to improve their students' reality. However, there are still elements that are hard to accomplish.

In this chapter, I present teachers' challenges while implementing a CBLT model and how the Mexican educative system's actual circumstances do not support this programme implementation. That is to say; the CBLT approach does not fit as projected within the Mexican educative system. For this reason, in this chapter, I will present some issues related to CBLT implementation and how teachers deal with them daily. Furthermore, the topics discussed here refer to how teachers perceive this model and how they implement it in classrooms and impress them on their students' learning outcomes. I start by providing a framework for the emergent categories of this study. The emergent categories were introduced in the methodology chapter and are indicated in the subtitles of this chapter. The first section includes how imposed external systems influenced by neoliberal tendencies affect teacher agency in a CBLT classroom. The second section provides data demonstrating that the Mexican education system is not yet ready to practice an outcome-based approach. Finally, I provide examples of some incongruences found within the Mexican System of Education that impact teacher agency in a CBLT classroom.

5.1 **Imposed External Systems that Impact the CBLT classroom**

5.1.1 **Quality Indicators**

This first section presents how neoliberal policies have penetrated the university's actions and practitioners' perspectives. The criteria that quality organisations require have a neoliberal tendency to link higher education to the employment market's needs.   It was interesting to understand how teachers perceive the university's rates, including CBLT policies and how these affect their agency. Although I did not include the theme in my questions, the category of

academic rankings emerged in different aspects that impact teacher agency in a CBLT classroom during the interviews. This section is presented to draw the Metropolitan University framework and see how international organisations' policies and quality agencies permeate the Metropolitan University. Furthermore, this section is offered at the beginning of the chapter to contextualise how teachers perceive the academic rates and what underlying notions of the social model implicit within CBE are found, which is one of the research questions that this study aims to discuss. The following quotation shows how teachers are aware of how the academic rankings put pressure on the Metropolitan University.

> Flor: "Yes, and public universities have their indicators, which are the money universities receive. Yes, authorities have to take care of the quality of learning and know that those indicators will have the money for the university's operation. Isn't it? Then, they are very important to accomplish; they are, NI MODO..." 23

In the last excerpt, Flor explains how the quality indicators in higher education work. Higher education institutions that want to develop must fulfil the requested quality indicators. If they do not, they do not generate funds, which are necessary for any project that any university would like to implement. In her words, she explains that the university uses this special financing to have money for the university's operations. For this reason, the accomplishment of these criteria is essential for the university. The participant uses "*indicators, money, quality of learning, operation, necessary to accomplish*". In the end, the term "*Ni Modo",* which in this context means, compliance: we must do it that way, even though we disagree. The terms used in the last excerpt reflect the language of commercialisation that higher education institutions use. Henceforth, this demonstrates how neoliberal ideologies have penetrated the official documents of higher education and how teachers express themselves. The participant directly links the accomplishment of the quality indicators with the university's money for its operation.

This aspect seems to suggest that neoliberal ideas have permeated teachers' ideologies. Furthermore, this permeation is reflected throughout accepting these ideologies, even though they do not fully agree. As the participant mentions, the indicators are the pressure measures universities are "invited" to accomplish to receive funds to operate the university. This aspect reflects the control that the policies have on universities. Van Dijk (2009) mentions that we are placed in the face of control over others' speech. People are not free to talk or write when, where, to whom or how they want to. However, other influential members control them partially or entirely, such as the state, the police, the media, or a commercial company interested in suppressing freedom of text and conversations.

On the contrary, they have to talk or write as they are asked. Even though the author refers to the freedom of speech, this quote inspired me to address the issue that teachers are not free to use their agency in classrooms since they are pressured and controlled by universities' indicators. Consequently, the policies and the accomplishment of the academic rankings are suppressing teachers' freedom and hence, their agency in classrooms.

Moreover, the acceptance of the CBE/CBLT suggestion in the Metropolitan University changed the paradigm that administrators, academics, and students hold about education and how classes should be imparted, at least in theory. This paradigm change requested teachers who already had a trajectory and a way of approaching education to modify aspects by the experience they had gained and experimented with through their teaching path. It could be observed through the different excerpts, that the system works this way (arbitrary) and affects teacher agency and the assessment carried out in institutions and inside classrooms. Another example of the pressure that the rankings and the accomplishment of specific academic quality indicators can be observed in the following excerpt:

> Flor: "How do I do to elevate my graduation rates or my graduation degree rates? Well, offer them summer courses to the students that failed, NI MODO PUES... It is a job that would have to do from a different view, probably from the bottom, a different culture of more effort, that probably us (teachers) in four years we do not accomplish to do." 24

The participant comments that the system/model and the quality indicators favour *"lazy"* students. She states that intending to elevate the graduation rates, the Metropolitan University has become too generous with students to approve. The participant mentions that the system facilitates students *"not failing"*. This way, the Metropolitan University would be able to increase the indicators and present *"good"* reports to the educative organisations to maintain a good record. She explained the situation, and again she used the word *"NI MODO",* expressing compliance and indicating that she must conform because those are the rules. The participant offers a different idea of education since her concept of education helps students accomplish an effort culture. Again, this event is part of seeing the student as a whole, and she is making her best effort.

Nevertheless, she seems frustrated about not achieving this task in four years of the BA, suggesting that this work should have started from elementary education. As observable, circumstances and pressures universities receive impact how students are trained. In the case of the Metropolitan University, the effects of keeping a good record of quality indicators promote

procrastination and failure instead of promoting responsibility. The university facilitates low-cost summer courses for students who failed the regular term assessment from the participant's perspective. This effect opposes the original intent of quality recognition rates; however, it increases the graduation rates. Ryohei (2017) points out another issue addressed while using evidence-based approaches: the fabrication and falsification of data. The author states that "as the competition to avoid penalties, stipulated by incentives grows ever fiercer, intrinsic motivation toward education fades, and as the professional ethic or self-regulation is lost, the fabrication and falsification of evidence take centre stage" (p. 106). According to the participant, the Metropolitan University offers students what they need to pass and present better indicators' records. Having better records might allow the Metropolitan University to receive the incentives offered. However, acting this way seems to have the opposite results that teachers and education seek.

5.1.2   Standardised Test

Another example of how the indicators affect classrooms and teachers' agency is an automatic standardised test that students must take at least three times during the semester. The institution calls this "self-assessment"; however, it is far from a self-assessment. I will say that it functions as a standardised mock test. However, it does not have curricular value. It is a requirement that students must take to have a grade. This standardised test appears on the online platform with different questions. Such questions were elaborated by the teachers of other campuses of the Metropolitan University. This standardised test has created some problems for teacher agency in a CLBT classroom, as can be observed in the following excerpt where the participant explains how this test affects her actions in class:

Gabriela: "I cannot leave those topics. Why? Because the student has a standardised evaluation each time an element of competence is finished. The five campuses design a test bank, and the questions are randomly selected. If I did not see this topic in classes and the student received the standardised evaluation on the students' online platform, they would not know how to respond. So, what can I do? Respecting the themes... for example... this topic is boring, but it is already there. I have to teach it, so it does not come to the student as a surprise. And then, I cannot enrich with anything else. The problem is that time is tight, and it is difficult, is a difficult problem. When we did not have that standardised test, the didactical sequence was a guide, and you could emphasise one thing or another because, in the end, you were in charge of the assessment, but now everybody is in charge. Then I have to see these topics, obligated."25

The institution created this standardised test to elevate graduation rates by training students to take the *CENEVAL* (El Centro Nacional de Evaluación para la Educación Superior). *CENEVAL* is a test that certifies that students accomplished knowledge during the B.A.; by receiving such certification, students can obtain their degree. Taking the CENEVAL is one of the options students have for obtaining their B.A. degree. Although the standardised test was not originally part of the Educative Model, there is no doubt that it affects teacher agency in classrooms, as observed in the last excerpt. The participant perceives the test as an imposition. She feels obligated to cover all the topics that evolve in the test. She uses the words and expressions: "*I have to", "I cannot enrich", "obligated", and "everybody is in charge".* The teacher feels drawn by the amount of content she has to cover and cannot act. She does not feel like she is in charge of the classroom because she mentions that everybody can assess her students now. Moreover, she feels that she loses control of what happens inside her classroom. And this is even clearer in the following excerpt.

Gabriela: "The standardised test limits me as a teacher; it limits me a lot. I no longer have the liberty of teaching. Even if I did have the liberty of teaching, I do not have the time." 26

As explained above, in Mexico, public universities are autonomous. Moreover, teachers have the right to liberty of teaching. This right means that nobody outside the classroom can tell them how or what to do in their classes. As we can observe in the last excerpt, the liberty of teaching is limited by this university policy. She says: *"limits me; I do not have the liberty of teaching; I do not have the time (for teaching)".* Her frustration can be felt through the verbal expressions that she uses.

Moreover, this explains the context in which teachers and students are. According to Webster, "educative teaching ought to be understood as philosophically and scientifically informed art undertaken by professional judgments in pursuit of the public good" (p.71). As stated, the participant's agency is limited by the standardised test, and her liberty of teaching is restricted. Webster (2017) says: "education is primarily moral and political in nature and therefore professional educators ought to be able to deliberate critically and intelligently to make professional judgements, rather than simply be compliant unthinking "appliers" of dogmatic principles which are not supported by education research" (p.71). The participant expresses that all the requirements teachers are asked to fulfil limit her agency and liberty since she has to accomplish all the requests with no time. In this case, as Van Dick states, she has become a

compliant applier of dogmatic principles not supported by education research. She is subjected to the pressure of encouraging students' competencies within a CBLT classroom, and at the same time, she must cover topics included in the standardised test. This issue exemplifies why encyclopaedical education has not yet been eradicated from classrooms despite all the efforts.

 These externalists' positions push teachers and remove their teaching, freedom of thought, and autonomy (Kumaradivelu, 2008). Teachers' discourse is being diminished. Therefore, imposed external systems alter the school dynamic by changing without a clear educative philosophy. According to the authors, this situation puts the teacher far from his job's intellectual commitment and the responsibility of teaching, school, and society. As the author states, the last excerpt is an example of how teachers' discourse is being diminished due to an imposed external system that alters the school dynamic by implementing a change without a clear philosophy of education. The participant feels far from her job's intellectual commitment since she has to accomplish all of these requirements.

According to Ryder et al. (2018), contradictions exist in teacher agency like loss of independence and confidence, subversion, and creative anxieties, as in the case of this participant. Gabriela feels that she has lost her independence and confidence when she states that everybody can assess her students now. She mentions that she does not have time since she is obligated to cover all these contents. She is frustrated when she expresses that even though Gabriela has the liberty of teaching, she does not have the time. This aspect encourages her creative anxieties and puts her far from her responsibility to teach and educate a better society. The participant manifests how this standardised test affects students' grades in the following excerpt.

> Flor: "Yes, it has a direct impact on their grade. Why? Let us suppose that the first element of competence is over, and your grade is advanced competent, but you did not pass the standardised test. It does not matter. In the second stage, you will do one and two when it is open again. And if you still do not pass it, it does not matter. In the third stage, you could do 1, 2 or 3. If you pass, the teacher can upload your grade to the system. And if not, the teacher cannot upload your grade. It is a lock that Metropolitan University has." 27

The participant explained that teachers could not upload their grades into the evaluation system if students did not pass the three standardised tests. Students have unlimited opportunities to do the tests, and in the end, the institution uploads the category (grade) until the student passes. Even if it happens out of time, the standardised test is not a part of the CBLT model as it could be

perceived. However, it does affect teacher agency and how students and teachers approach learning and are assessed. The test involves the development of the class while contrasting with the kind of assessment used by CBLT. CBLT assessment should be mainly formative assessment and focused on developing competencies. The standardised test measures mostly concepts, as the participants mentioned. As stated in CBLT, the evaluation's objective is to know and identify what students know and what they can do. This way, teachers will inform students about their process and feedback, which will help them learn about their qualities and accomplishments (Sambell, McDowell and Montgomery, 2013).

Also, I found that teachers have different versions of what the exam is. Some say it is CENEVAL type, and others mentioned that it is the TKT (Teaching Knowledge Test). However, all agree that the Metropolitan University created the test to increase graduation rates. As I explained above, in Mexico, when students take and pass all the B.A. courses, they must also present further proof to obtain their degree. For example, they can take the CENEVAL to write a dissertation; they could also get their degree by experience. This aspect varies depending on the bachelor degree programme. If students finish their B.A. courses and do not present any proof, they do not obtain their B.A. degree. Therefore, the graduation rates of universities drop. For this reason, the Metropolitan University incorporated this standardised test, as seen in the following quotation:

Flor "Here, I do not know how the institution manages the CENEVAL. Because many young people do not want to present it... For me, the CENEVAL test presentation is very important because it is a plus in the students' résumé. CENEVAL has a file of names, and each time more and more employers are turning to ask CENEVAL "hey, I am interested in this student to work. How was his or her CENEVAL presentation? And if you have a good record in CENEVAL, well, it is a big point, it means that you are trained and that your institution and what you learned from your institution make you a person who can work anywhere. Because it is not what you learned at the Metropolitan University; no, it is what a B.A. in Nursing of the world should know. That is the great value of CENEVAL, and I think it is very important. Besides, it generates funding for universities." 28

In the last excerpt, the language of commercialisation derived from the interference of neoliberalism in education is manifested by the words: *"résumé, more employers, work, trained, generate funding, world".* The participant has accepted the neoliberal ideology that has filtered education. It evidences the approval of training students to obtain a job, which was on the debate of the purpose of higher education. The discussion regards whether higher education aims to

form democratic citizens or if the interest is merely for commercial purposes. "Such tendencies reduce training to tangible outcomes, teaching and learning to visible operations. It is very adaptable to interdisciplinary research, hybrid business and the globalised society" (Ryohei, 2017, p. 102) with the primary aim of survival. This participant's quotation clarifies how neoliberal tendencies have reached the main educative actors in classrooms.

Teachers seem to have become "entities of massive manipulation" (Van Dijk, 2009) to favour neoliberalism. It also evidences the acceptance of preparing the student for a globalised world, which is part of the mobility positions behind CBLT. This quotation exemplifies how teachers have internalised the neoliberal philosophies behind CBLT and see them as something given. According to Wodak and Meyer (2003), the dominant structures stabilise the agreements and make them look natural; such conventions are taken for granted (Wodak and Meyer, 2003, p.20). This reproduction of ideas contradicts the results found by Alderuccio (2016), where the researcher demonstrates that it is a fact that teachers resist curriculum innovation on Competency-Based Education. The author explains this resistance towards the new social order implemented in teaching and learning. It is interesting to observe that all the participants accept the neoliberal ideas behind CBLT and the lack of criticism.

Van Dijk (2009) mentions that control of the mind implies indirect control of actions. The influential people's discourse indirectly leads to other discourses that will aid the interest of personalities that remain in command. For the author, discourse is a crucial factor in reaching the dominance of the minds and, as a result: approaching the domain and control of people's actions or agency, as stated through the present research. As noted, it seems higher education lost its' vision and that the system is already made for following the path to getting trained to get a job. Another option could be, as discussed above, making reflective and democratic students can contribute to their society and improve their environment. Although I am aware that the reality is that we live in a globalised world governed by capitalism, the role of higher education institutions should be to make students aware of the different possibilities and the consequences that globalisation and capitalism bring to local and worldwide environments. Capitalism should not be taken for granted. Moreover, higher education institutions should not be at the service of neoliberalism, as is the case. Furthermore, generating funding was evident, stating that it is one of the Metropolitan University and their teachers' priorities.

Another objective of the standardised test was that more employers look for students at the Metropolitan University. Since the Metropolitan University is a "young university", academics work hard to grow and gain a reputation among employers. Although teachers mention that the standardised test is not part of the CBLT project, students are being instructed and assessed by

taking it as a reference because the contents are planned for students to perform well in the examination. Also, I talk about the standardised test because, in the end, it affects teacher agency in the CBLT classroom and assessment, as observed in the following excerpt.

Clara: "These are incongruences. Then, if the students did not do the evaluation, I cannot upload their final grades. The students are affected. As a teacher, you must make a special request to open the system to upload the students' grades. Then... What are we playing? If what you want is to form the student in responsibility, they have a period for self-evaluation, and at the end, you open the system again. Which is the formative part? This aspect forms students as a Mexican: "I will have all the opportunities; it does not matter; nothing is going to happen." Then, another thing, and you say, well, the model eliminated the partials... Sometimes you have not finished the partials, and the self-evaluation is open. So, it does not work... it does not work.".29

Again, the issue of teaching students responsibility comes up. This situation is another example where the institution intends to elevate the quality indicator rates and offers a solution to help train students to answer multiple-choice items. The solution, in this case, was to provide this standardised test explained above. However, if we analyse the last excerpt, the participant also feels frustrated by how this is managed. She used the words and expressions: *"Incongruence, forming students as Mexican, nothing will happen".* The participant raises the issue by evoking the Mexican culture with the stigma of procrastination. Also, she believes this kind of incongruence promotes what teachers want to eradicate: irresponsibility and procrastination. It is evident that the participant sees students as a whole and intends to form students as complete individuals.

Nevertheless, these educative policies contradict what she works for in her classes. Overall, teachers' agency in a CBLT classroom is being hindered by all these outside factors. However, it was evident in this section how the participants relate quality to the special funding universities receive when they reach the quality indicators and how accomplishing these criteria directs the Metropolitan University's decisions. These quality recognition organisations promote neoliberal educative policies by relating what happens in classrooms to the employment market and putting higher education at the capitalist system's service. However, they diminish teachers' speech and promote spoiled and irresponsible students, which is the opposite of what education stands for. Furthermore, the accomplishment of these criteria carries underlying notions of neoliberalism observed in this section. Besides having such externalists pressures, other aspects like their economic stability hinder their agency in classrooms, as I will explain in the following section.

5.2 CBE Instruction and Assessment Linked to Teachers' Economic Stability

While conducting the present research, some elements evolved during the interviews about teachers' economic stability. Teachers' economic stability is linked to teachers' agency in instruction and the assessment performed in class. The following excerpt explains the situation and how it evolves at the Metropolitan University:

> Clara: Then the economic bonus teachers receive is another point against because you can only access that economic stimulation when you have a certain average on the students' evaluation of you as a teacher. But, besides, the average of your groups has to be equal to or more than 8.5. Then if you fail students, you will not have the economic bonus." Then, the logic is: Are you basic? If you are basic, well, you already passed. I'll give you a nine. This way, my average goes up, and I can access the bonus."30

There are two aspects revealed in Clara's excerpt. First, students' evaluation of teachers' work determines if teachers receive an economic bonus. This aspect might influence teachers' agency since now the teacher's economic improvement depends on their students' opinions. However, there is a second condition to receiving this financial bonus. Students' grades average needs to be 8.5 or up (on a 1-10 scale). For Clara, it is evident that this bonus access influences professors when assessing their students. I could infer that the Metropolitan University intends to increase the students' average and graduation rates. This conclusion might reflect how a top-down external policy influences teachers' classroom agency and how the records presented are fabricated to access an economic resource conditioned to students' passing the courses. In the following passage, Flor also mentions the risks teachers take when they ask students to be the ones who work and take centre stage as the CBLT approach demands it:

> Flor: "Students come trained to receive. They sit down and expect that you fill them up. When you turn them around and make them work, you take a risk because … two options… they do not understand what you are doing, or they do not want to do it because it is work, then your evaluation as a teacher goes down. It is a dangerous weapon, especially for teachers that depend on the students' evaluation. I try to make students conscious in this sense… the full-time teacher is not subject to damage by an evaluation. But hourly-paid teachers are, and I believe it is unfair that a student who did not want to work gives the teacher a bad evaluation, and the institution will not hire that teacher again. And unfortunately, it is very common for the student to give you a bad evaluation, and teachers are hostages, which makes me very angry." 31

Flor expresses a sensitive issue that teachers deal with. She mentions two unfair options for a bad evaluation of teachers' work: the first one, students do not understand the way of working, and the second one, they do not want to work. She mentions that teachers are *"hostages"* of students' evaluations of their instruction, making her *"very angry".* Now full-time teachers "are not subject to damage by an evaluation", but hourly-paid teachers are. She mentions the expression, *"it is unfair that a student that did not want to work gives the teacher a bad evaluation".* The reality in most Universities is that each time more teachers are hourly-paid to deal with the demand for the number of students and save economic resources. The injustice lies in: "*the institution will not hire that teacher again".* Then, as Flor stated, teachers become *"hostages"* of a bad evaluation.

On the one hand, teachers are asked to implement pedagogy changes involving a shift in students' work against their teaching conditions. On the other hand, they are being threatened by students' evaluations. It becomes clear how this vulnerability influences teacher agency and assessment in a CLBT classroom. Clara suggests that teachers' logic while having this economic bonus changes students' grades to obtain the incentive. Also, Flor points out that teachers are hostages of students' inadequate evaluations and try not to fail students. Otherwise, they get an unsatisfactory assessment of their teaching practice. Ryohei (2017) argues an issue addressed while using evidence-based approaches: the fabrication and falsification of data. The author states that "as the competition to avoid penalties, stipulated by incentives, grows ever fiercer, intrinsic motivation toward education fades, and as the professional ethic or self-regulation is lost, the fabrication and falsification of evidence take centre stage (p.106). Teachers are in a vulnerable situation that attempts against their economic stability and way of survival. They are in the middle of pressures of a system that wants measurable results, influenced by quality recognition institutions that can evaluate universities and have a say about the special financing that higher education institutions receive. The results showed through this section also seem to suggest that teacher agency in a CBLT classroom is being hindered by all these external pressures that affect their daily practice.

5.3 Clara: A Cutting-edge Model within a Traditional Framework

According to Clara, CBE represents a Eurocentric Model in a Mexican country. This topic emerged particularly during her interview, where she expressed the problems that she sees in the CBE implementation, as can be observed in the following selection:

> Clara: "The big problem is… we saw it when we were designing it, and I see it now that we are implementing it: we have a model that exceeds the Mexican model. That is to say; we are working with a model that we thought could be cutting-edge. Still, we are tied up, confined to a Mexican pedagogical model of assessment that does not allow flexibility".32

Clara points out that Mexico is not prepared to have a model used in other countries, specifically Europe, since the assessment system "*confines*" teachers and students to follow the traditional path. As seen in chapter 2, the CBE model started with the Bologna Process in the European Union. Later, the tunning project evolved by trying to standardise the competencies learned and unify education through the CBE model to favour international mobility. Clara explains why there is not an appropriate assessment system that links to CBE practice. Furthermore, she mentions that the team's intentions in designing the Educative model at Metropolitan University were the best. However, Clara starts with this statement and uses the words: *"the big problem"*, stating that this is the central aspect of Clara's belief: the CBE implementation has been partial in the Metropolitan University and the different educative levels in Mexico. She also uses the phrase *"exceeds the Mexican model", "we thought that could be cutting-edge", "Tied up," confined"* and *"does not allow"*.

For this reason, what can be inferred about Clara's statement is that the actual conditions of the Mexican assessment system limit the CBE implementation and impact on teacher agency, as explained in this chapter. As it will be developed later in this chapter, averages and summative assessment are the main elements that govern the assessment. This is how this mismatch between the CBE model and the Mexican educative system comes about. Even at a higher education institution where the planning stage and training seemed to be "according to the book", other external aspects appear to tie up and impede the appropriate development of the approach since the peripheral educative policies do not support this internal change. Kumaravadivelu (2008) points out:

> "Established methods are founded on idealised concepts geared toward idealised contexts. As such, they are removed from classroom reality… no idealised method can visualise all the variables in advance to provide context-specific solutions that practising teachers badly need to tackle the challenges that confront every day of their professional lives" (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p.165).

Standardised education does not necessarily fit in the reality of students and, therefore, in the reality of classroom needs. Moreover, this is a clear example of what happened to the

Metropolitan University while implementing a CBE and CBLT approach. As Clara explains, they are *"confined"* to a Mexican system that does not allow flexibility. I decided to address this topic since I consider this central for showing what could originate the resistance and compliance attitudes manifested by professors at the Metropolitan University. For instance, and to mention a few effects of the assessment system: Numbers are still required in all official documents instead of using categories of competencies like in CBE; summative assessment is the one that controls the assessment system, and standardised tests are used for students' certifications, assessment is linked to teachers' economic stability, time constraints limit teacher agency, among other effects that are analysed in the present chapter.

