



University of Southampton Research Repository

Copyright © and Moral Rights for this thesis and, where applicable, any accompanying data are retained by the author and/or other copyright owners. A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge. This thesis and the accompanying data cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the copyright holder/s. The content of the thesis and accompanying research data (where applicable) must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holder/s.

When referring to this thesis and any accompanying data, full bibliographic details must be given, e.g.

Thesis: Caballero Gastélum, Margarita Aurora (2022) “The case of English Teachers’ Professional identity in a Community of Practice in a Mexican Public University”, University of Southampton, Faculty of Humanities, PhD Thesis, 283 pp.

Data: Author (Year) Title. URI [dataset]

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

School of Modern Languages

**The case of English Teachers' Professional Identity in a
Community of Practice in a Mexican Public University**

by

Margarita Aurora Caballero Gastélum

ORCID ID 0000-0002-9951-2473

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September, 2022

University of Southampton

Abstract

Faculty of Humanities School of Modern Languages

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Linguistics

The case of English Teachers' Professional Identity in a Community of Practice in a Mexican Public University

by

Margarita Aurora Caballero Gastélum

This case study explores the professional identity of a group of English language teachers in a community of practice in a public university in Mexico. The main characteristic of this particular group of teachers is that they do not have a degree in the area of language teaching. The eight participants have a degree in different areas of knowledge; however, they have been teaching English for many years. The present research follows the Theory of communities of Practice by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) and the theory of identity by Norton (1995) to create an articulated framework for the study.

By drawing on narrative inquiry in the form of life stories, I gathered the data for this study in which the participants narrated different aspects of their professional lives and their ways of navigating the community of practice (CoP). With the help of the extended positioning analysis by Barkhuizen (2009), I could analyse in three different levels the narratives elicited with a semi-structured interview from the participants.

The findings of the research demonstrated that all the participants navigated in different ways the community of practice. I also discovered how some aspects which are not considered in the Theory of CoP such as power relations, inequality, status, among others, turned out to be of the utmost importance in the interactions of the community. The macro discourses out there, like neoliberalism, also play an important role in the construction of teachers' identities in the community of practice.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
List of Tables.....	v
Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Abbreviations	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Study overview.....	2
1.2 Aims and research questions.....	4
1.3 Thesis organisation.....	6
Chapter 2: Research context.....	9
2.1 Mexico’s educational context.....	10
2.2 Mexican Public University Context	15
2.3 Faculty of Languages Context	18
2.3.1 The English Department as a community of practice.....	25
2.4 Neoliberalism	29
2.4.1 General concepts.....	29
2.4.2 The neoliberal citizen	32
2.4.3 Neoliberalism in Mexico	33
Chapter 3: Literature review.....	35
3.1 Community of Practice and identity in Poststructuralism	35
3.2 Communities of Practice.....	36
3.2.1 Identity in an educational Community of Practice.....	43
3.2.2 Participation and non-participation in a CoP.....	46
3.3 The English Department as a Community of Practice	49
3.4 Theory of identity.....	54
3.4.1. Historical overview of identity	54
3.4.2 Teachers’ professional identity	61
Chapter 4: Methodology and research design	65
4.1 The Participants.....	65
4.2 Methodology.....	66
4.3 Data collection	68
4.3.1 The Life story interviews	69

4.3.1.1	The interviewing process.....	70
4.3.1.2	The transcription and translation processes.....	72
4.4	Narrative inquiry	73
4.4.1	Big stories vs small stories	76
4.5	Method of analysis	77
4.5.1	Positioning analysis	77
4.5.1.1	Extended positioning analysis.....	80
Chapter 5: My career in a life story.....		81
5.1	The participants.....	81
5.1.1	Who are the participants?.....	83
5.1.1.1	Permanent teachers	85
5.1.1.2	Non-permanent teachers	89
5.2	Common Topics in the Life Stories.....	91
5.2.1	My beginnings	92
5.2.2	The Turning point	94
5.2.3	I am a professional English language teacher	96
5.2.4	My community of practice: The English Department	98
Chapter 6: Trajectories in the Community of Practice		103
6.1	Peripheral trajectories.....	106
6.1.1	Moses: “I don't want to play the game”	106
6.2	Inbound trajectories.....	110
6.2.1	Ricky: “I know what I’m doing”	110
6.2.2	Lucy: “I don’t feel welcome”	114
6.3	Insider trajectories	116
6.3.1	Miguel: “It’s not fair”	117
6.3.2	Gina: “I love my job”	119
6.3.3	Albert: “I deserve recognition”	124
6.4	Boundary trajectories.....	128
6.4.1	Luke: “I know what I’m doing”	128
Chapter 7: Discussion		131
7.1	What is life like in The English Department?	134
7.2	Neoliberalism and other normative discourses	140
Chapter 8: Conclusions		144
8.1	My findings.....	144
8.2	Implications of the research	147
8.3	Limitations of the research.....	148

8.4	Suggestions for further research	149
	Appendix A: States in Mexico with highest rates of poverty.	151
	Appendix B: Levels of proficiency in a foreign language: CEFR and Cambridge main suite exams	152
	Appendix C Faculty of Languages Organigram	153
	Appendix D Consent forms	154
	Appendix E Interviews' transcripts	156
	References.....	249

List of Tables

Table 1 Research Design	5
Table 2 Payment fees in three Public Universities in Mexico	17
Table 3 Participants' information	64
Table 4 Steps for conducting the interview	68
Table 5 Script for the interview	69
Table 6 Participants' information II at the time of the interview	80
Table 7 Permanent and non-permanent teachers	81

Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Margarita Aurora Caballero Gastélum

Title of thesis: The case of English Teachers' Professional Identity in a Community of Practice in a Mexican Public University

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: 07/09/2022

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I thank God for this great opportunity.

I would like to thank my family and friends for their support all these years.

A very special thank you and my eternal gratitude to my supervisor, Adriana Patiño- Santos, I could have never finished this research without your help and encouragement.

Abbreviations

CoP: Communities of practice

BA: Bachelor's Degree

MA: Master's Degree

TESOL: Teaching English for speakers of other languages

SLA: Second language acquisition

NAFTA: North America Free Trade Agreement

CENEVAL: Centro Nacional de Evaluación de la Educación Superior

ANUIES: Asociación Nacional de Universidades y de Instituciones de Educación

Superior

COTE: Certificate for overseas teachers of English

DELTA: Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of other languages

SEP: Secretaría de Educación Pública (Ministry of Education)

UNAM: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Mexico's National Autonomous

University)

PNIEB: Programa Nacional de inglés en Educación Básica

UAM: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Metropolitan Autonomous University)

CELe: Centro de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras (School of foreign languages

teaching)

ELT: English language teaching

QI: Qualitative inquiry

Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis discusses the ways in which a group of English Language Teachers construct and negotiate their professional identities in a Community of Practice (CoP) in a Mexican Public University. The participants chosen for this research, though recognised as English Language Teachers in their workplace, do not hold a bachelor's degree (BA) in Languages or Teaching, and they all abandoned their previous careers and converted into full time English Language Teachers at this University.

The reason for the research to focus on this specific group of teachers, and the construction of their identities, resides on the fact that I am also a “non-official teacher” who has tried hard for recognition in the University where this study takes place. I refer to my own story because I have faced identity confusion in trying to legitimise myself with colleagues, students, and the authorities, who have directly or indirectly questioned my presence in the Faculty of Languages, where the participants of this research and I work. Another great challenge for me was when I oversaw *The English Department*, which is the organisation of all English language teachers at the Faculty of Languages of this University. The main obstacle was to convince my colleagues I was well-prepared to direct this group as most teachers who belong to this Department are former students of this Faculty and hold degrees in English Language Teaching.

The English language teachers who participated in this research decided to teach English due to different circumstances: as a hobby, as a part-time job to obtain some extra money or as the only option they had to have a paid job. Certainly, as they mentioned in the interviews, they did not initially envisage teaching, or at least not English at any rate. Otherwise, they would have chosen to do a BA related to this area. It is the circumstances which forced them to start teaching and made it their way of living.

Similar to these participants, I studied for a bachelor's degree in economics and started teaching English twenty-five years ago. At that time, I graduated when I started earning money by teaching English and have not stopped since. Similarly, some of my participants began teaching at private schools and then the Public

University, where it is required as evidence of one's teaching skills to obtain a bachelor's degree in the area.

Despite this, I was accepted and offered to teach different lessons. Nowadays, I even have tenure at the Faculty of Languages of the University where this study was conducted.

This account allowed me to understand important changes in the Mexican higher-education system. My work related to Harvey's (2005) theory of neoliberalism which indicates processes of neoliberal selves that emerged in this context.

1.1 Study overview

In this research, I have three focal points: Communities of Practice (CoP), Identity and Narrative Inquiry. When studying the existing literature on identity and CoP, I could realise that there has been an increase in the number of articles and journals devoted to the study of teachers' identity. This can be demonstrated with the publication of the special issue of *TESOL Quarterly* (September 2016) on Language Teacher Identity, and other articles which refer to the narrative turn to the study of identity (Barkhuizen, 2009; 2016; Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik, 2014; Block, 2007, 2013; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton 2006; Tsui, 2007), to name a few.

On the other hand, CoPs have been addressed in several fields such as: Networking and Technology (Bates, 2014), Management and Organisation (Wenger and Snyder, 2000), Online education (Kirschner and Kwok, 2008), Learning (Liu and Xu, 2013; Handley et al., 2006) and to discuss identity (Bathmaker and Avis, 2005; Tsui 2007; Taylor 2014). I use this notion of CoP to study teachers' professional identities since in a CoP one's identity is lived day by day, and not without struggles, while trying to succeed and belong to different social groups, in this case, the CoP.

I believe that both theories: Identity (Norton 1995) and Communities of Practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991 and Wenger, 1998) constitute an articulated framework on which I base this research. Both theories share the conception of a social theory and poststructuralism as approaches. The importance of socio-cultural theory became apparent in the 1980's as a reaction to cognitivist theories. In the area of education,

the Theory of Situated Learning (Lave & Wenger, 1990) questioned individual learning as a “discrete and decontextualized activity” (Handley, et al., 2006, p. 641).

The Theory of Communities of Practice (core component of Situated Learning) claims that learning takes place when an individual has opportunities to involve in “practices of the community as well as the development of an identity which provides a sense of belonging and commitment”. (Handley et al., 2006, p.642) From this, **identity** constitutes a fundamental element in the CoP. Bonny Norton is a pioneer in the creation of a theory of identity in the area of language learning and second language acquisition (SLA). In 1995, her seminal work “Social Identity, Investment and Language Learning” advocates the need of having a social theory of identity, one that relates the language learners and their context.

While it is clear that **CoP** and **identity** will be my guiding theories throughout this research, and they will be amply discussed in Chapter 3 (Literature Review), the ideal methodology to this work is **Narrative inquiry**, in the form of life stories. Much has been written about the narrative turn in the social sciences and in other sociocultural contexts. Narratives are neither new nor unknown in research; multiple disciplines have used narratives to understand certain phenomena. (Barkhuizen, 2014; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015)

I consider narratives as the correct methodology to use in this research because: i) with narratives, I understand how my participants make sense of their experiences and the ways in which they situate themselves and their activities, ii) narrative and identity are closely connected. Furthermore, De Finna claims (2015, p. 351) “narratives are seen as the prime vehicle for expressing identity and narrative analysts have gone so far as to argue that stories, we tell mold us into what we are”.

My study is largely influenced by De Fina (2003; 2012; 2013; 2015), De Fina and Georgakopolou (2012), Bamberg (1997; 2004; 2007) and Barkhuizen (2006; 2009; 2011; 2014). These authors are part of what Bamberg and Georgakopolou called the “new turn to narrative” (2008). Basically, this new turn intends to give more prominence to “small stories” over the traditional “big stories”. It is my intention to work with the life stories elicited from my participants and extract small stories to

find how these teachers use them to create a sense of who they are.

Narrative inquiry and life stories are discussed in Chapter 4 (Methodology and Research design). At this point, I had to decide how to analyse the life stories collected from the teachers. Having revised different options, I opted for a more interactional approach. I am convinced that the stories are not constructed in isolation, instead I am a co- constructor of these stories. Again, authors like De Fina (2009), Georgakopoulou and Bamberg (2008), and Barkhuizen (2009) guided me on adopting this approach. Furthermore, I am convinced that an interactional approach is a dynamic model to analyse identities in constant change.

Having opted for an interactional approach, I decided to embark upon an “Extended Positioning Analysis”. This model is presented by Barkhuizen (2009), who based this extended model on Bamberg’s Positioning Model (1997). Although this model is amply discussed in 4.6.1.1 *Extended Positioning Analysis*, I can say that the greatest advantage of using this model is its scope, which allows me to focus on form, content, and context. Also, as proposed by Barkhuizen (2009), it enabled me to include data beyond the small story; in this case, interviews with other members of the CoP, and the broader discourses in which we are all involved. Clearly, the small stories are enriched with this additional information.

1.2 Aims and research questions

As mentioned before, the justification for focusing on this group of English Language Teachers’ professional identity lies, first and foremost, on my own experience and, the lack of research on the specific area of this kind of teachers and their struggle in shaping their identities in the CoP, hereinafter called “*The English Department*”.

When examining the literature available, it was clear how much research it has been conducted lately on teachers’ identities and narratives. However, there is a void on the area of “non-official English language teachers” and their trajectories in their careers, which could reflect the conflicts they face in the process of legitimising and (re)constructing their identities. The case study I present in this research is not limited to the Mexican context. On the contrary, it is a phenomenon which happens in many

countries where English is taught by teachers who did not have teaching qualifications or formal training as teachers. With this in mind, and based on my own reading, the following research questions are addressed:

1. **How do English Language Teachers (my participants) position themselves in the CoP called *The English Department*?**
2. **How do these non-official English Language Teachers construct and negotiate their identities in the CoP (The English Department) across time?**
3. **How do other participants in the CoP (students, colleagues, authorities) perceive these teachers, and with what consequences?**

In the following table, I summarise my research design with the research questions:

Research Questions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do English Language Teachers position themselves in the CoP called <i>The English Department</i>? 2. How do these non-official English Language Teachers construct and negotiate their identities in the CoP (The English Department) across time? 3. How do other participants in the CoP (students, colleagues, authorities) perceive these teachers, and with what consequences?
Research method:	Multiple-case study
Main Participants:	Eight English language teachers
Data collection methods:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eight life stories elicited with semi-structured interviews (this is the main source of data). 2. My observations with field information
Method of analysis:	Extended positioning analysis

Table 1 Research Design

I can define my multiple-case study as one that explores the identity of English language teachers striving for recognition as legitimate members of the CoP in which

they participate. Accordingly, my sources of information are life stories of the teachers, obtained through semi-structured interviews, and my own notes from the interviews and field observations. The research design is further described in Chapter four in more detail.

1.3 Thesis organisation

This research is a multiple-case study, divided into eight chapters. The first chapter (*Introduction*) presents the topic of research and sets a general context in which my study is conducted. This chapter includes an overview of the study (*1.1 Study overview*). In this section, I provide a summary of the background information which is necessary to clarify how I understand two vital aspects for this research: **Communities of practice** and **identity**. I also explain my contribution to the field and the decisions made regarding methodology and data collection. In 1.2 (*Aims and research questions*) I introduce the aims and research questions which guide the present study.

Chapter two, *Research Context*, presents an overview of the Mexican educational system (*2.1 Mexican educational context*), particularly a short history of English Language Teaching in the country, and the influence in education of external factors such as the NAFTA agreement, as a materialisation of neoliberalism and globalisation processes, and how it affects the decisions made at the University. The second aspect discussed in this chapter is the Context of the Mexican Public University where the research was conducted (*2.2 Mexican Public University context*) and the Faculty of Languages, where the teachers who participate in the study work (*2.3 Faculty of Languages context*). The third part of this chapter also includes an explanation of the CoP, called “The English Department” (*2.3.1 The English Department*), which is the name given to the CoP all the English Language Teachers at the Faculty of Languages belong to.

In Chapter three, *Literature Review*, I present an overview of two main theories which support this research: The theory of **Communities of Practice** of Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998), and The **Theory of Identity** of Norton (1995). To begin the

discussion, I first present both theories: CoPs and identity, under a poststructuralist vision in 3.1 (CoPs and identity in Poststructuralism). In the next section, 3.2 *The theory of Communities of Practice* of Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) are discussed.

In this Section, Community of practice, there are two sub-sections dealing with important aspects within a community of practice: Identity in an educational community of practice (3.2.1) and participation and non-participation in a community of practice (3.2.2). The Theory of Identity of Norton (1995) is described in 3.3 *Theory of Identity*. This section includes a description of a teacher's professional identity in 3.3.1.

Chapter four, *Methodology and Research Design* is divided into eight main sections. In this chapter, I present a comprehensive description of the study design. First, I introduce the participants in the research in 4.1. In 4.2, I characterise the English Department as a community of practice. In 4.3, I describe the choice of methodology and approach behind this thesis. In 4.4, *Data collection*, I explain how I collected my data. In this section, I include: 4.4.1 *The life story interviews* with its processes (4.4.1.1) and the transcription and translation processes (4.4.1.2). In 4.5 *Narrative inquiry*, I give reasons for working with this approach. I also include a sub-section which deals with big and small stories (4.5.1). Next, I talk about the method of analysis in 4.6 and, more specifically, the method of positioning analysis in 4.6.1, and its extended version in 4.6.1.1.

Chapter five, *My career in a life story*, includes a more in-depth description of the eight participants in 5.1. Here, relevant aspects of their careers, my relationships with them, and their working status in the Faculty are discussed. 5.2 includes a first approach to the life stories as well as aspects common to all the life stories.

Chapter six presents the analysis of the data using the methodology described in chapter three. In this chapter, the analysis is divided according to the different trajectories of teachers. The Theory of Communities of Practice is used in this division of trajectories and the Extended Position Analysis in levels one and two. Chapter 7 amply discusses the results, as well as level three of analysis with broader discourses,

as proposed by Barkhuizen (2009). Chapter eight brings this research to a close with a summary of the main findings, along with a discussion of its shortcomings and possible future research.

In the following chapter, I describe the context in which this research was carried out as well as an initial overview of the community of practice called “The English Department”

Chapter 2: Research context

This study takes place in a public University in Mexico, located in the capital of one of the most populated states. This university welcomes an important number of students from various areas of the country. I decided to take this university as the site for the research due to the fact that I have been part of the staff of its Faculty of Languages for more than twenty years. This fact allows me to better understand the struggles and power relations present in *The English Department*. The University was ranked in the top ten of public and private institutions in Mexico in 2016. In the same ranking, it is the second among public universities in Mexico. (QS Top Universities, 2021)

State or public universities in Mexico have undergone a radical transformation over the last twenty years. They have become the hotbeds of internationalisation, understood as “the process which aims for world class academic training standards of education in areas such as: teaching, research, culture, among others.” (Secretaría de Cooperación Internacional, 2013). I am convinced this information is crucial, as Universities cannot be indifferent to the processes in which the country is involved. This University has been severely affected by such changes. In less than twenty years, we have witnessed a gradual but steady transformation in the scope of the University. As a result, in 2013, the new Administration decided to create the Department of Internationalisation. In fact, it has been the main objective of recent administrations in this University to promote the internationalisation of the University. However, in 2018 with the ascent of the new government, fewer resources have been allocated to these programmes.