 However, *"the cutting-edge model"* also presented specific problems, especially in the flexibility aspect it promotes. Clara continues explaining her point of flexibility issues in the following fragment:

Clara: "For example, the mobility aspects are a problem for us. We promote mobility to our students, but to start with, we cannot use the qualitative evaluation system, outstanding, advanced… etc. We have to translate that to numbers. But why do we have to translate to numbers? Well, because averages give scholarships. The Education Department is still number-based. Then, when the students go on mobility, it is not like in Europe. For example, you can go anywhere, take something, even if it is not your major, and then you come back and adapt it to your major, and your credits are solved. Here it does not happen like that. Here you must take a subject that matches your study plan. Then, there must be a committee that evaluates that this study plan is similar to that one, and then, only then, it could be valued as subject credit. And that ties you up. Our students in mobility delay in their studies, invariably they delay in their studies. What advantages can you offer them? Well, you sell them the idea and tell them about the culture and a new experience, but what is the price? Students delay one semester or one more year to finish their studies." 33

One of the CBE/CBLT model's main intentions and, therefore, the tuning project is to promote mobility among teachers and students. However, according to Clara, the mobility issue is not, in reality, as stated. Other elements influence that a student can go to different countries and experience seeing the world through different lenses or cultures. Mobility is one of the Tuning project's main objectives through CBE; to align all the world programs to have flexibility and students' and teachers' mobility around countries. The assessment system linked to universities' regulations seems to limit this mobility aspect. Still, in this case, the Metropolitan University *"ties*

students up" to specific procedures with time consequences in their studies. As observed, the mobility aspect is performed but not as planned within the CBE model and the tuning project. Clara continues contrasting how the model has worked in Europe and why it does not work in Mexico. She links this aspect to assessment and the way that credits are taken. It seems that nothing has changed in the Mexican educative policies in the mobility aspect. Since students have to make a request, research the subjects and submit this to an evaluation board to approve that such subjects match their study plan, Clara mentions that what happens is that students have to take an extra year or semester when they go out for an exchange programme. Students must find an exact match of all the subjects planned for the semester or year projected in the Metropolitan University; otherwise, they must take an extra year to complete their BA studies. This rigid policy exemplifies the educative practices incongruent with the CBE/CBLT approach's primary purposes. Clara offers a more comprehensive panorama of the CBE/CBLT approach and what, according to her judgment, does not provide the proper CBE/CBLT implementation. She sees mobility as one aspect of flexibility incongruent with the practice programme. Also, another concern that Clara points out is that, in theory, within the CBE/CBLT approach, students can have their learning rhythm, as it is observed in the following interview segment:

Clara: "Flexibility is very complicated. Timing, for example, students can have their own learning pace because it depends on the students, their capacity, and their learning, which is what the theory says. But when circumscribing the student to space-time, the student does not have such freedom. The student that has a job, for example… The Metropolitan University improved flexibility elements. For instance, students can take 4 to 8 subjects now depending on whether they are working. However, it is inside a frame. Flexibility is always inside a frame." 34

Clara denotes fundamental features about flexibility effects during the CBE implementation. According to CBLT, students can work and acquire the target competencies at their own pace. According to its' advocates, for the CBLT approach to function as it is meant, teachers, students and the educative structures need to be flexible to adapt to the international educative policies. One of the main characteristics of the educative model of the Metropolitan University offers is flexibility. According to the model, flexibility summarises the new way of understanding the relationships in different areas of society. In this sense, the Metropolitan University educative programme discusses the flexibility of time and space, knowledge, assignments, and work relationships. "Flexibility to adapt to a new situation and labour contexts, move to different regions of countries, and coordinate with workers from other parts of the world that participate

in the production process within the same business. Flexibility to learn and update in any space" (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora, 2010, p. 6). However, it is a fact that the semester has its' periods that instructors and learners follow. Students have specific due dates that they must follow to approve the semester.

The reality indicates that nothing has changed on the semesters' schedules to align with CBLT, which is another incongruence with the approach. The results show that students and teachers are tied to time constraints that contradict the flexibility quality that the model proposes as one of its main benefits. However, it is not the case that students have all the time to work at their own pace. The reality is that the students also have specific deadlines to meet and pass or fail to complete the semester. If the student does not manage to finish on time, the student fails the semester. Again, Clara points out that the flexibility issue defeats the idea of having students work according to their own pace. Flexibility in the study programs is another aspect the Mexican system does not allow, linked to assessment. It seems that the approach is far from the reality of the study programs in Mexico since, as Clara mentions, such incongruences are produced when circumscribing the student to space-time and the same old calendar scheme. Also, it is essential to consider teachers' real possibilities and resources. By actual conditions, I mean the physical circumstances, including time and space conditions of the classroom, the number of students, the time constraints that might affect the curriculum development, the workload of teachers, among other situations that might occur, and the average development pace in the classroom. When the curriculum is so determined and detailed, and the standards have been established, the lack of flexibility about everyday problems is more complicated.

Flexibility is expressed within the educative model in four areas: (1) Academic; concerning the relation and organisation of academic campuses. (2) Curricular; implies the organisation of possibilities of contents, areas, subjects, cycles, and modules. (3) Pedagogical; refers to the possibilities of change in the teaching process and the environments, means, and instruments that aim to favour the teaching process. (4) Administrative: it implies the update of rules, procedures, and general conditions that favour the operation of study plans (Centro de Estudios Superiores del Estado de Sonora p.6).

Although the educative model contemplates curricular flexibility, the Mexican educative system is regulated by a specific and rigid calendar that universities must follow. Clara provided a broader vision of the CBE / CBLT implementation. Another aspect that Clara points out about flexibility is that professors have misunderstood it. She means that some teachers understand flexibility by letting students do whatever they want. This viewpoint is evident in the following passage:

Clara: "Another problem is that flexibility has been misunderstood. Flexibility is not allowing the student to do whatever they want, but many teachers took it like that: We are flexible and let them do whatever they want. Now I am not a behaviourist anymore. I am a constructivist; you as a student: present, all the semester, present, and I am not going to close the knowledge, I am not going to show you the competencies, and my evaluation is your presentation. Then the student complains and says: we are only presenting; the teacher does not do anything, and we do not even know if what we do is correct because that conclusion by the teacher is not delivered." 35

Clara points out an apparent misunderstanding of the constructivist model. Although students are indeed the ones that construct and develop their knowledge, the facilitators are there to help students complete their competency development. Clara mentions that teachers shifted from being behaviourist to being constructivist. However, from her perspective, the Metropolitan University implemented this change wrongly. Again, she indicates that teachers incorporated some elements of CBLT into their teaching. Still, they have not gotten the main idea: closing knowledge and aligning it to develop competencies. She even mentions that students complain because they present a lot but do not get the necessary feedback. She suggests that the conclusion by the teacher at the end is not delivered. I will also analyse this lack of feedback topic later in this chapter. This last excerpt of Clara could be linked to the idea that the system benefits lazy students, as Flor expressed above. She restates that she believes in the CBE and the constructivist model, but she thinks that in Mexico, it does not work, as I will explain in the following excerpts:

Clara: "I believe in the competencies model, what I do not believe is in the system in Mexico… but, how it is managed with the references that we had (which were European), that sounds nice, but in Mexico, I do not feel it works."36

Clara: "I believe that teachers put their best effort, but it is impossible to follow it as it is; impossible. I insist we created a cutting-edge model within a traditional framework." 37

Clara states that the model *"sounded nice"* with the references they had when they planned it. These references were European and, according to her statement, are based on a different educative system. Furthermore, although educators put in their best effort to sustain and

accommodate the model, the Mexican Framework of education does not allow this to work as expected. She uses the word "impossible", displaying her frustration with the model's implementation. Furthermore, she *"insists"* that they formulated a *"cutting-edge model within a traditional framework"*. This last expression reveals that although they intended the model to function in these conditions, the model does not suit the Mexican educative context's framework. Therefore, although professors try their best, some aspects of the setting do not allow its planned implementation. Clara continues explaining certain elements that sustain her statement. For instance, Clara suggests that another issue she observes is that teachers do not have an "appropriate" conclusion of the topics presented in classes. She explains her argument in the following excerpt:

"We were formed within the same scope of the Mexican education that has not changed. Now (we receive) our students from high school with constructivists models, and when I teach the induction course, I ask students: Have you worked with competencies? Yes… Do you know how to make portfolios? Okay… What else do you know how to do? Nothing else. Then I ask: What are the competencies? They are objectives, and they say that they work on competencies. They did specific innovations, but they continue working with objectives. Then, I feel that if the Mexican education system does not change that idea, we will not be able to change it either."

38

"I learn from you, and you learn from me; we (teachers) do not accomplish to concretise. Why?"

39

Through this study's development, the topic of basic education working with a deficient constructivist model came up in different interviews. According to the participants, when students arrive in higher education, they lack specific necessary study skills to develop competencies— especially the skills related to critical reading and critical thinking. Therefore, scholars concentrate on developing students' debating competencies. Still, it takes much time, and as they said, it is challenging, and it takes much work to strengthen these competencies in only four years. I will analyse the lack of skills and problems related to basic education later in this chapter. However, another aspect that Clara discusses is the traditional framework that educators still carry within them. She suggests that the concretising element or the closing part where the competencies are

pointed out within this new criterion where professors and students learn from each other is still missing.

Norris (1991) states that the model focuses on practical learning outcomes instead of the process as a whole. This aspect does not guarantee that the student will develop adequately in various contexts. Clara suggests that teachers are worried about demonstrating competencies and showing learning outcomes. However, as she states, teachers still miss the closing part where the competencies are pointed out to students. Clara's statement might suggest that the educative model has had some improvements and that teachers have consolidated some components of the CBE/CBLT strategy into their pedagogy. However, they are still working with the same paradigm. Clara seems to suggest that administrators and professors are doing their best to develop the educative model in higher education. Professors must deal with a weak basis for its construction. This argument is evident in the phrase, *"if the Mexican system does not change that idea, we will not be able to change it either"*. Professors feel that they must build and develop study skills and competencies almost from zero; meanwhile, they deal with their teachers' and students' development challenges. Also, Flor talks about the same issue in the Mexican system of education in the following excerpt:

Flor: "We come from an educative system where the cognitive skills, which talk about a superior order, are not exercised. It is very difficult, very demanding. The student learns from the activities and making a well-thought activity that you make the student think takes much more time than doing something more mechanical, automatic, or the same thing, then it is difficult. Students come trained to receive; they sit down waiting for you to fill them. When you turn them around and make them work, you risk because they do not understand what you are doing or do not want to do it. After all, it represents work, and then your evaluation as a teacher goes down. "40

Flor specifies that when students enter higher education, they are expecting to be fulfilled. According to Flor, students feel like empty containers that need to be filled with information. These are the teacher-centred characteristics where instructors transmitted knowledge, and learners were seen as recipients of the information. Within the Competency-Based model, students are the ones that work the most, not teachers. The paradigm change that the CBE/CBLT proposes is working slowly to change the reality in classrooms.

Moreover, although teachers remain partially in command, the focus still lies on teachers. According to constructivism, the student is considered the leading actor, assuming an active role in searching, analysing, and integrating knowledge. The pupil requires planning, supervision, and assessment activities developed by the facilitator; moreover, this terminology change brings a shift in connotation, no longer putting the teacher as the one who transmits knowledge but as the one who facilitates it to pupils. Students will fulfil CBE assessment through products or learning outcomes that they produce according to the programme's standards (Diaz, Arceo and Bravo, 2014). This quote means that students are the ones who work and that the focus should be on their development within the CBE framework. The educative model document also refers precisely to the paradigm change in higher education. There is a shift from teaching characterised by high specialisation, long duration and theoretical overload that ended up with professionals and technicians "highly specialised by with a limited occupational performance". However, according to Flor's version, students bring a teacher-centred scheme within their basic education that is hard to change in four years.

 Flor brings up a sensitive topic concerning professors' evaluations and labour and financial stability within the same excerpt. The participant mentions that teachers risk when trying to get their students to work because they do not understand this new way of working or do not want to do it since it represents work. Students are not used to being the main protagonists in their learning. Students are not used to producing and demonstrating the acquisition of skills. They do not understand this new way of working, so they give the teacher a bad grade. This, in turn, produces a domino effect where the teacher has other employment repercussions. Since students do not understand this new way of working, the teacher's risk is that their confusion makes them deliver poor professors' evaluations. At the end of the semester, students are asked to evaluate the professors' work. There are different criteria where students evaluate the professor, which is considered for the professor to continue working next semester. Therefore, assessment in the classroom might directly affect teachers' evaluation, hence their labour and financial stability.

Piazza (2014) claims that states that have embraced a wide variety of reforms are commonly considered part of the neo-liberal agenda for school improvement, aiming to make public education function as a private business. Teachers are conditioned to "client satisfaction" to be hired next semester relates to having higher education function as a private company. As Flor mentions, it affects teacher agency in classrooms. Also, Silcock, Campbel and Hocking (2014) mention that "the enterprising language and skills required assisted in producing us as experts who could operate in the market… we provided services that could be measured, recorded and evaluated" (p. 9). As stated above, the commercialisation language of higher education is found in the Metropolitan University's educative model.

Moreover, the administrative actions that are carried out affect teachers' development in classrooms, and additionally, they must deal with students' expectations that affect their agency. As can be seen, teachers at the Metropolitan University are exposed to different pressures and responsibilities that involve their actions in class and risk their source of work. As stated, teachers' economic stability is at the expense of students' satisfaction. The participant mentions that it might empower students' attitudes towards developing the actions in class. In the following excerpt, Clara explains how the student-centred approach is far from being developed in the Metropolitan University.

Clara: "For example, the model is student-centred, but the university is centred in administration; what is more comfortable, faster, with the least possible resource, even if this is more difficult to the student. And then you see students forming queues here, and afterwards, they go to another place and get a signature there, and another signature in a different place. It is not a model centred on the student. It is administrative-centred… The teacher, the link between the administration and the student, is more conscious, but the administrative part is not student-centred." 41

As Clara has a broader view of the implementation model, she comments that Metropolitan University should be aligned with the model. The Metropolitan University planned the model to be student-centred; nevertheless, she mentions it is not student-centred but administrative-centred. She states that everything in the university should be aligned to the student's development and that the student should be the most significant part of the university. As stated above, it is planned similarly to corporations aligned to clients, and all the procedures should ease selling and client satisfaction. Nevertheless, this aspect does not occur at the Metropolitan University. Clara points out how everything should proceed according to the educative model and how it has vulnerable points to be improved. It would be interesting to analyse the components of this alignment to the design and the characteristics of its evolution.

Moreover, Clara's statement could be perceived as if they were "swimming against the tide". That is to say; teachers are trying to incorporate elements of CBE/CBLT into their daily practice. However, the administrative department's current conditions, outside policies, and the educative system in Mexico do not resemble the initial plan.

5.4   **Complications with the operating model:**

In the following passage, Clara explains that since the initial model creation, there has not been a review of its' implementation, and hence, the model has not presented evolution:

"There hasn't been an administrative direction for the evolution of the model… It is about filling gaps only. For example, do we need didactical sequences? Let's do them. I believe that a good team to evaluate the model is necessary. An assessment of the model, to say, "well, we are here; let's evaluate and go to the next step". But we are just running and getting things done. With the considerable growth of the institution, and without the economic resources, the teachers' workload increases more and more, and then it is more complicated to operate the model. More groups, more students, fewer full-time teachers, more hourly-paid teachers, and a lot more… that enter get training about the model, but it is not enough. These teachers just come to teach the class, are paid for that hour, and are gone. And all the class preparation, assessment and all that they are given minimal time to do it." 42

Again, Clara points out a very sensible element of the reality of higher education institutions in Mexico. In the first part of the excerpt, Clara explains that there have been no improvements to the model. The administration has limited themselves to remedying the missing elements. For instance, she mentions that only new topics have been added to the didactical sequences to suggest activities to teachers in classrooms. However, accurate analysis of the model's implementation has not occurred at the Metropolitan University. She also mentions the financial part. She states that with the organisation's remarkable growth and without financial resources, they are just getting things done and going to the next step. She also mentions another reality in most of the universities in Mexico. They are hiring fewer full-time professors and are concentrating on hiring hourly-paid teachers to save funds and meet all the students who choose to attend. In Mexico, public universities are for everyone. Students pay low tuition levels to study, so the number of students is growing. As can be seen, it is a complicated situation in which the external policies are incompatible with the expectations. That is to say, although professors do their part, some elements stop them from progressing in their goals, and they end up doing what they can. Then, educators' workload increases, and the quality decreases, as seen in the following excerpt from Alejandra.

> Alejandra: "the negative parts are maybe... sometimes I feel that I take much more time to grade, that is, I spend more time, and I only have this free hour, but this hour is not paid. But I use it to check and to catch up." 43

As stated in the previous studies, CBE/CBLT brings a significant workload for the teacher, which implies a meaningful commitment that translates to more time spent on planning and marking. Alejandra does not hold a full-time position at Metropolitan University. She has a full schedule with the hours she teaches in the English Academy and her second job during the mornings at a public elementary school. Although Alejandra has demonstrated to be a devoted professor, she declares that it is her free hour, the hour she could take a break and relax from working the whole day. However, this type of contract makes her use this hour to mark her students' assignments. This situation is the reality that most Universities in Mexico face. With the increase in enrolment, universities focus on solving operative problems and incorporating all the students that require higher education. However, this solution carries different challenges for teachers, and it might diminish the quality higher education institutions offer. In the following excerpt, Clara talks about the lack of time that she has for grading and her way to solve this issue:

> Clara: I do not use rubrics, and I do not ask for portfolios. Because it is very complicated, they say: the student learns at his pace, but you assess it with a rubric, and the rubric has small dots. Isn't it? Now, I have 37 students multiplied by five different groups. At what time am I going to take the rubric and see: hey, what are you doing this? I honestly don't use rubrics, and I promoted 70 rubrics… I am very flexible. I have the rubrics in my head, and I know how the student develops. I believe in the model's assessment, and the student will probably not attain the competencies right away, perhaps at the end of the semester, but then. Why should I punish them? I think that part of the assessment is good, and it is one of the benefits we have, but the teachers keep on working with averages and use the rubrics to prove the students' grade is low. It is better not to use them if you do not have time to use them well. I put them in my plan because the institution asks for them, but I definitely do not use them." 44

Clara states that the use of CBE/CBLT rubrics is very time-consuming. She explains the context in which she works at the Metropolitan University. Clara simulates the use of rubrics since she plans them, but she states she does not use them. The reasons that she explains are simple. Too many students and too many groups to make a personalised follow-up. Although she states that the

model has a sound assessment system and likes it, she is honest and mentions that she does not have time, although she wants to use them. It is impossible, as she says. Then the solution she brings is that she has the rubrics in her head, and Clara knows if the student is developing or not, and that is how she grades. Also, she comments on how other teachers use rubrics. She explains that teachers use rubrics to demonstrate to students where they were right or wrong, and as a shield, in case students come and complain about a grade. I observed that in the last chapter of Mariana's interview. In her opinion, if you are not going to use them to aid students learn and appropriate knowledge, it is better not to use them.

> Students: "Teachers, many times, are not following the rubrics. They are grading me differently from my classmates, but why do I get intermediate as a grade, and my classmate gets outstanding? We are in the same team, so I sometimes feel that they do their mental rubric, that it is not that they follow the rubric as it is. Because I read the rubrics and follow it, but in the end, I was missing something that did not come mentioned in the rubric, then it depends on the teacher."45

When this student mentions that she feels teachers have their mental rubric, she reinforces what Clara mentioned. Clara said she does not have time to assess each student with a rubric for every assignment. Therefore, she has her mental rubric and knows how a student is developing. This argument explains that human relationships and this type of assessment are not as exact as planned because of the working conditions and time constraints that impede teachers from sitting down with their 37 students in each of the five groups they teach. Rubrics are intended to guide teachers/ students to know the CBE/CBLT approach's quality expectations. However, in the following excerpt, it could be observed how students do not consider rubrics since they feel teachers have different ideas of what should be essential for them. Students talk about the use of rubrics in the following passage:
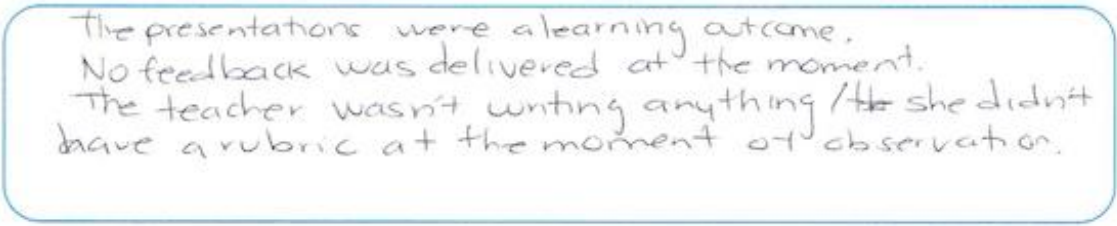
> Students from the fourth semester: "We do not always give a lot of importance to the rubric because one knows the teachers and gets their way of working. You say: Oh, with this teacher, we have such an assignment; I know what kind of homework this teacher likes. We know the working method of each teacher…Maybe it is subjective because I do not think a rubric defines all that a teacher expects from our work… I feel that they visualise the ideal assignment. Then I believe they think… oh, you did all the information, but at the same time, you did not do what I was thinking or visualised." 46

It is more important for this student participant to know each teacher's working methods because, as they say, it is better to get to know their teachers and their way of working than to focus on the rubrics. It seems that rubrics are sometimes ignored and that students try to guess the professor's mental rubric. She said, "*I do not think that a rubric defines all that a teacher expects from our work; I feel that they visualise the ideal assignment".* This aspect reveals that rubrics are not used as required by the institution due to different factors, including time constraints. Also, rubrics do not serve as a bridge in communication between the expectations and the performance. Instead, students rely on the human factor to understand teachers' expectations and how teachers deliver an assignment.

When I was observing classes, students had presentations as a learning outcome. The teacher presented a topic. However, I noticed she was not taking any notes, and she did not have any rubric with her, as evident in the following figure from my classroom observation sheet:

Use of Assessment

Figure 5.1 Observation note for Catalina

Transcription: The presentations were a learning outcome. No feedback was delivered at the moment. The teacher was not writing anything/She didn't have a rubric at the moment of observation.

Even though the participant verbally agreed with the assessment developed in the CBLT approach, when I observed her classes, she did not take any notes and was not carrying any rubric with her. This example could reflect the teachers' mental rubrics students refer to. In the following interview excerpt, Clara talks about the portfolio and refers to an issue observed in the portfolio implementation.

Clara: "The portfolio is very good. It is a compendium of assignments you were checking and sheds light on the competence you generate at the end of the semester. But teachers put there all the homework. It does not matter if they evidence competence. I do not do a portfolio; I do an integrative project, and then I tell students: Look, all that will be developed during the semester will be building the course's competencies." 47

Clara states why she does not use a portfolio either. However, she mentions that a portfolio has its benefits. Clara explains that a portfolio is a compendium of assignments that sheds light on the competence generated at the semester's end. She does not have the time to do that either, as teachers should do it, and she even makes another comment on what she has observed that teachers do. She mentions that professors only ask students to gather all the readings and assignments to check later. However, this is not the objective of the CBE/CBLT portfolio. As Clara states, a portfolio demonstrates that the student accomplished competence through all the work done during the semester. Instead, she proposes an integrative project, which she works with to close the semester and demonstrate that students reached the competencies required for approving the course. According to Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei (2016), the assessment process imposes concentration on lower-order skills or creativity is more complicated and less amenable to quantification. Norris (1991) mentions that the model focuses on practical learning outcomes instead of the process as a whole. For the author, this aspect does not guarantee that the student will develop adequately in various contexts. According to what was presented in the last chapter, teachers have incorporated the assessment suggested by the CBLT. However, Clara mentions that they do not necessarily reflect that the student has acquired the competence. As the author said, this aspect does not guarantee that the student will develop adequately in various contexts. In the following passage, Clara discusses some of the formative assessment's benefits. However, she explains the time constraints that do not allow its appropriate implementation.

Clara: "Formative assessment is an opportunity for the student to check in what part of the competencies is down and can go on, but since we are not obligated to report it (the formative assessment) to the administration, we do not report them, and the semester is very fast only four months, then you do not have time to say; student 35, come we are going to sit half an hour. These are the complications." 48

Again, time constraint effects are reflected in this last excerpt from Clara. Although she states the benefits of formative assessment for students, teachers are not obligated to deliver feedback and report that to the University. Still, in her case, she does not do it. She believes that time is one of the main complications for teachers in establishing a CBE/CBLT curriculum. Formative assessment is to build and enhance competencies in learners. Formative assessment is concentrated on the process's value, with immediate feedback and a search for constant improvement. Formative assessments define how well a learner is improving along the path to competency and need to be

persistent and explicit to render data about strengths and weaknesses (Bader and Tasmini, 2014). It stresses the positive aspects and detects mistakes when they are produced. Within constructivist approaches, the pupils learn by doing the tasks and having the facilitator provide feedback (Garforlo and L'Hullier, 2016). The data gathered suggests that the formative assessment is far from being implemented as it is meant. However, there is no doubt that teachers put their best effort. In the following excerpt, the student replicates this feeling about teachers' time constraints within the CBLT approach:

Students: In my case, the teachers evaluate in different ways. Not all of them have the same guide… Teachers do not have time because two teachers are studying their PhD studies, and the administration said they were only going to teach one class, but they must teach too many levels. Then, I think that they are not 100% sometimes. They do what they can... I regularly approach teachers to talk to them about a problem. The teachers know my situation and give me feedback because I have the initiative." 49

In this last passage, students perceive professors' time saturation. Students interviewed are sensitive to teachers' working conditions, so they accept that they do not receive the feedback they would like to get. I will approach the learner's lack of feedback later in this chapter. However, this aspect is considered to confirm how educators' lack of time impacts students' growth in their learning. Alejandra declared this as a teacher hired by hours; however, Clara and Gabriela also reveal time saturation within their statements, as can be observed in the following passage:

Gabriela: "The problem is for us as teachers: we have a lot of work, the full-time teachers. A lot of administrative work, and it is difficult." 50

The last quotation is a small sentence demonstrating that full-time professors are also saturated with all the administrative work, as she calls it. It is important to remember that full-time teachers could have three different subjects or five groups of the same subject or 20 hours on the online platform. A part-time teacher could have 15 hours of class time, and an hourly paid teacher could have twenty-five class hours. Also, they have different responsibilities. For instance, Gabriela oversees the quality certifications in the BA in ELT in the Metropolitan University, besides tutoring, the groups, research etc. During the interview, she was in the last stage of her doctoral

studies and had to cover all her responsibilities as a full-time teacher. Because of this amount of responsibility, she seems overwhelmed with everything as the situation evolves. When I observed classes, I noticed a gap when there was no activity in class. The teacher was working on her computer, as can be seen in the following fragment of my field notes:

Other comments

> • A few ss were working on the computer on other things
> • There was a gap of around 10 minutes when the teacher was working on her computer, and the class didn't have any activity.