The document which summarises the functions of the Department of Internationalisation in this University emphasises the idea of reaching the international standards a globalised world demands. As mentioned in the objectives of this University, nowadays, internationalisation plays a pivotal role. In the University Report presented in 2016, the Vice Rector highlighted the agreements signed with foreign Universities that enable students and professors

to further their education in international contexts. The same report says that 889 students and professors participated in international exchange programmes in 28 countries. These figures represent an increase of 100% in the numbers of students and teachers participating in these programmes. (UAEMex, 2016).

In the next sections, I describe three contexts that concern this study: Mexican educational context, Mexico's public University Context and finally the Faculty of Languages and the English Department context, which is the community of practice of the present research. I start with the educational context in Mexico, particularly the role that English has played in the past, and how it has been recently included in all the programmes, from the first years of elementary school to University. In the second context, I will describe how the Public University, where this study was being carried out, was created, and the importance of English teaching and learning has had throughout the years, a consequence of which was the creation of the Faculty of Languages at this University. It is precisely the Faculty of Languages which represents the third context. All the participants interviewed work at this Faculty and are members of "The English Department" the CoP all the participants in this study belong to.

2.1 Mexico's educational context

Despite the socialist ideals of the Mexican Revolution, Mexico has been largely influenced by its northern neighbour. This is mainly due to the long border that both countries share. The first neoliberal policies in education were introduced in Mexico by President Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988). This introduction coincided with the first loan from the World Bank, conditioned to the establishment of a series of free market measures. Mexico had suffered several economic crises in 1982, 1984 and 1987.

Later, in the 1990's, different foreign monetary institutions, like the IMF (International Monetary Fund) suggested a number of actions so Mexico should adopt to overhaul not only its economy, so as to meet higher standards in the international market, but also its educational system. These suggestions stemmed from the huge loans Mexico obtained in the middle of its financial

crisis, in 1994-1995. It is worth noticing that the government discourse introduced phrases such as “modernising policies” or “structural adjustment” aimed at disguising neoliberal policies.

In Mexico, the introduction of neoliberalism is more evident with the NAFTA (North American Trade Agreement) trade, a free trade agreement signed by Mexico, USA and Canada in 1992. After 25 years of its implementation, many voiced the need to renegotiate it. In 2018 a new treaty was signed: the new TMEC or USMC. This updated version did not vary much from the previous agreement. In all these years, it is undeniable that some sectors have benefited from this agreement. However, other sectors, like agriculture, have almost disappeared. Several studies have discussed the advantages and disadvantages of this commercial agreement. One of the consequences of this agreement has been the stark contrast between the north and the south of Mexico. The states which share a border with the USA have greatly benefited from the NAFTA. There are states such as: Nuevo León, Coahuila, Chihuahua, with a higher economic growth. By contrast, in Southern Mexico the states have the highest rates of poverty. (See Appendix A)

If we take into consideration the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) or PIB (Producto Interno Bruto in Mexico), the asymmetry is evident: “while USA specialises in exporting high technology, Canada natural resources and Mexico manufactures, there is no equivalence in salaries, economic growth and living standards” (Arés, 2015). NAFTA meant not only economic changes, but also in education These changes have had very important implications to both public and private Institutions.

Different authors (Aboites, 2007; Narum, 1994; Maldonado, 2000; Gacel, 2000) agree that one of the greatest problems with NAFTA or TMEC is the asymmetry of the Institutions in the three countries. It is evident that Mexico cannot compete on equal footing due to its lack of infrastructure and resources. The main problem is the uncritical adoption of the North American model of education in Mexico, without taking into consideration blatant differences in

culture, technology, idiosyncrasy, and organisation. “These changes have allowed an excessive number of private Institutions which certify and qualify professional studies, and all this under a very dubious quality control”. (Aboites, 2007, p. 40)

In the decade of the 90’s, there was increased optimism in the government and universities in trying to modernise the educational system, thus stressing “quality improving efficiency and above all making education more relevant to economic development” (Rolling, 1996, p.79). Those ambitious expansion projects forced many universities to grow in an unregulated manner. As a result, they resorted to hiring graduate students without any relevant experience, or teachers without qualifications. This last aspect is discussed throughout this research.

In this sense, Aboites (2007) claims that one of the first consequences of NAFTA or TMEC is the limits to the action of the government in different sectors, including education. An example of the extent of the changes in education in Mexico is related to the issuing of certifications and licences. The new system has changed the expected form teaching standards are ascertained in Mexico, Article 1210 of NAFTA “Licensing and Certification” clearly shows how education procedures, and its evaluation does not involve students’ knowledge, but, as Aboites (2007, p.37) states, “it has to do more with the logic of a free trade agreement and the consequences it brings to Mexico”. For example, to certify a professional from a foreign country, it must be considered whether the school or programme has been certified or the person should have an exam or evaluation to demonstrate their professional capabilities.

This article of NAFTA led to the establishment of national entities which could certify and evaluate professional knowledge. The National Centre for the Evaluation of Higher Education (CENEVAL) was founded in 1994 by the National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions (ANUIES). According to their webpage, CENEVAL is structured as a twenty-member Board of Trustees; Presidents of public and private universities, Presidents of the two Universities Associations and the Heads of Professional or Trade Associations. The core

mission of CENEVAL is “the design and administration of tests and assessments for academic purposes, mainly for schools and universities”. (Ceneval, 2016)

Since then, English Language Certificates are extremely popular in Mexico, either to secure a job or climb up the rungs on the career ladder. In both public and private universities. This is to further one’s education, namely a Master’s or Doctorate programmes. Most certificates are provided by Private Schools which are sponsored by important Universities and International Institutions. In the context of this research, I will refer to the certificates awarded by the University of Cambridge, as they represent the most prestigious certification in the area of Mexico, where this research took place. Cambridge University offers a wide variety of certificates for young children and adolescents, adults, as well as teaching and business certificates.

It is also relevant to point out the importance of Certification if you want to teach in any public or private school in Mexico. Most schools require a minimum of FCE or *First* (First Certificate in English) level (B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)), many times holding an FCE diploma renders both college degrees and irrelevant experience. Appendix B shows the different levels for Certification of languages for the CEFR and Cambridge English Exams.

Another consequence derived from NAFTA has to do with the so-called “express certification”. Aboites (2007) explains that, nowadays, it suffices to show the requisite documents, have a successful interview, pass a multiple-choice exam and a written essay, to obtain a professional degree. This degree is issued by the SEP (Ministry of Education in Mexico), not from a University which puts university students at disadvantage. Aboites considers this to be “...a generous procedure in which people who have studied only part of their bachelor’s degree can obtain a professional degree”. (2007, p. 40)

What is true is that, on the one hand, having the possibility of graduating from university with more options is indeed advantageous to the students. A byproduct of this is a decrease in the number of research projects, which can bring about negative consequences to the whole educational system in the

country, as less time and resources are devoted to original research. The Mexican government has also adjusted many of its practices to meet the requirements asked by the other two signatory nations. However, the USA and Canada do not adhere to these practices, so Mexican professionals continue to face many obstacles to practise in those countries. The article by Aboites (2007) mentions as an example, the refusal of the Californian Senate to pass a law in 2002 to allow a number of certified doctors and dentists from UNAM to practise in the USA. (p.43)

In the three most recent administrations in Mexico (Vicente Fox 2000-2006, Felipe Calderón 2006-2012 and Enrique Peña 2012-2018), English Language Teaching has been encouraged at all levels in public schools. The National English Program for Elementary Education (PNIEB) was created in 2007 as a pilot program. Its original ambition was the introduction of English Language Teaching in the last course of kindergarten, at all the levels of elementary school (6 years), and the three years of secondary school.

The new mandatory study and teaching of English represented job opportunities for people who graduated from teaching and language programmes. However, reality was discouraging. The education system was not prepared to provide courses of the new subject. Most of the educators who started teaching English in public schools were far from proficient in the language while most public schools could not cover the posts for English Language Teachers. This was demonstrated by research carried out by the association "*Mexicanos Primero*" (O'Donoghue, 2015). Some of the findings of this study called: "*Sorry. El aprendizaje del inglés en México*", show the situation of English language teaching in Mexico in public schools: "there is a lack of English Language Teachers in Mexico, only 50% of secondary schools have English language Teachers, only 10% of elementary schools and 5% of kindergarten schools do". (2015, p.68). Other figures from the same survey, show that 14.7% of English language teachers in public schools understand English, 23.8% of English language teachers have attained an A1 level (which is the level for the fourth grade of elementary school), and 13.5% of English language teachers demonstrated an A2

level (level for the first grade of Secondary school). The study concluded that you can teach English in public schools in Mexico without being able to speak English. What is more, the same study revealed that only 3% of students of high school have reached an elementary level of English.

The document *"Sorry. El aprendizaje del inglés en México"* also concludes that "the most evident problem regarding the teaching and learning of English in Mexico is inequality" (2015, p. 33). This is most evident when we compare public and private universities. For example, in the area of English language. Whereas in some public universities, students graduate with A2 level of the CEFR, in private universities, students reach a C1 or C2 level even before graduating. Also, students in private Institutions are proficient in languages other than English. However, I should emphasise that speaking English does not guarantee a better education. As Suárez-Zozaya remarks "even when all Mexican students at University could speak English, this would not solve the problems which the educational system is facing nowadays". (2012, p.305)

In the following paragraphs, I will discuss the different changes undergone by the University where this research takes place.

2.2 Mexican Public University Context

This study was carried out in a public university, considered to be one of the best ranked public universities in Mexico. It is located in the central area of the country. This entails offering its services to nine other states in the central region of the country. It has its main offices, faculties, and schools in the capital of the State. It has a population of 18,625 students. Apart from the capital of the State, it has campuses in other 23 towns in the State. It also has four offices abroad, two in America (Argentina and USA) and two in Europe (Spain and Germany).

This University has a long history, as it was founded as an Institute in 1828. In those years, it was closed and then reopened several times due to foreign military invasions to Mexico. It was reopened in 1846. By 1943, the Congress granted the Institute with its autonomy from the State. At the time known as

ICLA (*Instituto Científico y Literario*). In 1956, the congress passed a law and officially ICLA gained the status of University.

Originally, the University had six schools: junior-high school, Medicine, Law, Business, Nursing and Pedagogy. In those days, the main languages that were taught in some programmes were French and English. In the mid-twentieth century, English became the most important foreign language to study. Gradually, it was included in the different degrees offered by the University. By the 1990's, English had become synonymous with globalisation and internationalisation, Mexico and elsewhere around the world.

The history of English Language Teaching within the University is included in some of the chronicles of the University, particularly in the "*Cuadernillo 13*" called "*Un breve recorrido por nuestra historia: 2007*" (Lopez Olivera, 2007). According to this document, the first language classes at this university took place at the beginning of the XIX century. However, it was French not English, the language of choice to study. Later, in 1870, the high school included in its curriculum, as compulsory subjects, Latin, English, French and German. (López Olivera 2007, p.7) In those days, French was lingua franca, and it was assumed to confer prestige.

The chronicle clarifies that the language teachers had mastery of the language they taught. However, they did not necessarily have teaching qualifications or formal training. This factor allowed many people, without a degree, certification, or teaching instruction, to become language teachers. The chronicle emphasises that this situation would be inconceivable nowadays. This is the direct quotation:

"Normalmente los cursos eran impartidos por profesores que poseían ciertos niveles de dominio y cuyos métodos didácticos eran totalmente artesanales (intuitivos) y empíricos. El carácter complementario con el que se concebía el aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros y la falta de profesionales en su enseñanza propició que la legislación universitaria permitiera dispensar el requisito de título de Licenciatura a los profesores de lenguas, hecho que hoy sería impensable de vislumbrar". (López Olivera, 2007, p.8)

The transformation into a University in 1956 meant the creation of new schools and departments. The creation of the Department of Foreign Languages, now

CELe (Centro de Estudios de Lenguas Extranjeras) in 1959 reflected the importance of the study of different languages at the University. With *CELe*, both University students and the public in general could attend lessons of the different languages the school offers. The creation of this school also reflected the global tendency to study foreign languages and participate in the globalised world. Since its beginning in the 1970's, this Department of Foreign Languages has been interested in teaching several different languages. English, French, Italian, and German are some of the languages on offer. This school also has courses in *otomí, mazahua, nahuatl* and other national languages.

This Public University has 21 Faculties –including the Faculty of Languages-, eleven “Centros Universitarios”, a School of Arts, eight High-Schools, and six “Unidades Académicas”. The different academic places are overseen. The top position at the University is the “Rector”, elected every four years by “*Consejo Universitario*”. This *Consejo Universitario* includes teachers, students, and administrative staff of the University. The “*Rectoría*” where the top officials work. These include the University Rector and Secretaries of fourteen different Departments.

In Mexico, public universities are granted a budget by the government. In this University of the research, students must pay a fee. This fee is relatively high compared to other public universities, but it is still relatively lower than at private universities. The fee can be reimbursed if students get a scholarship. Approximately 70% of students have a scholarship, this provided that they keep getting good grades.

Public University of the research (Faculty of Languages)	Prestigious Private University in Mexico City. (1)	Prestigious Public University in Mexico City. (1)
\$35,000	\$533,745	\$2,055

Table 2 Payment fees in three Public Universities in Mexico.

Comparison of the total cost of a degree in Humanities. The total cost is shown in Mexican pesos. (1) Information based on a survey by *Periódico Reforma* in

2016 and data gathered by the researcher.

In the next Section 2.3, the Faculty of Languages from this Public University is described.

2.3 Faculty of Languages Context

In the previous section 2.2, I mentioned the creation of CELe as a school for studying a number of different languages. The history of the Faculty of Languages is closely related to CELe. In 1984, “Consejo Universitario” created a School of Languages. In 1992, the BA programme in English was officially launched. Its main aim being the training of teachers, translators, and interpreters in the English Language. This officially severed its links to CELe. The first curriculum of the new BA in English was approved by “Consejo Universitario” in 1992. The main goal was that graduates from the BA should be “professionals not only capable of teaching, but also translating and interpreting at the highest level”¹. (2007, p.10). The main goal of these first cohorts was the mastery of Spanish and English and a third language, French.

It is important to say that the first teachers at this school were mainly those whose L1 was English and French. Today, the situation has changed. Out of twenty English Language teachers, only one has English as his L1. The Faculty of Languages offers two programmes: bachelor’s degree in Languages and a Distance programme in English Language Teaching. However, this second programme is geared towards people who are currently teaching English without a degree. The Faculty also has two Master Degrees, one in Applied Linguistics (MLA), the other in English Language Teaching (MEI), a distance programme.

As this Faculty is located in the capital of one of the most heavily industrialised and densely populated States in Mexico, graduates tend to look for a position as English language teachers at private local institutions. Still, some prefer to go back to their hometown and teach at the local schools.

¹ El currículo de la LLI que fue aprobado estipulaba que el ejercicio profesional en el campo de las lenguas no se limitaba a formar un profesional capaz de enseñar, sino que éste además deberá ser capaz de traducir e interpretar a un alto nivel. (2007:10)

The Faculty had a staff of 121 teachers in autumn 2021 and 1096 students. The Faculty is located in an urban area in the capital of the State. It has three buildings with 25 classrooms, 26 offices for teachers, a library, a self-access centre and a cafeteria. It also offers translation and certification services to the public. These services generate resources which can later be invested in the improvement of the school or in scholarships for students. It is important to highlight that most students come from low- income groups, whereas those with the wherewithal prefer private universities.

It is relevant for my research to understand the working conditions of the teachers. Under the University rules, all teachers who work for this University must have a bachelor's degree. However, it does not specify in which area. Recently, according to the different Administrations (there is a new Director voted in elections every four years), it is preferable to hire new teachers with master's degrees or even PhDs. Nevertheless, this situation depends on the powers that be. The main authorities in the Faculty of Languages are three: the Director, elected every four years through a vote from the community: students, teachers, and administrative workers. The Director appoints two sub-directors, Administrative and Academic, and also decides on the different departments in the Faculty. Usually, most of the Departments oversee tenured professors. This represents an extra administrative burden, as not only do these professors teach a minimum of eighteen hours, but also must do research, coordinate departments and supervise thesis from the BA and the MA programmes. Some of the participants in the study belong to this category of professors. The organisation of the Faculty is better understood with the organisation chart, included in the Appendix C. In this organigram, I highlighted the level of: Academic Council. This Council is integrated by all the Presidents of the Departments. In this Academic Council, the participants make important academic decisions which involve students and teachers. I can say that this is one of the perks of being the President of a CoP.

At this University, a teacher can have either of two categories: "full time or tenured" teacher or "*asignatura or untenured* " teacher. Permanent professors

work 40 hours a week, with a minimum of eighteen hours' classroom work. In the Faculty of Languages, there are only twenty-one permanent teachers, to become a permanent teacher, you need to have a Master's Degree or a PhD and a proven experience. Permanent or tenured professors are appointed by the authorities in "*Rectoría*". On the other hand, *asignatura* teachers can teach a maximum of eighteen hours. As I write this, there are 100 *asignatura* teachers working at the Faculty of Languages. Every year, there are three cycles or terms: spring, autumn, and an intensive three-week summer period. The process to assign a number of classes differs in each Administration. However, there is usually a preference for permanent teachers, those with more experience, and last, new teachers.

In order to decide on the distribution of teachers and their lessons, the Academic sub-director and the coordinator of the BA assign the subjects. Ideally, there is an expert teacher for each area of knowledge. Nevertheless, teachers must adapt to the schedules proposed by the authorities. As a result, sometimes they are made to teach courses outside their area of expertise.

Since 2006, due to a reform to the curricula of the university, the BA in English was transformed into the BA in Languages. The main difference is the inception of a flexible system, whereby students can choose the rhythm, schedule, and teachers for their studies. All the above information has been taken from the *Curriculum de la Licenciatura en Lenguas 2009*, the official document each Faculty has. In this document, we have information related to the BA. This Curriculum includes objectives, profiles of student and teacher, as well as a description of every subject in the BA. According to this curriculum, the aims of the BA are:

"The main objective is to form professionals in the area of English and French who can teach or translate, as well as provide their students with a series of tools and skills which affords the graduates the exercise of critical thinking in their professional and everyday life"². (Curriculum de la Facultad de Lenguas, 2009, p.23)

² La Licenciatura en lenguas busca formar profesionales en la lengua inglesa o francesa que realicen funciones de docencia o traducción, además de dotar a sus egresados de las herramientas o habilidades que les permitan actuar en su vida profesional y personal a partir del ejercicio crítico y el razonamiento de sus saberes. (2009:23)

It is necessary to clarify that both languages: English and French have the same relevance regardless of the area of study. In other words, to be an English language teacher you need to study eight levels of English. The same happens with French when the emphasis is on this language. The student profile to enrol in this Faculty points out that it is not necessary to have any previous knowledge of the languages to study. However, in the exam all the students sit to enter the Faculty, there is a section to test the level of English candidate's.

Earlier in this chapter, I mentioned that a teacher needs a BA to teach at this University. In 2006, the Administration decided that in order to teach English in this Faculty, a teacher needed to demonstrate a C1 level of proficiency of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). To teach French, a B2 level in the same framework is a requisite. Most teachers hold these certifications. However, it was a stumbling block for many graduates, who wanted to teach languages but could not demonstrate they had this level. Therefore, they were not allowed to teach English. Seven of my participants meet this requirement. This has resulted in heated debates in The English Department, as not all the teachers agree on the need to have a Certification. They claim that having a degree in Teaching English or Languages is far more important than a certificate. This decision is problematic, as graduates sometimes cannot pass a C1 Certification.

This has proven controversial for some, as demonstrated in the life story interviews. The answers to this topic are discussed in Chapter 4. However, in general terms, teachers and students prefer a person who has got a Certification to demonstrate their English level. This is an addition to their qualifications in the area. This only goes on to show how neoliberal practices, imposed by foreign Institutions, have deeply permeated the decisions made at a local level at this University. This analysis will demonstrate the previous point.

The certifications mentioned earlier in this chapter are a common practice at all private schools in Mexico. Sometimes, students, at all levels, from elementary school to university, need to pass this Certification to move onto the next level

of education. This is a disadvantage for students at public schools, who cannot afford a preparation course nor the exam leading to the certificate. At the Faculty of Languages, most students have been studying English for about six years (secondary and high school). However, this implies many difficulties and challenges along the process. As a consequence, when these students go to university, most of them are placed at levels A1 or A2 of the CEFR. This means that students are expected to move from an A1 or A2 level competence of English language to a C1 level in a period of four years. C1 level is what the Curriculum stipulates³. (2009, p.57)

The Curriculum of the BA in languages has a section, 1.4 p. 12-13 called *Epistémica*, a description of the importance of training “professionals in the area”. “Teacher training is not an imitative xxx, but a professional activity, intra and interdisciplinary.” (2009, p.13) With this, the University intends to employ only “professionals in the area on Languages”. This would exclude all my participants, who have a professional degree in areas different from teaching or languages. However, they can demonstrate their proficiency in the English language with an International Certificate. It is precisely this Certificate which allowed them to get a job at the University. The profile of the teachers can be seen in Chapter 4 (Figure 3. Participants information).

The document also stresses the importance of the professionalisation of English teachers at both, public and private institutions. There are many language teachers who lack the necessary pedagogy to be teachers. In the same text, it is argued that there is still the belief that a person with an international certificate in a language is capable of teaching this language. It is this person who displaces the professional teachers who hold a BA in teaching at a University. “All this, results in a lack of recognition for the profession” (2009, p.13). The previous statements are contrary to what actually happens at the University, where most

³ Los estudiantes deberán manejar el idioma hasta el nivel superior intermedio, desarrollando las cuatro habilidades.

language teachers come from different degrees, and they needed an international certificate (Level C1 in ALTE) in order to teach at this Faculty of Languages.

The Curriculum tries to legitimise certain practices, thus “officially” recognising as teachers only those who hold a degree in the area. In “real practice”, however, English language teachers are those who can demonstrate their level of English with an international Certificate. I can vouch for this as I have witnessed the process of teacher selection, and it was also borne out during my interviews. As a result, there are two kinds of teachers in “The English Department”: “official” teachers, with a degree in English language teaching, and teachers who have a degree in areas other than teaching and languages. In this research, I want to give an account of the tensions and complexities that the latter face when they try to legitimise themselves before students, colleagues, and the authorities.

During the 2021b semester, the Faculty of Languages had 29 English Language Teachers: 15 BA in Languages, and 14 holders with a BA in other areas. All the teachers whose life stories are explored in this research belong to the second category. It is important to highlight how these figures have changed. In 2002, out of nineteen English language teachers, only six had a BA in languages.

In the official curriculum, it is also established that it is true that “many private institutions offer language and teacher training courses. These are short and do not cover all the aspects the students of a BA in teaching do”⁴(2009, p.13). The private institutions to which this Curriculum refers are Institutions which are recognised worldwide and supported by prestigious Universities, this is the reason why, many people, as it is my case and of some of my interviewees, studied in these private schools and they could obtain a good job teaching English without having a university degree in the area.

⁴ “Si bien existe un sin número de institutos privados que imparten cursos de inglés en general, y que a su vez forman su planta docente con personas que toman algunos cursos de entrenamiento en el área de corta duración, el profesional de lenguas egresado de las distintas universidades públicas abre cada vez más, nuevos campos de acción en el desempeño de la carrera” (2009, p.13).

Additionally, some of these teachers have two jobs, one related to their university studies and they also teach English.

With this information, I can affirm that most teachers of languages have attended a number of courses provided by private Institutions and such degrees never represented an obstacle to be hired in the public University. Once again, there is a contradiction in the Official Curriculum and the real practice in the Faculty of Languages.

It is undeniable how the reality of this Faculty of Languages has been transformed in a few years. At the beginning, when this Faculty was founded, most teachers came from different educational backgrounds, and little by little, the tendency has been to give opportunity to people who studied in this Faculty and come back to their *Alma Mater*. However, in the area of Languages, more specifically, English, I can still see a majority of people with other BAs and in recent years they continue hiring people who are not specialists in the field.

When I asked the current and past authorities about this contradiction, the answer was simple: “we needed people with the level of English, and the people who graduate from this School do not have the level we demand”⁵ (Interview with the head of the Academic Department). There are other answers such as: “we need people with experience”, and most of the people working in this Faculty have been teaching for more than ten years. However, I must point out that, since 2015, there are some teachers, without experience, in classrooms teaching English.

To summarise the contradictions found in the Curriculum when contrasted with what happens in reality, it is true that, it is necessary to have a BA to teach in this University. It is also desirable to have a master’s degree to teach at the Faculty of Languages. Despite this, it is not mandatory to have qualifications in the area of Languages and Teaching, in order to teach English in the Faculty of Languages

⁵ Answer given by the Academic Subdirector to the question: Why did you hire people with a different degree and not graduates from the BA in Languages?

The participants in this research have a certificate which proves their proficiency in the language. Furthermore, they have also taken a number of courses in Pedagogy, some of them from highly-reputed schools. However, it must be kept in mind that, according to students, it is precisely these teachers who are training the future professionals in the area. This is a contradiction that has caused problems to some of my participants, as they have been challenged by students or colleagues for not being “professionals” in the area, I want to emphasise that by “professional” I mean a person who has a college degree in teaching, or one of the other areas he or she is teaching.

All the teachers at this Public University, which includes the Faculty of Languages, belong to a Department, organisations of teachers of all the Faculties at this Public University. Departments are pivotal of the essence as far as this research is concerned, and their function is described in the next Section 2.3.1.

2.3.1 The English Department as a community of practice

The English Department is the name I have chosen for what I have defined as the CoP I aim to study. Officially, they are called differently, and these CoP have very important roles formally described in “*Legislación Universitaria*”. I am interested in the official role of The English Department of English Language teachers, but also in the informal interaction that occurs among all the participants.

The Departments are an integral part of all the Faculties at this University, and they are the subject of this research. To my mind, they constitute a CoP where my participants interact. I am using the name *English Department* in this research thesis, but the generalities of this academic group are found in “*Estatuto Universitario*”. This document establishes all official rules, obligations and rights of students, teachers, and staff at the University. It is considered the most important document for all schools, faculties, and departments of this university. The points related to The Departments are found in the Chapter VI, articles 80-81. Now, I will summarise and translate what this document says:

Article 80: The Departments are forms of organisation within each School and Faculty. Their main objectives are: “to provide counselling and give opinion about the curriculum processes in each School/Faculty, to develop the programmes for each subject and all the documents pertaining teaching (such as exams), to establish the processes of teaching and learning and to analyse the aspects related to the recognition of studies at other schools” (2016, p.27).

Article 80, contains guidelines for the functioning of a Department. The article goes on to describe albeit succinctly the practices of a Department. I can talk about the practices of The English Department as I have participated in it for more than twenty years. It is true that within the English Department, we create the syllabus. However, there is no consensus about exams and evaluation processes. Consequently, all teachers are given free rein in that regard. For instance, in the English Department, all teachers are asked to evaluate listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar skills. Nevertheless, it is the teacher who decides how to assign the percentages of the final mark. This is one of the discussions which have created more tensions within The English Department. As there is no agreement on how to do it, and the teacher cannot be forced to evaluate in any particular way.

At the different Faculties of the University, The Departments are divided in areas of study. At the Faculty of Languages, there are seven The Departments: English, French, Linguistics, Translation, Cultural Studies, Computing and Research. Each term, a teacher can belong to one or even different Departments, depending on the subjects they teach. For example, if I teach English III and Contemporary History of English, I belong to two different Departments: English and Cultural Studies. The same Article 80 explains how The Departments are constituted:

“The Departments will have a President and a Secretary who can take over the duties of the first in case the former being absent. Both the President and Secretary remain in the post for a two-year period and will be elected by the teachers who belong to the Department” (2016, p.27).

In the process of election, all teachers who belong to the Department are entitled to be voted, as long as they fulfil the requirements set forth in Article 81. The teachers can nominate themselves or nominate somebody else. The elections

are usually through a direct vote. Most of the time, full time teachers and those with more experience tend to be elected. There is no campaign, and, in my experience in the English Department, the Secretary usually becomes President at the end of the two-year period.

Notwithstanding the freedom that characterises the election with all Departments, it cannot be denied that the Director of the Faculty may exert some influence in the way the vote is conducted, mostly by suggesting a candidate.

Article 81 clarifies who can be elected President and Secretary of the English Department:

“The successful candidate need to work at the School or Faculty, have a bachelor’s degree, teach a minimum of eight hours a week at the School or Faculty, not to have an administrative role at the School or Faculty, be recognised by his/her peers as an active participant at the School or Faculty and be genuinely interested in the School or Faculty they work in.” (2016, p.28)

From the previous Articles I can conclude that all teachers working at a Faculty at this University belong to one or more Departments. Even though The Departments have general rules set forth by “*Estatuto Universitario*”, it is each Faculty and School that ultimately decide how they organise and function. At this Faculty, each Department meets at least twice every semester. Some Departments meet more often, according to the number of issues to discuss. The meetings are called by the President and the Secretary of the Department. The invitation is usually sent by email. The email every member of the Department receives. The email usually includes the day, time and venue of the meeting; usually, the meeting room of the Faculty or a classroom, if the Department has a large number of participants.

At the beginning of each meeting, the President reads at the points to be discussed at the meeting “*Orden del día*”, which needs to be approved by the members of the Department. After this, the Secretary reads the minutes from the previous meeting, the content of which is also approved or corrected. Then,

the President usually starts by raising an issue to be discussed. Everybody can participate and give their opinion. The dynamics and interaction of each Department vary, so teachers attending can decide to take part or just listen to the rest of the members. Sometimes, there are commissions within the Department which deal with certain aspects of the area. These commissions are also elected through a vote. The dynamics of teachers at these meetings reveal much about their trajectories, as I discuss in section 3.2 devoted to CoP (See 3.2 Communities of Practice).

When a teacher does not attend a meeting, he or she must get in contact with the President or the Secretary to be briefed about all the aspects discussed in the meeting. In past Administrations, *asignatura* (non-permanent) teachers were warned against missing the meetings as it could have negative consequences regarding their contract for the following term. The dynamics of the Department are crucial for this research work as the English Department is the CoP where all teachers interact with colleagues and an important place to construct an identity and participate or decide to stay on the margins or periphery.

Some Departments have specific duties throughout the academic year, for example, the English Department organises “*Mock Exams*” every term. These exams are important for the final grades of students, and all members of the Department participate. Some of them invigilate the exam; others mark exams while others act as oral examiners. The English Department also prepares the “*English Day*”, a festival with conferences, games and other activities, which also involves the complete Department of English. This takes place in November.

As I mentioned before, all teachers belong to a Department but not all attend the meetings due to personal reasons. This is normally the case for *asignatura* teachers, who may have other jobs, or the meetings take place when they have lessons. It is this interaction that I want to explore in depth in my interviews.

As I will demonstrate in section 4.1, the Department of English language teachers is a CoP. First, it is made up of people engaged in a process of collective learning, in a shared domain of human endeavour. Secondly, they represent groups of

people who share a concern or passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better, by interacting regularly. (Wenger, 1998)

In the following chapter, I discuss different authors who inform my research and the theories which guide this analysis.

2.4 Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is a most contentious issue. Neoliberalism can be studied from a point of view of economics, or as part of an analysis of the social sciences. References to neoliberalism are as extreme as the following: "... the ultimate end of politics, as neoliberals say, is the existence of the free market and the denial of Sociology and all Social Sciences," Bonanno, Martínez, Aboites (2016, p.10). In contrast, Dani Rodrik describes neoliberalism as "... a perversion of mainstream economics" (2017). In literature, some refer to *neoliberalism* as capitalism or globalisation and globalism.

The main reason for including this section in the present study is to contextualise the moment in which the participants are immersed, and also to demonstrate that the teachers in this study can be characterised as "neoliberal citizens".

The first section considers some generalities of neoliberalism. The second one describes the neoliberal citizen, and, finally, there is an overview of neoliberalism in Mexico.

2.4.1 General concepts

One of the seminal works that introduced clear concepts of neoliberalism was "A Brief History of Neoliberalism," by Harvey (2005). Harvey defines neoliberalism as "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (2005, p.2). Traditionally, neoliberalism has been considered one of the forms of capitalism (Block, Gray & Holborow, 2012; Block 2018).

Block, Gray & Holborow (2012, p.i) define neoliberalism as "the way in which

social, political and economic factors relate to one another within the context of a capitalist economy". With neoliberal practices, the state changes its role. The new role of the state is "to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such (neoliberal) practices" (Harvey, 2005, p.2).

The turn to neoliberalism can be traced back to the 1970's. With very few exceptions, all countries embraced this new politics. The very first actions that characterised this

form of capitalism were deregulation, privatisation, and withdrawal of the state from many areas of social provision (Harvey, 2005). The latter included education, particularly at universities. Many important positions at universities were occupied by what Harvey (2005) called "think tanks". This meant that universities adopted, above all, an entrepreneurial vision. Bordieu (2005, p.10) claims that neoliberalism has been so deeply rooted in societies that "it has become a system of beliefs and values, and ethos and a moral view of the world, in short, and economic common sense".

A salient characteristic of current neoliberalism is the ruling of certain organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. These organisations have backed the turn to privatisation of services previously granted by the state. Examples of these are health and, certainly, education. In this respect, Spring (2008) considers that establishing neoliberal parameters in education means that neoliberal education provides human capital and constitutes the engine for economic growth.

A consequence of introducing neoliberal practices in schools is that they become the seedbed for neoliberal thinking and the inculcation of market values, fertile soil for different corporations. According to Block, Gray and Holborow (2012) the shift from pedagogical values to market values in educational philosophy has meant "the abandonment of the social and cooperative ethic in favour of individualist and competitive business models" (p.6). Neoliberalism has permeated all levels of education with a disguised discourse of ideals of upward individual economic mobility and the social ideals of global economic

competition. Saltman (2009) claims that we have been made to believe that there is no alternative but to enforce “knowledge and curriculum conducive to national economic interest and the expansion of a corporately managed model of globalisation as perceived from the perspective of business” (p.53).

In 2004, some US educationalists wrote of the way in which educational reform, “embracing the twin legacies of neoliberalism and neoconservatism, had resulted in greater social inequality, more cumbersome bureaucratic measurements and greater power for the evaluative state” (Apple 2004, p.13).

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, neoliberalism has been traditionally studied as part of the political economy of a country. However, many authors have warned us against the importance of considering neoliberalism as a great influence in people’s lives. Block, Gray & Holborow (2012, p.i) take the view that “engagement with political economy is central to any full-rounded analysis of language and language-related issues in the world today”. The same authors consider that political economy justifies neoliberalism in the wider economic and political developments of contemporary capitalism and provides the vital political and economic dimension to issues of social identity, language, and language teaching.

Some authors, in turn, (Block, 2018; Holborow, 2015) insist on the importance of studying neoliberalism from the interdisciplinary of applied linguistics and political economy. These authors consider that there is a gap in the studies of applied linguistics when researchers do not take into consideration aspects of political economy in their studies. Block, Gray & Holborow (2012) insist on the importance of seeing political economy as “a pathway to interdisciplinarity which combines branches of economics and politics in order to understand how social institutions, their activities and capitalism influence each other in various ways” (p.2). If applied linguists lacked this, their studies would not give a full account of what truly happens in the world. Brumfit (1991) claimed that real world problems are clearly linked to political economy and our material existence.

Neoliberalism has become a point of reference in today’s world. Most authors consider it an ideology. Holborow (2012) argues that “an ideology constitutes a

representational mechanism, articulated on behalf of specific social interests, which precisely blurs the distinction between the ideology and the real world” (p.9-10). The same author characterises neoliberalism as an ideology because: it is a one-sided representation; it is articulated from a particular social class but constructed as a worldview; it is part believed and part-rejected; it is influenced by real world events; and it is coextensive with language but distinct from it (2012, p.29).

Neoliberalism is an ideology because it is full of contradictions; what it says is completely different from what actually happens in reality. “Neoliberal ideology draws a picture of the world to suit its ends; starting from the real world, it misrepresents it” (Holborow; 2012, p.29).

The following section characterises and defines the “neoliberal citizen”.

2.4.2 The neoliberal citizen

The term “neoliberal subject” was coined by Joseph Park (2013). Park describes an ideal neoliberal subject as someone who “does not begrudgingly participate in work, but displays initiative, responsibility, and flexibility, willingly taking risks and engaging in projects of endless self-improvement” (p.103). All the above characteristics are certainly found in the participants in the present study.

According to Block (2018), the concept of neoliberal subject draws heavily on Foucault’s 1979 biopolitical lectures, and the interpreters of these lectures (e.g., Brown, 2005; Lemke, 2001). Most definitions of neoliberal citizens include initiative and flexibility as important characteristics of such a subject. Brown (2005) prefers the concept of self-care to refer to neoliberal subjects or citizens. These citizens, according to Brown, reject welfare and solidarity.

Block (2018) chooses the term *neoliberal citizen*, and not subject, because “society, and in the nation-state, is a collective structure” (p.104). Living in the neoliberal citizen times means that subjects live in conformity with the neoliberal regime. This may mean badly paid jobs, being a good consumer to help the economy grow, being a member of an organisation, among others.