Figure 5. 2 Observation note for Laura 1

Transcription: A few students were working on the computer (on other things). There was a gap of around 10 minutes when the teacher was working on her computer, and the class didn't have any activity.

The teacher took class time to advance in other responsibilities that she had. I observed that she was filling out a form since another teacher assisted her in this task. Since she is an hourly paid teacher at the Metropolitan University, she mentioned that the model was time-consuming, and she struggled to administer her time. This example could reflect how the teachers are overwhelmed by the amount of work and their contract, directly affecting their classroom agency.

Other comments

> Too much time wasted on class. At first 15 minutes, at the end 20 minutes. When ss finished their case, they started to chat or do something different.

Figure 5. 3 Observation note for Laura 2

 Transcription: Too much time wasted in class: At first, 15 minutes, in the end, 20 minutes. When students finished their case, they started to chat or do something different.

In addition, when I asked one of the participants if she had time to observe students and follow them up, she mentioned that not all students require this follow-up. If she detects a student who

is having trouble, she refers this student to his or her tutor. In the BA in ELT, there is a tutoring programme where each teacher monitors a certain number of students and follows them up about personal or academic issues that might affect their studies. It would also be interesting to conduct further research into how this tutorship programme works and how it could be beneficial for students as seen in the following excerpts:

Gabriela: "There is time for seeing students' problems because not all the students have a problem. The ones you must attend, then you speak to their tutor. Then, for a small message, yes, there is time…"51

Mariana: "Negative aspects, obviously time is needed to design a programme based on competencies and apply in the classroom. Because sometimes, time is short. And these are the things that I struggle with. I have 50 minutes to see a topic, and suppose I see them twice a week. But there are many competencies that the students must achieve; then, I feel that I am always short on time. Even if everything fits in the plan, I am always short of time in practice. Sometimes I feel that I go very fast, which shouldn't be like that because all the topics are essential. But some topics always take more time than others. Then, time is not always my best ally." 52

Time constraints were a recurring topic among the participants interviewed. Mariana is hourly paid at the Metropolitan University; she has a full-time schedule. Also, she has a different job. Mariana is very detailed and dedicated to her work and has a good understanding of the CBLT approach. However, Mariana also states that she always feels short of time because she must cover various topics, and all of them are relevant to her. Mariana believes she needs more time with students, but the semester goes fast. She also believes that students must achieve many competencies to cover during the semester, which takes time. This argument defeats each student's panacea of working at their own pace since the semester has due dates that must be respected in this traditional framework. Teachers must deal with a CBLT approach within a conventional frame, as stated above. An educative structure that is not prepared for change. Moreover, although it is a top-down approach, professors must deal with reality and actual conditions that do not fully implement the CBLT approach as the Metropolitan University planned it to be.

Students from the sixth semester: "Teachers have to make an effort and not only fill us up with information because we do not work that way. Unfortunately, some students still work that way. Still, for most students I have seen, you cannot come and fill them up with information, but with examples and activities, more educatively, and entertain them in a certain way, not like a clown, but give them a spark."53

In the last excerpt, the student participant recognises that students still come with the idea that the teacher is there to pack them with information. Students understand that teachers *"make an effort",* that this way of teaching is different and does not consist of filling students with information. However, they also state their notions about how education should be; by giving examples and suggesting activities. They even mention *"entertain, not like a clown but provide them with a spark".* Contrary to what participants mentioned above, it could be perceived from the last excerpt that students are from a generation where they learn differently. Let us use the entertaining word way. Also, their orientation to being ELT teachers might influence how they perceive how teaching could be. This perception could be influenced by the belief that ELT teachers are known for being dynamic and having an excellent methodological base. For this reason, students might be more aware of the teaching methods and their way of learning. This student is now in one of the last semesters, and the environment they are involved in might help them be more reflective about their education.

Patricia: "CBE is very demanding for teachers because they are asked to use the rubrics, they are asked to do a portfolio, and they deliver feedback on each element of competence. The model is somewhat patronising. Because you take them by the hand… it is demanding for teachers, even more, when they have five or four groups, it is complicated." 54

Patricia talks about the teacher's role and how CBLT has changed teachers' workload. She mentions the responsibilities that professors acquire while working with this approach. For instance, they are asked to use rubrics and portfolios and deliver feedback on each competence element. These are the requirements and the structure that the CBLT model included. Although professors are considered in the model as facilitators, the term suggests that they are not at the centre of the teaching-learning process. Therefore, it could be implied that they do not have as many responsibilities. The truth is that the instructors' work in planning the course, assessing the competencies, delivering feedback, organising presential classes, marking, having large classes,

and a considerable amount of administrative work has demanded more of professors' time and energy. Patricia mentions the expressions: "patronising" and "taking students by the hand", to explain that the professor's role is to conduct the student in each step. This condescendence is, in fact, more demanding than ever for professors. What is expected is that students become more autonomous each time.

According to Griffith (2014), preparation becomes a fundamental teaching element. Consequently, teachers must dedicate considerable time to creating the activities needed to reach competency requirements. Also, time is required to assess students' performance and provide direct, precise, and personalised feedback (Richard and Rodgers, 2001). Furthermore, Hawkins (2015) shows that different practical and logistical challenges have been addressed concerning the implementation of the model. For instance, there is a lack of structural models, an increment in administrative requirements, and inconsistency in how competencies are defined, developed and assessed.

Moreover, the researcher suggested that detailed assessment may become cumbersome for programme leaders. Educators may spend more time administering a competency-based programme than ensuring the quality of the learning experience. Lukindo (2016) also claimed that this teaching method is time-consuming and challenging to apply due to most public schools' large classroom sizes. These different claims are also demonstrated through the participants' quotations. In the following quote, Clara presents an overall assessment of the CBE approach in the Metropolitan University:

Clara: "The competencies model works partially; that's all I can say. It has many good aspects and very good flexibility aspects, but flexibility is still our problem. It has good assessment aspects, but students must also demonstrate them, there is still a lot to do. For instance, this integrated projects by modules that we are not doing. It would be good, but we have not concretised these projects. Neither the fact that the student goes into the existing labour field while studying. Then, there are plenty of things to do." 55

Clara pointed out a strong point about the CBE model and its functions within the conditions teachers and students work in the Metropolitan University. She mentions that the CBE model works partially and that there are elements that have been incorporated into the teaching and learning process. However, not all the parts can be implemented because of the Mexican education system and the Metropolitan University's conditions. All these factors, policies, and

regulations directly affect teachers' agency. Clara recognises that the CBE model has advantages and that the institution has advanced its implementation. However, she is still aware that there are elements that do not close the cycle of students demonstrating the competencies, such as the integrated project by modules, the incursion of students in the labour field, and plenty of other things to do. Again, she mentions the flexibility issues discussed above and the assessment part that must be adjusted.

5.4.1 Working Conditions and Time Constraints

In this section, I voice the concerns that professors present regarding their working conditions and elements that affect teacher agency. Throughout the present study, we have so far observed how time constraints interfere with the expected implementation of the CBLT approach. Time constraints were an issue about CBLT implementation that different authors also confirmed. Furthermore, I present some quotations from participants that sustain this statement as follows:

> Clara: "I don't use rubrics; I don't ask for portfolios because it is very complicated. They say: the student learns on his rhythm, but you assess him with a rubric. Now, I have 37 students multiplied by five groups. At what time will I take a rubric and see how you (students) do this? I have them (rubrics) in my head. Thirty-seven students, five groups, you run from one classroom to another, plus the other things, field practices, research, diffusion, linkage, mentoring." 56

It is easy to infer that Clara is saturated with the amount of work required by the Metropolitan University. When she refers to the instruments that could be used for assessment in the CBE approach, she uses the phrase "it is very complicated." Clara explains that besides having that number of students, she has different responsibilities in the Metropolitan University like field practices, research, diffusion of the programme's activities, and mentoring. For this reason, Clara must be cautious when administering her time with this number of responsibilities. As a full-time professor, time is considered precious. However, Clara proposes alternatives for providing students with the needed features and prefers to invest her time in what she has appropriated as her teaching method. She says that she likes the CBE assessment idea and that she believes in it; however, there are operating restrictions that impede it. This reasoning does not mean that Clara does not teach great lessons. It only means that she is careful in administering her time resource for her students' development.

> Alejandra: "I only have this free hour and use it to check my students' work, but this hour is not paid." 57

> Clara: "I feel that the professor has been asked a lot: use the rubrics, the portfolio, the didactical sequence… we do the didactical sequence, but we fill it up with activities… then it is like this `hang us´." 58

> Gabriela: "Does it (the model) absorb you? Yes. Does it take time? It takes time, but you learn to know them well, not only as a student but as the human being inside our classroom."59

> Mariana: "Sometimes, time consumes you. That is one thing I struggle with—for example, the time. I have 50 minutes to see this topic, and suppose I see them twice a week, but students need to reach many competencies. So, I feel that I am always short of time, and sometimes I think that I am very fast, and it should not be like that because all the topics are essential. Aren't they? But some topics take more time, so time is not my best ally." 60

In the last passage, Clara continues explaining the demands that professors have while implanting the educative policy of CBE in the Metropolitan University. She directly mentions that the programme is full of activities; however, in the end, all these activities are overwhelming for them. She uses the expression *"nos ahorca,"* which translates to "this hangs us". This interpretation means that they struggle to accomplish all the activities required and planned. When a person is hanged, that person dies because there is no air to breathe. I believe those expressions reflect how teachers feel about the extra activities involved within a full-time position and hourly-paid in the CBLT policy implementation and assessment.

Additionally, Gabriela uses *"absorb you"* and *"takes time"* to refer to the educative model. When using these expressions, it could be inferred that professors feel drained and overwhelmed with the working load that they have to fulfil. Moreover, Mariana uses the phrase *"time consumes you", "demanded", "short of time" "time is not my best ally"* to refer to how her agency is limited by time and the duties that she has to accomplish. However, they do their best to administer their time in the best way to achieve most of the areas required.

Sixth-semester students: "I believe that teachers do not have time, two teachers are studying for their Ph D, and they had only one class, but they have many courses. That is why I believe that they are not 100% with us".61

Gabriela: We always have to make time to give feedback to the student. With the blender system, the class time is shorter, but you can also deliver virtual feedback through the online platform. The problem is for us; full-time teachers have a lot of work. A lot of administrative work, and it is difficult for us." 62

Gabriela's statement justifies what the students complain about the lack of feedback. She mentions that full-time professors have a lot of administrative work. For this reason, delivering feedback is difficult for them. Gabriela states that teachers can virtually provide feedback since class time is shorter because of the blender system implemented in the Metropolitan University. Gabriela is too overwhelmed; however, she tries her best to administer her time to deliver feedback.

5.4.2   Paradigm Shift: Teachers' and Students' roles

In the present section, I present the data concerning how teachers' and students' roles have changed through the operation of the CBLT. In this first excerpt, Clara gives her opinion about students' attitudes when working on this scheme.

Clara: "There are students who are too critical. And sometimes students become very arrogant. Because before there was this scheme: I am the professor. You are here, and I am there. Then the one who delivers knowledge is me. But right now, we are facilitators. Then, we see how we interact because I learn from you (student) also.   But in the end, the student is young, and they break this schema. Sometimes it is necessary to say. Stop, calm down. There are levels here. I have been studying for many years… Then sometimes students tell me; Clara… (and I say) stop, you will call me by my name when we are colleagues, but right now, we are not. Right now, I am your teacher, your professor. However, you want to call me, but I am not Clara." 63

Clara talks about how the paradigm change towards teachers and students' roles has modified the students' attitudes and way of addressing teachers and how students see professors now. She

compares the teacher-centred paradigm and the facilitators' position that the CBE brought with it, clarifying that before, the professor was an authority in the classroom and that this new role diminished this perception of management. Clara mentions that students are young, and sometimes Clara needs to clarify and specify the levels of respect expected from students. When she says, " *I learn from you as a student"*, Clara recognises that she can learn from students; however, she also does not allow students to cross the respect line with her. Mariana reinforces this statement in the following quotation:

> Mariana. "As teachers, we do not have time to focus in one class, but overall, it would be good if they were people who read, and with that, their consciousness would be awakened… and I tell them: if you don't read, you will not be able to transmit anything new to your students. Then you have to start reading and know the reason for things, not only like that. Then I feel that it is not about the competency model but the generation we have to deal with, which is the problem. This generation goes hand in hand with the teacher. The teacher was on a pedestal before, and now, teachers are no longer there. Society knows it, and the students know it. For that reason, I believe they don't respect, and students sometimes do things that we don't expect because it is a different generation." 64

Mariana goes back to teachers' time pressures; however, she mentions that students can take advantage of the programme even under these circumstances. Notwithstanding, in her view, the problem is that the generation does not respect teachers. Also, she mentions that the professor was perceived to be 'on a pedestal', and now they are not. Professors, students and society know this, so the role of *facilitators* has diminished their authority and, hence, the respect toward them.

> Flor: "Unfortunately, your work has a wall that is the students' willingness. Then we (teachers) put our best effort into developing their cognitive capacities, attitudinal etc. But the student is the one that says: No. This point is where your work finishes. You often see how they change, and it is a surprise, and you can't believe what has been done." 65

I decided to code this passage under this category since Flor talks about how teachers make their best effort, as it is mentioned in the quote. However, the student is the one who is responsible for his or her learning process. Her frustration is evident when she says, "*unfortunately, stop, no, this is where your work finishes"*. This barrier reflects how the interaction has been in the paradigm change and how teachers try to help students, but they sometimes feel rejected when they say:
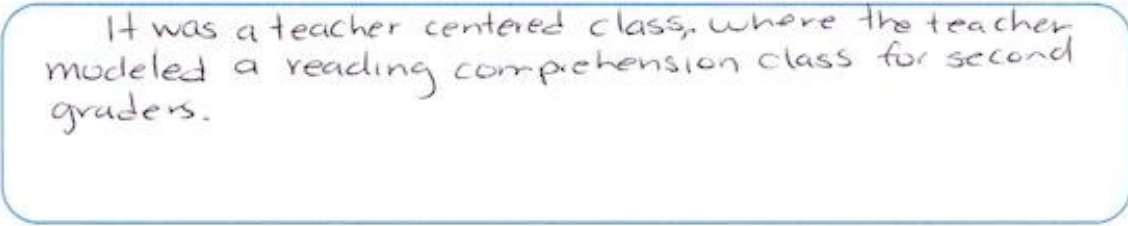
"No, this is where your work finishes". She mentions that students often respond to the help provided but are not interested at other times. For this reason, the facilitators' work has to stop.

> Gabriela: "It is an opportunity if the student does his part. We are talking about the ideal student that reads and participates. But what did he acquire if he only repeats what his classmates say and does not read enough? It is not like the fear that it will be an exam and that I must learn this by memory. There might not be tests. There were no tests in my master's degree, and I feel I learned a lot, but I did my part as a student. Sometimes it is effortless for students to be "light" because the model is made for them to do their part. It is student-centred… The student who wants to study and learn takes many advantages of this model because it develops skills."66

Gabriela states that the model works when the student has a positive attitude towards learning. Students who read and debate take advantage of the model. As Clara mentioned, the model could be light for students and does not demand much from them. However, she indicates that when students do their part, they take many advantages from the model, helping them develop the needed skills. The role of the student in CBLT is to be responsible for his or her learning. However, as mentioned in previous quotations, students seem to complete what is asked and fill the gaps. This condition makes me reflect on how assessment is used in these cases and how appropriate feedback could influence these students' development.

When I had the chance to observe classes, I witnessed that the classes included students in the discussion and that teachers have adopted elements of the CBLT approach to their teaching practice, as was discussed in the last chapter. However, the teachers led most of the observed classes, with a few students participating. There was more teaching talking time than student talking time/activity. It is essential to mention that teachers have presential classes, and then they also have time for students to work through the online platform that allows students to have independent work. However, during the presential courses that I was able to witness, I took the following notes to mention some examples:

Other comments
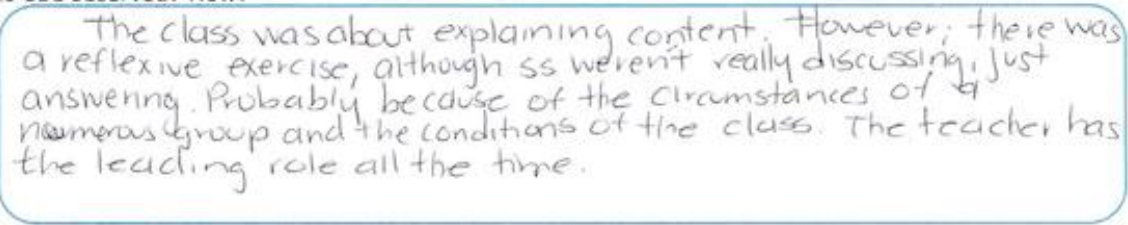
> It was a teacher centered class, where the teacher modeled a reading comprehension class for second graders.

Figure 5.4 Observation note for Mariana

Transcription: It was a teacher-centred class, where the teacher modelled a reading comprehension class for second graders.
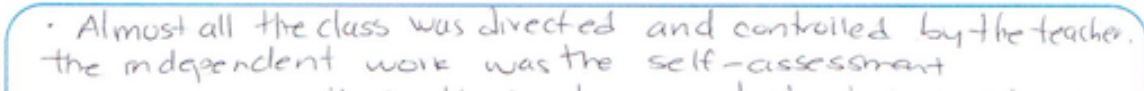
Is CBE observed? How?

> The class was about explaining content. However, there was a reflexive exercise, although ss weren't really discussing, just answering. Probably because of the circumstances of numerous group and the conditions of the class. The teacher has the leading role all the time.

Figure 5.5 Observation note for Laura 3

Transcription: The class was about explaining content. However, there was a reflexive exercise, although students weren't really discussing, just answering. Probably, because of the circumstances of the numerous group and the conditions of the class. The teacher has the leading role all the time.

> • Almost all the class was directed and controlled by the teacher. The independent work was the self-assessment

Figure 5. 6 Observation note for Gabriela

Transcription: Almost all the class was directed and controlled by the teacher. The independent work was the self-assessment.

In the next quotation, Patricia also talks about the ideal student for this kind of approach.

Patricia: "I believe it is a model that propitiates teaching and learning. There is a facilitator that guides them. The ideal would be that students were more inquisitive, curious, and more… that they search for more information. They would require more from teachers, and hence the teacher would deliver more to students if they were more receptive to all the extra. They would grow much more." 67

Patricia believes in the CBLT model; she thinks it provides enough resources for learning. However, she states that students need to bring further education for this model to work appropriately to be more curious and more receptive to extra information. When Patricia talks about teachers and students' new roles, Patricia uses the word "ideal" that reflects a different type of student than the ones they have. Furthermore, she declares that both sides, the facilitators and the learners, could benefit from this approach and development. Moreover, she continues talking about the students' characteristics in the BA of ELT at the Metropolitan University.

Patricia: "I believe this is about the formation they already bring within them and that they are focused on their interests. As if their surroundings did not exist, only memes and images. Then, I believe that they are missing critical thinking." 68

Once again, students are described as being submerged in their virtual reality. Patricia also mentions that students focus on memes and images and lack critical thinking skills. Patricia and Mariana state that this generation of students is distracted by technology and does not take advantage of their tools. It would seem that technology has students entertained and dedicated to social media and memes. That way, they avoid critical thinking, and anything else seems to be not attractive to them.

As mentioned above, within CBE/CBLT, the teacher becomes a facilitator. Moreover, this change of terminology shifts in connotation, no longer putting the teacher as the one who transmits knowledge but as the one who facilitates it to pupils. Their role goes beyond a lecture; they become "coaches" by motivating, guiding, and selecting materials and activities that support their students in reaching target competencies (Griffith, 2014). The educative model refers precisely to the paradigm change in higher education. A shift from a teaching characterised by high specialisation, long duration, and theoretical overload ended with professionals and technicians "highly specialised but with a limited occupational performance". However, according to this study's participants, students do not understand their role of responsibility and work. They seem distracted by social media so that critical thinking and reasoning are far from being exercised. Also, participants mentioned that teachers' image is diminished and disrespected because students do not understand the paradigm shift of teachers' and students' roles.

5.4.3   CBE training from Basic Education

Through the interviews, professors' participants mentioned that students' training in primary education was deficient. It is worth noting that all the levels of basic education work through CBE as well. In the following passages, I expose what the interviewers expressed regarding this topic:

Students: "In my case, our case… my generation of secondary and high school was trial and error. Then, the competencies were introduced, but many teachers, maybe they were trained but not well enough, like the intelligent blackboards and the projectors that they only put them there and that is it. Then, we struggled a lot initially, but right now, I am starting to understand what competencies are because teachers said they would train us to work with competencies in secondary and high school, but they didn't. They followed the traditional method, and maybe in their mind, they were doing it well, but no. And the books that we got were based on competencies. But it was something new; not only is the book, and that's it. The books do not mean that it is a competency-based programme. That is, they weren't doing it well." 69

Students recognise that they have known CBE since they were in primary education. However, they noticed that there its implementation was out of control. The student mentions the phrase *"we were trial and error, "* indicating that he was aware of the educative system's incongruences. Now that he understands what CBE is, he can reflect that "*maybe teachers were trained, but enough", "They followed a method, and maybe in their minds, they were doing it well, but no", "they weren't doing it well".* Although this study did not intend to focus on CBE and primary, secondary and high school education, professors always referred to the training students had when entering higher education. They consider four years not enough to manifest a change in the students' role paradigm.

Mariana: (Talking about her experience as a teacher working in elementary education). "When we transitioned to CBE, we had a two- or three-day training. The topics were very open; nothing landed. I remember that the instructor wasn't very familiarised (with the topic). We were very confused. The course instructor said you do not have to focus on all the competencies, only on the students' needs, and I did not understand it was overwhelming. Many things had to be accomplished, and time wasn't enough. It took me more than a year to understand." 70

Mariana is talking about how she started approaching CBLT. She works for the public elementary school system in the English area. Marina expressed that the training received was not clear enough for her and that she was confused. She uses "*I did not understand*" and "*overwhelming*" expressions. This circumstance exemplifies a professor who was not educated through a performance system when facing CBLT. Mariana said it took some time to understand this approach, but she does now.

> Patricia: "It (CBLT) has the deficiency, in my opinion, of asking that students self-regulate, but not training them in that studying skill from high school. It is a big gap because the student has the flexibility of the model, but you did not form this skill before; then, when he gets to this model, he finds that: Gee, I am the owner of my learning, I have to manage it, with the facilitator. That is the benefit, the flexibility of the model. But if the student is not prepared to take advantage of this flexibility. We do not provide these elements because the student should have them already. They are already formed in their study skills through secondary and high school. When you get to university and face a flexible model, you do not know how to use it or take advantage of its benefits. The model is not a solution because we do not have time to remedy what they miss from basic education. This aspect is what it is missing. Connecting what it is in higher education to basic education. Students cannot exploit flexibility because they miss their study habits to take advantage of that flexibility. Their formation is not as good for taking advantage of the model." 71

During the last passage, Patricia explains, from her perspective, that there is a big gap between what students bring from primary education and what they are expected to bring to higher education. She refers to this aspect as a *"deficiency"* of the model, explaining that students are not prepared to work within this flexibility model when they do not develop the appropriate study skills. Patricia points out what is missing, *"connecting basic education to higher education,"* and states there is no time to "remedy what they miss from basic education." According to Patricia, the connection from primary education to higher education regarding studying skills would help students take advantage of the Metropolitan University's educative model's flexibility. However, since students do not develop the necessary study skills to work in a flexible programme, the programme does not work as it is supposed to.

5.4.4   Lack of Feedback

In this section, I discuss some extracts about how feedback is delivered in the BA of ELT. According to teacher-participants, feedback is offered on each assignment through the official online platform of the Metropolitan University. Feedback is also provided at the end of every element of competence. Feedback is an essential part of the assessment process. This feedback is how professors and students can communicate. Students can improve and reach their competencies by working on their areas of need. Also, they can improve by strengthening the areas in which they are advancing. Although this lack of appropriate feedback could reflect teachers' time constraints and schedule saturation, I discuss them because operation issues could diminish students' development.

Students: "There is a teacher that does not give us a grade; he only grades as completed. Then, I did not know how I did my assignment or whether he had something to tell me or improve. Then the semester advances, and you have an incognita that the teacher will say:" you are basic". But during the semester, you did not tell me anything: how I could improve or develop certain skills." 72

The student is talking about one specific teacher who does not deliver appropriate feedback; that means he does not point out where the student's weak and strong areas are. Also, this teacher does not provide a grade or category for the student. Therefore, students go through the semester wondering what their grade could be or if "completed" means they have an outstanding category. This statement is a perfect example of how the lack of feedback affects students' agency since they cannot know their improvement areas.

Students: "There is the possibility of writing comments through the online platform. Teachers say: Do not forget the APA references, then I know that I got an advanced grade because I missed the APA references. But if you only say completed, and when I receive feedback, they only say,… you did this assignment, but you were wrong in this aspect. How will I know if the project only says received, thanks a lot, well done? Where is my opportunity area?" 73

Students: "In the first element, two or three teachers gave us feedback but only said. You got an advanced, or outstanding, and that is it. Or they said: why didn't you do this homework? Well, your grade is this. During this semester, I do not have an idea of my development. They give us some comments on the assignments, but I would like to receive feedback." 74

Students expressed their frustration when they worked on an assignment and got a short feedback response through the online platform. Students expect that teachers mention the aspects accomplished on the task and the elements that could be improved. It is also clear that students are not satisfied with the feedback, such as: well done, thanks a lot, received. Also, having a good grade is not enough for this kind of student. Undergraduates are asking for more criticism of their work. According to students' view, the lack of appropriate feedback reduces the opportunities students have to improve their work.