The individualisation of the citizens has been on the increase since the 1980's. Robert Putnam (2000) has noted a series of fundamental changes since then, namely: a decrease in political participation, less participation in civic organisations, a decline in union membership, and a decline in informal social connections such as playing cards with friends or bowling (p.104).

Block & Grey (2018) have also found examples of this individualistic, entrepreneurial, neoliberal citizen in a study of French textbooks. In this respect, Holborow (2015) makes particular reference to what she calls "The age of entrepreneur". She claims that the *entrepreneur* has lost its original meaning. Now entrepreneurs are "the social icons of our neoliberal age" (p.72). The neoliberal entrepreneur represents a citizen who is at the centre stage, looking for wealth at an individual level.

As discussed in the previous section, neoliberalism is hardly ever mentioned in forums outside the field of economics. This fact has allowed neoliberalism to remain unnoticed in many aspects of people's lives. Stephen Gill (1995, 2016) has written about a market civilization, which he defines as "the dominant mode of capitalist development– one that is possessively individualist, me-oriented, consumerist, exploitative of human beings and nature (and) unequal, energy-intensive, wasteful and ecologically myopic".(Gill, 2016, p.34)

The next section deals with neoliberalism in Mexico.

2.4.3 Neoliberalism in Mexico

As I said in 2.1, Mexico experienced a series of economic reforms in the eighties. This was facilitated by the trade agreements signed by Mexico. Neoliberalism in Mexico also coincided with a change of regime in decades. In 2000, for the first time, the ascension of an opposition political party to the government made it easy to adopt neoliberal policies.

In 1988, many reforms took place to facilitate Mexico's admission to the introduction of NAFTA. The main objectives, as signalled by the IMF, were control of inflation, negotiation of external debt, privatisation of different state-owned companies, among others. González & González (2014). The subsequent

presidents, never deviated from the same political and economic script. However, the arrival of Andrés Manuel López Obrador in 2018, has meant a watershed event in all sectors of Mexican society.

Even before López was elected, he claimed that neoliberalism was the root of all problems in Mexico. He used the word neoliberalism more than thirty times in *The National Development Project*. (Ramírez, 2023). Every morning, at his conferences, he blames neoliberals for all of the problems, past, present or to come.

He went as far as declaring the “end of the neoliberal period in Mexico” on September 1st 2018, the day he was sworn in as president. (Mares, 2018)

In order to reach his goals, President López has sent different bills to the Federal Congress. Over the past five years, he has cut down the budget of essential sectors. For example, in 2022, the government shrank the money to health and education to \$41,000 million pesos, the lowest budget in the last ten years. (Torres, 2022). This money was spent on his “mega projects”: *The Maya Train*, and the “*Dos Bocas oil refinery*”.

The reductions in the education sector have had different implications. In 2022, it was reported a reduction of 11% in the budget assigned to elementary education. This counter-reform introduced in education implies the complete elimination of the previous reform by Enrique Peña Nieto. Some voices have been critical of this reform. Gil Antón, professor at Colegio de México, claimed “it is a poor reform, poorly written, with unforgivable syntax mistakes and without solid foundations” (Usier, 2019). By contrast, the President states that the “New Mexican School” will have as its foundations: humanism and scientific knowledge. Nevertheless, science in Mexico is one of the sectors most seriously affected by the recently approved reforms.

In April 2023, Senators belonging to the president’s political party, passed a law which eliminated different organisms. One of them is CONACYT (Consejo Nacional para la ciencia y la tecnología). (Chávez, 2023). The future of thousands of graduate students and research funds is uncertain, as there is no clarity about

the new mechanisms to apply for scholarships. Highly regarded scientists, like Antonio Lazcano, consider the new “Law of Science” as “contrary to the basic principles of research, as it aims to impose only one single vision of science” (Aristegui noticias, 2023). What’s more, there is no clarity about the new lines of research approved by the new Act.

Supporters of the new Act state that the CONACYT does not disappear, “it is just a change to the name of the organism”, said Federico Anaya, professor of the National Polytechnic and participant in the drafting of the Act. (Ruíz, 2023). What is true is that the monetary support to teachers and professors at private schools has been cancelled.

The participants in this study teach English, and also train future English language teachers. When López became president, there was uncertainty about the future of the study of foreign languages in public schools. Previous reforms, as mentioned in 2.1, had incorporated, albeit with poor results, the study of English at all elementary level schools. In 2018, some prestigious universities like COLMEX (Colegio de México) claimed that “it seems that the new government has decided to end the teaching of English in Mexico, as established by PRONI (Programa Nacional de inglés) in 2016... This decision will mean a regression in the educational sector” (Mota, 2018)

Despite all the signals, the “New Mexican School (NMS)” includes the teaching of English at schools. NMS states that “the subject of English is incorporated into all the programmes and the syllabus of the language development area” (SEP, 2019). It is too early to know the consequences of the implementation of the NMS and the Act of Education.

López Obrador has claimed to be one of the fiercest enemies of neoliberals and neoliberalism. However, many of its reforms and policies are neoliberal to the core. As Campos (2020) states “The fourth transformation⁶ is, at heart, neoliberal deep inside” (Campos, 2020).

⁶ Name given to Lopez’s movement

Chapter 3: Literature review

This chapter presents a comprehensive theoretical framework for this research. It discusses the following topics: an explanation of the most relevant aspects of the “Communities of practice” (CoP) social theory (Lave and Wenger 1991), and Wenger (1998), including a number of definitions, significant to this thesis. It also revises Norton’s theory of identity (1995). I include in both theories (CoP and identity), some examples of literature which shows the evolution of both concepts. The theory of narrative underpinning this research is later discussed in Chapter 4.

First, in this literature review, I define CoP and identity from a poststructuralist view (3.1). Then in 3.2., the main components of the theory of CoP are established and how they would guide my field work and analysis. In the third section of this review, the concept of identity will be introduced according to the fundamentals provided by Bonny Norton and other authors (3.3). There will be an extensive explanation on how this idea of identity as a construct, which is situated and continually negotiated is closely related to the theory of CoP.

3.1 Community of Practice and identity in Poststructuralism

Before discussing CoPs and identity, I consider it necessary to see the context in which I study both constructs. **Poststructuralism** has meant a turning point in social theory. Norton and Toohey, in 2002 stated that “poststructuralist theories of language are becoming increasingly attractive to researchers of identity and language learning”. (p.116)

In the last three decades, identity has been studied through a poststructuralist approach (Norton & Morgan, 2013; Bucholtz & Hall, 2007; Block, 2007). In poststructuralism, as opposed to structuralism, language is central in the construction of identity. In Norton and Morgan (2013, p.1), “poststructuralist theories of language which achieved prominence in the late 20th century, have been influenced by Bakhtin (1981), Bordieu (1977), Derrida (1978), Weedon (1997), and Foucault (1980).”

The main critique to Saussure's work in structuralism is that "structuralism did not account for struggles over the social meanings that can be attributed to signs within a given language" (Norton and Morgan 2013, p. 2). Norton and Morgan (2013) present some characteristics of poststructuralism which will undoubtedly shed light on the main characteristics of identity. According to them, poststructuralism is:

"a set of theoretical stances that serve to critique prevailing assumptions regarding the sources and nature of identity... poststructuralism critiques the conditions and foundations of knowledge, particularly with reference to its apparent objectivity and universal applicability" (2013, p.1).

These characteristics offered by poststructuralism will mean the change from static laws of human behaviour to multi-layered characteristics that shape and reshape continuously. The authors who support poststructuralism give more prominence to language. In poststructuralist theory, language is seen as central to the circulation of discourses; in poststructural terms, "discourses normalise the personal and collective possibilities we are capable of imagining in place and time." (Norton and Morgan 2013, p. 1).

With the above descriptions, I can see that, while structuralists consider that linguistic communities are fairly homogeneous, poststructuralists see the practices of The Departments as heterogeneous and sites of struggle. These characteristics are also found in CoPs. Regarding identity, in structuralism, most views consider identity as a more fixed and stable entity. Along the same lines, Bryan (2012) says "in identity research, poststructuralists undermine the notion of an essentially stable self (identity) and instead, acknowledge identity as a complex phenomenon that is multiple, fluid, dynamic, and shifts depending on interactions within social contexts". (p.44).

In the following sections, CoPs and identity are analysed more specifically, the notion of teachers' professional identity.

3.2 Communities of Practice

The fact of using CoPs as a theoretical framework for this research is justified not

only because I consider that this notion covers the fundamental elements needed for explaining the construction and transformation of the participants' identity in the context with which they interact, but also because the literature has demonstrated the efficacy of this framework to research individuals' identity (Tsui, 2007; Norton, 2001; Pratt & Back, 2012; Taylor, 2014; Morita, 2004; Handley, et al., 2006) .

Communities of Practice theory (CoP) is founded on a theory of learning which understands that engagement in social practice is the fundamental process whereby we learn and become who we are. Furthermore, it claims that learning is an integral and inseparable part of social practice (Wenger, 1998; Lave and Wenger, 1991). This theory explores the intersection of issues of community, social practice, meaning, and identity. Wenger (2000b) clarifies that the concept of CoP was not born out of the systems theory. It has its roots in anthropology and social theory inspired by Lave, 1988; Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 1984; Foucault, 1980; Vygotsky, 1978.

The evolution of the concept has gained momentum since the 80's. It is a theory which has helped to understand communities of different kinds, in fields such as business, government, academe, education, health and the civil sector. (Wenger, 2000)

The four premises for this social theory of learning are: 1) we are social beings, 2) knowledge is a matter of competence with respect to valued endeavours, 3) knowing is a matter of participating in the pursuit of such enterprises, that is, of active engagement in the world, 4) Meaning is ultimately what learning is to produce (Wenger 1998, p.4). As we can see, these elements will be fundamental to interpret the teachers' life stories in the CoP. It would also show the degree of engagement and involvement they have in the CoP (The English Department) they belong to.

Wenger (1998) explains that the foundations of his theory are similar to the ones of Giddens (1971), who aimed to solve the dichotomy between structure and action in his "structuration theory". Giddens' theory is based on the idea that structure is both input and output of human actions. Accordingly, actions have

both intended and unintended consequences, with actors knowing a great deal, though not everything about the structural ramifications of their actions. (Giddens, 1998)

Bonny Norton used the ideas on CoP by Wenger, to explain current theories of identity and language learning, (Norton, 2002, 2006, 2013), Norton and Toohey state that “a shift from seeing learners as individual language producers to seeing them as members of social and historical collectivities moves observers to ward examining the conditions for learning, for appropriation of practices, in any particular community.” (2002, p. 119) Along the same lines, this thesis analyses the ways in which teachers interact within a community as they have contact with a number of other actors who also play a part in shaping and reshaping their identities in the different CoP they participate in.

According to Wenger (1998, p. 5) a social theory of learning must therefore integrate the components necessary to characterise social participation as a process of learning and of knowing. These components include:

- 1) Meaning: a way of talking about our changing ability to experience our life and the world as meaningful (Learning as experience),
- 2) Practice: a way of talking about the shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives that can sustain mutual engagement in action (Learning as doing),
- 3) Community: a way of talking about the social configuration in which our enterprises are defined as worth pursuing and our participation is recognizable as competence (Learning as belonging),
- 4) Identity: a way of talking about how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our communities (Learning as becoming). (Wenger, 1998, p.5)

Learning is, therefore, a transformative experience in the individual sense, but also in the dynamics within the English Department. However, the aspects which are not mentioned in this “learning experience” in the CoP are related to the complexities found in *The English Department*. The CoP is full of struggles and power relations and the participants need to learn how to navigate them.

Norton and Toohey (2002) suggest that educational research might focus not so much on assessing individual “uptake” of particular knowledge or skills, but rather on the social structures in particular communities and on the variety of

positionings available for learners to occupy in these communities. (p.119) In The English Department, there are privileged positions: President and Secretary, while the rest are members of the community occupying lower rungs in the different positions.

As a participant in a CoP, your role must be active in the activities of such communities and construct an identity in relation to these communities. Such participation shapes not only what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret what we do. The teachers who participate in this research belong to different CoPs, but in order to identify themselves as English teachers, they belong to "*The English Department*". In this English Department, teachers participate performing different roles and engaging in different practices, resulting from various factors.

Hoadley (2012) defines a CoP taking into consideration two characteristics: a feature-based definition and a process-based one. The former is a community that shares practices. This is important because it identifies knowledge with something people "do", as part of their culture, profession, or avocations" (2012, p.287). This definition is particularly relevant to this study, as teachers do something different from what they were supposed to do, that is, they are English teachers even when they did not study specifically to become teachers.

In the process-based definition, CoP are groups in which a "constant process of legitimate peripheral participation takes place. Through this, learners enter a community and gradually take up its practices". (Hoadley, 2012, p. 291). It is important to clarify that this concept is central to the theory of CoP and to this study, as **legitimate peripheral participation** (LPP) determines the type of participant you are in a CoP, and the degree of engagement you have in it.

Lave and Wenger, in 1991 introduced the concept of **legitimate peripheral participation** to characterise the process by which newcomers become included in a CoP (p.100). In using this term, they wanted to capture important conditions under which people can become members of a CoP. Wenger mentions that they wanted to broaden the traditional connotations of the concept of apprenticeship to one of changing participation and identity transformation in a CoP. The

concepts of identity and CoP were thus important to their argument, they say that “learning, as situated activity, is at its core, a process that we call **legitimate peripheral participation**” (Lave and Wenger 1991, p.29).

Norton and Toohey (2002) suggest that **legitimate peripheral participation** represents Lave and Wenger views that “communities are composed of participants who differentially engage with their practices of their communities and this engagement of practice in participation is learning.” (p.119) With this in mind, I understand how important it becomes to actually engage into the practices of the community, *learning by doing*.

In this respect, Lave and Wenger (1991) explain that CoP require newcomers to move toward full participation in the practices of a community. It concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a CoP (p.29). **Peripherality** and **legitimacy** are two types of modification in the forms of participation of newcomers, which are required to make actual participation possible:

1. **Peripherality** provides an approximation of full participation that gives exposure to actual practice. Wenger also points out that to open up a practice, peripheral participation must provide access to all three dimensions of practice: to mutual engagement with other members, to their actions and their negotiation of the enterprise, and to the repertoire in use (1998, p. 100). It is important to mention that it does not matter how the **peripherality** of initial participation is achieved, as long as it involves newcomers and gives a clear idea of how the community operates.

2. The second type of modification refers to the **inbound trajectory**. According to Wenger (1998, p. 101), newcomers must be granted enough **legitimacy** to be treated as potential members. For obvious reasons, if a community rejects a newcomer, that person would have a hard time learning. As the group of teachers which are participating in this research are not official English teachers, they can be regarded as **peripheral**. Consequently, it will be relevant to understand how they have gained legitimacy and find the resources they have used to move from the periphery to the centre. In the theory of CoP, **legitimacy** can take many forms. Wenger mentions a variety of them: from being

useful to being sponsored, feared, the right kind of person to having birth rights. This **legitimacy** depends very much on the type of CoP. However, granting the newcomers **legitimacy** is relevant because, as Wenger states, “newcomers are likely to come short of what the community regards as competent engagement”. (1998, p.101). It can be concluded that only with enough legitimacy, can all the problems and difficulties become opportunities for learning rather than causes for dismissal, neglect or exclusion. The previous aspects: **peripherality and legitimacy** are described in the trajectories of the teachers and elicited in the interviews.

For Hoadley (2012), initially, people may participate in tangential ways. However, over time, they take up more and more of the identity of group membership and centrality, thus adhering to the main practices of the group. Block (2007) added: “participation must thus always begin peripherally, and if the individual is not deemed legitimate by others or if he or she chooses not to participate as a reflective form of resistance, then it might not begin at all”. (p.865). Definitely, it takes time to move along the learning trajectories of each participant. Still, if the conditions are not given, one participant can be excluded with all the negative consequences this entails.

It is important to mention that the responsibility of being legitimate in a CoP involves both the community and its newcomers. It may also involve a number of conflicts. It is the process of negotiation that can help overcome the possible conflicts in generational encounters. In the CoP of the present study, it is of the utmost importance to see how the teachers who are not considered “official teachers”, as they lack a BA in the area, move from the periphery to the centre, and thus become core members. For some teachers, it may take more time than for others. The stories they provide in the interviews demonstrate the constraints the process has put on each of them.

For this theory, learning cannot be conceived without social participation, which implies an active involvement in the practices of the community and constructing identities within the community. This participation, as Wenger states (1998, Pp. 4-5), shapes not only what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret

what we do. In the CoP there is a socialisation process whereby teachers make adjustments and develop a variety of skills. With the life story interviews, I will try to understand how these teachers interpret who they are, as they did not hold a BA in English teaching, but ended up teaching the language, and have an outstanding track record. Socialisation in The English Department can take up different forms: the meetings they have, the teacher interaction and the teacher involvement in the different activities.

Different authors have used CoP to describe **identity**: Toohey (1998) used it to explain the stratification of a group of learners; Morita (2004), in a qualitative study, introduced the framework of CoP to examine how a group of L2 learners negotiated their participation and membership in their new L2 classroom communities; Taylor (2014) through the lens of CoP investigated the use of the mother tongue in identity and participation of the ESP teacher and students; Cheung Yin, L., Ben Said, S., and Park K. (2015) published a number of studies on identity and CoP: *Advances and Current trends in Language Teacher Identity Research*.

CoP framework is ideal to work with identity. As Tsui (2007) explains, “Wenger’s theory of identity formation is perhaps the most powerful, in that it cogently argues for identity formation being relational and experiential, as well as social and personal.” (p.31) Likewise Cheung Yin, L., Ben Said, S., and Park K., (2015) say that “identity evolves through day-to-day experiences through participation in communities of practice together with a negotiated perspective on teacher development” (p.xvi). Clarke (2008) sees the advantage of using CoP as “it is a fruitful framework for thinking about the sort of synergies that working together and being part of a group can engender” (p.29).

For Van Canh (2013), if you take CoP to study identity, you can have “complementary perspectives on the participatory aspects of learning and the continuous (re)construction of self and collective understanding that takes place in ESL/EFL classrooms” (p.4). The latter is another reason for working together with CoP and identity, as the participation in a CoP changes continually and constructs and reconstructs one’s identity.

Regarding identity and the processes of **identity formation**, Wenger (1998) identifies three distinct modes of belonging: engagement, imagination, and alignment.

In engagement, there is an active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning, in the imagination mode: creating images of the world and seeing connections through time and space by extrapolating from our own experience and in the alignment mode, coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures and contribute to broader enterprises. (Pp. 173-174)

As we have seen, identity is an important concept in this theory, and cannot be separated from issues of practice, community, and meaning.

3.2.1 Identity in an educational Community of Practice

The concept of identity in a CoP consists of “negotiating the meaning of our experience of membership in social communities. The concept of identity serves as a pivot between the social and the individual, so that each can be talked about in terms of the other”. (1998, p. 145). In this line of thought, there is a profound connection between identity and practice. When individuals engage in practice, they engage with other participants by acknowledging each other. It is important to remember that, in this practice, there is a negotiation of ways of being a person in that context.

In this respect, Tsui (2007) argues that in Wenger’s framework, “one’s identity does not lie only in the way others talk or thinks about oneself, or only in the way others talk or think about one, but in the way one’s identity is lived day-to-day” (p.660). That is the reason why it is relevant to have the teachers’ voices, colleagues, students, and a deep knowledge of the context.

Wenger explains that identity is a negotiated experience of the self because “it is a layering of events of participation and reification by which our experience and its social interpretation inform each other” (1998, p. 151). Therefore, identity exists in a constant process of negotiating the self. It is important to mention that, when a participant is a **newcomer**, the practices are new, and the participants are in uncharted territory, they do not know how to engage with

others and lack the shared references the participants understand. In the context of this research, the newcomers have compounded difficulty of being new and from a different educational background, which may cause the experience to be even more difficult.

A concept which is vital in this study is **Learning trajectories**. Wenger (1998) reminds us that identity is always an ongoing process, and a constant renegotiation during the course of our lives. As we go through a succession of forms of participation, our identities form trajectories, both within and across communities of practice. A **trajectory** has a coherence through time that connects the past, the present and the future. This is not dissimilar to what happens in a narrative such as a life story. In the context of CoP, there can be various types of trajectories:

- 1) **Peripheral trajectories:** By choice or necessity, some trajectories never lead to full participation. Yet they may provide a kind of access to a community and its practice that becomes significant enough to contribute to one's identity.
- 2) **Inbound trajectories:** Newcomers join the community with the prospect of becoming full participants in its practice. Their identities are invested in their future participation, even though their present participation may be peripheral.
- 3) **Insider trajectories:** The formation of an identity does not end with full membership. The evolution of the practice continues with new practices and all practices create occasions for renegotiating one's identity.
- 4) **Boundary trajectories:** Some trajectories find their value in spanning boundaries and linking communities of practice. Sustaining an identity across boundaries is one of the most delicate challenges of this work.
- 5) **Outbound trajectories:** Some trajectories lead out of a community. What matters then is how a form of participation enables what comes next. It is natural therefore to think of identity formation in terms of all the learning involved in entering a community of practice, even when the participants are on the way out of such a community. This movement also involves developing new relationships, finding a different position with respect to a community, and seeing the world in new ways.

Other two concepts which are important when studying the trajectory of a participant are: **paradigmatic trajectories**: the history of the community including people and stories. These paradigmatic trajectories are vital when a newcomer enters a CoP, as this newcomer must know the history and “*modus operandi*” of the CoP. “The English Department” has operational rules which were described in Chapter 2 (2.3.1 The English Department), which must be known by all the participants. Ignoring these rules may bring negative consequences and affect one’s performance and trajectory in the CoP.

In the process of negotiating trajectories, there is an encounter of different generations, which can be very complex. This not only implies a transmission of a heritage, but an interlocking of identities with conflicts and interdependences, which brings about different histories to a practice. In this interchange, both old-timers and newcomers find their experience of history. In a CoP, newcomers must find a place in relation to the past; they must gain some access in order to participate in the history to whose creation they contribute. Wenger points out “they must make it part of their own identities” (1998, p. 157).

To sum up, trajectory characterises **identity** as a continuous process, shaped by individual and collective efforts, thus incorporating the past and the future in the experience of the present. Identity is negotiated with respect to paradigmatic trajectories and invested in histories of practice and generational politics. (Wenger, 1998). All these characteristics are analysed in the life stories elicited from the participants.

Our **membership** in any CoP is only a part of our identity; our various forms of participation are not merely sequences in time. That is the reason why an identity is more than a single trajectory, it should be viewed as “a nexus of multi membership. In a nexus, multiple trajectories become part of each other, whether they clash or reinforce each other. They are at the same time, one and multiple”. (Wenger 1998, p. 159). It would be important to add that trajectories are full of struggles and ups and downs. In this study, every term, teachers change classes with different levels of English. Obviously, this represents a new trajectory.

In order to reconcile different ways of engaging into practice, forms of accountability and elements of a repertoire, it is necessary to construct an identity that includes different meanings and forms of participation into one nexus. It is important to add that the work of reconciliation from moving from a community to another may be the “most significant challenge faced by a learner” (Wenger 1998: 160). The challenge for these teachers is bigger because they have other jobs and careers. These challenges are portrayed in their life stories as well.

This nexus is not necessarily harmonious, and the process is not done instantly. With this in mind, it is easy to understand why “multimembership and the work of reconciliation are intrinsic to the very concept of identity”. (Wenger 1998, p. 161).

The last concept regarding identity has to do with global identities. In a CoP “we come together not only to engage in pursuing some enterprise, but also to figure out how our engagement fits in the broader scheme of things” (Wenger 1998, p.162). It is convenient to introduce the concept of **imagined communities**. Here, originally by Anderson (1991) and then Wenger (1998), this concept refers to the possibility of appropriating meanings, thus creating new identities. As Pavlenko and Norton (2007, p.590), argue “it also reflects the desire of learners to expand their range of identities and to reach out to wider worlds.”

3.2.2 Participation and non-participation in a CoP

So far in this chapter, it has been discussed the roles and all the different practices the participants are engaged with in a CoP. However, it is also worth mentioning to mention what happens when a participant decides not to take part in the different activities in a CoP.

First of all, according to Wenger, “we also define ourselves through practices we do not engage in and our identities are constituted not only by what we are but also by what we are not”. (1998, p. 164) These remarks highlight the importance of the decisions made by all the actors involved in the CoP. The decision to

participate in the activities of the English Department is personal and a negative determination is as valid as an affirmative one, in the end, the formation of identity is the accumulation of decisions in our lives.

In order to explain this non-participation source of identity, Wenger (1988, p. 165) establishes the following:

- Experiences of non-participation do not necessarily build up to an identity of non- participation.
- Not all that we encounter becomes significant, and not all that we meet carries our touch. Yet these events can all contribute, in their own way, to our experience of identity.
- A coherent identity is a mixture per force of being in and being out.
- Experiences of non-participation are part and parcel of life, but they take on a different kind of importance when participation and non-participation interact to define each other.

In this last comment, it is essential for this research to refer to newcomers and old-timers. If a newcomer does not understand a conversation between old-timers, this becomes significant because this experience of non-participation is aligned with a trajectory of non-participation. It is true that many new teachers at the University can find this situation familiar. If they do not have the same educational background as the old-timers, the construction of their identities and their participation in the CoP may be more difficult than for the newcomers who have the same BA as the old-timers.

Wenger (1998, p. 165) describes two cases of the interaction of participation and non- participation:

1. In the case of **peripherality**, some degree of non-participation is necessary to enable a kind of participation that is less than full.
2. In the case of **marginality**, a form of non-participation prevents full participation.

In these cases, a mixture of participation and non-participation is present, and

their boundaries are not very clear. However, in order to understand the differences between peripherality and marginality, we must look at trajectories and the significance of forms of participation.

- Newcomers may not participate. Eventually, they see participation as an opportunity for learning, and may in the future have full participation. Even for people with peripheral participation, not to participate is a desirable choice at the beginning.
- Old-timers may have a marginal position; the maintenance of this position may have become integrated in the practice.

With this in mind, it can be said that peripherality implies full participation, unlike marginality. It should be pointed out that this participation has a different degree. Wenger (1998, p. 167) states four main categories:

1. full participation (insider);
2. full non-participation (outsider);
3. peripherality (participation enabled by non-participation. This may lead to full participation or remaining on a peripheral trajectory);
4. marginality (participation restricted by non-participation, which may lead to non- membership or to a marginal position).

The participants in this research belong to a CoP as English Language Teachers in a public University in Mexico. The problem they face lies not only in participating or not in the activities of this CoP through The English Department, but also in the fact that these teachers come from a different educational background from most teachers teaching English in this Faculty. Consequently, it is with the different decisions they make that they construct their identities and navigate the different trajectories in the CoP.

Wenger (1998, p. 167) adds: “the mix of participation and non-participation through which we define our identities reflects our power as individuals and communities to define and affect our relations to the rest of the world”. In the case of The English Department, it is important to clarify that sometimes relations of non-participation are mediated by institutional arrangements. Still,

the onus is on the teachers, who may choose not to participate in the activities of this CoP formed by all the English language teachers.

The aspect of non-participation in a CoP has been discussed by Norton, who emphasises that “non-participation in some communities is inevitable because our experiences include coming into contact with communities to which we do not belong” (1993, p. 161). However, the latter is different. Even if we do not participate in a community, we still do belong in it, it is here that aspects of peripherality and marginality come into action.

With the above description of Wenger’s theory, it can be concluded that being recognised as a competent member in the CoP constitutes an important source of identity construction. This competence includes activities such as knowing how to relate with other members of the CoP, understanding the actions and activities of the CoP and resources sharing.

In this Section, some elements of Wenger’s theory of CoP which covers part of my theoretical framework were presented. The second part of this framework discusses a theory of identity as developed by Norton (1995).

3.3 The English Department as a Community of Practice

In this thesis, I want to discuss the trajectories and the identity construction and transformation of the members of an academic CoP. Hereinafter *The English Department*. The English Department is a symbolic space for professional recognition among a group of teachers, its members. In 2.3.1, I described how the University legitimises The English Department and how it operates at the Faculty of Languages.

When I described some elements of a CoP, as related by Wenger in 3.2, I included the premises that, according to him, constitute a theory of learning and how learning transforms who we are and our identities. However, this knowledge is power and power over the rest of the members of The English Department and can decide to exercise this power for their own benefit. The theory of CoP does not reflect in absolute terms all the complexities, struggles and power relations

that exist in The English Department. Nevertheless, I use the theory of CoP as an operational framework to characterise the positions that the participants of The English Department hold, the identity transformations they experience, as well as the moves they may make to navigate his community.

Hoadley (2012) defines a CoP as a place to share practices related to your profession. In the case of The English Department, the English Language Teacher profession. Interestingly, some of the teachers, all members of The English Department, define it along the same lines: "It is a place to share knowledge and continue learning" (Gina), "It is the ideal place to actively participate and share opinions" (Miguel). These definitions are in alignment with the nature of The English Department, as described in the Article 80 of the *Legislación Universitaria*, which defines it as the place where all English Language teachers work together towards a common goal.

The English department is a community of practice because it has the following characteristics mentioned by Wenger (2008). (1) members are brought together by a learning need, all the teachers in the CoP learn from each other. Particularly important becomes the figure of the expert in the help he/she provides to newcomers. The President and Secretary of the English Department can be easily identified with these roles. (2) Collective learning creates experiences across time. The trajectories give account of these different experiences and how the participants lived them. (3) The interactions among the participants transform their identities.

Having a common goal, however, does not entail that working together is an easy task. Thus, as explained by some of the participants: "it is sometimes difficult to work in The English Department as many teachers do not attend the sessions" (Albert), "The work in The English Department is not constant, sometimes we do not have a reunion in more than a year" (Luke), "If everybody were interested, it would be really rewarding. However, the reality is different: not everybody participates" (Ricky). From these comments, I can deduce that the idea of working together towards the same goal is not as easy as Wenger (1998), made it out to be in saying that equal participation is vital when you navigate a CoP.

When a candidate is hired as a teacher in this University, either tenured or untenured teacher, he/she becomes officially a member of the CoP. Being a member implies certain duties and responsibilities, as mentioned in *Legislación Universitaria* in 2.3.1. Each Faculty is entitled to regulate the work of The Departments. Nevertheless, those who have been members for years know that there are “unwritten rules” about how these The Departments work. For example, in some Administrations in the Faculty of Languages, the Director has urged teachers to participate and attend the meetings of The English Department, otherwise they will be penalised in some form; for example, in the case of untenured teachers, by giving them fewer teaching hours. In my experience, I have not witnessed any kind of punishment and the teachers are not forced to participate. We all feel that participation is important. Unfortunately though, not everyone can participate. According to the participants I interviewed: “If all the teachers participated, there would be great potential”. The reality is that only 50% or less of the teachers participate” (Ricky), “Maybe, in the past, The Departments were important. Now, teachers do not attend the sessions, so it is better not to have meetings. It’s a waste of time”. (Luke)

As mentioned by the participants, the main reasons for not attending the meetings are lack of time, no need to attend the meetings, and the absence of any productive outcome. (Lucy, Miguel, Moses)

All organisations have rules, explicit or not. In The English Department, the institutional rules are given by the Articles of *Estatuto Universitario*. However, in my own experience, and judging from the life stories of the participants, I can see there are operational rules which may facilitate one’s life while navigating the CoP, or even make it more difficult. Some of the participants made reference to the necessity of forcing, in some way, the teachers to participate: “*Asignatura* teachers need to feel more identified with The English Department, and get a reward when they fully participate” (Max), “I only participate when I have the time, I cannot miss my classes at the other school to attend these meetings, which honestly, sometimes, are a waste of time” (Moses).

Each Department plans their meetings according to their needs. However, the authorities usually ask you to get together at least twice every semester. Most The Departments decide to have a meeting every month. Nevertheless, with some Administrations, the meetings have been scarce due to internal problems between the teachers and the Administration in turn.

A central concept for the CoP is **legitimate peripheral participation** (LPP), already defined (see 3.2). It is through this LPP that newcomers gain access to a CoP and how the participation sets people apart in a CoP. The participants start in the periphery, but move on following their own trajectory. After some time, and if certain conditions are met, they can remain there or move to the centre. I asked all the participants about the ways in which they accessed the CoP, some of the answers were: “my first experience in The English Department was awful because I knew I was not welcomed in the Faculty [I came from CELe] and the President did not accept my suggestions” (Max). “I always attended the reunions; it was important to be there to make sure people knew I was there” (Ricky). “I was really afraid of The English Department. When I attended a meeting, I never spoke because I knew in my classes I was doing something different from the rest (the establishment)”. (Lucy). When Lucy mentions that she was doing something different from “the establishment”, she refers to her classroom practices and the ones considered to be correct in The English Department. Even though they all expressed their initial concerns and fears, I can state that all these participants achieved a peripheral participation at some point in their trajectories. This will be later analysed and demonstrated in Chapter 5, with the individual analysis of trajectories.

A second aspect relevant to participation in a CoP is **legitimacy**. In this trajectory, a newcomer must feel welcomed and accepted. I provide some examples of how the participants gained legitimacy in The English Department: “Evidently the level of English is the most important document, but also your performance in the classroom. With this, the students respect you” (Luke). “I consider that you are recognised with your work and then with some continuous updating, by taking courses, getting diplomas and, of course, with the support of all your

certificates” (Gina). “When I started at the Faculty, I had the same CV I had. That’s why the Rector chose me, and the students knew it” (Max). The three participants: Luke, Gina and Max referred to the documents or the certifications that legitimise an English language teacher, particularly when you don’t possess a degree in the area of languages. In the first years of the Faculty of Languages, as mentioned in 2.3, the people who taught English were mainly people who could demonstrate their proficiency in the language, without taking into consideration their methodological or pedagogical abilities.

It is also necessary to remember that all the participants have been part of The English Department for more than ten years. Therefore, there have been changes in their trajectories. Some have moved to the centre; some have remained in the periphery, and still others went directly to the centre.

In The English Department, I have identified three differentiated participant roles: The President, the Secretary, and the rest of the English language teachers. The roles of these members are not clearly described in the *Legislación Universitaria*. However, as I explained in 2.3.1. The President and the Secretary are organisers and voice the opinions of the rest of the teachers at *Consejo Académico*. This is a privileged position as one can play an active role in the most important decisions regarding the Faculty, the curriculum, the programs and other academic aspects, discussed and voted on by the *Consejo*. When I asked the teachers about being in the Academy, some of them level criticisms against the general role of The English Department. Nevertheless, nobody mentioned the aspect of power relations and privilege. In this respect, I have to say that I have played the roles of both President and Secretary, which may have made some teachers wary of discussing this issue with me. Some of the negative comments regarding The English Department are the following: “The work of The English Department is dictatorial; they only tell you what must be done. They give a series of steps, instructions to follow, but there is never real research, and it is unfair how The English Department tells you if you are a good teacher or not” (Lucy). “There isn’t any real commitment, but I have to say that for *asignatura* teachers, it is really unfair, because you’re not paid to attend the sessions or to

belong to The English Department... you have other things to do, it is not fair” (Miguel). The two previous comments are from *asignatura* teachers, who regard as a burden the work of The English Department, as it must be done without payment and in their free time. This clearly shows a power situation between permanent and *asignatura* teachers. Due to the present working conditions, it is very difficult that an *asignatura* teacher becomes President of The English Department. This creates tension between two kinds of teachers: permanent and *asignatura*.

3.4 Theory of identity

As mentioned in the introduction to this Chapter 3, the turn to poststructuralism paved the way for a new vision of identity. In order to understand the implications of this change, for both the study and research on identity, this section discusses different topics which inform the analysis and discussion in the following chapters. Section 3.3.1 provides some historical background about identity, as well as some definitions from different authors. 3.3.2 discusses different studies of teachers’ professional identity, along with some groundbreaking research on the topic.

3.4.1. Historical overview of identity

Some authors explained the development of the concept of identity during the Enlightenment, Romantic and postmodern periods (Benwell & Stokoe; 2006). The term identity has evolved from one with fixed characteristics to an ever-changing one. Cote and Levine, 2002, p.9) claim that identity “is the result of external, social, political, and economic forces”. It was not until authors like Norton (1995) and Firth & Wagner (1997) that identity was seriously introduced in studies of Second Language Acquisition. Ever since then, identity has been the object of multidisciplinary approaches and perspectives. One example of this is the work of Benwell & Stokoe (2006) in discourse analysis. These authors claim that we reveal who we are, how we talk, what we say or what we mean (our identity) through discourse. Thus, the social construction of identity is

“accomplished, disputed, ascribed, resisted, managed and negotiated in discourse (p.4).

Wrong (2000) claimed that *identity* has become the most widely used concept in social sciences and the humanities. Block (2007) argues that, in the 90's and 00's, “there has been a marked increase in the number of publications based on the assumption that there is such an interrelationship (between identity and L2 learning)” (p.863). This interest in identity has also meant a significant growth in the publication of articles on identity. Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles (2011), in their search of the term “identity” in titles and keywords in scientific publications, found that, by 2010 almost 100,000 articles, books and chapters in books had used the word.

Norton Peirce (1995), in her seminal work “Social identity, Investment and Language Learning”, argues that researchers and scholars have failed to find a connection between the language learner and the social world. Norton asserts that such disconnection existed in those years because the theorists had not developed a theory of social identity and language learning. By the mid-nineties, such affirmation represented a new vision of both fields: language learning and language teachers' identities.