On the one hand, professors demand more critical students. They blame the characteristics of this generation of students they are receiving in the BA; however, it is evident that students are requesting more feedback to improve. On the other hand, teachers deal with time constraints that impede their appropriate development and dedication to individual students as expected from the institution and students. As can be seen, the CBLT assessment is a complex process that involves external policies that affect teachers' and students' agency in the classroom.

Students: "I am not going to lie to you. This semester I have not gotten any feedback. Receiving feedback is very important because I know what I have to improve; I know what I need to continue doing or not. This semester I have not gotten feedback, but previously always." 75

Students: "I believe it is essential that teachers have time to deliver feedback. This way, there will be an improvement in the classroom as a group. Not only with each student but as a group." 76

In the last two passages, students point out the importance of receiving feedback that could improve their work and the work delivered as a group. In the second passage, the student is aware that professors struggle with time constraints to provide appropriate feedback, demonstrating the workload that professors at the Metropolitan University deal with. Furthermore, students in the following two quotations express their preference for the kind of feedback they do not like to receive:

> Students: "I do not like receiving feedback by the computer either. They can say whatever they want, but I do not know what tone they are saying it. If they are honest, then I hate that part, not the feedback but the use of the online platform." 77

> Students: "I would like more presential feedback and follow-up. I know that it is difficult because there are many students." 78

Students expressed their opinion about the online feedback they receive through the Metropolitan University's virtual platform. They seem to prefer a more humanistic treatment to understand their areas of need and improve them. They use the words: *"I do not like", "hate"* to talk about these topics since many questions arise when they get this kind of feedback. The second passage also expresses students' awareness that it is difficult for teachers to deliver appropriate feedback since they have many students. They manifest their understanding that the context does not allow ideal feedback delivery.

> "I have noticed much communication among teachers, and they say: this student is not working, they have approached the student and talked to him. If you have any problems, we will see how we can support you. I have noticed that they have a lot of communication, but not all teachers are like that. "79

During the last quotation, the student expressed positive aspects that teachers do to help struggling students. They mentioned that teachers approach this kind of student to talk to them and see how their problems could be resolved. He wishes all teachers could work in the same tone, but he only mentions that not all teachers are like that. The institution asks teachers to deliver feedback when they finish a competence element. Although students told me that some teachers do not take the time to provide feedback, such an essential part seems to be diminished with time, and more students are complaining about the kind of feedback they received, as observed during this section. Feedback is essential for practising formative assessment. *Formative assessment* is the estimation that CBLT stresses to value the progression and aid students in reaching the target competencies.

Since formative assessment is concentrated on the value of the process, with immediate feedback and a search for constant improvement, teacher advice on their work becomes essential for

students to reach the target competencies. Formative assessment is employed to define how well a learner is improving along the path to competency and need to be persistent and explicit to render data about strengths and weaknesses (Bader and Tasmini, 2014). It stresses the positive aspects and detects mistakes when they are produced. Therefore, process equals performance, and the result is the outcome of the process. The students learn by doing the task and having the facilitator provide feedback (Garfolo and L'Huillier, 2016). Continuous information about the competency acquisition process should be offered.

Thus, students can produce and communicate messages consistently so that the teachers can provide support to develop their competency level (Zabala and Arnau, 2008, cited in Moreno T., 2010). When appropriate feedback is not delivered, the continuous improvement process is diminished, and formative assessment is not accomplished. Although it is understandable that teachers lack time and have different responsibilities, the data suggests that the contextual pressures hinder teacher agency.

Higher education institutions have a marked tendency to suggest that all processes must be evaluated, and hence, students expect feedback from all processes. That demands a considerable amount of extra work for teachers. Such practice has been accepted due to employers' pressures and quality assurance agencies requiring transparent processes and detailed descriptions. Teachers have these structural pressures that demand time, numbers, and judgments based on final performance and policies that do not support formative assessment, as observed through the data. Sambell, Mc Dowell and Montgomery (2013) claim that Assessment for Learning (AFL) recognises the challenges of summative assessment. However, they propose a balance between formative and summative assessment by valuing grades and offering time for formative assessment, "If students can see that assessment tasks require real, valuable learning, they also see the opportunity to gain worthwhile knowledge or skills" (Sambell, Mc Dowell and Montgomery, 2013, p 37). However, despite the different focus, structural changes in the education system must be made; otherwise, teachers will still experience the same pressures, and thus, the same results.

5.4.5   Use of Exams within CBLT

There is a debate about the kind of learning outcomes that should be used within the CBLT. Some teachers and students believe that exams are banned in the CBLT, and others do not condemn the use of tests because, as they mention, they are beneficial for student learning. In the subsequent quotations, the participants express their opinions about the use of exams within the constructivist approach:

> Gabriela: "The educative model can make the student more self-assured because there are many ways to assess, not only with an exam. Often, the only way a student will study is when he is afraid of an exam. The word *exam* has much psychological weight. They are afraid, and then they start studying. Then, the model has its pros and its cons." 80

An aspect that evolved in several of the interviews was having exams within the CBLT model. Metropolitan University professionals and students believe that exams are not part of the CBLT approach. Although it is true that the CBLT model promotes other types of assessment and emphasises the implementation of formative assessment, in particular, it does not ban exams. Gabriela feels that students do not give education the importance it has, and she mentions that when she sees that students study, they have an exam. She says that otherwise, they feel that the contents are not challenging and do not require students to be dedicated and focused on the subjects' contents. The model has advantages and disadvantages, like the lack of students' engagement in their studies because they feel confident that they will pass the courses by doing what they usually do. In the following excerpt, Clara expresses the same feeling about the exams and the kind of activities that are required for students:

> Clara: "When I ask students to work on a discussion, a theatre dynamic, a role-play, a video, they will do it very well. But when I see the student worried is when they will have an exam. There is when they are worried, and I see them in the halls, studying, asking each other, biting their nails because they still have that framework." 81

Clara also mentions that students can master the planned activities, such as discussions, theatre dynamics, role plays, and a video demonstrating their competencies. However, she used the word *worried* again as Gabriela did. When she sees students worried, studying in the halls, asking each other, and biting their nails is when they have an exam. They consider that students do this only when they have an exam, but you do not see them studying in the halls when they have other activities that could be entertaining. She indicates that students still have the framework of having to study for an exam, but they do not dedicate similar amounts of time to other teaching and learning activities. Therefore, it seems that Clara's idea is to observe students studying, dedicating their time and effort to improve and master their studies. Clara states that students bring the "teacher-centred" schema to university and believe that when they have to dedicate and spend time discussing it, they have this kind of assessment. It could be inferred that the CBLT

model has negatively impacted the presentation of exams and that teachers still see advantages in their implementation with university students. This excerpt reveals two aspects: the first is a specific condemnation of exams within the CBLT model in the Metropolitan University. Teachers see many advantages in having them. The other aspect is that the scheme or framework that students bring within them programs them to dedicate more effort to exams and how they were assessed within their basic education. It could be that the other activities planned do not represent the need for students to dedicate that amount of effort and that teachers expect individual attitudes from students. Still, their proposed actions do not require students to have that kind of engagement.

Using exams and the standardised test is often associated with summative assessment. As mentioned above, the CBE/CBLT approach focuses mainly on formative assessment. Formative assessment is learning with an improvement focus where mistakes are taken as a learning point and a critical vision to improve the elements that need more emphasis. The summative assessment determines a grade or mark based on students' performance and whether students accomplished (or not) the previously established requisites. This way, summative assessment is the "final judgement" of students' performance. Exams have gained a negative connotation since they were overused to be the final judge of students' performance. However, as the participants mention, they could be a powerful tool for aiding students' learning. In the next section, the topic of the type of assessment that teachers use in the classroom is discussed within the Metropolitan University context.

5.5 CBE/CBLT within the Mexican Education System: Incongruences

5.5.1 Categories vs Numbers

In this section, I discuss a topic that has led to confusion among students and teachers. Also, I debate the contradictions between the Metropolitan University grading system and the Mexican assessment system. Furthermore, I explain how the public policies affect teachers' and students' agency in classroom assessment. The fact is that students come from primary education with a numeric system for evaluation and are used to that system. However, in the Metropolitan University, students are graded through categories of learning (basic, approved, advanced, outstanding), and that generates confusion within the participants, as will be observed in the following quotations:

> Students: "Personally, the negative part is that we have the *not approved, advanced, basic, outstanding* (categories). I often know that *outstanding* is the highest, and other times I am a *basic.* I do not have a specific number. What is this *basic*? Is it 6 or 7? Because I do not know the exact number of my grade. For example, If I got a*dvanced…* am I closer to *basic* or *outstanding*? Because *basic, advanced* or *outstanding* is too general. *Outstanding* is 10, but *advanced* and *basic*; what is exactly? Then I would say that I wouldn't say I like this because I do not know what my exact grade is. 82

> Students: "It is not having a precise number in the moment of why I got an *intermediate*. And what kind of *intermediat*e is it? Is it a 7? I don't know. Sometimes it depends on the teacher's perspective, maybe the teacher thought it was an 8, but I feel like a 7. But why? No number says to me: you have a seven; you have an 8. I believe this is essential for students who want to get their BA degree by average. We could do that here. Then, you go with an incognito all semester. Is my grade going to go up or down? 83

These students are expressing their uncertainty about their grades. Students try to translate the categories to the numerical system they know because, in the end, the categories are converted to numbers and averaged in the Metropolitan University. I can imply that for this reason, students want to know their numerical average. They specifically question what it means to have each of these categories and, when they get a grade, what the nearest next category is. I understand that they are trying to build a schema and adapt these categories to what they perceive to make sense of these new terms that define their assessment. Students can obtain their degree on the BA in ELT to have a certain average on their transcript. The average is taken after the conversion of categories to numbers.

Students are interested to know the number and average score needed to avoid other options like a dissertation or a standardised test. When students get a certain average in their transcripts, they can automatically obtain their degree. For this reason, students are concerned that the numbers should match such a requirement. In the end, students' grades will be considered and awarded numerically, which is why these students seek certainty on this topic. This issue is one of the incongruences of working with a CBE/CBLT approach in a Mexican education system. Teachers and students are trying to implement these changes; however, outside elements and policies affect the teachers' and students' agency in the assessment as debated in the excerpts within this section.

> Gabriela: "For example, when the first element of competence, if at the end, I was *advanced*, it does not mean that my final grade will be *advanced*... suppose you have an *advanced,* and in the other two elements of competence that in other schools call them partials, I have *outstanding.* In that case, the teacher can say, he demonstrated to be an *outstanding* student, super *outstanding.*"84

The last quote is an example of how some teachers manage assessment. Professors do not necessarily average grades, but they observe students' competencies and judge based on their progress. If students did not get an *outstanding* grade initially, they could obtain it if they worked hard. Therefore, the opposite can happen otherwise. That is to say, if students get an *outstanding* category at the beginning, that does not guarantee that they will keep that category until the end of the semester.

> Gabriela: "We have the number equivalent. *Outstanding* is 10, *Advanced* is 9, *intermediate* is 8, and *basic* is 7. *Not approved* is 6. Then we do the conversion at the end of the semester. Then, if my student finished *advanced*, I know I will grade him with a nine. I know I will use a number when I officially register the grades. However, the whole semester is *advanced, intermediate, basic, and not approved.* I never give them numbers or percentages; in the end, on their transcripts, they see numbers, but with me, they only see letters. The online platform gives you numbers, and then the student asks, why do I have 8.5? I do not like to work with percentages; I always work with letters." 85

Gabriela explains the conversion from categories to numbers. The transformation from categories to numbers is evidence of the CBE's incongruence in the Mexican education system. Gabriela explains that in their transcript, students see averages, that is what students are looking for; for this reason, they are interested in numbers and percentages because this is how they are being graded. Furthermore, according to Gabriela, what students see on the Metropolitan University's online platform are numbers. In the following excerpt, Gabriela continues reinforcing this incongruence in the assessment system when she explains that they must translate the grades for the official education office in Mexico:

> Gabriela: "When we have to register the grades on SEP, SEP does not manage competencies. We put 9- advanced competent, 8- intermediate competent. The translation is because SEP does not manage that; the numeric model is still the one that governs. But this is when capturing grades. The student will see in their transcripts *advanced, intermediate, basic.*"86

Gabriela mentions that *"the numeric model is still the one that governs"*. The use of the word 'governs' reflects the belief that the numeric system in education in Mexico is the one that controls education, and that has not changed. Since not all higher education programs in Mexico have adopted a CBE model, the public education system has not changed. However, the repercussions are present in Mexican classrooms, and the structure's incongruences reflect on teachers' agency, as observed in the following excerpt.

> Mariana: "I remember having a big conflict with the assessment. This conflict was because I was used to assigning a number to the performance. However, I feel this number is sometimes assigned according to the teacher's criteria, and I often do not feel that is wrong. Still, you are involved in situations of conflict with the students or misunderstandings, etc. Then, when I was told about the competencies model, I thought that the assessment was the most complicated because, in the end, I was asked to evaluate with a number, I had a conflict." 87

For Mariana, it was complicated to assess through the CBLT model (using categories) and provide a number. This aspect represented a conflict for her. She feels that teachers grade according to their criteria within the numeric system, which could confuse students when explaining their grades. She mentions that it was difficult for her to understand the CBLT assessment system. Therefore, when asked to evaluate using numbers, she felt conflicted about doing it and why. Later on, she continues talking about the numeric system and aspects that represented confusion for her:

> Mariana: I remember that many teachers were outraged: why if the student did not accomplish all the assignments, I must grade them with a five or six? Why do I give them a six if they did not work? And I remember that at some point, I also thought like that. They are giving their grade as a gift and giving them everything easily. I feel that there should not be a conflict because the student who does not work will fail in any model. I have had cases when I say: You did not hand in X assignment, I can give you a chance to hand it in again, of course, that they will not count the same, but you must hand it in, and they do not hand it in. When the student is interested, even though it is the most Finnish model, they will try and pass. You will not pass when you are not interested; even though if it is only the attendance requirement, you will not pass."88

In the Metropolitan University, the lowest numeric grade that students can get is a six. For this reason, teachers complain that students' average is increasing even when they do not deserve it. Mariana mentions that this aspect does not matter because when students are not interested, they do not work and will not pass. However, this is an aspect to emphasise since it affects assessment and how teachers and students perceive it. Furthermore, CBLT assessment categories certainly relieved students' stress, as observed in the following excerpt.

> Students: "I feel that I had felt much better with my grades, now that the grades are competencies than when they were numbers. I do not get that stressed. And many times, I feel that "I prefer to send this and have an intermediate, to not sending it and have a not approved." I do not get that stressed like saying: I will have a six or something like that." 89

How teachers were educated, the beliefs teachers and students hold towards assessment, and the numerous prerequisites of assessment policies, among other factors, have contributed to having summative assessment dominating classrooms. Sambell, Mc Dowell and Montgomery (2013) point out that ""this type of curriculum delivery structure has indeed generated activity, but it may be an activity that is focused on the accumulation marks, within a regime of frequent demands that students are required to manage"" (p.33). The focus is put on the assessment shreds of evidence that, if completed, students can tick that box and move forward to the next activity until they fulfil all the course requirements, having as a goal the completion of the tasks required instead of experiencing meaningful learning. Although the teachers have incorporated some aspects of the CBLT assessment into their classrooms, the general focus is still on the transcript's number.

It would be expected that some of the existing structured mechanisms in the education system in Mexico adapt to align with the CBE/CBLT policy and that institutional processes should be coordinated. Nevertheless, this synchrony does not exist in some cases. As the data suggests, CBLT has a premise that the student learns through a combination of all types of assessment, but mainly through formative assessment, which becomes the way of learning in the CBLT approach. However, it is necessary to conclude with a number assigned by the teacher at the end of each semester. The Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) requires a number for official documents. This requirement gives emphasis and power to the summative assessment that traditionally has prevailed in the Mexican assessment system.

Furthermore, "These structural conditions at the societal level can lead to assessment dilemmas such as formative assessment being neglected or under constant threat (Knight and Yorke 2003,

cited in Sambell, Mc Dowell, and Montgomery, 2013, p.34). Formative assessment is under continuous threat since teachers pressure to impress students' love for learning and provide authentic learning opportunities and assessments. Additionally, students develop and self-regulate at their own pace.

5.5.2   CBLT seems to be beneficial for "lazy" students.

Further comments throughout the interviews suggested that the way in which the MU approached the CBE system might benefit "lazy" students. Participants used the term "lazy" to describe students that do not put in the required effort to learn. Therefore, students' responsibility and other values are diminished. Also, the participants suggested that some of the conditions the Metropolitan University offers might encourage this feature.

> Clara: "If you want to deliver the formative part of the responsibility, you have a period to do your self-assessment, and in the end, you open the system again. Where is the formative part? They are forming students as a Mexican: I will have a thousand opportunities, but nothing happens anyway." 90

Clara talks about another incongruence in the assessment system at the Metropolitan University. As was explained above, the Metropolitan University manages a "self-assessment" test. This self-assessment is, in fact, a standardised test that students must complete and pass to obtain their final grade. The incongruence that Clara mentions is that students have as many chances as they need to pass it. Even if students have finished the school year, they still have a chance, and teachers must modify their grades when the assessment period has ended. The question that Clara raises is where the formative part is? For her, this is incongruent with what they are trying to achieve: responsible students. She even mentions that the Metropolitan University is forming students as "Mexicans" who believe they will have as many opportunities as possible to pass without consequences. Although the self-assessment in the MU is not an explicit part of the CBE approach, it was created with other objectives as explained by participants. It affects students' assessment in how it conditions their grades to be official. It also has a significant effect, as mentioned above, on teacher agency. The test includes the topics that must be seen in classes and tie teachers to having students answer the specific questions that appear on the test. In the following passage, Clara talks about the perception that Metropolitan University has due to the way of assessing:

Clara: "I can say that the percentage of students that do not argue their postures is not high, is low, in our model is low. Indeed, it is more about the students' personalities or students' insecurities, but the school has the nickname of an easy school. The outside perception is that it is a very easy school. You pass easily. I do not know if this has to do with the model. For example, if a student fails, you grade him with a six. You are not going to give him a five or a four. You are going to grade him with a six. And this way, his average increases, so it is easy." 91

The topic of grading students with a minimum of six arises again. However, Clara explains that this evaluation has promoted the Metropolitan University as an *"easy"* school. She uses the sentence *"you pass easily* ". Although she mentioned that she does not know if this nickname has to do with the CBE approach, she delivers an example of how the minimum grade of six helps students increase their average and pass easier. Clara uses the term "*his average increases,"* which relates to summative assessment. In the end, summative assessment is the one that governs the Metropolitan University. Clara continues talking about the CBE model and flexibility issues that are misunderstood by professors and students, explaining that teachers also encourage "the easy school" perception, as observed in the following passages:

Clara: Then, you deliver knowledge this way, and I feel that students are like: "Oh, the teacher, he is very nice" because there is a lot of empathy with the student. The old schoolteachers are like: if you do not arrive on time for my class, I close the door, and nobody enters.". But right now, it is flexible. Then, the student comes from far away in the city, and the teacher says, "Oh, you can enter, do not worry. We will see this later. And since the model is student-centred, "the student comes and does not have breakfast. He is hungry; how is he going to learn? Go to the cafeteria". 92

Patricia: "The educative model must be aligned with the institution's regulations. The educative model is flexible but is not flexible in the regulations. If we are flexible with the educative model, maybe the absences weren't that important. If the student develops the competence outside and comes to demonstrate it, I do not have any problem. After all, it means that the student is developing. That would be the flexibility of the model. However, as a teacher, I need to see the regulations, which say that the student must attend 90% of classes. The students could have a basic grade because they are demonstrating that they are competent. Still, they do not have other important elements for the institution." 93

On the one hand, Clara talks about some of the differences she observes in the traditional system where the teachers were the leading authority in the classroom and how teachers have perceived the student-centred CBE model. For the participant, teachers misunderstand flexibility within the CBE approach when they allow students not to be responsible and are condescending with students' needs, even if they are not accountable. She mentions that before, teachers were stricter; therefore, students had a different responsibility reference. On the other hand, Patricia explains how the institutions' flexibility and regulations should be aligned. She mentions that within CBLT, more aspects could be flexible.

Notwithstanding, if that flexibility is not according to the university's regulations, then the plan cannot be that flexible. She gives an example of the attendance that students need to pass a course mentioning that they need to attend 90% of the classes to pass the terms. This reasoning reflects how the CBE/CBLT approach promotes students from learning at their rhythm; however, the regulations state a different picture. Furthermore, Flor also talks about Flexibility in the Metropolitan University, but she calls it generosity to *"lazy"* students. She talks about the number of opportunities that students have for passing a course in the following passage:

> Flor: I believe that the university is very generous with lazy students. The fact of opening a summer course to students that deliberatively have decided: no, I better pass this course in summer. And that the university pays for the classrooms. The university keeps working, and the student only pays for a subject. I believe it is a misunderstood generosity by students. If that part were in my hands, I would say: You can take the subject in summer, but it will cost you. All students in these classes will pay the teacher's salary and the fixed costs of the classroom because the air conditioning is on." I would be stricter, of course, that I do not have the complete picture. What is wanted is that students do not get stuck. The university wants students to flow and graduate. But I would put a little lock that makes them try and think twice before throwing things away." 94

During the last passage, Flor explains that students have different chances of passing the course and that the Metropolitan University provides all the necessary for students to continue studying. She believes that sometimes students do not take the semester's subjects seriously since they know they can make the subject during the summer with the same low tuition fee. Flor believes that the school needs to be stricter on this aspect. Although she understands that "*what it is wanted is that students do not get stuck, that they flow and graduate"*, she believes that the university should make students try harder, so they take school more seriously. This thought reflects how the external policies and graduation rates affect what happens in classrooms.

Students have all the flexibility they need to pass the courses. However, according to the participants, there is a lack in the formation part of students being responsible, which CBE promotes. Another effect of the graduation rates on classrooms is that the university traced a student's "effortless" journey by providing everything for students to graduate. Furthermore, one student in the sixth semester talks about the model and being a "lazy" student in the following passage:

> Students: "There are lazy students, and I was one of them. Teachers give you a chance. How many absentees are needed to fail? Or you come late, and they do not say anything. Then, if the students are lazy and you give them that ease, well, more, they will be like that. Teachers are not only facilitators, but they can also motivate students and make them go out of their comfort zone and say. If you are going to continue like that, you are going to fail; you are going to fail if you keep coming late to class; you are going to fail if you continue being lazy." 95

This student participant reinforces Clara's and Flor's idea of teachers' misunderstandings about flexibility within the CBE/CBLT approach. He mentions that he was a *"lazy"* student and feels that the more opportunities lazy students have, the lazier they will become. Although it is true that being a student-centred programme, students are the ones who are responsible for their learning, it seems that students in this context are expecting stricter teachers for them to succeed in school. It could also be that students are used to a particular way of working through their primary education; when they start higher education, they are asked to be more autonomous. However, they still expect teachers to be stricter for them to work as expected as if teachers pushed students to work. In the following excerpts, Flor and Alejandra talk about the need for more academic skills that they feel that students need to develop to work appropriately:

> Flor: "I believe that a very important part, for me, is class discussion. And this is something that the student is not used to doing. I am doing this more each time; there was confusion last semester. The students did not understand the section of the term discussion. For a student to become part of a discussion and have significant participation, he must bring something if he can be in the discussion and contribute with significant participation: he read; he did something before, and for me, that is fundamental." 96

> Alejandra: "I feel that the students need to be more critical. I think they only fill the gaps, or I do not know if I am very strict. I do not know. I am struggling a lot, but I am working on that." 97

On the one hand, Alejandra and Flor state a need for a greater level of critical thinking among students. Alejandra explains that students are only filling the gaps. It means that students comply with the requirements, but she feels that they need to be more analytical, and although she works for improving this, she is "struggling a lot" with this aspect. On the other hand, Flor also comments on this when she states that students do not understand the term discussion. Flor explains what the word "discussion" means and what she expects from students at this level. She mentions that students are not used to discussing in class and contributing to what they read before coming to class. The lack of critical thinking students was a topic raised in the different interviews, and it is one of the prominent critics of CBE. The CBE approach focuses more on the performance of specific tasks that can be visibly operated instead of developing analytical skills to develop critical thinking. Mariana has a different opinion about "lazy" students in the Metropolitan University, as it is observed in the following sentences:

> Mariana: "If a student is lazy sooner or later, he will fail. Sometimes I perceive that some teachers want to make students fail. I try to rescue because I feel that if I fail them, I am against the student, like in a videogame, and the teacher is going to be all the walls that the character has to avoid." 98

Mariana has a strong argument on how she approaches teaching and assessment. She believes that assessment is for rescuing and trying to help students to succeed in their path. From her perspective, she talks about some teachers' attitudes when she mentions that she feels that "*some teachers just want to make students fail.*" She considers that if she fails a student, Mariana is against that student. She even makes a videogame analogy where the teacher is a wall the students are trying to avoid, to succeed in the game. Mariana and Patricia describe and generalise the students' generational characteristics in the Metropolitan University in the following two extracts.

> Mariana: "We can find any kind of students in the classroom. But I believe that the lack of interest prevails because I feel that students have many distractors. I feel it is the generation that has everything instantly. This generation needs visual stimulation. It is a generation that requires movement, is very kinetic and visual, and lacks auditive intelligence. They listen to a lot of music, but they are not used to be one-hour listening, delivering, and expressing. This generation lives in anonymity. They do not like to participate; they do not like to present their ideas because they feel exposed. I notice that students do not read; they are digital, not to contribute or produce, but to receive." 99

Patricia: "I believe that students aren't self-conscious about what it means to be an English teacher, in how they can make an impact, of the need that exists… I think it must be with their education, focusing on their interests. They act as If the environment did not exist; there are only memes and images. Then I think that is what they miss. We try to help them develop critical thinking; they are guided to self-regulate their learning. But I believe that they have not reached that point in which they say. Yes, that is true; all this free time that I have, I will use it to document myself about what is going on in the world, then I feel that they are not that conscious yet." 100

During the last two excerpts, Patricia and Mariana described the kind of students that they receive in the BA in ELT programme. They both seem to agree that students have many distractions, are busy, and have their minds occupied by memes and images. It appears they are describing a generation filled up with social media and that they do not dedicate an extra effort to become better professionals. Mariana even mentions that students are digital but are only used to receiving, not contributing, or producing. That might probably be the mismatch between what teachers expect and what students can deliver within CBLT implementation in this context.

Once the elements teachers accept and reject concerning the CBLT approach have been stipulated, we can form a criterion on how the CBLT programme adapts to the Mexican educative system's current conditions.

5.6 Custom-made adaptation of the Model

In the previous chapter, I mentioned that teachers know the theoretical elements of competency-based education. Teachers are also informed about the type of assessment in the classroom. I displayed the ideology's materialisations translated into the types of learning evidence that the students present, showing that the ideology has permeated teachers' agency and what they ask from their students. Participants demonstrated that they consider the competency model an opportunity to improve education. The data obtained and analysed through CDS indicate that the teachers have appropriated the neoliberal ideology for university education and do not resist this aspect.

Thanks to the participants' valuable perspective in this study, I observed other external factors that pressure teachers and limit their agency in the classroom. Time constraints, lack of flexibility on students' pace, and plenty of responsibilities teachers carry have all affected the feedback

provided to students.   Additionally, the type of labour contract teachers hold impacts their agency. Also, the lack of flexibility in the student's pace makes the semester short. Therefore, the teachers responsible for covering specific content during the semester maintain control of the face-to-face classes. Due to the circumstances described in this chapter, it can be understood that teachers have integrated some competency-based language teaching elements into their classroom practice. They seek to generate discussion, encourage students' participation and incorporate aspects of the assessment. In sum, the MU teacher has adapted the CBLT model to their circumstances and external pressures that interfere with their agency.

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Chapter 6   **Conclusion**

In this project, I investigated how a top-down policy, as is the case of the CBLT, has permeated the agency of the primary education actors in Mexican higher education. It is interesting to observe how teachers embrace some aspects of the CBLT ideology and reject other elements due to the challenges presented within their context. This study shed some light on teachers' perceptions about the model and what they bring into action through their agency. Likewise, other elements that interfere with their agency while working with competency-based education were observed.

Teacher agency is critical for understanding how teachers embrace, comply with, or reject these external ideologies. I decided to study this topic with a critical perspective on the phenomenon in my research. In this way, my work has evidenced how the neoliberal ideology has permeated the work of educative actors. My study's main original contribution to the area of knowledge is the proposed methodology for analysing the collected data. I developed this methodology to bring critical discourse studies to practical reality. The aim was to observe how international efforts to promote higher education at the neoliberal system's service have materialised physically, orally, and through concrete actions performed in class. In addition to the methodological proposal, this study contributes to adding knowledge and discussion to what is currently very little in studies of the CBLT area (Auerbach, 1986; Pamplón Irigoyen and Villalobos, 2015; Lukindo, 2016; Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei, 2016; Dwi-Hatmanto, 2017; Ryder et al., 2018).

Moreover, another main contribution of the present research is to shed some light on this top-down policy implementation's challenges, explaining how different contextual political elements interfere with teacher agency in the CBLT classroom. The analysis and presentation of the "lived lives" of the teachers in the Metropolitan University and a detailed analysis of the challenges they face are other of the main contributions to the area of knowledge that the present study offers (see Ch. 5).

6.1 **Main Findings**

6.1.1   **Teachers´ attitudes towards the model**

The findings of this project reveal that the teachers at the Metropolitan University hold a favourable attitude towards the competency model. All the participants can explain the academic model's guidelines and highlight the constructivist aspects that the model advises. Teachers at the Metropolitan University see the educative model based on competencies as an opportunity to offer the student a different approach from the traditional ones, bringing them closer to the

actual practice of the contents seen in class. Only one participant mentioned that the model is an imposition since it is mandatory; however, she does not oppose such an imposition since it shows the model's benefits for her students.

Moreover, teachers in this study manifest a favourable attitude towards the neoliberal tendencies implicit in the model. Data analysis suggests that participants have appropriated preparing students for the job market, which occurs naturally in their interviews. Preparation for work has manifested itself as something given to all participants since none of them offered any resistance to this aspect. This fact reveals the efficacy of neoliberal policies in higher education and their penetration in the work of the leading educative actors: practising teachers.

6.1.2   Implications for English Teachers

Participants mentioned some of the implications for English teachers. They note that the competency model was not challenging because they are used to working with constructivist learning models. Also, English teachers are trained to develop students' skills, somewhat like the work done in developing competencies. According to the participants, the model has all the elements for students to foster learning. In addition, participants mentioned that CBLT is a model that is already designed and structured, which gives them a better idea of how to direct development and achieve the desired competencies in students. However, they also mention that it is necessary for students to be more interested than they currently are in CBLT and to cultivate their autonomous learning skills. The student is seen as a complete entity, as a person instead of as a number or a percentage. The institution has a holistic and more humanistic bent toward students.

6.1.3   Assessment within CBLT

Regarding assessment, some participants highlighted using rubrics to help them be aware of what is required in each activity. However, other teachers mentioned that it is impossible to follow the model due to time constraints and other administrative responsibilities that must be carried out. Both students and teachers referred positively to mental rubrics to evaluate the students and thus comply with the model. The teachers expressed their knowledge about the types of assessments carried out in the competency model. Teachers and student participants are trained in the model and its application since they receive a training course upon entering the Metropolitan University to work or study. Likewise, students have explicit subjects that enable them to work through competencies since it is a model they will need for their working life. The students' learning outcomes that teachers ask for are according to those established by

competency-based education and the formative assessment promoted. However, the feedback delivered to students is not as constant and detailed as expected. Nevertheless, feedback is an essential part of formative assessment and continuous learning.

6.1.4   Time constraints and external pressures that hinder teacher agency

Teacher-centred classes were mainly observed within the face-to-face classes with some student participation. The teachers try to make the contents dynamic, involving the students in the planned discussions and activities. However, teachers have prescribed content to teach and have limited time to work. Thus, as the model promotes, students cannot work and improve at their own pace. The data from this study seem to reveal that in addition to the demands of time and the responsibilities teachers have, external pressures impact their agency. One of them is a standardised test that students must take three times a semester until they pass. The Metropolitan University created this exam for students to practise answering this type of test since it is one of the requirements for graduation. What is sought is to raise the students' graduation rates at the Metropolitan University. Students' grades are conditional on passing the standardised test. The teachers indicated that the standardised test affects their agency because they must comply with the contents of the exam and that this exam limits what they can do in class within the required time.

6.1.5   Teacher agency

Teachers' agency is reflected in the fact that they incorporate elements of competency-based education into their practices in the classroom. Some aspects I observed while conducting the research were that the teachers try to link with the students' practice by connecting the content with their personal life or work practice. Another element of CBLT that teachers incorporate into their practice is that they follow the didactic sequences and elements of competence marked in the syllabus. Students and teachers know the steps outlined in the sequence and try to follow them. Teachers treat students as integral beings since they worry about their problems if they have a particular situation that affects their studies. Although I mainly found teacher-centred practices during face-to-face classes, teachers try to integrate students into class discussions through the exercises they provide in the course. In addition, ELT teachers incorporate into their CBLT practice elements that they have already adopted over the years and are part of their teaching identity. This study revealed that for English teachers in this context, the transition to a competency model, at least in the methodological part, was not tricky since ELT teachers bring a constructivist profile that makes them more receptive to learning by competencies.

Having collected the students' learning evidence allowed me to observe how the materialisation of the ideology has been carried out. The learning outcomes reflect how teachers understand competency-based education and incorporate elements of the model into their practice and what they ask of their students. This research design allowed me to observe the phenomenon from different angles and verify that the ideology of the CBLT has permeated the main educative actors, the teachers. It has also permeated students' attitudes, beliefs, and actions, who will be the new generations of teachers in Mexico. This study also reveals that the participants implicitly appropriated the neoliberal ideas that competency-based education brings. The data suggest a marked tendency towards accepting the neoliberal ideas that place university education at the employers' service. Participants have embraced competency-based education by uncritically accepting the neoliberal ideology implicit within CBE and CBLT. This lack of criticism of their work practice has also penetrated students with ideologies passed from generation to generation. The participants see education for work as something given. The lack of criticism of neoliberal practices has been normalized, and I did not find resistance to this aspect.

From this perspective, it can be deduced that the efforts to promote education for work have been successful and that this neoliberal ideology has reached students. Without knowing it, teachers have potentially become "agents of manipulation" (Van Dijk, 2009), transferring neoliberal elements without presenting a critical attitude towards the phenomenon. This type of education is far from being a democratic education. It does not offer debate about students' different alternatives and perspectives to form a critical judgment. When conducting this research, I also sought to know if the participants showed resistance to the phenomenon to see the attitude that teachers present to the CBLT. When inquiring about this aspect, some interesting categories emerged that gave me a complete vision of implementing the CBLT model. This study's participants allowed me to have a more global vision of the phenomenon and find emerging categories in this research that enrich the knowledge about teachers' agency in CBLT.

6.1.6   Inconsistencies within the Mexican educative system

The participants' vision in this study allowed me to observe the phenomenon from different angles. I could attend to the model's macro aspects and its insertion into the Mexican educative system. According to the data collected, it is necessary to modify the Mexican educative system's structural aspects for the model by competencies to work as planned. According to the participants: The model exceeds Mexico's educative system— derived from the lack of flexibility in the programs and assessment. The students' problems were evident when planning student mobility and the limitations that the evaluation system offers. In the participants' words, "*we are confined to a Mexican evaluation model that does not allow flexibility*." Since it is still reviewed

subject by subject if it has compatibility with the institution's study plan, the student decides to study outside the country. If there is no compatibility in all subjects, the student becomes an irregular student and invariably graduates at least one year later upon returning to the institution.

Another aspect that displays inconsistencies in the Mexican educative system is the type of evaluation. Within the competency method, evaluation is through categories derived from instruction and formative assessment, and in the educative system, only numbers and averages are accepted. In the end, the student's transcripts are based on numbers, and aspects such as student scholarships are conditional on a numerical average. For this reason, students are interested in knowing their numerical grades and continue pondering averages since, in the end, averages are considered. Students cannot work at their own pace because they do not have that freedom when they are confined to a time and space. Students and teachers are subject to semester times in which they must complete the planned content and ensure that students achieve the competencies established in the programme. Problems deriving from lack of time were recurrent in the interviews with the participants.

The findings support the idea that the students who work and perfect their skills at their own pace is a fallacy in the Mexican context. Flexibility in the student's work pace does not exist in the current system. It is evident from this research that teachers do their best to integrate elements of competency-based language teaching into their classroom practice. However, beyond their control, elements that affect their agency and the ecology surrounding them put time pressures and demanding responsibilities on the teacher. One of the main competence-based education guidelines is formative instruction and assessment, where competence is modelled through constant feedback on the student's work. According to the data collected in this study, the model offers a clear structure of how the student can acquire the target competence. However, this requires constant feedback. In the Metropolitan University's case, where the groups are large and there are time pressures, following the model as it is, is, in the words of the participants, *"impossible.*" Some teachers follow mental rubrics and do not request portfolios focusing on integrative projects demonstrating acquired competencies. The amount of work required of the teacher is: "*absorbing".* In addition, the hiring of hourly-paid teachers, which is increasing, accentuates teachers' time constraints. Students expect more detailed feedback on their work; however, this practice has decreased.

According to the participants, although basic education levels are based on competencies, students enter higher education with a system still based on objectives. Students receive training on the model upon entering the Metropolitan University; however, it is difficult to change the way students work in practice. The participants mentioned that the students are trained to

receive information instead of generating work. In turn, the fact that students are immersed in social networks and memes was recurrent. Furthermore, students do not exploit the tools the model offers to learn better. This aspect makes the development of the cognitive work of the students more complicated. According to the participants, the moment they see students concerned about their learning, reviewing readings, and studying is when they have an exam. Otherwise, they comply with the activities but need more analysis and discussion about the class contents. The participants mentioned that the teacher is considered a facilitator of learning, and the respect the teacher's figure used to have has decreased. This factor adds an attitudinal burden on the part of some students.

6.1.7 The Metropolitan University as a "hostage" of the academic indicators and their compliance

The Metropolitan University's pressure to comply with the academic indicators was evidenced in this study. These pressures have been translated into practices carried out in educative design and connect with teachers and students' agency. The teachers link the quality indicators and the Metropolitan University's funding for its operation. The results shown in this study seem to indicate that the Metropolitan University has become a hostage to academic indicators and their compliance. Otherwise, the resources the MU would receive would be reduced. That is why alternatives have been implemented to help students graduate and for the Metropolitan University to present better statistics of students who have successfully graduated. The participants allege that these alternatives promote the students' procrastination and low effort attitude; in their words, they mention that these alternatives facilitate the graduation of "*lazy students*". For instance, summer courses are offered if students fail subjects during the regular semester. The summer courses reinforce the idea of having extra chances to pass the subjects and not valuing regular semester classes. In addition, the teachers stated that their agency has a limit, and it is up to where the student allows them to work. Another example is the standardized test mentioned above, which was created for the student to practice answering this type of test and thus be able to raise graduation rates through the CENEVAL exam (see Ch. 6 sections 6.1.2). Teacher participants mentioned that this exam limited their agency as they had to cover the exam topics.

I observed how the academic indicators had influenced the Metropolitan University's actions in assessment. Teachers have an economic bonus if their group's general average is 8.5 on a scale of 10. The monetary compensation offers an invitation to be more benevolent with the student's grades and therefore have a lower percentage in the indicator of failure. In turn, the student evaluates the teacher's performance online. Teachers who are hourly-paid depend on the grade

their students assign them to be rehired. According to the participants, this makes the teacher a *"hostage"* of the students: Students come to higher education trained to receive. When the teacher tries to make students work, they are not used to or do not want to work, so if the teacher gives them a bad grade, the students also provide the teacher with a low rate and then he or she is not rehired. This aspect forms a vital part of the findings of this study as it questions the integrity of the CBE/CBLT project and how the surrounding elements of the classroom influence teachers' actions. At the same time, it shows how the system is designed to help the students pass and increase the graduation rates. In the next section, the findings of this study will be compared with earlier work.

6.2 Findings Compared with Earlier Work

This study confirms earlier work by Hawkins et al. (2015), who show that concerning the implementation of the model of assessment, different practical and logistical challenges have been met. Moreover, they suggested that detailed assessment may become cumbersome for programme leaders to manage and that educators may spend more time administering a competency-based programme than on ensuring the quality of the learning experience. This study also confirms earlier work by Lukindo (2016), who claimed that this teaching method is time-consuming and challenging to apply due to the large classroom sizes that most public schools and universities have. In addition, the present study's findings support the results found by Pamplón Irigoyen and Villalobos (2015), who also discovered that teacher-centred methods were practised inside the classrooms. Also, the results support the findings by Aziz (2016) who found that teachers holding a BA. or master's degree in English Language Teaching did not guarantee using CBLT methods in classrooms. The author mentions that their professional qualification was not a factor that influenced the implementation of the model since teaching was not Competency-based. However, it could be added from the present study that having a BA in ELT facilitates the transition to a CBLT model due to the constructivist foundations of the approaches. The results of this study also confirm the results shown by Biesta, Priestley and Robinson (2015), who found that teacher discourse was being diminished. Also, the data of this study concur with these authors' that imposed external systems alter the school dynamic by carrying out a change without a clear philosophy of education.

The conclusions of this study contrast with the findings of Pamplón Irigoyen and Villalobos, 2015; Lukindo, 2016; Velasco-Martínez, Díaz-Barriga and Tójar-Hurtado, 2017 who identified developmental needs of teachers regarding competency assessment. The present study showed that teachers understand CBE and know how to assess their students. Also, the outcomes of this study contradict those found by Robles-Haros and Estévez-Nenninger (2016) and Saadi, Saeedi

and Karbalaei (2016), who state that the educative policy has as a primary challenge the pedagogical training of teachers for the continuous development of programs to move on from a traditional classroom to a CBLT classroom. The outcomes of this inquiry also differ from the ones found by Alderuccio (2016), who demonstrates that it is a fact that teachers resist curriculum innovation in Competency-Based Education. According to the authors, this resistance is to the new social order implemented in the teaching and learning process.

It can be concluded that although teachers are trained and show a favourable attitude towards the competency model, it has been partially implemented in Mexican HE. This incompleteness in the implementation is because teachers' agency is hindered by ecological pressures such as lack of time, type of hiring, academic indicators, and teacher evaluation. The lack of flexibility in the Mexican educative system has been evidenced, especially in assessment, mobility, and students' pace. Also, teachers do their best to implement the model, but they face time constraints and external pressures that force them to take control of class time.

6.2.1   Findings compared to CBLT studies

This section will compare the studies concerning CBLT with the present study results. Concerning the studies that reference the programs' evaluation and implementation, Lukindo (2016) concluded that teachers know the essential elements of the model. However, they were unsure how to evaluate under the Competency-Based Language Teaching Approach; nevertheless, they continued assessing traditionally. The present research found that teachers know how to assess the competencies under a CBLT programme, as demonstrated by the student's learning outcomes (see ch. 4 section X). Furthermore, Pamplón Irigoyen and Villalobos (2015) also discovered that teacher-centred methods were practised inside the classrooms. The study describes current practices teachers use, and according to the results, these practices are not aligned with the programme's guidelines. As possible causes, the study mentions that teachers did not know the parameters they were supposed to follow, which leads to some questions regarding training and follow-up. Through this study, teachers know the precepts of CBLT, as was observed through the interviews presented in the results. However, as stated in chapter 5, different external pressures, challenges, and characteristics of the B. A. in ELT lead to teacher-centred classes.

Furthermore, Dwi-Hatmanto (2017) found that the Competency-Based approach was partially implemented. The results suggest that the practices did not correspond to those instructed in a Competency-Based model. Consequently, the author recommended professional development opportunities for teachers to improve their teaching practices. The results also show that the CBLT model was partially implemented. However, the cause was not because of professional

development opportunities but due to pressures that teachers have that are external to their classroom but affect their agency in CBLT.

The study by Saadi, Saeedi and Karbalaei (2016) examines the outcomes of learning under the execution of competency-based language courses in this university based on teachers' perspectives and attitudes towards the model. Findings revealed that the programme's implementation of CBLT has been almost successful. Regarding assessment, students stated they knew the target competencies and their stage to reach them. However, the classes I observed and the interviews revealed that teacher-centred practices were found, and my conclusion was that CBLT was performed partially in the Metropolitan University.

As teacher-trainers, we should consider the current challenges that teacher-trainees will face by instructing them about the methods they will need to perform their labour practice. This argument was brought by Aziz (2016), who found that teachers who hold a B.A. or Master's Degree in English Teaching did not guarantee the use of Competency-Based methods in classrooms. The author mentions that their professional qualification was not a factor that influenced the implementation of the model since teaching was not competency-based. The present study demonstrated that teachers could relate to a CBLT methodology since they know the different methods from the constructivist approach and are familiar with the demonstration and production of learning outcomes.

Alderuccio (2016) demonstrates that it is a fact that teachers resist curriculum innovation on Competency-Based Education. This resistance relies on the new social order implemented in teaching and learning. Consequently, these aspects directly influence the methods that the teachers utilise in the classroom, which is key to the success or failure of the programme. In the case of the present study, no resistance towards the model *per se* was found among the participants. However, several challenges regarding the structure of the Mexican educative system were exposed in this research, as seen in Ch. 5.

Kalaja et al. (2015) explore the relationship of teachers with their professional environment and the evolution of their beliefs as English as a Foreign Language Teachers (EFL). The researchers collected data in two stages. Twenty- three novice teachers were asked about what being an EFL teacher implied and about their goals within their professional area. Participants wrote reflective essays as they were studying, and after they graduated, they continued writing a piece twice a year for their first four years. The study shows that teachers' classroom activities were not according to their ideals in many cases, and their actions depended on the environment to develop their pedagogical practices. The present study results also show that in many cases, the activities that teachers ended up doing in classrooms depended on the environment to develop

their pedagogical practices. Such dependency was also shown in negative terms. Their expressions seemed to reflect their agency since they looked at themselves as individuals who were forced to act in a certain way without an option to choose.

6.3 **Limitations**

Teachers allowed me to observe their classrooms and their work. However, it was not easy to get evidence of their online work and the type of virtual feedback they provide to their students. Nevertheless, I was able to get some of this data with the help of students. The methodological design I carried out provided me with enough data to reach the abovementioned conclusions.

However, there were specific difficulties distinguishing the type of approach performed in classrooms. I observed constructivist elements within the classes. However, I could not distinguish them from other approaches since certain methods of ELT development are also based on constructivist ideas. Therefore, I focused on the assessment elements to observe how the students' learning outcomes were presented and to make a clear line between the method and the competence demonstrated.

The ideological perspectives of the participants were analysed through an adaptation of Critical Dispositive Analysis. Such an interpretive approach intends to observe how the ideology is observed in the classroom. In addition, it tries to understand how the materialisation of the ideology takes place. Considering that each person interprets and constructs the social world differently, it is essential to state that studying it depends on the researcher's understanding of these interpretations and constructions.

Through this study, I documented and interpreted external pressures that hinder teacher agency, the complexity of the Mexican educative system and its impact on the Metropolitan University. Such ecological approach aid in interpreting participants' descriptions of their agency. However, elements involving top-down pressures, such as those by the University's founding bodies, impacted the participants' perspectives about their agency in classrooms at the Metropolitan University. It was interesting to observe how the academic indicators impacted the classroom assessment within the University studied. This study allowed me to have an in-depth investigation of the Metropolitan University, and it allowed me to present the different interpretations from the participants' perspectives through this methodology.

Using an interpretative approach enables an understanding of specific features of the CBLT implementation in a Mexican context. However, caution should be exercised in generalising these findings to the broader field of language education since the competency-based education model

had a well-organised plan at the Metropolitan University. Likewise, the structure for teacher training has, in turn, been according to the CBE foundations. Students are also trained for instructing and assessing under this model. Furthermore, the methodology developed to analyse the data through Critical Dispositive Analysis was designed for the type of data collected in this study. Another limitation of this study is that I, the researcher, studied Competency-Based Education for my Master's Degree. Also, I have participated in the design of programs and didactical sequences of Competency-Based programs. Therefore, I know the processes carried out from planning to implementation and evaluation, which inevitably influence analysing the results obtained. However, approaching this issue through critical discourse analysis and developing a methodology for this purpose changed my perspective on research, observing the phenomenon from a greater distance.

6.4 **Further Work**

Since Competency-Based Education has not been widely explored in applied linguistics research, new research ideas emerged while working on this study. Below I mention some possibilities for future work that could broaden the perspective offered in this investigation. Further work needs to address the competency model's digital ethnography teaching experiences that could allow a more in-depth understanding of educative interactions. We are faced with a changing context where more and more interactions occur online today. That is why a digital ethnography could enhance the results offered in this study. In turn, teachers' attitudes could be contrasted to those of the university where I would initially have carried out my study and CBLT has not been implemented. This comparative study could explore and contrast the attitudes that the participants of this study presented.

A study could be conducted with graduates of the BA in ELT to observe their CBLT-informed agency in their workplaces. This study would allow us to know to what extent the ideologies of CBLT reach the broader public through students trained to use this model. Additionally, a more specific study could contrast the evidence outcomes with the target competencies to tell if the evidence demonstrates its completion. In addition, students' agency could be studied regarding their autonomy in using competency-based education and using formative learning and the feedback that is carried out. This study could aid in understanding the formative learning process more in-depth on a time-constraint basis. Research on the specific role of teacher identity would be of value in understanding the respect and authority that the traditional teacher figure may have lost when becoming a facilitator. In addition, this study could help understand why the teacher's agency could be diminished. It would be interesting to assess the effects of CBLT on teacher fatigue. The results of this study suggested that several factors pressure the teacher.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

Specific research on the relationship of CBLT to teachers' fatigue and the strategies they use to reduce their burden could help explore more about this aspect.

Given the range of views around the issue of CBLT and teacher agency, the evidence from this research suggests that teacher agency is exercised in using competency-based education and their criteria for accommodating activities to their students. However, their agency is also limited by external factors that directly or indirectly pressure their teaching practice. Teachers have lost control of their classrooms. This control has been delegated to companies with a say in classroom content. Neoliberal trends are being replicated by the educative system and the main academic actors, and they successfully reach students. Higher education is far from a critical education where time is spent observing different positions and questioning the decisions.

Moreover, students seem immersed in social media and do not have a critical view of the phenomenon resulting in the reproduction of power in higher education in this context. My research suggests that educative policies should favour critical learning, knowing the various positions and not allowing manipulation of economic or ideological regimes of any kind. This freedom of teaching and learning would make a thoughtful contribution to the society where students live and would enrich their local communities through democratic instruction in higher education.

Appendix A   Consent Form and Information Sheet

UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton

CONSENT FORM

Study title: Analysing Teacher Agency during the Implementation of a Competency-Based Program in Higher Education in Mexico, a Case Study.

Researcher name: Gloria Carolina Pallanez Dávila
ERGO number:

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (13/06/2018/1) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time for any reason without my rights being affected.	
I understand my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research.	
I understand that the information collected about me may be used in future ethically approved research studies, remaining anonymous.	

Name of participant (print name) ....

Signature of participant ....