Likewise, Firth and Wagner (1997) described what they considered a narrow view of identity in most second language research “...for the SLA researcher, only one identity really matters, and it matters constantly and in equal measure throughout the duration of the encounter being studied” (p.292). Block (2007) pointed out that these two articles: Norton (1995) and Firth & Wenger (1997,) along with other publications (Block, 1996; Lantolf,1996; van Lier 1994), were “symptomatic of a general uneasiness about a certain conceptual and epistemological narrowness in the field” (p.864).

In this “boom” of the concept of identity, there is also a variety of views and perspectives from which the term can be analysed. As it was already mentioned, in this thesis the main author to inform this research on identity is Norton (Peirce) (1995, 2001). However, in this Chapter, other authors are quoted to

enrich the term and its importance for this thesis. I opted for Norton's work because her theory on identity was closely related to CoPs, and she has been dedicated to studying what happens in the classroom in terms of the identity of teachers and students.

Norton (2010, p.1) emphasises the importance of working within a poststructuralist notion of the term identity: "poststructuralists take the position that the signifying practices of a society are sites of struggle, and that linguistic communities are heterogeneous arenas characterised by conflicting claims to truth and power". With this in mind, different authors have attributed qualities to identity which are far from fixed (Norton, 1995; Wenger 1998; Block, 2007; Bucholtz, 2005; Weedon, 1997).

Despite the "explosion" in research on identity, there was no consensus on the meaning of identity. As early as 1995, in her article "Social identity, investment, and Language Learning", Norton Peirce urged second language acquisition (SLA) theorists to "develop a comprehensive theory of social identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context" (p. 12). Norton explains that, after doing some field work, she found that social identity of the language learners who participated in her study must be considered as:

"Having a complex social identity that must be understood with reference to larger, and frequently inequitable social structures which are reproduced in day-to-day social interaction... The role of language is constitutive of and constituted by a language learner's social identity. It is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time, and it is through language that a person gains access to -or is denied access to- powerful social networks. (Norton 1995 p.13)

The last sentence quoted claims that it is through language that a person may gain access to a social network. This can be easily related to the access or denial to participate in a CoP as a core member or as an actor in the periphery.

Norton (1995) follows Weedon (1987) to justify her study in social identity. The

three aspects mentioned by Norton are “(1) the multiple nature of the subject, (2) subjectivity as a site of struggle and, (3) subjectivity as changing over time”. (p.15).

From this definition, it can be understood that identity is basically concerned with the “self”, as it intends to answer the existential question of “*who am I?*”. It is the answer to this question that accounts for the great complexity of the term. The question: *who am I?* can be answered by naming a list of attributes that one has: I am Mexican, I am married, I am young, I am a teacher, etc. However, this is a fixed list that does not take into consideration the different positions that oneself can take, nor the inner struggles and battles that occur in the person when interacting with the other.

As identity is always defined in terms of interaction, there is another question that needs to be answered in relation to the other. How do the others see me? Lemke (2008) states that as one’s identity is always in relation to others, we must, per force, interpret the identity of the actors involved in the interaction. With this in mind, it can be said that identity must be understood in relation to others, in interaction.

When looking at different definitions of a teacher's identity, some commonalities resonate. Varguese (2017, p.45) “...language teacher identity is an interaction of how we see ourselves as language teachers and how others see us”. Burns & Richards (2009, p.5) “...how individuals see themselves and how they enact roles within different settings”. Clarke (2008, p.8) “identity references individuals’ knowledge and naming of themselves, as well as others’ recognition of them as a particular sort of person”. Norton (2000, p.5) “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future”.

The social aspect mentioned by the previous authors leads to the conclusion of the existence of a “social identity.” One example of this is the work of Benwell and Stokoe (2006) in discourse analysis. According to them, we reveal who we are, how we talk, what we say or what we mean (our identity) through discourse,

the social construction of identity is “accomplished, disputed, ascribed, resisted, managed and negotiated in discourse (p.4). Anna de Fina (2003), in the field of narratives, claims that language is central to the expression of identity because “it is not a reflection of our apprehension of reality; it is not a “conduit” for thought, but rather a constitutive aspect of our experience of the world” (p.5). She goes on to say that “We cannot understand and share experience if we do not express it linguistically. The way we express our experiences is as part of those experiences as the material and psychological processes that prompted our telling of them” (p.6).

Feminist studies have also largely contributed to the research on identity. Authors like Weedon (1997) and Bucholtz (2005) have introduced concepts, like *subjectivity*, as a core component of identity. Weedon (1997) tells us that the term *subjectivity* comes from “subject”. Through subjectivity, we identify ourselves and our place in the world and Norton (2010, p.2) adds that “the notion of subjectivity is a reminder that a person’s identity must be always understood in relational terms”.

Along the same lines as poststructuralism, social identity must be described as diverse, contradictory, dynamic, multiple, and decentred. These are some of the characteristics of social identity. The same concept is shared by authors, like Bucholtz and Hall (2005), who propose an analysis of identity as “produced in linguistic interaction and regarded as a socio- cultural phenomenon” (p.585). One more time, we find the importance of context and interaction when we try to understand the construction of somebody’s identity or, as Wenger explains the term, as one that is constructed in a process of mutual constitution (1998).

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) define identity as “the social positioning of self and other”, adding to this definition the importance of interaction as “it is in interaction that all the resources (the different levels at which identity operates) gain social meaning” (p. 586). Consequently, these authors, as in the case of Norton, describe identity “as a dynamic and discursive construct that emerges in interaction” (p.587). The relational terms of identity imply that either you are in

a position of power or you are subject to power.

Norton's theory deals with identity as the stage where struggle unfolds. Undoubtedly, this has to do with the consideration of identity as multiple and contradictory. In this respect, Norton remarks the importance of "relations of power in which the person takes up different subject positions, and some positions may be in conflict with others" (1995, p. 15). At this point, I can refer to the different roles the self can have in a CoP, and to the different CoPs we belong to. This affirmation is particularly meaningful to the participants in this research. Not only do they need to cope with the different roles of a teacher, but also with the fact of not being "official" teachers.

A different aspect highlighted by Norton is the active role of the person: "...he/she is conceived of as both subject of and subject to relations of power within a particular site, community and The English Department: The subject has human agency" (1995, p. 15). Bucholtz and Hall (2005) explain that within this view of identity, the dichotomy of structure and agency must be discarded as:

"It is only through discursive interaction that large-scale social structures come into being, and even the most mundane of everyday conversations are impinged upon by ideological and material constructs that produce relations of power. Thus both structure and agency are intertwined as components of micro as well as macro articulations of identity. (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005, p. 607)

The third aspect mentioned by Norton is related to the changing quality of a person's social identity. This changing quality is associated with the concept of subjectivity mentioned by Weedon (1987, p.33) "... the significance of decentering the subject and abandoning the belief in essential subjectivity is that it opens up subjectivity to change".

The concept of investment as a complement to motivation was first introduced by Norton in 1995. Norton justifies the concept of investment over motivation because if "you invest in an activity, you do it with the understanding that you

will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources which in turn increase the value of your cultural capital” (1995, p. 17). Norton did her research with a group of second language learners. Undoubtedly, investment can be applied to any activity in life, and it is used to demonstrate that motivation alone is not enough when trying to accomplish a goal.

Along with this definition of investment, Norton (2001) claims that an investment in an activity represents an investment in your identity as well. An identity that is in constant change across time and space. The participants in this research invested in different ways to accomplish their goals: becoming a recognised member of a CoP of English language teachers, where, at first, were considered outsiders or illegitimate members as a consequence of not being “official” teachers.

Norton and Toohey (2002) argue that language learning engages the identities of learners because language itself is not only a linguistic system of signs and symbols, “but also a complex social practice in which the value and meaning ascribed to an utterance are determined in part by the value and meaning ascribed to the person who speaks” (p.115). With this in mind, it can be concluded that, from a sociocultural perspective, teacher identity is constructed in relation to others (teachers, students, colleagues), and also with respect to the other and larger institutional practices (schools, homes and workplaces) (Reeves, 2009; Norton, 2006; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Block 2013).

Now, I turn my attention to analyse some of the characteristics that most authors attribute to identity. The first characteristic being that identity is not fixed for life, but flexible and dynamic (Block 2007, Norton 2006). Thus, a second characteristic to be added to identity is that it is fragmented and contested in nature (Block, 2007). Norton (2006) characterises it as complex and co-constructed, in a wide variety of sociocultural relationships, and framed within relations of power (p.4). This aspect of co-construction is particularly important as I, as a researcher and interviewer, co-construct the narratives of the participants in this research.

Having characterised identity, I introduce some aspects related to teachers' professional identity in the next section.

3.4.2 Teachers' professional identity

Poststructuralism and the sociocultural turn also meant a change from the cognitive paradigms that dominated teaching and learning theories to theories that took into consideration situational and interactional factors (Johnson, 2009). In consequence, nowadays, the definition of teaching practice cannot be exempted from including teacher identity. Richards (2017) claims that "teacher learning is seen to involve the adoption of a teacher identity, a process that involves an interaction between the teaching, and learning processes" (p.139). By the same token, Miller, Morgan and Medina (2017) see teachers' identity as foundational in the teaching practice.

Tsui (2007) states that teachers' professional identity is a critical component in the classroom and in the teacher's professional development. In light of this, I cannot separate a teacher's identity from their professional identity. Additionally, and by following Wenger's assumption that we have different roles in a CoP as well as participation in different CoPs, it is relevant to elaborate on the construction of teachers' professional identity. Although the fact of belonging to a community of practice means interaction and negotiation of different degrees of participation, the teaching practice in the classroom is what really makes the teacher.

According to Miller (2008), teacher identity is generally understood as "relational, negotiated, constructed, enacted, transforming and transitional" (p.174). All the previous qualities transform and evolve across time as the teachers gain experience. The roles played by teachers also change when their duties vary in the different communities of practice in which they participate. Fajardo (2011) claims that all this evolutionary process is "significantly influenced by culture and the socio-political context in which teachers live and work" (p.25). As a result, macro discourses, such as neoliberalism, acquire a significant

importance in understanding teachers' identities.

When trying to understand the identity of a teacher, the social and cognitive factors cannot be separated. Cognitive factors comprise aspects such as beliefs, experience, motivations, and expectations, among others (Borg, 2004; Johnson, 2009). Social factors are usually related to interaction with others and the roles the teachers assume and are given by the rest of the participants in a community.

Several authors have studied teacher's identity. Particularly relevant has been the study on beginning or novel teachers (Alsup 2013; Olsen 2008). The tensions of being a teacher, particularly for a beginner, can be characterised as chaotic, disorganised, selves in the search of meaning. Alsup (2013) claims that one of the pressing problems (for teachers) is identity, what a teacher is and does, what a teacher looks like, and whether the teacher 's body is a normal teacher's body (p.xiii).

The participants in my research were not beginner teachers. However, most did not have any formal training as teachers. This fact can make the experience of teaching a second language more challenging than for the rest of teachers who had proper training. The aspect of identity should not be overlooked in the training and development of teachers. Olsen (2008) describes the teacher's profession as a continuum, in which recruitment, in-service professional development, and teacher retention, are chronologically sequenced but epistemologically intertwined. In this way, the teachers go back and forth and are influenced by their past. However, they also plan the future and act in the present.

In the sequence previously introduced by Olsen (2008), the construction of identity is usually influenced by the interaction with others. Richards (2017) claims that he likes to think that his work as an educator also reflects his experiences as a language learner. Some of the participants in the present research started teaching with this in mind. As a result, instead of having proper training, they took what they had at hand: their experience as learners and the influences of their second language teachers.

Almayez (2019, p.37) argues that “developing a professional identity as a teacher unmistakably includes a combination of personal and professional (including contextual aspects”. This confirms the importance of researching teachers’ professional identity within a community of practice, where the personal self and the interaction inform and complement each other.

Becoming an English language teacher is not an easy task. Learning how to teach a language in a language that is not your own comprises a complex process of constructing and developing a professional identity. Teachers construct and reconstruct an identity as they develop in the profession. A second language teacher must possess different abilities, including the domain of the second language. Tsui (2003, p.1) enumerates some of the qualities of expert teachers “being very knowledgeable in the field; being able to engage in skilful practice; and being able to make accurate diagnoses, insightful analyses, and the right decisions, often within a very short period of time”.

Learning the language and then teaching it, without previous training, poses a double challenge for the teachers that took part in my research.

Connelly and Clandini, who have done extensive research on narratives and identity, introduce teachers’ professional identity in terms of “stories to live by” (1999, p. 4). These stories to live by refer to individuals who narrate their own stories, of which they are also the main character.

Likewise, Tsui (2007, p. 658) claims that narratives provide a framework whereby teachers make sense of their experience and themselves. It is with these assumptions that I find a strong connection between identity and narrative inquiry. In chapter four, “Methodology and research design”, this aspect will be further discussed.

In this respect, Burns and Bell (2011) also make a claim as to the relationship between narrative inquiry and teachers’ professional identity:

“...to see teachers’ professional identities as narrative constructions and to view them from the social constructionist point of view where one’s identity is constantly constructed and reconstructed in interaction with others offers a way for the teachers to empower themselves and overcome the feeling of personal inadequacy in teaching” (Burns & Bell 2011, p. 958)

Tsui’s research on identity formation through a narrative (2007) concluded that there are two important sources of identity formation: “the individual recognizes that he or she possesses competence that his or her community values, and the individual is given legitimacy of access to practice” (p.675). **Recognition** and **legitimate access** were discussed in section 3.2 are mutually constitutive. The teachers’ professional identity will relate undoubtedly, to the recognition and perception the teachers have of themselves, but also to that of others and the role they have in the CoP. While some professionals are given access to their CoP by virtue of sharing a profession, the participants in this CoP, “The English Department”, they may also be at first be considered illegitimate and denied legitimate access.

At this point, it is important to say that, in the teachers’ professional identity formation, it is essential that these participants recognise the significance of having the ability to participate in the construction and negotiation of meanings, thus being entitled ownership of meanings, which grants them full participation in the CoP.

This section has explored general aspects of what constitute identity, more specifically teachers’ identity. The next chapter discusses the methodology used in this research.

Chapter 4: Methodology and research design

The life stories gathered from the teachers are the core of this research. My study involved interviewing teachers about situations related to their university studies, their first English lessons and how their past decisions have influenced their present careers. The questions I asked dealt mainly with their professional life and how they ended up teaching English in spite of having studied a different degree related to English Language Teaching.

As mentioned in the Introduction (1.1), the ideal methodology is qualitative, in the form of **Narrative inquiry**. In this chapter, I describe the reasons behind the choice of approach, methodology and instruments to collect the information. I also discuss the method of analysis: **extended positioning analysis**. At the same time, I illustrate some of the struggles and ethical issues I went through when collecting my data.

4.1 The Participants

I start this chapter with a table which introduces some relevant information about my participants. All the data correspond at the time of the interview.

Pseudonym	Teaching English experience (years)	Bachelor degree	Maximum Degree in ELT/Certifications	Age at the time of the interview
Luke	35	Degree in Interpretation and Translation	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)	56
Gina	26	Degree in Agronomy	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)	46
Albert	23	Degree in Accountancy	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)	43
Miguel	25	Degree in Administration	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) DELTA (Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages)	43
Lucy	32	Degree in Computer Science	CAE (Certificate in Advanced English)	48

Moses	25	Degree in Architecture	CAE (Certificate in Advanced English)	45
Ricky	18	Degree in Accountancy	FCE (First certificate in English)	40
Max	25	Degree in Engineering	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) DELTA (Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages)	43

Table 3 Participants' information

4.2 Methodology

My interest in these teachers' professional lives and the ways in which they make sense of their own decisions have led me to adopt an interpretivist perspective.

Interpretivism has been defined as an approach in which researchers "concern with subjectivity, with understandings, with agency and the way people construct their social world, introduces complexities that involve elements of uncertainty" (Descombe, 2002. Pp. 21-22).

In this sense, as a researcher, I make subjective assumptions about the story told by the participants, and how they construct their identity by telling their life stories. However, I analysed the stories systematically. It cannot be denied that I, as I "the audience" for these teachers, influence the way the teachers narrated their life stories.

Grix (2010, p. 84) lists some characteristics that can be identified with interpretivism: "...the world is socially constructed through the interaction of individuals, social phenomena do not exist independently of our interpretation of them and it is these interpretations which affect outcomes". As a consequence, researchers are part of the social reality being researched.

The analysis becomes subjective as "knowledge is theoretically and discursively laden and the researcher is the sum of their personal opinions, attitudes and values" (Grix 2010, p. 84). Given these characteristics of qualitative, interpretivist studies, I need to be rigorous in the analysis and interpretation of the results.

As already mentioned in Chapter 1, my research is a qualitative, multiple-case study. I decided to work with a multiple-case study because I wanted to have a

deep understanding of the phenomenon. Cheung Yin (2015) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in depth and within its real-world context” (p.16).

As regards the suitability of a multiple case study for my research. I think it has proved to be a suitable method to study identity in narratives, as demonstrated by several studies which informed mine. Second, my study refers to a phenomenon analysed in its real context. Third, as Duff (2008) points out, a case study is usually enriched with multiple perspectives or triangulation. In this multiple case study, I used interviews, observations and field notes to triangulate the data.

When I looked for a suitable method of analysis, first, I considered content analysis, as the stories I collected are long narratives told by the participants, and I am more interested in the content. However, I had missed, at first, to consider my influence as a researcher in the co-construction of the stories, so by reading recent literature and authors, like Barhuizen (2014; 2016), De Fina (2015), Georgakopoulou (2015) and Bamberg (2008), I understood that I needed to work with a method which could take into consideration narratives in interaction. That’s the reason why I opted for **Positioning Analysis**.

The first difficulty I faced was to decide if my data was compatible with such method of analysis. The definition given by Barkhuizen affirms that “narrative in interaction differs from other approaches in dealing exclusively with short narratives that occur in natural spoken interaction” (2014: 83). It was then that I decided to work with “chunks” of the interviews, rich enough to be treated separately as **small stories**.

De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2015) emphasise the importance of studying local interactions and analyse the ways in which these stories develop and emerge. In short, it is necessary to understand what participants do with narratives and how they position themselves. It is precisely the position of narrators that I will analyse through the analytical approach “positioning analysis”. This method was proposed by Bamberg in 1997, and then refined by Bamberg and Georgakopoulou in 2008.

Positioning analysis has been related to the analysis of small stories. It was Barkhuizen's "extended positioning analysis" that influenced my work. The method of positioning analysis materialises the theories of communities of practice and identity previously put forward by Wenger (1998) and Norton (1995). Positioning analysis takes into consideration how people construct themselves, and takes a position discursively in interaction. In 4.6, I introduce a complete description of positioning analysis and its extended version.

4.3 Data collection

I organised my field work in the following steps:

- Contact the participants and talk about my research and its objectives.
- Agree on a date for meeting, thus allowing the participants to choose venue and time for the interview.
- Meet the participants and record the interview.
- Listen and transcribe the material.
- Read and re-read the transcripts in order to choose the small stories.
- Translate the small stories which will be included in the thesis.
- Complete the analysis and write down the results.