Date ....

Name of researcher (print name)   Gloria Carolina Pallanez Davila.....................................

Signature of researcher ....

Date ....

[05/02/2018] [2]   [Ethics/IRAS reference *(if applicable)*]

UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton

(Teacher) Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: Analysing Teacher Agency during the Implementation of a Competency-Based Program in Higher Education in Mexico, a Case Study.

Researcher: Gloria Carolina Pallanez Dávila
ERGO number:

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. It is up to you to decide whether to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

This study is part of my PhD research project. Furthermore, I intend to analyse the way in which the educational policy involving Competency-based education has permeated within the main educational actors, in this case, teachers. This, to know what it is happening at classrooms, specifically in the assessment area.

Why have I been asked to participate?
I am asking you to participate because you are involved in the process of the implementation of the educational policy, as a teacher or as an administrator.

What will happen to me if I take part?
If you agree to participate, you would need to:
1. allow access to qualitative data as students learning outcomes.
2. allow being interviewed to know your perspective about the Competency-Based Education and its implementation inside classrooms.
3. Allow being observed during the semester 2019-1.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?
The benefits are mainly for the program and future students, as the study aims at better understanding teachers' experiences and practices regarding this educational policy.

Are there any risks involved?
The only risks involved in the research are related to confidentiality and anonymity. To avoid this, all personal information will be changed, and the participants will be able to see any report which includes it to confirm that it has been changed to their entire satisfaction. If there is certain information that participants prefer not to share, they can state so, briefly explaining why, and its omission from the study will be considered.

Will my participation be confidential?
All data obtained from your participation will be used only for the purposes of this study and your personal information will be anonymised. Therefore, all names and other personal information that may reveal the participants' identity will be changed. No one will have access to this information except for me and, only if necessary, my supervisor, and it will be kept in my laptop, which has a password. All backup made will also be given a password for access.

What should I do if I want to take part?
If you agree to participate, please complete the attached consent form.

What happens if I change my mind?
If you change your mind, you can withdraw at any time and this will not have any repercussions in any way whatsoever for you. In this case, the data obtained from your participation up to that point will be completely withdrawn from the study should you require so.

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

What will happen to the results of the research?
The results will be used in the PhD thesis as well as any publication derived from the study. You will have access to the information that concerns your participation before the thesis or any contribution for publication submission to confirm that your identity has not been exposed in any way. You will also have access to the thesis once the University of Southampton releases it, and I will inform you about any publication that has been made, with the corresponding link if available. The data will be stored for a minimum of 10 years according to the University of Southampton policy. The anonymised data may be available for future research projects, but only when I am involved and only if the participant has agreed to it, in the understanding that anonymity will be always respected.

Where can I get more information?
You can contact me for any additional information you may require at gcpd1r7@soton.ac.uk.You can also contact my supervisor, Dr Darren Paffey, from the University of Southampton, at Darren.Paffey@soton.ac.uk.

What happens if something goes wrong?
If you have any complaint, you can contact the Head of the Faculty.

Thank you.
I truly appreciate that you have taken the time to read this information sheet and considered taking part in the research.

Appendix B   Classroom Observation Sheet

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date:_____   Professor:_____

Description of the classroom

Development of the class

Is CBE observed? How?

Use of Assessment

Other comments

Appendix C   Semi-Structured Interview Questions

	Participants	
Date	Teachers	Administrators
	Questions related to:	
February 2019	Background Information 1. What is your age range? For instance, 20-30,30-40.? 2. Could you describe your Educative Background? 3. Could you tell us about your educative job experience? 4. Have you worked with CBE before this job? Teachers' knowledge about the precepts of the CBE model: 1. Have you been trained about CBE? For how long? Was the training formal, informal, self-guided? 2. Describe what you perceive as CBE. 3. Describe what you perceive as the assessment under CBE. The general opinion about CBE 1. Do you think that CBE has positive aspects? Which ones? 2. Do you think that CBE has negative aspects? Which ones? 3. Do you perceive CBE as an imposition or as an opportunity? Why? Teacher Agency and CBE assessment 1. Describe what you do in the classroom with CBE. Do you follow it as it is? Do you adapt it? Alternatively, do you resist it? How? Why? 2. How do you assess your students? What instruments do you use? Do you think they are adequate to assess students' knowledge? Why?	Background Information 1. What is your age range? For instance, 20-30,30-40? 2. Could you describe your Educative Background? 3. Could you tell us about your educative work experience? 4. Have you worked with CBE before this job? Educative Policy 1. Why is the BA in ELT programme based on Competencies? 2. Did you have a different option to choose? What are the benefits of the programme? What are the drawbacks of implementing this programme? 3. Do you perceive CBE as an imposition or as an opportunity? Why? Administrators' knowledge about the precepts of the CBE model: 1. Have you been trained about CBE? For how long? What the training formal, informal, self-guided? 2. Describe what you perceive as CBE. 3. Describe what you perceive as the assessment under CBE. Teacher Agency and CBE assessment

		1. Has a formal follow up of CBE programme implementation been made?
		2. Do you think that teachers follow CBE programme as it is? Do think that they adopt it? Alternatively, do they resist it? How? Why?
		3. How do teachers assess their students? What instruments do they use? Do you think they are adequate to assess students' knowledge? Why?

Appendix D Classroom Observations

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: _August 29, 2018_   Professor: _Obdulia_

Description of the classroom

> Subject: Advanced Grammar
> 2 hours/period of classes

Development of the class

> The class started with an academic discussion about concerns of other subjects. The class followed by asking ss about their plans for the weekend and asking ss to write their sentences on the blackboard. The teacher presented the subject with a good attitude. All the class so far was based on the teacher eliciting examples & their grammar explanation. The teacher gave some handouts to ss. The teacher brought chips for the team with no mistakes as a price.

Is CBE observed? How?

> The sentences were about reality, linking the topics to real life (constructivism).
> A lot of discussion during the class about ss. choices & the teacher gave them general feedback.
> - Self assessment & discussion at the end.

Use of Assessment

> - Self assessment was performed in class at the end. The teacher made ss. reflect about their answers and they "mistakes".
> - The teachers were in pairs discussing the questions on the hand out for 10 minutes

Other comments

> - Almost all the class was directed and controlled by the teacher, the independent work was the self-assessment
> - It was clear that the teacher cared about ss problems, by dedicating time for asking them academic concerns.

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: _August 29, 2018_   Professor: _Obdulia_

Description of the classroom

Subject: Advanced Grammar
2 hours / period of classes

Development of the class

The class started with an academic discussion about concerns of
other subjects. The class followed by asking ss about their plans
for the weekend and asking ss to write their sentences on the blackboard.
The teacher presented the subject with a good attitude. All the class
so far was based on the teacher eliciting examples & their grammar
explanation. The teacher gave some hand outs to ss. The teacher
brought chips for the team with no mistakes as a price.

Is CBE observed? How?

The sentences were about reality, linking the topics to
real life (constructivism).
A lot of discussion during the class about ss choices &
the teacher gave them general feedback.
- Self assessment & discussion at the end.

Use of Assessment

· Self assessment was performed in class at the end.
The teacher made ss reflect about their answers
and they "mistakes".
- The teachers were in pairs discussing the questions on
the hand out for 10 minutes

Other comments

· Almost all the class was directed and controlled by the teacher.
the independent work was the self-assessment
· It was clear that the teacher cared about ss problems,
by dedicating time for asking them academic concerns.

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: April 5th   Professor:_____

Description of the classroom

Class: Reading Comprehension. Traditional seating.
(Didactic) ↑

Development of the class

The teacher talks about an ELT Fair they are having. She's organising a story demonstration in the fair.

Is CBE observed? How?

※ The story demonstration is a project which is a characteristic of CBE. However, only a few ss. were involved.

Use of Assessment

No assessment was mentioned. And this wasn't an activity for the whole class.

Other comments

All the class was directed to organising the story demonstration.

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: _April 4_

Professor: _____

Description of the classroom

Class: Reading comprehension. Traditional seating in rows (Didactic of)? Then the teacher asks Ss to arrange seats like a-U.

Development of the class

The teacher brought the story three little pigs. She models the story to Ss. in a context of second graders. She reads the story and when she finishes she gave the Ss some handouts. She elicits answers from students to complete the chart & draw the answers on the board. Then, she give Ss copies with a mask. Ss colored the masks. Then she goes on giving some recommendations for teaching reading. At the end she takes a picture of Ss working on the masks.

Is CBE observed? How?

Use of Assessment

Other comments

It was a teacher centered class, where the teacher modeled a reading comprehension class for second graders.

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: April 1st

Professor: _____

Description of the classroom

> Class: Diductic of Reading Comprehension
>
> Traditional seating in rows.

Development of the class

> The teacher begins the class with a warmup activity. She explains the pre-reading, during reading and after reading strategies. The teacher was explaining & ss were listening with a few participation from ss using the whiteboard. The teacher asks students to get in groups of three and then asked them to write two improvements of the minilessons from last classes. Most ss were reflecting in groups and writing down their ideas. Ss shared the ideas with the class.

Is CBE observed? How?

Use of Assessment

Other comments

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: ___October 9 2018___   Professor: ___Guadalupe___

Description of the classroom

Traditional seating / or about 20 ss. in the class
2 hours-class period

Development of the class

Ss. presentations in pairs, and the teacher was eliciting questions
for them to explain more about a certain topic. It was a
student centered class. The teacher made sure st students (the rest)
understood the topics presented by asking presenters to elicit examples
from ss & giving feedback

Is CBE observed? How?

Ss investigated about a topic. Then, they presented the topic
by giving definitions

Use of Assessment

The presentations were a learning outcome.
No feedback was delivered at the moment.
The teacher wasn't writing anything / the she didn't
have a rubric at the moment of observation.

Other comments

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: March 29

Professor:_____

Description of the classroom

Subject: English Grammar Fundations.
Traditional seating in rows.

Development of the class

The teacher starts the class by talking about environmental care. Then she continued by eliciting definitions from ss about action verbs and linking verbs as a warm up. She went on reviewing the tenses that they have seen so far. Then she went on writing on the board an exercise & she gave ss time for answering.

Is CBE observed? How?

Use of Assessment

Other comments

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: April 1st

Professor: _____

Description of the classroom

Class: Didactic of Reading Comprehension
Traditional seating in rows.

Development of the class

The teacher begins the class with a warmup activity. She explains the pre-reading, during reading and after reading strategies. The teacher was explaining 8 ss were listening with a few participation from Ss using the whiteboard. The teacher asks students to get in groups of three and then asked them to write two improvements of the minilessons from last classes. Most ss were reflecting ingroups and writing down their ideas. Ss shared the ideas with the class.

Is CBE observed? How?

Use of Assessment

Other comments

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: _October 9 2018_   Professor: _Guadalupe_

Description of the classroom

> Traditional seating / or aunt 20 ss. in the class
> 2 hours-class period

Development of the class

> Ss. presentations in pairs, and the teacher was eliciting questions for them to explain more about a certain topic. It was a student centered class. The teacher made sure at students (therest) understood the topics presented by asking presenters to elicit examples from ss 3 giving feedback

Is CBE observed? How?

> Ss. investigated about a topic. Then, they presented the topic by giving definitions

Use of Assessment

> The presentations were a learning outcome.
> No feedback was delivered at the moment.
> The teacher wasn't writing anything / He she didn't have a rubric at the moment of observation.

Other comments

>

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: March 29   Professor:_____

Description of the classroom

Subject: English Grammar Foundations.
Traditional seating in rows.

Development of the class

The teacher starts the class by talking about environmental care. Then she continued by eliciting definitions from ss about action verbs and linking verbs as a warm up. She went on reviewing the tenses that they have seen so far. Then she went on writing on the board an exercise & she gave ss time for answering.

Is CBE observed? How?

Use of Assessment

Other comments

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: March 28 _____   Professor: _____

Description of the classroom

> Subject: Bilingual Education / Traditional seating.

Development of the class

> Preactivity: The teacher handed a piece of paper and asked ss three questions about the topic they saw last class. Then she packed the pieces of paper with the answers. The teacher then started to elicit some terms about the class. she asked them why were they learning these terms. Some ss presented some terms to the class, after that, there was a discussion directed by the teacher.

Is CBE observed? How?

> Ss. were reflecting about the terms
> Ss presented the terms (new).
> Some ss were engaged with the discussion.

Use of Assessment

> The teacher talked about a 'project' that ss. have to complete to close with the topic. She said (the third element of knowledge). refering to the didactical sequence.

Other comments

>

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: April 2 _____   Professor:_____

Description of the classroom

> The class is developed in a computer lab. Each student has a computer. The teacher also has one. There are about 30 ss in the classroom, and it looks crowded.

Development of the class

> The class started by making arragements for the trip to a special needs center. Then, the teacher asked about last class' cases, and ss were recalling the specific case in teams. The teacher was asking questions about the different cases. It was a teacher directed class (20 minutes). Then, the teacher braught some real cases from the elementary school she works for describing real special needs students. The class finished with notes for the next day.

Is CBE observed? How?

> CBE is reflected here with the link that is planned with real world cases, and with the visit to the special needs center. It was a class directed by the teacher, but ss had more time for discussion than the teacher.

Use of Assessment

> The teacher was asking questions about the cases.

Other comments

> · A few ss were working on the computer on other things.
> · There was a gap of around 10 minutes when the teacher was working on her computer, and the class didn't have any activity.

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: March 28   Professor: _____

Description of the classroom

> Subject: Integration of ss with special needs
> Computer lab. Each student had a computer and the
> teacher had a projector.

Development of the class

> The teacher asked ss about their self evaluations on the platform. She went on organising
> a trip to Crit and then for 15 minutes the class hadn't started. Then, the teacher presented
> about Educational integration and asked the ss to take notes. After that she asked ss
> to form teams of 3 for a case analysis. Most ss were engaged with the activity and at the
> end ss had to answer some questions in a form. for about 20 minutes.
> Next class ss are going to present their case because "there wasn't enough time"

Is CBE observed? How?

Use of Assessment

> The teacher asked about self assessment. (An exercise that
> all ss have to complete in the platform) at the middle of the
> semester.

Other comments

> Too much time wasted on class. At first 15 minutes, at the end 20 minutes
> When ss finished their case, they started to chat or do something
> different.

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: March 26 2019   Professor:_____

Description of the classroom

> Subject: Integration of special needs students.

Development of the class

> The class starts by organising some volunteer work. After that, the teacher divides the class into two teams. The teacher wrote sentences on the board for the teams to discuss and students were coping on the notebook. Ss. had to decide if the sentence was a strategy or if it showed a dissability. Ss. were answering some questions about the content seen in class in their computers as a game.

Is CBE observed? How?

> The class was about explaining content. However, there was a reflexive exercise, although ss weren't really discussing, just answering. Probably because of the circumstances of a numerous group and the conditions of the class. The teacher has the leading role all the time.

Use of Assessment

> · The teacher asked ss to exchage their answers and she gave the "correct" answer for ss to check.
> · Knowledge was checked through an exercise of questions at the end.

Other comments

> - Since it is a computer lab (the classroom). The arragement of the seats does not allow teamwork properly.

Appendix D

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: March 26 2019   Professor: _____

Description of the classroom

> Subject: Integration of special needs students.

Development of the class

> The class starts by organising some volunteer work. After that, the teacher divides the class into two teams. The teacher wrote sentences on the board for the teams to discuss and students were coping on the notebook. Ss. had to decide if the sentence was a strategy or. If it showed a dissability. Ss were answering some questions about the content seen in class in their computers as a game.

Is CBE observed? How?

> The class was about explaining content. However, there was a reflexive exercise, although ss weren't really discussing, just answering. Probably because of the circumstances of a numerous group and the conditions of the class. The teacher has the leading role all the time.

Use of Assessment

> • The teacher asked ss to exchage their answers and she gave the "correct" answer for ss to check.
> • Knowledge was checked through an exercise of questions at the end.

Other comments

> - Since it is a computer lab (the classroom). The arragement of the seats does not allow teamwork properly.

Classroom Observation Sheet

Date: __April 2__   Professor:_____

Description of the classroom

Class: Bilingual Education

Development of the class

The teacher didn't show up.

Is CBE observed? How?

Use of Assessment

Other comments

Appendix E Spanish Version

Gabriela: "Para mí es una oportunidad, desde un inicio… bueno, será que nosotros en dónde estábamos, que es en área de inglés, ya habíamos aprendido a trabajar con el desarrollo de habilidades. Entonces cuando empiezan a capacitarnos para movernos en competencias y que empiezan a hablarnos de cómo desarrollar habilidades, pues nosotros ya teníamos como una formación, ya entendíamos… Qué tengo que hacer para desarrollar una habilidad o desarrollar otra. Entonces fue una oportunidad de aplicarlo no solamente en el área de la enseñanza del idioma inglés, sino aplicarlo en cualquier materia que tú pudieras impartir y no fue una transición brusca ni que dijeras: ¿Cómo le hago? ¿Qué es lo que hago?, entonces ¿Oportunidad? Sí. Puedes hacer muchas cosas dentro del aula que una enseñanza tradicional muchas veces no te lo permitía."1

Patricia: "Ah, sí es una oportunidad de crecimiento, siempre y cuando sea utilizada de manera idónea. Con las herramientas suficientes para que el chico pueda lograr eso, pueda autorregularse, pueda gestionar su saber ser, su individualidad durante todo el semestre. Entonces, si hay o no facilitador, la guía está, el chico está, los medios están, entonces pudieran llegar a eso. Que, si está o no el facilitador no sea más que para enriquecerlo, por eso yo creo que el modelo es una oportunidad siendo utilizado con todo lo que tiene."2

Patricia: "Fíjate que en este momento no creo que haya resistencia al modelo; yo creo que ahorita ya está en una etapa de observación de lo que tiene bueno y lo que no sirve porque estamos por empezar la actualización de los planes de estudio puesto que los temas van quedando obsoletos. Entonces, en ese sentido, todos los programas educativos que venimos del plan del 2014 vamos a sufrir esta modificación, entonces yo creo que eso nos va a brindar oportunidad para ver qué es lo que el modelo nos ha dejado bueno, qué no y qué hay que adecuar."3

Patricia: "Yo creo que no hay resistencia en este momento, seguramente lo hubo al inicio; no lo recuerdo. Cuando yo llegué en el 2011 no me resistí porque yo era nueva en la institución y yo me adecué a lo que la institución me brindaba, pero tal vez un maestro que tenga muchos más años, que haya vivido el cambio, pudo haber notado esta resistencia."4

Clara: "Yo en todo momento lo vi (EBC) como una oportunidad, como administradora fue una oportunidad de hacer cosas diferentes y de hacer crecer a mi institución, como imposición yo nunca lo vi."5

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Alejandra: "Yo creo que estoy más a favor que en contra, yo sí veo que tiene muchas ventajas, creo yo. Es más específico a la hora de evaluar y también para los alumnos, pienso yo; es más fácil así saber qué tengo que hacer, qué es lo que tengo que lograr. Pienso yo que eso es bueno."7

Flor: "Me encanta porque vemos al estudiante como un ser humano. Me gusta a mí pensar que yo estoy trabajando por seres humanos, por seres humanos que yo quisiera contribuir a que fueran más felices. Yo siento que si las personas somos felices vamos a vivir mejor, vamos a vivir más seguras, vamos a vivir y vamos a producir. Inclusive cuando tú empujas a tus alumnos a dar el extra, si lo haces y ellos saben que te interesan ellos, lo hacen mejor. Entonces un ganar-ganar. Yo

no me involucro mucho con mis estudiantes, creo yo que no necesitan una ni amiga, jamás, pero sí me gusta que ellos sientan que me interesan mucho, que su persona y su bienestar y su felicidad para mí es muy importante."8

Gabriela: "Aspectos positivos yo le veo muchos porque, al final de cuentas, necesitamos aprender cómo vamos a funcionar en el área laboral. Entonces si me están diciendo, desarrollo de habilidades, por ejemplo: Si yo me estoy formando como maestro y me van a formar en el desarrollo de estrategias de enseñanza y de aprendizaje, y yo se los voy a poder transmitir, aplicar en el aula… Ahora, no es nomás el desarrollo de habilidades en el sentido imperativo. Cada cosa que se enseña tiene sus fundamentos teóricos; como previa lectura, previa discusión y luego te vas a la fase práctica. Entonces, sí, yo pienso que te da muchas armas para enfrentar el área laboral."9

Flor: "Una opinión muy personal ha sido siempre que el buen profesor siempre ha trabajado por competencias. Cuando se logró separar esta visión de preparar al estudiante para incorporarse a un mundo de trabajo, y se le vio que tenía que tratarse como un ser integral y como tal formarlo, yo creo que el buen profesor siempre ha tratado a sus estudiantes por un modelo por competencias, porque no nada más ves una calificación en el muchacho, al menos esa siempre ha sido mi perspectiva. Para mí la evaluación se compone de muchas cosas y yo siempre lo he dicho; la calificación, el número es muy frío… para mí el muchacho tiene mucho que enseñar. Pero creo que el buen profesor siempre ha actuado por competencias, es ver a tu estudiante como un ser humano integral, y no nada más a una persona con una capacidad de lectura, reflexión y una calificación, se acabó. No, creo yo que es mucho más que eso.10

Mariana: "Yo creo que siempre hemos trabajado en un modo con competencias. Simplemente que ahora ya tienen un nombre, pero siento que siempre hemos trabajado por competencias. Siento que trabajar por competencias es más organizado porque el maestro puede ver qué es lo que quiere lograr, qué es lo que se quiere y se puede lograr. Entonces, si está bien organizado, si el maestro lo entiende bien, puede lograr todas las competencias que se establecen en el programa o en el currículo, no sé, y obviamente llegar a esos objetivos… otros aspectos positivos son cuando uno puede leer las competencias; hay un camino hacia donde seguir una dirección y no te pierdes tanto, porque muchas veces cuando hay un programa, y no está basado por competencias, el docente se puede perder y agarrar viada, o nada más ver los temas puntuales sin aterrizarlos y ligarlos. Y eso es muy importante porque ayudas al alumno a que vea toda la fotografía de lo que va a aprender, y por qué lo aprendió, él ve toda la fotografía."11

Patricia: "Que los estudiantes pueden tener dominio de los contenidos y llevarlo más allá. Es decir, si el maestro o facilitador en clase presenta un tema en específico, vamos a decir que el alfabeto internacional para los sonidos, el IPA, (international phonetic alphabet) pues tendrá el chico oportunidad de tomar estos conocimientos que ve en clase e investigar mucho más y autorregular; ver más información, consultar tal vez con el facilitador, buscar otras estrategias, otras dinámicas."12

Patricia: "tenemos las rúbricas que tal vez no se utilizan todas, pero sí las tenemos. Entonces el chico sabe lo que se espera de él desde el momento en que le pides un mapa conceptual; entonces, las lecturas que están en la bibliografía de la secuencia didáctica también es otro recurso. Entonces, yo ya sé qué se espera de mí y qué tengo que hacer para desarrollar tal contenido y este aprendizaje. Sí me parece que tienen las herramientas suficientes, tienen la plataforma, tienen estos espacios para buscar bibliografía de manera digital, tienen la biblioteca, que tal vez ellos quisieran tener más bibliografía, pero bueno, hay bibliografía, hay secuencias didácticas, hay rúbricas, está el facilitador… Sí considero que tienen suficientes herramientas para poder trabajar."13

Flor: "Me gustan las rúbricas, por supuesto que hago exámenes, esa es otra confusión: -es que en las competencias no se hacen exámenes-… Claro que se hacen exámenes, por supuesto que sí,

pero las preguntas se deben de elaborar de una forma distinta. A mí me gusta mucho ponerlos en situaciones hipotéticas, exponerlos a sus a su práctica futura y preguntarles. Siempre hay una integración del portafolio al final, electrónico. Las asistencias son muy importantes para mí, para mí un estudiante se forma, se termina de formar, se redondea con la interacción de todos en la clase, aprendes formas de trabajar diferentes, aprendes a solucionar problemas, y problemas no en el sentido negativo de la palabra, sino las situaciones que van surgiendo."14

Gabriela: "Algo que tiene de innovador, para mí, en cuestión del área de las competencias es que no solamente estás evaluando el conocimiento. Evalúas al alumno de una manera completa, de una manera holística, donde tomas en consideración todos aquellos aspectos que te ayudan a desarrollarte como ser humano porque puedes tener alumnos muy inteligentes, por así decirlo, o muy habilidosos en el sentido del conocimiento, pero que no saben ser; no los ves tú como profesionistas. Dices tú, Sí, pues sabe mucho, pero todavía no sabe cómo desarrollarse. Las competencias en ese sentido vienen y te dan la oportunidad a ti de decir "Bueno, evalúa al alumno en todos los aspectos, no nada más en adquirir el conocimiento" Y el alumno al principio se le hace difícil que si te está demostrando que conoce y que sabe. Pero después se va acostumbrando para que tú digas "tienes todas las competencias" tienes que saber ser, tienes que saber saber y tienes que saber hacer, me tienes que demostrar todo, no nada más en una hojita plasmar tu conocimiento, que a lo mejor lo tienes muy bien grabado, tienes muy buena memoria, pero no lo sabes aplicar, no sabes compartirlo. Entonces ahí es cuando el alumno va aprendiendo a hacer eso, y eso es como tú evalúas al alumno, o sea, me tienes que demostrar de una forma completa que sabes, que tienes el conocimiento, que lo sabes aplicar, que lo sabes compartir."15

Gabriela: "Dentro del modelo centrado en el alumno, tú vas construyendo, en base a esas tareas y otras cosas que calificas. El alumno va construyendo su calificación, pero dices, "Ah mira, hiciste 10 tareas y no me entregaste una, entonces tu promedio es tanto", no, no es así en competencias."16

Mariana: "Las rúbricas son buenas… Yo siento que sí son buenas, sí son factibles. En la cuestión del tiempo siento yo que economizan tiempo si se hacen bien… a veces dices: tienen que hacer un proyecto ¿Cómo voy a evaluar ese proyecto? Ah pues voy a hacer una rúbrica. Pero a veces hacemos unas rubricas tan complicadas o minuciosas, cuando en realidad yo siento que la finalidad de la rúbrica es organizar el trabajo del docente."17

Patricia: "El modelo tiene como beneficio las diferentes maneras de evaluarnos; que está la sumativa, la coevaluación, el participar siempre con sus compañeros, el tener una constante retroalimentación. El poder autorregularse y buscar más información y consultarlo con el facilitador, también serían las diferentes maneras de evaluarse, que no solo es lineal del maestro al estudiante, sino que el estudiante también puede retroalimentar al maestro, puede consultar, puede acercarse a sus compañeros. Tiene más libertad en ese sentido, no es tan rígido el proceso de enseñanza de aprendizaje."18

Estudiantes: "Ahorita sí son demasiado abiertos en la manera en la que trabajamos, porque nos exigen, pero que seamos nosotros los que trabajen. No nos piden que seamos perfectos, simplemente que demostremos lo que sabemos."19

Estudiantes: "a nivel profesional no debemos depender del maestro, tenemos todo escrito, tenemos que poner todo de nuestra parte porque el maestro no está aquí para guiar… el maestro está aquí para apoyarnos, realmente… no para traernos como mamá y papá… entonces, es ver al maestro más como un facilitador… El profesor nunca te va a decir "Eso es lo que quiero y hasta ahí, no hagas nada más-no, al contrario, ellos dicen: no hagas menos de aquí, puedes hacerlo hasta aquí, pero me gustaría que lo hicieran hasta allá".20

Gabriela: "Para mí, el modelo por competencias todavía es vigente, es bueno. Nos vino a mover el tapete, nos vino a cambiar así. Ustedes, maestros, antes eran el centro de atención, ahora no, es el alumno… lo más importante es como aprende el alumno. Entonces el enfoque es: ¿De qué manera voy a lograr yo que el alumno aprenda? No es más mi enfoque en qué voy a enseñarles, sino cómo voy a lograr que el alumno sea el que aprenda, sea competente y tenga las habilidades al final, no solamente el conocimiento".21

Gabriela: "el alumno se hace más consciente de lo que es el aprendizaje, se enfoca en lo que es el aprendizaje y aprende a evaluarse en cuanto a aquello que le ayuda más a aprender. Entonces ya no es simple y sencillamente nosotros como maestros que le estamos transmitiendo el conocimiento, sino ellos como alumnos que están aprendiendo las distintas formas en que el aprendizaje es mejor, entonces ellos identifican cuál es su forma de aprender y saben identificarse ya. Al menos nosotros, que tenemos a los alumnos de la licenciatura que trabajan con didáctica, que trabajan con metodología, entonces aprenden mucho a relacionar - Ah, ya entiendo por qué estoy aprendiendo así, que es la manera más fácil para aprender para mí. Y eso es uno de los mayores beneficios que se me hace a mí que tiene, que el alumno identifica la manera en que aprende… Para los maestros es… ya no te centres tanto en lo que tú enseñas sino enfócate más en cómo están aprendiendo tus alumnos para dirigirte hacia eso, o sea, más en el aprendizaje que en la enseñanza."22

Flor: "Sí, y es que las universidades públicas tienen indicadores que cumplir y esos indicadores es el dinero que recibes. Sí, definitivamente las autoridades tienen que cuidar la calidad del aprendizaje, pero también tienen que saber que esos indicadores son el medio por el cual van a tener el dinero para la operación de la universidad ¿No? Entonces si son muy importantes de cumplir, sí son, ni modo".23

Flor (Gabriela): "Sí, por un lado, sí. Bueno ¿Cómo le hago para elevar mi índice de titulación o mi índice de egreso? Pues ofréceles cursos de verano a los reprobados, ni modo pues. Es un trabajo que tendría que hacerse desde otra óptica, a lo mejor desde más abajo, una cultura diferente de más esfuerzo, que a lo mejor nosotros aquí en cuatro años ya no logramos hacerla."24

Gabriela: "No puedo salir de esos temas ¿Por qué? Porque, a parte, el alumno tiene una evaluación estandarizada. Cada vez que se termina un elemento de competencia, las cinco unidades; Magdalena, San Luis Río Colorado, Navojoa, Benito Juarez y Hermosillo, diseñaron un banco de preguntas al azar. Entonces si yo no vi este tema y le llega la evaluación estandarizada que le hacen en el portal al alumno, pues no va a saber qué responder. Entonces ¿Qué puedo hacer? respetando los temas… por ejemplo "uy este tema, qué aburrido está este tema, pero ni modo ya lo pusieron". Lo tengo que dar, para que no le llegue de sorpresa al alumno y yo puedo enriquecer con algo más. El problema es que estamos muy medidos de tiempo, es difícil, ese es un problema difícil. Cuando no teníamos esa evaluación estandarizada pues la secuencia didáctica era una guía y tú podías darle más énfasis a una cosa o a otra, porque al final de cuentas tú te encargabas de la evaluación de tus alumnitos, pero ahora es todos. Entonces, tengo que ver eso a fuerzas."25

Gudalupe: "El examen estandarizado a mí, como maestro, me limita mucho. Ya no tengo tanta libertad de cátedra. Aunque la tuviera, no tengo el tiempo. 26

Flor (Gabriela): "Sí, sí repercute ¿Por qué? Supongamos que se acabó el primer elemento de competencias y saliste con competente avanzado, pero llegó el examen estandarizado y no lo pasas. Bueno, no importa, la segunda etapa que se vuelve a abrir vas a hacer el del uno y el de dos. Y si todavía no pasas uno, no importa, a la tercera etapa vas a hacer el uno, dos y tres o uno y tres, si te quedó pendiente. Si apruebas, te permite el maestro capturar sistema y si no los hiciste no puedes, o si no aprobaste uno, el maestro no puede capturar tu calificación. Es un candado que tiene la universidad."27

Flor: "Aquí no sé cómo lo esté manejando la institución, porque muchos jóvenes no lo quieren presentar (CENEVAL)… Es muy importante, para mí la presentación del CENEVAL es muy muy importante, porque además es un plus en el currículum del estudiante. Ceneval tiene un archivo de nombres y cada vez más empleadores están volteando a preguntarle CENEVAL "oye este joven me interesa que trabaje ¿Cómo le fue en la presentación del CENEVAL?" y si tú tienes un buen récord en CENEVAL pues es un puntote, quiere decir que tú estás capacitado y lo que tu institución y lo aprendiste de tu institución te hace una persona que puede trabajar en cualquier lugar ¿No? Porque no es lo que aprendiste en la licenciatura en la UES, no, es lo que un licenciado en enfermería del mundo mundial tiene que saber ¿No? Ese es el gran valor de CENEVAL, creo yo que es muy importante, además de que genera fondos para las universidades."28

Clara: "Son incongruencias. Entonces, si tú no hiciste las autoevaluaciones, yo docente, facilitador, no te puedo poner tu evaluación, tu calificación final no te la puedo poner. Entonces al chavo se le afecta. Luego, como maestro hay que hacer una solicitud extra para que las vuelvan abrir. Entonces ¿Pues a que estamos jugando? Si lo que quieres es dar la parte formativa de responsabilidad, de que tienes un periodo para hacer la autoevaluación, y al final se las vas a abrir ¿Pues cuál parte formativa? Lo está formando como un mexicano: "Voy a tener oportunidades al mil, total no pasa nada". Luego otra cosa; y dices, bueno, el modelo eliminó los parciales… hay ocasiones en que tú todavía no terminas un elemento de competencia cuando ya la autovaloración les está pidiendo evaluarse… Entonces, realmente no funciona, no funciona."29

Clara: "Y luego los estímulos que le hagan los docentes también es otro punto en contra, porque tú puedes acceder a estímulo al desempeño económico siempre y cuando tengas cierto promedio de evaluación, pero aparte promedio de los estudiantes. O sea, tu grupo o tus grupos, el promedio de los grupos tiene que ser igual o mayor a 8.5. Entonces, si los repruebas no vas a tener estímulo. La lógica es que o sea, sí, no los repruebes, ayúdalos a que aprendan, pero para el docente la lógica es: "¿Eres básico? Si eres básico, pues ya la pasaste, te pongo nueve. Así me subo mi promedio y ya puedo entrar a estímulos".30

Flor: "Vienen ellos (los estudiantes) entrenados a recibir. De hecho, se sientan y están esperando que tú los llenes y en el momento en el que los volteas y los pones hacer a trabajar a ellos te la juegas, porque una de dos; o no entienden que estás haciendo o no quieren hacerlo porque es trabajo, y entonces tu evaluación como profesor se va al suelo. Es un arma peligrosa, sobre todo para los profesores que dependen de la evaluación del estudiante. Yo les hago mucha conciencia a ellos en este sentido… el profesor de tiempo completo ya no es sujeto a daño por una evaluación, pero los profesores de horas sueltas, esos sí, y es muy injusto que un joven que no quiso trabajar califiqué mal al profesor y no lo vuelvan a contratar. Y desafortunadamente se da mucho que el estudiante quiere hacer lo más posible o te calificó mal tú sabes, y los hacen rehenes, y eso da mucho coraje".31

Clara: "El gran problema es que… y que lo vimos desde que lo estamos diseñando y lo veo ahora que lo estoy implementando… es que tenemos un modelo que sobrepasa al modelo mexicano. Es decir, estamos trabajando con un modelo que pensamos que puede ser vanguardista, pero nos estamos encadenando, circunscribiendo a un modelo mexicano pedagógico y de evaluación que no nos permite la flexibilidad."32

Clara: "Por ejemplo, los aspectos de movilidad son un problema para nosotros. Nosotros proveemos movilidad a nuestros estudiantes, pero, para empezar, no podemos utilizar el esquema cualitativo de evaluación, esto de sobresaliente, avanzado… etc. Lo tenemos que trasladar a números ¿Por qué lo tenemos que trasladar a números? Pues porque las becas son por promedio. La Secretaría de educación se basa todavía en los números. Entonces cuando los chicos se van de movilidad, no es como en Europa, por ejemplo, te puedes ir a cualquier lugar, tomar algo, aunque no sea de tu carrera, y luego vienes y lo adaptas a tu carrera y se te resuelven tus créditos. Aquí no, aquí tienes que tomar una materia que sea similar a lo que está en tu plan de estudios, tiene que

haber un comité que evalúe que este plan de estudios es similar a aquel y entonces solo entonces yo te lo podría revalidar. Y eso te amarra mucho, entonces nuestros chicos de movilidad se retrasan invariablemente, se retrasan. ¿Qué ventajas les puedes ofrecer? Pues tú les vendes y les dices la cultura, una experiencia nueva, pero se retrasan ¿Cuál es el precio? Un semestre o un año más."33

Clara: "la flexibilidad es muy complicada. Luego son los tiempos, por ejemplo, el estudiante puede llevar su propio ritmo de aprendizaje, porque depende del estudiante, de la capacidad que tenga, de la forma de aprender, eso es lo que dice la teoría. Pero a la hora de circunscribirlo a un espacio de tiempo, el estudiante no tiene tal libertad. el estudiante que trabaja por ejemplo… sí hubo elementos de flexibilidad que se mejoraron, definitivamente, el estudiante ahorita puede llevar entre 4 y 8 materias, dependiendo si es trabajador no, puede llevar cargar de medio tiempo, sin embargo, está dentro de un marco, la flexibilidad siempre está dentro de un marco."34

Clara: "Otro problema es que se ha malentendido la flexibilidad. La flexibilidad no es dejar que el estudiante haga lo que le dé la gana, pero aquí hay muchos docentes lo tomaron así: "No, pues somos flexibles, que haga lo que le dé la gana", "ahora ya no soy conductista, soy constructivista, tú estudiante expón, todo el semestre, expón y yo no voy a cerrar el conocimiento, yo no te voy a mostrar las competencias y mi evaluación es tu exposición". Entonces el estudiante se queja porque dicen: "nomás estamos exponiendo nosotros, el profe no hace nada y ni siquiera sabemos si lo que exponemos está bien o está mal" porque ese cierre de parte del docente, que al final de cuentas facilitador del aprendizaje, o sea, es el experto. En este ir y venir en lo pedagógico entre yo aprendo de ti y tú aprendes de mí, es un proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje dual, no lo logramos concretar."35

Clara: "yo creo en el sistema por competencias lo que no creo es en el sistema en México… pero cómo se maneja con los referentes que teníamos que eran europeos, eso sí suena muy padre, pero en México no siento que funcione."36

Clara: "lo que yo creo es que los maestros hacen su mejor esfuerzo, pero es imposible seguirlo como es, es imposible. Insisto pues, o sea, creamos un modelo vanguardista en un esquema… en un marco tradicional."37

Clara: "nosotros mismos fuimos formados en ese ámbito de la educación mexicana que tampoco ha cambiado del todo. Ahora nuestros estudiantes de preparatoria nos llegan con modelos constructivistas y les decimos… yo por ejemplo doy en el curso de inducción al modelo educativo en fase, y les digo ¿Ya han trabajado con competencias? Sí ¿Ya saben hacer portafolios? Okay ¿Qué más saben hacer? Nada más. Entonces ¿Qué son las competencias? Son objetivos, dicen que trabajan por competencias, hicieron algunas innovaciones, pero siguen trabajando por objetivos. Entonces yo siento que mientras el sistema mexicano realmente no cambie el chip; no lo vamos a poder cambiar nosotros.38

Clara: "En este ir y venir en lo pedagógico entre yo aprendo de ti y tú aprendes de mí, es un proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje dual, no lo logramos concretar ¿Por qué?"39

Flor: "Venimos del sistema educativo donde las habilidades cognitivas, sobre todo, las que hablan de un orden superior no son muy ejercitadas. Es muy difícil, es muy demandante. El estudiante aprende de las actividades, una actividad bien pensada para que le saques jugo y hagas pensar a un estudiante te toma mucho más tiempo que hacer algo más mecánico, más automático, más de lo de siempre, entonces es difícil. Vienen ellos entrenados a recibir, de hecho, se sientan y están esperando que tú los llenes y en el momento en el que los volteas y los pones hacer a trabajar a ellos te la juegas, porque una de dos; o no entienden que estás haciendo o no quieren hacerlo porque es trabajo, y entonces tu evaluación como profesor se va al suelo"40

Clara: "por ejemplo, el eje centrado en el estudiante. La administración se basa en el eje centrado en administración; lo que sea fácil, rápido, con el menor recurso posible, aunque le dificulte al

estudiante. Y tú ves al chavo queriendo sacar una constancia de lo que sea, por ejemplo, haciendo filas acá y que te resuelva en no sé cuánto tiempo y luego regresas y luego tienes que ir a una firma para allá y otra firma para acá, ese no es un eje central del estudiante, ese es un eje central administrativo… La docente, que es el vínculo entre estudiante y la administración es quizás quien más tiene conciencia, pero la administrativa no está centrada en el estudiante."41

Clara: "No ha habido dirección administrativa para eso, o sea, hasta ahí se quedó el modelo y ya no hay más visión… Se trata de subsanar nada más. Por ejemplo, ¿faltan secuencias? Sacar secuencias. Se necesitaría, yo creo, otra vez un equipo base fuerte de evaluación del modelo. Una evaluación del modelo, decir "ah bueno acá estamos, ahí está la radiografía, esto nos faltó, esto se puede hacer, vamos al siguiente paso", pero estamos como que conforme vamos corriendo vamos sacando los pendientes. Y con el crecimiento de la institución tan desorbitante y que no hay recurso económico, pues a los maestros se les carga cada vez más, entonces es más complicado operar el modelo. Hay más grupos, más alumnos, menos profesores de tiempo completo, más profesores por asignatura, muchísimos más, que igual entran, se les da una capacitación del modelo, pero no es suficiente pues. Son profesores que sólo vienen a dar la clase, se les paga esa hora y se van y toda la parte de la preparación, la evaluación y todo eso les da bien poquito tiempo para hacerlo."42

Alejandra: "En cuanto a lo negativo, quizás para… yo como maestra, a veces siento que me tardo más en revisar, o sea, yo como maestra le invierto más tiempo para que eso salga. Sólo tengo esta hora libre, por ejemplo, esta hora no me la pagan, pero la uso para revisar para ponerme al corriente y así."43

Clara: "yo a mi nivel no uso rúbricas, ni pido portafolios. Porque es muy complicado eso, o sea, te dicen "El estudiante aprende a su ritmo, pero evalúalo con una rúbrica, y la rúbrica lleva los puntitos" ¿No? Ahora, tengo 37 estudiantes, por cinco grupos, cada uno con su propio rollo. ¿A qué hora voy a agarrar una rúbrica y voy a ver cómo le haces? Honestamente no uso rúbricas, y yo promoví 70 rúbricas… soy muy flexible, las traigo en la cabeza y se cómo se está desempeñando el estudiante. Pero además yo creo mucho en la evaluación en fase… Probablemente el primer elemento de competencia los estudiantes no me lo supieron hacer, porque se les hacen bolas las manos, porque lo que tú quieras, pero entonces, todo el semestre hacemos lo mismo hasta que aprendan… Si el primer elemento de competencia fueron básicos, yo estoy segura que para el tercero o cuarto eso ya va a estar súper superado. Entonces yo no tengo porque promediarles un básico cuando son sobresalientes en esa competencia durante el último periodo, el último elemento de competencia. Yo sí creo en ese esquema, yo sí creo que a la mejor al facilitador del aprendizaje o docente el estudiante no le cachó, pero un día en la cafetería al facilitador del aprendizaje estudiante, o sea, su compañero, sí le cachó, le cayó el veinte, entonces ¿por qué lo voy a castigar? Entonces esa parte de la evaluación yo si la considero… yo si creo que es buena y es uno de los beneficios que tenemos, pero los maestros siguen promediando, y usan las rúbricas como una forma de evidenciarle al porque sacó bajas calificaciones. Entonces yo digo "O sea, mejor no las uses, si no te da el tiempo para usarlas bien, ¿para qué le haces?44

Estudiantes cuarto semestre: "Porque el maestro, muchas veces, realmente no está siguiendo la rúbrica, sino está poniendo una calificación distinta a la de mi compañero, pero somos del mismo equipo, ¿de dónde saca entonces que yo tengo, a lo mejor, un intermedio pero él tiene un outstanding? Entonces como que a nosotros nos dejan las rúbricas nomás para que… "de aquí voy a partir", pero la verdad, a veces siento que ellos hacen su propia rúbrica mental, no es como sigan una rúbrica como tal. Porque a mí me ha tocado hacer trabajos en los que leí la rúbrica y según yo cumplí con lo que era, pero al final me faltó una cosa que no viene mencionada en la rúbrica, entonces depende mucho del maestro."45

Estudiantes de cuarto semestre: "No siempre le damos tanta importancia a la rúbrica, porque uno conoce al maestro y le agarra el modo de trabajo. Entonces, "Ah, con este maestro tenemos tal tarea, yo ya sé qué tipo de tarea le gusta a este maestro o a esta maestra", ya sabemos el método

de trabajo de cada maestro… a lo mejor y es subjetivo; porque no creo que una rúbrica defina del todo lo que un maestro está esperando de nuestro trabajo… En el momento cuando el maestro pide algo, yo siento que él ya visualiza su trabajo ideal. Entonces, yo siento que de ahí se va basando de que… ok, hiciste toda la información y lo que tú quieras, pero de alguna manera no hiciste lo que yo estoy pensando o lo que yo visualicé."46

Clara: "El portafolio es muy bueno, también es muy bueno. Es todo el compendio de trabajos que tú estuviste revisando que te dan luz de la competencia que estás generando al final del semestre. Pero los docentes meten ahí todos los trabajitos, no los importantes que te dan luz a esa competencia. Entonces, yo no hago portafolio, yo hago un proyecto integrador. Y al final les digo: miren, todo lo que se va a desarrollar durante el semestre se va a ir construyendo y al final esta es la competencia del curso."47

[1] Clara: "La evaluación formativa se le debe decir al estudiante porque es una oportunidad de que el estudiante verifique en que parte de las competencias está abajo y pueda salir adelante, pero como no estamos obligados a pasarlas pues no las pasamos, y el semestre es rápido pues, son cuatro meses, entonces tampoco te da tiempo de decir: Estudiante número 35, ven nos vamos a sentar media hora. Son las complicaciones."48

Estudiantes de sexto semestre: "En mi caso, los maestros, me ha tocado que evalúen de maneras diferentes, no todos se guían por lo mismo… los maestros no tienen creo que tiempo, porque hay dos maestros que están haciendo el doctorado ahorita, y administración había quedado que solo iban a dar una clase, pero les metieron muchísimas clases. Entonces yo pienso que por eso yo les doy chance pues de que no estén al 100 a veces, o sí, hacen lo que pueden, pero en la manera de revisar a veces son muy secos o no le echan muchas ganas, constantemente me acerco con algunos maestros para comentarle algún problema, los maestros conocen mi situación y yo me acerco y ellos me dan feedback porque yo tengo iniciativa."49

[1] Gabriela: "El problema es, para nosotros los maestros, que tenemos mucho trabajo, los de tiempo completo. Mucho trabajo administrativo y se nos hace difícil"50

Gabriela: "Sí hay tiempo para los problemas de los estudiantes porque como los ves… mucho haces en clase. O sea, no es como si fueran dos mundos separados, pues. Luego, no todos los alumnos tienen un problema. Los que salen con problemas son focos que tú tienes que atender, entonces, hablas con su tutor. No es que todo lo tenga que hacer uno, pues. Entonces, para un pequeño mensaje en sí, sí."51

Mariana: "Aspectos negativos; obviamente se necesita tiempo para diseñar un programa por competencias para aplicarlo en el aula. Porque a veces, por ejemplo, el tiempo te consume. A mí es una de las cosas que yo batallo, tengo 50 minutos para ver este tema y supongamos que los veo dos veces por semana. Pero son muchas competencias que se le exige al alumno por alcanzar; entonces siento yo que siempre estoy corta de tiempo, aunque en la planeación todo encaje, en la práctica siento que estoy siempre corta de tiempo. Y a veces siento que voy muy rápido y no debería de ser así porque todos los temas son importantes ¿No? Pero hay temas que siempre toman más tiempo que otras, entonces el tiempo no siempre es mi mejor aliado."52

Estudiantes de sexto semestre: "Los maestros se deben de esforzar en no nomás querer llenar todo y así atascarnos de información porque ya no funcionamos así. O sea, desgraciadamente hay alumnos con los que todavía puedes hacer eso, pero la mayoría de los alumnos, yo he visto, que no nomás puedes llegar y atascarlos de información, sino tienes que llenarlos de ejemplos, actividades, de manera más didáctica y entretenerlos en cierto aspecto. Tampoco ser un payaso, pero sí, darles esa chispa."53

Patricia: "Sí se le demanda bastante al maestro porque se le pide que utilice las rúbricas, se le pide que haga un portafolio, que les dé retroalimentación cada elemento de competencia. Hasta cierto punto pudiéramos pensar que es paternalista ¿No? El modelo, porque ahí vas de la mano… pero sí, sí se le demanda al maestro y más si tienes cinco grupos o cuatro grupos, pues sí se les complica."54

Clara: "el modelo por competencias funciona parcialmente, es todo lo que puedo decir, parcialmente. Tiene muchas cosas buenas, tienes aspectos de flexibilidad muy buenos pero es nuestro mayor problema, tiene aspectos de evaluación muy buenos, pero se tienen que ajustar, se queda mucho en el tintero, por ejemplo, estos proyectos integrados por módulo que no estamos haciendo, que sería muy padre pero no lo hemos logrado concretar; el hecho de que el estudiante los últimos semestres se vaya espacio laboral, más allá de las prácticas profesionales, una incursión en el espacio laboral real tampoco lo estamos haciendo, entonces hay cosas que se quedaron en el tintero."55

Clara: "yo a mi nivel no uso rúbricas, ni pido portafolios. Porque es muy complicado eso, o sea, te dicen "El estudiante aprende a su ritmo, pero evalúalo con una rúbrica, y la rúbrica lleva los puntitos" ¿No? Ahora, tengo 37 estudiantes, por cinco grupos, cada uno con su propio rollo. ¿A qué hora voy a agarrar una rúbrica y voy a ver cómo le haces? las traigo en la cabeza. 37 estudiantes, cinco grupos, corres de un salón a otro, laboratorios y prácticas de campo, más lo demás, difusión, investigación, vinculación, tutoría."56

Alejandra: "Sólo tengo esta hora libre, por ejemplo, esta hora no me la pagan, pero la uso para revisar para ponerme al corriente y así."57

Clara: "Yo siento también que al profesor como se nos ha pedido tanto; utiliza las rúbricas, el portafolio, la secuencia didáctica… la secuencia didáctica nosotros las hacemos, pero las llenamos de actividades, entonces a la hora de estar… nos ahorca."58

Gabriela: "¿El modelo te absorbe? Sí ¿Te lleva tiempo? Te lleva tiempo, pero aprendes a conocerlos también, te digo, no nada más como un estudiante sino como un ser humano que tienes adentro del aula."59

Mariana: "Porque a veces, por ejemplo, el tiempo te consume. A mí es una de las cosas que yo batallo, tengo 50 minutos para ver este tema y supongamos que los veo dos veces por semana. Pero son muchas competencias que se le exige al alumno por alcanzar; entonces siento yo que siempre estoy corta de tiempo, aunque en la planeación todo encaje, en la práctica siento que estoy siempre corta de tiempo. Y a veces siento que voy muy rápido y no debería de ser así porque todos los temas son importantes ¿No? Pero hay temas que siempre toman más tiempo que otras, entonces el tiempo no siempre es mi mejor aliado.60