Some of the steps coincide with what authors working on the field of narrative inquiry suggest (e.g. Barkhuizen et al., 2014).

As I mentioned before, the participants of my story are my well-known friends and colleagues. However, when interviewing them, I tried to turn the familiar things into strange or new, so as to not to interfere in the processes of the research.

After recording the interviews, I managed to complete a total of six hours twelve minutes of recorded information. Each interview lasted for about 45 minutes and the atmosphere was always relaxed. Six interviews took place in my office at the

university. One in the interviewee's office, and one in a coffee shop chosen by the participant. In addition to these recordings, I planned to triangulate the information with my field notes and my knowledge of the CoP and participants. When I met each of the participants, I described the purpose of the interview and asked for their consent in oral and written form. I also made it clear that they would have a pseudonym in the thesis and all their information was going to be treated with utmost care and confidentiality. I assured them that they could withdraw from the study at any moment if they so decided. (See the consent forms, Appendix D)

4.3.1 The Life story interviews

As it is shown in different studies related to narrative inquiry (Coryell, et al. 2010; Barkhuizen, 2016) one of the most common ways to elicit accounts from participants is through interviews. A common practice consists of accompanying the interviews with other elicited information. Although there is a vast amount of information related to interviews, their stages and the ways to conduct them, I will refer specifically to a semi-structured interview, the type of interview I conducted to elicit the life story from the participants.

Life stories offer us the opportunity to have information related to long-term experiences that can be accessed through asking people to reflect on these past experiences. The life story interview has evolved from oral history, life history, and other ethnographic and field approaches. According to Atkinson (2002, p.123); "Life story interviewing is a qualitative research method for gathering information on the subjective essence of one person's entire life that is transferable across disciplines". For the purposes of this research, I did not interview the teachers about their entire lives, but about important turning points in their lives such as choosing a college degree and how they started teaching English (See set of questions in Figure 5).

Some narrative researchers (Atkinson, 2002; Barkhuizen, 2014; Seidman, 2013) conceive life story as a circumstantially mediated, constructive collaboration between the interviewer and interviewee. I can affirm then that life story

interviews consist of a naturalistic approach to know about a person's life. This previous statement "person's life" represents a unique way of understanding the world, that is, in a subjective, interpretive form the narrator's or story teller's construction of their past, present and future.

Seidman (2013) calls this type of interview in-depth; and he claims that the purpose of in- depth interviewing is not to get answers to questions. "At the root on in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman 2013, p.9). Therefore, being interested in the other's story is the very first condition to become a good interviewer.

Given the nature and purpose of my study, I call my interviews: in-depth-semi-structured interviews. Richards (2003) defines a semi-structured interview as a form of interview "...that has a definite structure but nevertheless allows researchers considerable freedom in how they allow the interview to develop. Situated between "structured" and "open" interviews, this is by far the most common form of interview" (p. 349).

Regarding my interview, I prepared guiding questions, but the interviewee had the freedom to narrate their life story. It is also important to clarify that, as the participants are all different, the questions that arose while the interview was being conducted. The language used in the interview was everyday language, and the interview was conducted in Spanish. I considered that even though they are all English language teachers, using our shared L1 might be more beneficial for the purposes of this study, as I discuss later.

4.3.1.1 The interviewing process

The agenda with pre-interview considerations, during the interview and post-interview is included in Table 4.

Pre-interview

Prepare some initial guiding questions in Spanish, to allow the interviewee to feel relaxed and confident.

Design the consent form that includes the permission to use interview excerpts for research purposes. The consent form was written in English and Spanish.

Contact the interviewees and agree on an ideal day and time for the interview.

Choose a venue for the interview. Let the teachers decide on the ideal place for the recording.

Prepare the recording device and practise using it. Check the volume and memory capacity of the device.

During the interview

Explain the purpose of the interview and ask if they have any concern or questions about it.

Let the interviewee read and sign the consent form.

Turn on the recording equipment.

Draw on the interview guide while letting the interviewee speak freely.

Take notes in case it is necessary.

Post interview

Download and store the recording.

Duplicate files for safe keeping.

Transcribe the interviews.

Translate the transcript.

Table 4 Steps for conducting the interview.

In order to have the same questions for all the participants, I wrote the following script with questions to guide the interview. I basically wanted to elicit information regarding the turning point and the circumstances that led them to make their professional decisions in their professional lives, when they decided to start teaching English, and the trajectories they have followed in the CoP. The last question: How do you identify yourself? (*¿Cómo te identificas?*), was included so that they could describe their identity and how they see themselves.

Guiding script

(The original questions were formulated in Spanish, this is the translation)

Tell me about your studies at University.

How did you start teaching English?

Tell me about your first English lessons.

When did you start teaching English at this University?

How do you legitimise or justify yourself not having a BA in languages or teaching?

Tell me about your experience in “The English Department”.

How do you identify yourself?

Table 5 Script for the interview.

It is important to remark that this is the original script. However, other questions arose as the interview unfolded and more or fewer questions were asked, depending on the answers provided by the participant. As a co-constructor of the narrative, and knowing some of the information provided by the participants, I considered they felt at ease, so capable of unveiling extra information, which I was not really expecting to hear. This is probably a consequence of the teller’s considerations, while recounting their experiences. (De Fina, 2009)

4.3.1.2 The transcription and translation processes

All the interviews were conducted in Spanish as it is the first language of the interviewees and the interviewer (researcher). I was aware of the possible difficulties that I may face when translating the interviews. However, authors always recommend conducting the interview in the first language of the interviewee, or at least the language in which they feel more at ease (Seidman, 2013; Barkhuizen, Benson & Chick, 2014).

Regarding the content of the interview, it is important to remember that I am not looking for “the truth”, or for accuracy in the telling of the story. As Seidman (2013) explains we should not ask interviewees to remember but to reconstruct the story. And as this happens, we must make allowances for certain silences

that may occur while the participant is reconstructing their life story. Transcriptions are time-consuming, especially if they are at a later stage translated. However, they are necessary to have the whole story. With every subsequent reading, we can also reconstruct the story elicited.

Dörnyei (2007) warns us against treating the transcription as a mere technical task. Depending on the transcription convention used, the interpretations of the data can vary enormously. In general, The transcriber should emulate to the extent possible, oral language in the written transcription. This is done with the use of punctuation marks, the division of sentences and, in general, by polishing the text in such a form that it facilitates the reading. However, special care needs to be taken not to modify the information provided by the interviewee, as it may be sometimes tempting to edit certain lines.

With reference to translation, it is important to highlight that I did all the translating. This will allow me to remain as close as possible to the original meaning. The translation process should not be taken lightly, Temple (2008) emphasises the importance of translation in research methods, and how the researcher must be reflective before trying to put into words what was said in the original language.

4.4 Narrative inquiry

Traditionally, the work of Labov and Waletzky (1967) is regarded as a ground-breaker regarding narrative analysis. Different studies (Block 2007, Norton 2006, Barkhuizen 2013, Patiño-Santos, 2018) claim that the work of William Labov in Sociolinguistics, the study of narrative (as form) and narrative inquiry (as method, particularly influenced by work in general education) has given rise to legitimate research approaches in applied linguistics.

Since the 1990's, Clandini and Connelly (1994) intended to provide an understanding of the narrative inquiry approach to research. These authors are largely influenced by Dewey's (1934, 1938, 1961) idea of experience and learning. This can be discerned in their definition of narrative inquiry: as a form

of narrative experience. The use of narratives in research is far from new. As Barkhuizen, Benson and Chik (2014, p. xi) say, narratives have been used in fields such as: psychology, sociology and in language teaching and learning. However, in the last few decades there has been a resurgence of interest in narrative in the social sciences. As a consequence, narrative inquiry began to gain traction as seen in the number of approaches to research that are now available.

Nevertheless, most authors have voiced their concern that it is very difficult to agree on what narrative analysis of texts exactly is (Temple, 2008; Riessman and Quinney, 2005). As a consequence of this narrative turn, which is also a turn to language in social sciences (Riesmann and Quinney 2005), narratives “have become both a legitimate mode of thinking and writing in research and the focal point of a variety of approaches that come under the heading of “narrative inquiry” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p. 1). The special potential which narrative inquiry offers to research opportunities in TESOL are infinite, as discussed in the literature review in Chapter 3.

In the past 10-15 years, there has been an explosion in terms of research-based publications using narrative data and methodologies. Even if this has not been explicitly acknowledged as narrative: This has probably been because, as De Fina and Georgakopoulou suggest, “narrative resists straightforward and agreed-upon definitions and conceptualizations” (2012, p. 1). Thus, my own definition of narrative inquiry is inextricably linked to my choice of approach and methodology. Research on the content of the experiences of the participants and their reflections of these is typically referred to as **narrative inquiry** (Barkhuizen 2013, p.8). Narrative inquiry is then a **research methodology**.

Another worth mentioning difference is the one made by Polkinghorne (1995) regarding “analysis of narratives” and “narrative analysis”. The first one refers to research in which stories are used as data; the former uses stories as a means of analysing data and presenting findings.

Barkhuizen, et al. illustrate general features of narratives:

- i) are spoken or written texts, ii) are produced by people who have something

to tell, iii) are situated in time and space, iv) involve development over time, v) have structures that correspond to the development they describe, vi) encapsulate a point that the narrator wants to get across, and vii) have a purpose and meaning within the context of their telling (Barkhuizen, et al. 2014, p. 7).

Narrative inquirers want to know about past events and lived experiences. Connelly and Clandini (2006, p. 407) refer to narrative inquiry as “the study of experience as story”. Later Clandini (2013, p.13) added to his definition “a story is situated in relationships and in community, and it attends to notions of expertise and knowing in relational and participatory ways.”

Other authors, when defining narrative inquiry, emphasise the idea of space and time. Therefore, for example Labov (2006), Toolan (2001) and Barkhuizen (2013). In their definitions, all make reference to the narratives as having defined places and times. Likewise, other authors have made emphasis on the coherence of stories and the sense-making that narratives imply (Linde, 1993; Ochs & Capps, 2001). A third element present in other definitions has to do with the role of the co-narrator, essential to this research. For example, Barkhuizen states that “the narrator and addressee work together quite closely to interactionally co-construct the narrative, as we find in everyday conversations.” (2013, p. 3)

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, the use of narrative inquiry in identity research has been present in the research of Social Sciences in the last few decades. The relationship between someone’s identity and others’ identities, where the former in the community where this person interacts has been widely explored in recent literature. However, recently, there has been a new turn in the study of identity and narratives. De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2015, p.3), and Patiño-Santos (2018) propose a new turn to the study of narratives and identity, one that includes: (i) a focus on interaction and the local level, (ii) an emphasis on the contextualising power of narratives and a (iii) commitment to social theoretical concerns. What these authors ask for is a step beyond the current understanding of what participants do with narratives in the storytelling and how they position themselves against each other in the process, De Fina and Georgakopoulou claim that we should look for:

“Links and articulations between different levels of context and different scales in order to explain how the telling of stories shapes and is shaped by ideologies, social relations, and social agendas in different communities, times, and spaces.” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2015, p.3)

Narratives can be broadly divided into **big** and **small stories**. These stories are discussed in the following section.

4.4.1 Big stories vs small stories

It is relevant to discuss big and small stories in narrative inquiry, especially when it comes to subscribing to Bamberg’s views. As he explains “they represent very different approaches in narrative inquiry” (2006, p.165). Big stories are considered “traditional” or “canonical”, due to the fact that the first analyses in the history of narrative inquiry were done on this type of stories. (Labov and Walestsky 1967)

Advocates of the turn to small stories agree on the multiple benefits that the analysis of these stories may bring to the enrichment of the field. (Bamberg, 2006; Georgakopoulou 2006, De Fina, 2015). I consider that the field has also been enriched with the arguments presented by both sides. That is, authors who advocate the traditional stories and those who have adopted this “new turn” (Freeman and Bamberg in Discourse and Identity, 2006). However, for the purpose of this study I will emphasise small stories and their advantages when analysing what the teachers say, how they say it and, above all, what they do with what they say.

Small stories are considered the stories which typically, though not exclusively, occur in ordinary conversations, while big stories such life-stories and autobiographical accounts, are typically but not exclusively elicited in interview contexts (Georgakopoulou, 2006; Georgakopoulou & Bamberg, 2005; Ochs and Capps 2001).

However, Bamberg (2004, 2006) claims that, with very few exceptions, “people didn’t actually tell such “big stories”, most of the time... they mainly told “small stories”, played out during the course of living out their life”. With these definitions I can say that I am working with small stories taken from a big story,

in the form of a life story elicited from a semi- structured interview.

The following characterise small stories: multiple, active co-tellers and relatively embedded in surrounding discourse and activity. They can include non-linear unfolding of events (Ochs and Capps, 2001; Georgakopoulou, 2015). The small stories included in this research show different aspects of the participants' identities and reveal the trajectories they follow in the CoP.

4.5 Method of analysis

My method of analysis is related to the methodology and approaches of the research. The interactional approach chosen is in the positioning analysis, the best tool for the elicited data.

4.5.1 Positioning analysis

Positioning theory has its origins in discursive psychology, particularly with the work of Hollway (1984) and Davies and Harré (1990). These authors wanted to demonstrate, by applying this theory, the dynamism of social interactions and the collective construction of sociality. Davies and Harré (1990, p.47) defined **positioning** as “the discursive production of a diversity of selves.”

Even when this concept of positioning was not put forward to analyse narratives, it has been used in recent years to analyse small stories. The proponent of this method of analysis is Michael Bamberg in 1997, and later Bamberg and Georgakopoulou, in 2008.

Bamberg, when referring to positioning theory, indicates that “in conversations, due to the intrinsic social force of conversing, people position themselves in relation to one another in ways that traditionally have been defined as roles” (1997, p.363). To understand these roles, let us consider the case of one of my participants. If *Gina* has a BA in Industrial Agronomy, she has certain credentials and certain vocabulary that can position herself with the people from her CoP in Industrial Agronomy. However, her position as an Industrial Agronomist in the Faculty of Languages is of little use. In the University she positions discursively as

a teacher, and as a member of the CoP of English Language Teachers, among other roles. Gina is also a mother, a daughter, a sister, a wife, and other roles which can be more stable than others.

Positioning analysis is an attempt to link two approaches: “how people attend to one another in interactional settings and the analysis of what the language is referentially about” (Bamberg 1997, p.336). The first idea comes from Davies and Harré (1990), the second one, from Labov (1997).

Some critics of the model of Davis and Harré (1990) argue that a weakness of the model is the contrived use of data. Furthermore, they argue that it also presents a view of discourse as a succession of speech acts (Bamberg, 1997; Bamberg and Georgakopoulou, 2008; Bamberg, De Fina & Schiffrin, 2011). Due to these shortcomings, more recent approaches to the positioning model and the analysis of narratives pay more attention to the interactional phenomena and participants’ local understanding. De Fina (2013b) claims that recent approaches to positioning analysis emphasise:

- i) the locus where positioning needs to be studied is in interaction where people display local understandings of positions. Therefore it is from that level that analysis needs to start in order to reach the macro level, not vice-versa;
- ii) positioning is a reciprocal and dialogical process, whereby individuals not only take, but also are attributed positions, which they negotiate in emergent ways;
- iii) the relations between local processes and more global processes are very complex. Therefore, they cannot be seen as a matter of straightforward determination of macro to micro social structures of action and cognition. (De Fina, 2013b, pp. 41-42)

From this argument, I can say that, in the positioning model, identities are produced and negotiated in interaction while positions are accomplished by social practice. This affirmation brings coherence to both: my theoretical framework and my methodology. When we speak, we talk to people about something and we use discursive tools, however, when we tell stories, as Bamberg says:

“... we do more, we signal to others that we are entering, maintaining or handing over the floor to do a story, and we order aspects of what the story is about (particularly the characters in the story) in space (there) and time (then) into a plot; again, by use of the same discursive devices” (Bamberg, 2004, p.135).

Positioning intends to study identity in its different facets. Having read different authors who have used positioning theory in their analyses (De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 2008, 2012; Depperman, 2015), I have found that such positioning theories argue that people's actions are tied to social discourse. Therefore, it would be incorrect to separate people's identities from the context of the discourse in which they are inserted. Furthermore, these identities are sometimes contradictory, and are neither integrated nor coherent.

Bamberg's seminal work "Positioning Between Performance and Structure" (1997) uses Davies and Harré's positioning theory (1990) to propose an approach which evaluates storytelling more productively. Bamberg (1997) uses three questions to create the three-level model of positioning analysis. The three questions are the following:

1. How are the characters positioned in relation to one another within the reported events?
 2. How does the speaker position him or herself to the audience?
 3. How do narrators position themselves to themselves?
- (Bamberg 1997, p. 337).

At level number one, we attempt to analyse how characters, in the story world, are constructed in terms of, for example, protagonists and antagonists, or as perpetrators and victims. At this level, we also look for the relationship between characters in the story. At level number two, we seek to analyse the linguistic means characteristic of the particular discourse mode employed, that is, the interaction between the speakers in the "real world". At this level, the narrator positions himself/herself in a similar way in the story and the story-telling context. At the last level, number three, we try to find how the language is employed to make claims that the narrator holds to be true and relevant, above and beyond the local conversational situation (Bamberg, 1997).

These three levels have been used to analyse narratives. Barkhuizen (2009) extends level three to incorporate new data. As can be seen from these three levels, this methodology intends to account not only for the content of the story, but also the form and the context of the story. From the questions at the three levels, the stories provide an inkling to characters and their relationships, the

content of the story and the discourse used by the narrators to position themselves in the story, and be positioned in the torn.

In the following section, I discuss the method of extended positioning analysis as an extension of the positioning analysis method.

4.5.1.1 Extended positioning analysis

Positioning analysis has been related to the analysis of small stories, it was Barkhuizen's "extended positioning analysis" that influenced my work. In his article "An Extended Positioning Analysis of a Pre-Service Teacher's *Better Life Story*" from 2009, Barhuizen uses an extended version of Bamberg's three-level positioning analysis.

Barkhuizen (2009) proposes the extended version of the method by including data beyond the small story. He includes this "extra information" at level three. This extra information can include other small stories, ethnographic data in the form of interviews or written journals. In my research, this extra information will be provided by my observations, my notes and my knowledge of The English Department and its context.

The reason for including this extra information at level three has to do with the necessity to include information collected in the course of the study, which cannot be omitted by the researcher. I find this extra information useful to enrich my analysis and to include more voices to the participants and their life stories.

The article from Barkhuizen (2009), which informs my analysis, discusses an approach that brings together a focus on content, form and context in the analysis of narrative data. Barkhuizen uses a small story about the imagined "better life" of a migrant, pre-service teacher.

In the following chapter, I introduce my participants in detail and show some common themes I found in the life stories.