Estudiantes de sexto semestre: "los maestros no tienen creo que tiempo, porque hay dos maestros que están haciendo el doctorado ahorita, y administración había quedado que solo iban a dar una clase, pero les metieron muchísimas clases. Entonces yo pienso que por eso yo les doy chance pues de que no estén al 100 a veces"61

Gabriela: "Sí, para retroalimentar al alumno, sí, siempre uno debe de darse el tiempo. Ahora con el sistema blender las clases presenciales se acortaron las horas, pero también se puede dar retroalimentación virtual, o sea, a través de la plataforma. El problema es; para nosotros los maestros, que tenemos mucho trabajo, los de tiempo completo. Mucho trabajo administrativo y se nos hace difícil."62

Clara: "son demasiado críticos (los alumnos). Así, o sea, hasta si tú quieres medio altaneros en la crítica. Porque antes era el esquema de "Hey, soy el doctor, tú estás acá yo estoy acá, entonces quien te da el conocimiento soy yo" y ahora no, o sea, somos facilitadores, entonces vamos viendo cómo interactuamos porque yo aprendo de ti alumno, entonces a veces el alumno al final de cuentas es joven. Sí rompe el esquema pues, de repente hay que decir "a ver, calma, hay

niveles. Llevo estudiando tantos años…" como le digo yo a mis estudiantes, por ejemplo, cuando de repente se les bota la catota ¿No? "es que Clara…" "Eh, eh, me vas a decir Clara cuando seamos colegas, ahorita no somos colegas. Ahorita soy tu maestra, tu profesora, como me quieras decir, pero no soy Clara."63

Mariana: "No, como docentes no tenemos tiempo para enfocarnos en una clase, pero, por ejemplo, a mí me serviría mucho que fueran personas que mínimo leyeran y con eso se les despierta una parte de su conciencia… y es lo que les digo: "Si ustedes no leen pues nunca van a poder transmitir algo nuevo a sus alumnos. Entonces, tienen que empezar a leer, y tienen que saber el porqué de las cosas, no nada más así." Entonces, yo siento, no es el modelo de competencias, es la generación con la que nos toca lidiar, entonces he ahí el problema. Esta generación también va de la mano con el perfil del docente, y es algo que es algo que yo siempre he dicho, el docente antes estaba en un pedestal y ahora está ya no está en el pedestal. la sociedad lo sabe y los alumnos lo saben, por eso los alumnos a veces no respetan, por eso a veces los alumnos hacen cosas que a lo mejor a nosotros nos saca como de onda, porque es una generación diferente."64

Flor: "Desafortunadamente tu labor tiene una pared que es la voluntad del estudiante ¿No? Entonces nosotros hacemos… la mesa está puesta para que ellos desarrollen sus capacidades cognitivas, actitudinales y demás ¿No? Pero el estudiante que te dice "No" pues hasta ahí llegaste, hasta ahí terminó tu labor, es esperar. Muchas veces vemos cómo cambian y es maravilloso ver la sorpresa, que tú dices "Este niño se arrastró hasta tercer semestre" y lo ves en séptimo y no puedes creer lo que se ha hecho."65

Gabriela: "es oportunidad si el alumno hace su parte. Porque estamos hablando de un alumno ideal que lee esto, lee acá, lee allá, participó en una mesa de discusión. Pero si solo repite lo que dijo el de enseguida y no leyó lo suficiente ¿Realmente qué se le quedó? Como no es el miedo de que va a haber un examen y que tengo que aprenderme de memoria, está pues es muy fácil a veces llevártela muy "light", porque el modelo está para que el alumno haga su parte, centrado el alumno… Puede no haber exámenes, en mi maestría no había exámenes y yo siento que aprendí mucho, pero yo hacía mi parte como alumna, entonces yo veo que es de oportunidades. El que quiere estudiar y aprender saca mucha ventaja de este modelo porque realmente desarrolla habilidades."66

Patricia: "en realidad sí me parece un modelo muy… que propicia el ambiente de enseñanza y aprendizaje ¿No? Que sí lo fomenta, que sí hay un facilitador, que orienta, que guía. Y lo ideal sería que los muchachos fueran más inquisitivos, más curiosos, más… en busca de más información, que es lo que se pretendería, que fuera de ambas partes porque exigirían más al maestro, por ende, les daría mucho más a los chicos si fueran más receptivos de todo eso extra. Crecerían mucho más, ambas partes."67

Patricia: "no creo que sea por la formación del modelo educativo, creo que tiene que ver con la formación que ellos ya traen y que solo se enfocan a que les interese lo suyo. Como si su entorno no existiera, solo hay memes, solo hay imágenes, solo hay padres y que me digan… entonces, eso creo que les falta."68

Estudiantes de sexto semestre: "En mi caso, nosotros… mi generación de secundaria y de la prepa, todas, porque estuve en la misma, fuimos los "prueba y el error". Entonces, introdujeron las competencias, pero muchos maestros, pues a lo mejor sí los capacitaron, pero no lo suficientemente bien. Como se hizo con los proyectores y con los pizarrones inteligentes que nomás los pusieron ahí y pues ya. Entonces, al principio sí batallamos mucho, pero ya más o menos ahorita ya me está cayendo el "veinte" de qué son las competencias porque los maestros decían que nos iban a calificar por competencias en la secundaria y prepa, pero pues no lo hacían. Seguían el método tradicional, y a lo mejor ellos en su mente lo estaban haciendo bien, pero no. Y en los libros que nos daban decía "Basados en competencia" pero era algo nuevo, o sea, eran libros que… No

sé, o sea, no todo es el libro y no significa que eso es la competencia, o sea, no lo están llevando a cabo bien."69

Mariana: "Cuando hicimos la transición, que tuvimos un "training" como de dos, tres días. El programa, o sea, los temas, todo se nos hacía muy abierto, nada aterrizado. El maestro podía… bueno, me acuerdo que en ese entonces, yo creo que, el instructor no estaba muy familiarizado, ni muy empapado, porque todos estábamos revueltos. El maestro, yo recuerdo que nos decía: "podía escoger de todas estas competencias las que el alumno necesite, no tienen que enfocarse en todas" entonces yo no entendía para nada esto, era como muy abrumador, eran muchas cosas que tenían que lograrse y el tiempo no me va… y sí, me tomó, yo creo que todavía un año, todo un ciclo escolar, entender."70

Patricia: "Tiene sí, a lo mejor la deficiencia, en mi opinión, de pedirles que se autorregulen, pero no formarlos en ese hábito de estudio desde la preparatoria. Desde tal, pues se nos hace ahí una brecha grande, porque el muchacho sí tiene la flexibilidad del modelo, pero no lo formaste antes, entonces cuando llega a este modelo, se encuentra con que: "Híjole, yo soy dueño de mi propio aprendizaje, yo tengo que gestionarlo, sí, con el facilitador." o sea, eso es beneficio, la flexibilidad del modelo. Pero si el muchacho no está preparado para aprovecharlo, ni tiene las herramientas, y no se las damos en la universidad porque debería tenerlas previamente, porque en cuatro años… a los 18 ya tienen formados sus hábitos de estudio, vaya, pudieran desarrollar otros. Pero ya traen de preparatoria, de secundaria, de primaria otros hábitos en los que sí era rígido el modelo. En los que no estabas gestionando tu conocimiento, en los que solo recibías. Al momento de llegar a la universidad te encuentras con un modelo que sí es flexible, pero no sabes utilizarlo ni aprovechar sus ventajas. Entonces, es algo en contra del mismo modelo ¿No? Que no lo propicia el modelo. Pero tampoco brinda una solución; porque a lo mejor no nos da el tiempo los cuatro años que están en la licenciatura de andar remediando lo que ya traen de educación básica y media. Yo creo que ahí falta eso, como que conectar lo que está en la superior o lo que pides en la superior, con lo que hiciste en la media superior, en la media y en la básica. La misma flexibilidad no puede ser aprovechada porque les hacen falta los hábitos de estudios a los jóvenes para poder aprovechar esa flexibilidad o la formación que traen no es la óptima para que aprovechen el mismo modelo."71

Estudiantes : "hay cierto maestro o maestra que no nos pone una calificación "aprobado" o "no aprobado"; simplemente "completado". Entonces no me da a saber si yo hice bien mi trabajo, si tiene algo que decirme si puedes mejorar en esto. Entonces, va pasando el semestre y uno está con una incógnita de que al final me vayas a decir que voy a tener un básico. Pero durante el semestre no me dijiste como podía desarrollar, como podía mejorar ciertas cosas ¿No? O habilidades."72

Estudiantes: "en la plataforma aparece la posibilidad de poner comentarios, que es donde los maestros nos dicen: "No olvides las referencias en APA", entonces ya sé que saqué avanzado por las referencias en APA. Pero si nomás me dices "Completado", y a la hora de que me den el feedback nomás me dices: "es que hiciste la tarea y esto lo tuviste mal.", y cositas así, bueno ¿Cómo iba yo a saber si nomás dice "recibido", "muchas gracias", "well done"? Pues ¿Cuál es mi área de oportunidad?"
73
Estudiantes: "Creo que en el primer elemento nos dieron como dos o tres maestras, pero nomás también fue: "Tienes avanzado", "tienes sobresaliente" y ya. O nos decían "¿Por qué no hiciste esta tarea? Bueno, pues te queda así." y es todo. Yo, este semestre no tengo ni la menor idea de cómo voy. En las tareas, cuando las subimos nos ponen comentarios: "Se te pasó poner esto", "se te olvidó poner aquello", pero no nos han dicho nada y ahorita este semestre no sé cómo voy y también, pues sí me gustaría que me dieran feedback para saber."74

Estudiantes de cuarto semestre: "No te voy a mentir. Este semestre, a mí, no me han dado feedback. Entonces, para mí es muy importante que me den feedback, porque sé en qué tengo que

mejorar, porque sé qué voy a seguir haciendo o sé qué no voy a seguir haciendo ¿No? Entonces, este semestre no se nos ha dado feedback, pero previamente siempre"75

Estudiantes de cuarto semestre: "Y creo eso es algo esencial que los maestros se den el tiempo de hacer eso (otorgar retroalimentación) ¿No? Porque así va a haber una mejora en el salón, pues. Grupal, no solo con cada estudiante, sino grupal.76

Estudiantes de sexto semestre: "No me gusta que me den retroalimentación por una computadora tampoco. Me pueden decir lo que sea, pero no sé en qué tono me lo están diciendo, si me están siendo sinceros, entonces odio esa parte. No tanto la retroalimentación, sino el uso de la plataforma."77

Estudiantes de sexto semestre: "Entonces eso ese tipo de evaluación sí afecta. Me gustaría que fuera más presencial y con más seguimiento. Sé que es difícil porque hay muchos alumnos."78

Estudiantes de sexto semestre: "nuestros maestros y nuestro departamento, lo bueno que tiene y que yo he visto, que tiene mucha comunicación entre ellos. Entonces muchos maestros se pasan y dicen: "¿Sabes qué? Este alumno me está fallando.", "Ah, a mí también.", "¿Sabes qué? Vamos a hablar con él." y sí lo han llegado a jalar y decirle: "Oye compa ¿Y por qué estás fallando?" O "haz esto, si tienes algún problema vamos a ver cómo te apoyamos", "económicamente vamos a intentar ayudarte con una beca o algo así". He visto que tienen mucha comunicación, pero no son todos. 79

Gabriela: "El modelo en fase, es algo que puede hacer al alumno un poco más confiado porque muchas veces hay muchas maneras de evaluar, no necesariamente con un examen. Muchas veces la única manera de que un alumno estudie es si tiene miedo de un examen, nomás oímos la palabra examen y tiene demasiado peso, tiene demasiado peso psicológicamente hablando. Les da miedo y se ponen a estudiar. Entonces tiene ahí sus pros y sus contras."80

Clara: ". Yo le puedo pedir a mis alumnos X número de evidencias y me las van hacer, y me las van hacer a la mejor con muy buen nivel. Más yo, que estoy en el área social, socio-ambiental, pues es más dado que diga: "a ver, una mesa de discusión, un debate, vamos hacer una dinámica de teatro, vamos a poner roles, un cambio de roles, o vamos a hacer un esquema de difusión del aprendizaje, un video", bueno ¿Será mucho eso? Lo van hacer y lo van a hacer bien. Pero cuando yo veo al estudiante preocupado, es cuando van a tener examen. Ahí es cuando se preocupan y ahí es cuando los veo en el pasillo, en rueda, estudiando, preguntándose uno al otro, comiéndose las uñas, porque todavía traen ese esquema."81

Alumnos de cuarto semestre: "Personalmente, lo negativo es que tenemos lo que es el no aprobado, avanzado, básico y sobresaliente. Entonces muchas veces yo sé que sobresaliente es la más alto, pero me ha llegado muchas veces a llegar el tener un básico, por así decirlo. Que no tengo un número en específico y "¿Qué significa ese básico? ¿Tengo 6 o tengo 7?" Porque tampoco no sé cuál es mi número exacto de mi trabajo. O sea, si tengo un avanzado ¿Estuve a nada de tener un básico o estuve a nada de tener un sobresaliente? Porque básico o avanzado o sobresaliente es demasiado general. Sobresaliente es 10, pero de avanzado hacia abajo es como "¿Qué es exactamente? ¿Es un 8, es un 9? A lo mejor es un 7 o un 6 ¿O el 5?". Entonces ya ahí yo diría que es donde de verdad no me gusta porque no sé cuál es mi calificación exacta."82

Alumno de cuarto semestre: "Es no tener un número claro en el momento de "¿Por qué me saqué un intermedio?, ¿y qué clase de intermedio es?, ¿es un 7? No sé. O a veces, también, depende de la perspectiva del maestro. A lo mejor el maestro puso algún intermedio pensando en un 8, basándose en tales cosas, pero a lo mejor y yo lo siento como un 7 y ya me quedo como "¿Pero por qué 7?" O sea, no hay un número que me diga a mí "No tienes un 7, tienes un 8.". Y creo que también es esencial para aquellos alumnos que se quieran graduar por promedio. Que aquí

tenemos la oportunidad de hacer eso, entonces el ir con un incógnito todo el semestre, es como que "¿me va a bajar mi calificación o todo va a seguir igual?"83

Gabriela (A4°S): "Por ejemplo, cuando pasa el primer elemento de competencia, si al final del primer elemento yo saqué avanzado, no quiere decir que mi calificación final, promedio, va a ser avanzado; sino tengo los otros para recuperarme, salir sobresaliente y el avanzado que está ahí no me va a afectar para que al final yo tenga una buena calificación… los elementos de competencia son los que se llaman parciales en las otras escuelas: "Ah, en el primer parcial saqué 9, puedo sacar en los otros dos 10 y ya me queda mejor 9.9 o algo por el estilo, o te suben a 10." aquí es lo mismo; tienes un avanzado, pero tengo en los otros dos tengo sobresaliente, el maestro puede decir "es que me demostró que es un estudiante sobresaliente, súper sobresaliente."84

Gabriela: "Ahí sí, tenemos el equivalente numérico. El sobresaliente es 10, el avanzado 9, el intermedio es 8, el básico es 7 y el no aprobado es 6. Entonces hacemos la conversión, pero al final del semestre. Entonces si a mí el alumno me terminó avanzado yo sé que le voy a poner un nueve, en el registro de calificaciones yo sé que voy a usar un número, pero en todo el semestre es avanzado, intermedio, básico, no aprobado. Yo no les manejo porcentajes, y ellos se acostumbras a mi manera de evaluar. Yo no les manejo números, nunca les manejo números. Al final ellos en su cardex ven números, pero conmigo siempre ven letras, siempre. Y dicen: "Ay, pero es la misma porque trabajamos en its learning (plataforma)." Its learning te da números. Yo no, yo manejo las letras. Entonces me dicen: "¿Por qué traigo 8.5 maestra? Súbame al 9, si es 8,5", entonces con un intermedio, tu competencia es intermedio, hablamos de competencia, no de números pues. Por eso no me gusta trabajar con porcentajes."85

Gabriela: "Al momento de capturar ante la SEP, la SEP no maneja eso (números) ¿Verdad? Ponemos 9.0 –competente avanzado, 8.0 – competente intermedio. Ahí está la traducción, porque la SEP, no maneja eso. El modelo numérico es todavía el que la rige, pero eso es al momento de capturar calificaciones. El alumno va a ver en su Kardex avanzado, intermedio, básico."86

Mariana: "Mira, para la evaluación yo me acuerdo que yo tenía mucho conflicto; porque yo estaba acostumbrada, tanto como en mi experiencia como alumna y docente, estaba acostumbrada a asignar un número al desempeño. Sin embargo, siento yo que ese número a veces se asignaba según el criterio del maestro, que muchas veces no siento que esté mal, pero recaes en situaciones de conflicto con los alumnos o en malinterpretación, etc. Entonces, cuando a mí me hablaron del modelo de competencias, yo creo que la evaluación fue lo más complicado, porque al final me pedían evaluar con un número, entonces ahí yo chocaba."87

Mariana: "yo me acuerdo que muchos maestros se indignaban de por qué al alumno si no me cumplió con todos los trabajos le tengo que poner cinco o seis, porque hay escuelas que dicen "Aquí no permitimos el cinco, permitimos el seis" y decían "¿Por qué tengo que ponerles seis si no trabajó?" y yo me acuerdo que en algún momento yo también pensaba así y decía "Ay, pues es que les están regalando la calificación, les están dando todo fácilmente.". O sea, yo siento que no debe de haber conflicto, porque el alumno flojo que no trabaja, tarde o temprano, en el modelo en el que sea, va a reprobar, tarde o temprano. Yo he tenido casos de alumnos que: "A ver, no me entregaste X trabajo, te puedo dar oportunidad de que los vuelvas a entregar. Claro que no te van a contar igual, me los tienes que entregar para tal fecha" y no los entregan. Cuando a uno le interesa, así sea el modelo finlandés más sofisticado le va a echar ganas y va a pasar, y cuando no te interesa así sea de tomar asistencia, pues no." 88

Estudiantes de cuarto semestre: "la verdad yo sí me he sentido muchísimo mejor con mis calificaciones ahorita que son en competencias que cuando eran en números. No me estreso tanto. Y muchas veces, ha sido de que: "prefiero mandar y tener un intermedio a no mandarla y tener un no aprobado". No me estreso tanto como decir: "es que voy a sacar 6 o algo por el estilo".89

Clara: "Si lo que quieres es dar la parte formativa de responsabilidad, de que tienes un periodo para hacer la autoevaluación, y al final se las vas a abrir ¿Pues cuál parte formativa? Lo está formando como un mexicano: "Voy a tener oportunidades al mil, total no pasa nada."90

"Lo que sí te puedo es que el porcentaje de estudiantes que no argumentan sus posturas no es alto, es bajo, en nuestro modelo es bajo. Existe, sí existe, pero son más personalidades de los estudiantes, inseguridades de los estudiantes. Pero sí la escuela tiene el mote de ser una escuela fácil, O sea, hacia afuera la UES es como que muy facilita, o sea, te aprueban por todo, no sé si tenga que ver con el modelo. Por ejemplo, nosotros pues tú sabes que competente básico es seis, o sea, si vas a reprobar a un chavo le vas a poner seis, no le vas a poner cinco ni cuatro, le vas a poner seis. Y ahí le vas subiendo su promedio, entonces es fácil pues."91

Clara: "Entonces, pues das así del conocimiento y eso siento que los estudiantes lo ven como que: "Ay el profe, es bien lindo.", porque hay mucha empatía con el estudiante pues. Los profes, por ejemplo, del antiguo guardia, ellos sí es como que: "a mí me llegas a la hora o yo te cierro la puerta y ya no hay entrada.". Ah, pero es flexible, entonces, el estudiante vienes desde el centro ecológico o viene desde la nuevo Hermosillo, ah no pues, puede entrar, no te preocupes mijito, luego lo vemos ¿No? Y como está centrado en el estudiante "el estudiante viene sin desayunar, tiene hambre ¿Cómo va a aprender? vete a la cafetería".92

Patricia: "el modelo educativo también tiene que ir alineado con el reglamento de la institución. Y sí hay flexibilidad en el modelo educativo, pero en el reglamento no. En el sentido que… si somos flexibles en modelo educativo, pues tal vez las faltas o asistencias no serían tan importantes porque si el chico por fuera desarrolló la competencia y viene y me lo demuestra a mí, maestro, pues yo no tendría problema, porque quiere decir que el chico lo está desarrollando. Esa sería la flexibilidad del modelo, sin embargo, yo, maestro, tengo que ver el reglamento y el reglamento me dice que el joven debe cumplir con 90% de asistencia a clases. Entonces, si el joven te lo demuestra, pero no vino a clases en muchas ocasiones, pues ya no sería un alumno sobresaliente. Pudiera ser básico, porque sí tiene la competencia, pero no tiene los otros aspectos que también son importantes para la institución.93

Flor: "a mí me parece que la universidad es muy generosa con los alumnos flojos. El que les abran un curso de verano a quienes deliberadamente han decidido: "Hay no, mejor en el verano lo paso" ¿No? Y que la universidad costee aulas, hay una logística, mantenga prendido todo lo que tiene que ser la universidad caminando y que el alumno pague una materia, se me hace una generosidad a veces mal entendida de parte de los estudiantes. Esa parte si estuviera en mis manos, yo si fuera un poquito más firme con los alumnos: "¿Vas a reprobar para llevarla en verano? Perfecto, pero te va a costar, eh.", "entre todos los que se anoten van a pagar el sueldo de profesor y los gastos fijos del aula, porque fíjate que está la refrigeración prendida.". Ahí sí, por ejemplo, yo sería un poquito más estricta. Claro que no tengo la visión de la película completa ¿Verdad? Lo que se quiere es que los estudiantes no se atoren, fluyan y se gradúen. Pero yo creo que sí, yo sí les pondría un cantadito ahí. Que les costara más trabajo, para que lo pensaran dos veces si van a tirar las cosas."94

Estudiantes de sexto semestre: "Estoy en desacuerdo con algo que dijeron, con la parte de los alumnos flojos. Cierto, sí los hay, porque yo era uno. Los maestros te dan oportunidad ¿Cuántas faltas quieren para que ya los repruebes? ¿Te dan opción de cuantas faltas o cuantos retardos? O llegas tarde y no te dicen nada. Entonces la gente o los alumnos, si son huevones y le das esa facilidad pues más se van a aconchar. somos maestros, tenemos diferentes roles, o sea, no somos facilitadores nomás, podemos hacer también… motivarlos también y hacerlos salir de la zona de confort en la que están. O sea: "si vas a estar así vas a reprobar, vas a reprobar si sigues llegando tarde, vas a reprobar si sigues siendo flojo."95

Flor: "yo creo que una parte muy importante para mí es la discusión en la clase y es algo que el estudiante no está acostumbrado a hacer. De hecho, yo lo estoy haciendo cada vez más, con más

fuerza desde el semestre pasado y hubo confusión. Los jóvenes no entendían la sección del término discusión como tal. Para que un alumno tome parte de la discusión y su participación sea significativa tiene que traer algo. Si es capaz de estar en la discusión y aportar una participación significativa; te leyó, hizo algo antes. Para mí eso es básico.96"

Alejandra: "pienso que les hace falta mucha crítica a los alumnos. Como que nada más … no sé … llenan por llenar, a veces siento. O no sé si yo sea muy estricta, no sé. De hecho, estoy batallando mucho: "ahora analiza la información", en eso, pero estoy trabajando con eso."97

Mariana: "si el alumno es flojo tarde o temprano cae, yo así lo veo. Siento, a veces, algo que yo percibo de algunos maestros es que a fuerzas quieren reprobar gente, y yo trato, sin que se malinterprete, de no reprobar. Yo trato de rescatar, porque si yo siento que… o yo así lo veo, si yo repruebo insistentemente es como si estuviera yo contra ese alumno, es como si fuera un videojuego, y el maestro va a ser todas las murallas que el monito tenga que esquivar"98

Mariana: "en el aula hay de todo. Y yo creo que lo que más predomina y lo que más se ve es el poco interés, pero no es que sea poco interés por que sí, yo siento que los alumnos tienen muchos distractores. Es una generación que todo lo tienen instantáneamente, es una generación que necesita estímulos visuales, es una generación que necesita moverse, muy quinestésica, muy visual, poco auditiva. O sea, sí escuchan mucha música, pero ellos no están acostumbrados a estar una hora escuchando y sacando, externando. Es una generación de mucho anonimato también. A ellos no les gusta participar, no les gusta exponer sus ideas porque se sientes expuestos. Pero igual yo me doy cuenta como que no leen, como que son muy digitales, pero no ellos a aportar sino que nomás a recibir, casi no son de leer ellos."99

Patricia: "Entonces, los chicos no han visualizado todo lo que pueden aportar al ser maestros de inglés. Pero tal vez no tienen tanta conciencia aún de cómo pueden impactar, de la necesidad que existe…Entonces, yo creo que eso les falta, pero no creo que sea por la formación del modelo educativo, creo que tiene que ver con la formación que ellos ya traen y que solo se enfocan a que les interese lo suyo. Como si su entorno no existiera, solo hay memes, solo hay imágenes, solo hay padres y que me digan… entonces, eso creo que les falta. Sí se les ayuda a que desarrollen pensamiento crítico, sí se les guía que sean… su autoconocimiento, autorregulador de tu aprendizaje, pero yo creo que no han llegado a ese punto en que digan "Ah, sí es cierto, todo este tiempo que tengo libre debería aprovecharlo para documentarme de qué está pasando en el mundo, entonces se me hace que no, no tienen todavía esa conciencia."100

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