Chapter 5: My career in a life story

In this chapter, I provide a summary of information related to the participants (5.1). In 5.1.1, I divide the participants according to their working category they are institutionally allocated: permanent and non-permanent teachers. In Table 7, I cover some significant differences between the categories, some of which are found in the official documents of the University. I also include some of the participants' comments taken from my notes and my experiences working with them for more than twenty years. In 5.2, I discuss the topics common to all the life stories. This will shed some light on the analysis of the narratives in Chapter 6. The four topics are described in 5.2.1-5.2.4.

5.1 The participants

I interviewed eight higher education English language teachers who do not have a BA degree in languages or teaching. They are coworkers, which has allowed me to observe them in meetings of the English Department, where I took field notes. All this information has helped me to construct a complete profile of each of my participants. These teachers represent the core of this research. Consequently, I consider it essential to have complementary information about them. In Table 3, I included some of this extra information which complements Table 3 in Chapter 4. This additional information was collected at the interviews, informal meetings, and through the use of field notes. Particularly relevant is the "type of teacher category" they belong to: permanent or non-permanent teacher. In 2.3, I explained the differences between these two categories, which include salary differences, the number of working hours, which confers status at the Faculty and The English Department.

Participant ⁷	Teaching English experience (years)	Bachelor degree	Maximum Degree in ELT/Certifications	Age at the time of the interview	Years teaching at the Faculty of languages	Type of teacher: permanent or non-permanent	Working situation at the time of the interview
Luke	35	Degree in Interpretation and Translation	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)	56	21	Permanent	Works 40 hours in the Faculty of Languages. Teaches English in another school for 12 hours and also one private class.
Gina	26	Degree in Agronomy	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)	46	24	Permanent	Works 40 hours in the Faculty of Languages
Albert	23	Degree in Accountancy	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)	43	14	Permanent	Works 40 hours in the Faculty of Languages
Miguel	25	Degree in Administration	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) DELTA (Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages)	43	21	Non-permanent	Works 10 hours in the Faculty of Languages. Teaches at CELe for 20 hours. He works in a Consultancy office.
Lucy	32	Degree in Computer Science	iCAE (Certificate in Advanced English)	48	14	Non-permanent	Works 10 hours in the Faculty of Languages. She is the coordinator of a bachelor degree in a Private University in the area.
Moses	25	Degree in Arquitecture	CAE (Certificate in Advanced English)	45	10	Non-permanent	Works 10 hours in the Faculty of Languages. Works 20 hours at CELe. Has some private lessons

Ricky	18	Degree in Accountancy	FCE (First certificate in English)	40	11	Permanent	Works 40 hours in the Faculty of Languages.
Max	25	Degree in Engineering	CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) DELTA (Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages)	43	23	Permanent	Works 40 hours in the Faculty of Languages. Owns a consulting business.

⁷ The names of the participants are pseudonyms.

Table 6 Participants' information II at the time of the interview.

5.1.1 Who are the participants?

After listening and re-reading the transcripts of the interviews, I deemed it important to introduce them through their trajectories. Since they share important similarities, I grouped them according to their working categories: Permanent and non-permanent (*asignatura*). This section is based on their testimonies, and it has been contrasted with my impressions, resulting from having worked alongside them for 18 or 25 years, in some cases. The decision of making this difference between permanent or non-permanent teachers lies in the fact that the duties, rights and other privileges are different between these two categories of teachers. I illustrate some of these differences in the following table:

	Permanent teachers	Non-permanent teachers
No. of working hours per week	40	Between 2-18
Duties in the University	They must teach a minimum of 18 hours, as well as do research and administrative chores. Some teachers are also in charge of Departments and special tasks.	Only teaching activities. However, as they belong to a The English Department, they must attend sessions, workshops and participate in commissions and specific projects
Salary benefits	All permanent teachers can participate in a government programme which can benefit them with 1-14 extra salaries. These extra benefits are part of a scholarship that is awarded according to your academic merits. For example, if the teacher has a PhD or if they publish articles or write books, etc.	Only those who teach more than 6 hours per week can participate in the government programme, which entitles them to receive an extra bonus consisting in 1-3 fortnight salaries.
Salary benefits for obtaining a Masters' Degree or a PhD	The teacher can be upgraded and promoted.	Practically non-existent, you can access to a scholarship, however, the degree does not guarantee the award
Conditions for re-hiring teachers	Unless there was a really serious problem with the teacher; their rehiring is unquestionable, most of them have tenure	Teachers are evaluated every term. The parameters for the evaluation are discretionary, and it is the Director's decision; three teachers have tenure.

Table 7 Permanent and non-permanent teachers

As every single life story is different, I decided to introduce each of my participants using my field notes, parts of the interview and my personal knowledge of the teachers. This knowledge is also very helpful in the analysis,

which takes place in Chapter 6. This additional information helps me to understand situations which are not explicit in the transcript, such as gestures, body language and tone of voice. I made some field notes during the interview and immediately after any salient detail I considered relevant. I also want to remark on the fact that the participant and I co-constructed the narrative throughout the interviews.

5.1.1.1 Permanent teachers

Five teachers belong to this category: Gina, Max, Luke, Albert and Ricky. Most of the time, a teacher from this University starts off as non-permanent. Eventually, they may become permanent teachers. However, in this group of participants there are some exceptions; as result unexpected situations have allowed some of them to start off as permanent teachers.

I. Gina

Gina is one of the most enthusiastic teachers I have ever met. She is always positive and looking on the bright side of any situation. Gina studied Industrial Agronomy, to the surprise of her parents, as they were both highly-regarded teachers in their area. Gina's mother has been a prominent figure in the history of the Public University of the present study. Gina's mother was also a teacher at the School of Languages (CELe) ,and in the Faculty of Languages.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I mentioned that it was the circumstances which forced all the participants to start teaching English. In Gina's case, the influence of her mother had on her, coupled with the lack of opportunities for women in the field of Industrial Agronomy made her choose a career teaching English.

I have known Gina for more than 15 years. When I met her, she was pregnant with her second daughter. We immediately became closer. She has always been helpful. Even though she is not one of my best friends, we do have a close relationship. She graduated with honours from the Master's degree, and we also had the same supervisor in the process of writing our dissertation, since the topics were also similar (translation studies).

We also started studying together for the PhD in Education Sciences. However, I

did not continue in the program. She is about to finish her PhD⁸. When I asked her for an interview, she agreed immediately. Unlike the rest of my participants, the interview took place in her favourite classroom. During the interview, she emphasised two facts: how much she loved studying Industrial Agronomy and how she does not regret choosing English Language Teaching as a career.

II. Max

I have known Max for more than 20 years. Max used to work as an English Language teacher at a private school, where I studied English. Although he was not my teacher at the time, we became friends. In 1997, Max was in charge of the Academic Department of the Faculty of Languages, he invited me to work there, where I started as a non-permanent teacher. The interview with Max took place in his office in the Faculty of Languages.

What I clearly noticed in Max's words is his honesty, as he revealed some unknown details, unknown to me, about the time when he started teaching at the Faculty. As far as I remember, he had always been in important positions of the Faculty and the University. He is very critical of some decisions made by the authorities in the government and the University, as he thinks these decisions put our students at disadvantage as regards the rest of the professionals in the area.

Max has recently created a consultancy business. He offers courses and gives advice to different schools and institutions related to teaching languages and teacher training. He seems to be a bit disappointed, he would have preferred to continue his career in "*Rectoría*" as staff member of the managerial team. I consider this is a very common problem with ex- directors; they are not supposed to continue working at their Faculties, at least not immediately, after their period in the *Rectoría*. They are sometimes called to work at other schools or Departments of the University.

⁸ All time references are given from the time of the interview, unless otherwise stated.

In the group of participants I interviewed, Max is the only teacher who has been an Academic Coordinator and also a Director of the Faculty of Languages. At the time of the interview, Max was particularly involved in his facet as a writer; he recently published a novel and he is thinking of starting another one. With all his background knowledge and experience, it is difficult to remember that he attended a private university to study Engineering.

III. Luke

Luke is the oldest teacher of my participants. However, he seems to be the teacher who has more working hours and I would say more energy as well. I have known Luke for more than twenty years. His wife used to be my boss in a private school and she was also my friend.

Luke is one of the most admired teachers in the Faculty; his classes are always highly requested by students. He usually teaches English and Translation. However, his favourite subjects are related to Literature Studies. He is an avid reader and he really enjoys sharing this passion with students. He is also keen on travelling; without a doubt, of the people I know, he is the person that has travelled the most in this Faculty. This travelling experience and the fact of being a passionate reader make him a very good conversationalist and he uses all this knowledge in his classes, apart from the fact of speaking five languages.

He is a demanding teacher and very straightforward. That is the reason why many people may see him as a little bit intolerant. However, once you know him, he is a funny man with an excellent sense of humour. He says he does not like interviews and he was really worried about giving me the “correct” answers in order to help me. The interview took place in his office in the Faculty of Languages and it was the first interview I conducted for this research.

It was really interesting to discover how when I stopped the recording he was more open and he gave more details about his life and his views on the matter. That is the reason why I decided to take field notes. He studied Interpretation and Translation at a private Institute. However, his real passion –apart from reading and travelling- is music. He plays the cello, and he is particularly

interested in classical music. When he has the opportunity, he attends a concert.

IV. Albert

Albert started working in the Faculty of Languages about twelve years ago. He started as a non-permanent teacher. He was also in charge of the Administrative Department. Later, he was granted a permanent position. He studied Accountancy at the University and, as with most of my participants, he started working as an English language teacher at CELe.

Unlike the majority of the participant teachers, he worked as an accountant for many years. He says it was the routine, the low salaries, and the constant stress, which made him decide to continue teaching English. While he was working as an English language teacher at the Faculty of Languages, he decided that he wanted to continue with his training in language teaching, so he opted for a MA in Applied Linguistics. Currently, he is finishing his PhD in Applied Linguistics.

Although he has been immersed in Administrative work, he says that he prefers teaching and his area of expertise is Evaluation. He is really keen on photography and also enjoys all kinds of sports. I can say that some of our conversations which do not involve teaching have to do with football.

V. Ricky

He is the youngest of my participants, and he is also the teacher I have known for less time. However, we became acquainted easily as we were studying the same master's degree program. Rick studied accountancy and worked for some years in the field of finance in a private company. However, he decided to go on to English teaching because the school where he was working offered flexible hours and job security. At this point, it is important to mention that the fact of working in the Faculty of Languages in the Public University guarantees you a pension after 35 years of uninterrupted work.

Rick started working at this Faculty, with only 6 hours, as a non-permanent teacher. He rapidly became a permanent teacher and head of an important Department at the school. Even since then, he has devoted himself to doing research. He is particularly interested in aspects related to English language

teachers' professionalisation.

The interview took place in my office, in a relaxed mood. Rick and I are members of the same Academic Group. As a result, we have meetings very often, and we have had many talks outside the school. He likes sports and he has a bowling group.

5.1.1.2 Non-permanent teachers

I interviewed three non-permanent teachers: Miguel, Lucy and Moses. These three teachers have long trajectories as English language teachers both inside and outside the public university. The three teachers continued teaching at the Faculty, despite the low number of teaching hours because they have social security and need to continue teaching so that they can become entitled to a retirement. In the following lines, I describe them in more detail:

VI. Miguel

Miguel and I have been friends for more than twenty years. He was my English language teacher in 1996. Ever since then, we have kept a good relationship. Miguel has a long trajectory in the field of English language teaching at the University and at private schools. He has a degree in Administration from the University. Nevertheless, he has always taught English. He had the influence of his aunt, who used to have an English language school, where he started teaching English at a very young age.

He has always been a relaxed person with a very positive attitude. During the interview, I was surprised, to be honest, that he was utterly critical of permanent teachers and the lack of recognition of non-permanent teachers, the majority at the Faculty.

The interview took place in a well-known cafeteria. At times, it was difficult to hear what he was saying because the place was full of people. This is the interview that was harder to be transcript because of the noise, which sometimes made it difficult to understand the complete answers from Miguel. Miguel leads a very busy professional life. This is one characteristic of non-

permanent teachers, he works for three other schools apart from the Faculty of languages, and he also works with Max in his consultancy business.

Currently he is the President of the English Language The English Department, which is not very common for a non-permanent teacher. I believe he was elected because of his long trajectory and experience in the area.

VII. Lucy

I remember when Lucy started working as a non-permanent teacher in the Faculty. We became friends immediately. She has a BA in Computer Science from the University. Lucy started teaching English at a very young age. She has the advantage of having lived in the UK for many years. When her family came back to Mexico, her father opened an English language school, where she started teaching English as a teenager.

When I first met Lucy I noticed her openness and sociability. These traits helped in her rapid immersion in all the processes at the Faculty. She started teaching in two areas: Computing and English. Once she started teaching in the Faculty, she decided to study the MA in Applied Linguistics in the same cohort as Gina, Rick and myself. After two years as a non-permanent teacher, she became permanent teacher and Head of the Academic Department. She left the post for personal reasons and became a non-permanent teacher again. Since then, she has been working at the Faculty of languages for four or six hours per week. Nowadays, she is Head of the Academic Department at a prestigious private school.

The interview took place in my office in a very relaxed way. In fact, I had to go back to my script because at times we started discussing other issues. Lucy is a clear example of how unstable the positions of teachers can be at this public University. Unless teachers have tenure, they do not have complete security of having a job next term. In her free time, Lucy enjoys doing sports, she runs marathons and likes being in good shape.

VIII. Moses

I have to say that Moses is the teacher with whom I am less acquainted. This is probably because he is relatively new to the Faculty. Also, sometimes he has

lessons in the morning, sometimes in the afternoons so we do not run into each other very often. I can say that we only talk to each other in the meetings we shared in The English Department. Having said that, I can honestly say this is probably the interview which I enjoyed most because it gave me the opportunity to get to know Moses and discover his different facets.

The interview took place in my office, and it was the longest, compared to the other seven. Moses studied Architecture at the Public University where we work. He says that he enjoys looking at buildings. He has always been interested in design. However, he considers he should not have followed that career path. He became interested in English because he wanted to understand the lyrics of English language songs. He had the opportunity to travel and study in the USA where he learned and practised his English.

He started teaching at a private school when he was 18. Without any previous training, he started teaching. At that moment, he realised he really enjoyed teaching, even when most of the students were older than him. He is critical of the role of The English Department; he has the impression that sometimes teachers just participate in order to demonstrate how much they know. He says he prefers to be quiet and just listen and learn. I thought he was really shy. It turns out that he is not, it is just that he does not like to participate in the discussions of the English Department.

Currently, he is studying Theology and he enjoys travelling a lot. In fact, he has lived in different countries and he is planning to continue doing so. He likes trying new things in his classes and even when he says that now he is a bit quieter than in the past, students seem to enjoy his classes a lot. He also teaches at CELe.

5.2 Common Topics in the Life Stories

Before doing the positioning analysis in Chapter 6, in this section I describe some common topics which appeared in the eight interviews. I would like to clarify that this section is not an analysis, but a description using the words of the participants and my opinions on the topics. Some of the topics were elicited by the researcher, while others emerged naturally in the conversation. The main

aim of this section is to discover how students started teaching English (**My beginnings**), how they decided to make English language teaching their way of living (**The Turning point**), how they legitimise themselves in the English language profession (**I am a professional English language teacher**), and how they moved across The English Department (**My community of practice: The English Department**).

To describe all these four topics, I also use some concepts mentioned in 3.2, related to navigating in a community of practice. This section also contributes to the in-depth analysis of the next chapter.

5.2.1 My beginnings

Different factors influenced the decision of the participants to start teaching English. On average, all the teachers started teaching English before they were twenty years old. Gina was 20, Max 18, Ricky 23, Lucy 15, Miguel 17, Luke 22, Moses 16 and Albert 18. Most of the participants refer that it was a question of “luck” having had the first opportunity to start teaching English. Others started teaching as a result of the influence of either a close relative or a previous teacher who influenced and helped them to get a job without any previous experience and, in some cases, without any training.

Gina mentions that:

“It was the influence of my family, particularly my mother’s. She founded an English language school and as far as I remember she had always been teaching English” (Gina)

Along similar lines, Lucy comments:

“ When I was 15, my father opened an English language school. And as there was a lack of teachers, well, he gave me the opportunity, and I started teaching when I was only 15” (Lucy)

Miguel mentioned this:

“My mother asked me to go to study to this private school of languages where my aunt used to be the principal... Later at CELe,me my teacher asked to help him with one of the classes because they needed a teacher with urgency, so I said yes immediately” (Miguel)

In Albert's situation:

“I started teaching English by mere coincidence. I was studying an advanced level of English, and the academic secretary was my teacher. One day, when I was walking into the school, he saw me and asked me: “Hey, do you have an FCE?” I said yes, and he asked me: “Would you like to teach a lesson?” I told him: “ yes, but I have no idea how to do it.” (Albert)

A similar situation occurred with Max:

“Well I put my first class down to good luck. I studied English at the school of languages of the University (CELe). I belonged to the second cohort of CELe, and we obtained the First Certificate from the University of Cambridge in 1990. We were only five people in the second cohort, and while in the first cohort there had been three students. So, we were just a handful of people. The person, the teacher who trained us for this certification, was also the Academic Supervisor at CELe. He was also teaching at the private University where I had studied. I passed my certification exam in December 1990. In January 1991 I came across this teacher and he told me: “Hey one teacher (at CELe) has just left, and I need a teacher for a beginners' class. It is an evening course. Would you like to help me and have some extra money to pay for your studies at University?” I accepted. I didn't really know what I was about to face” (Max)

What is evident in all the participants' beginnings is that teaching English was not the first choice as a professional career. If it is true that some teachers comment that they did not have the right vocational guidance (Max and Moses), none of the teachers mentions regretting having studied the subject they did at University.

At some of the beginnings, teachers confessed not having any previous training before starting teaching: Albert, Max, Luke, Ricky, Lucy. Others had received some training from the same school:

“...In those years, we could start teaching English if we had a Cambridge certification. Before I started teaching, I attended a training course offered by the same University. There were five courses in total, and I went through all this training before teaching”. (Gina)

Moses had a rapid training course or methodology course in the same school where he was about to start teaching:

“The system of the school was that we were told what to teach every single day of the week, how to teach it. I remember during the first

hour of the class we had to use the book, or as people called it “The bible”. If I did not know about the topic, I asked someone who was more experienced. I had no idea about the grammar, I spoke English the same way I did with Spanish, really. I had no idea. That is how I started to learn, honestly, I don’t remember if the students asked me questions, but I started to study in case students had a question” (Moses)

“... it was a good opportunity to have some income because I didn’t have any money and I could use this money to travel. These classes were my first salary, my first job. So, I said yes, immediately, without any experience or any notion of what it meant teaching a second language”. (Luke)

The positioning of participants like Max, Moses and Luke demonstrate their agency trying to succeed in a career which is not familiar to them, despite not having the proper training.

5.2.2 The Turning point

I decided to call “The turning point” the moment when the teachers decided to pursue a career teaching English. For some participants it was the only option; for others, it meant a second or third job. However, this turning point meant leaving behind the degree they had studied at University.

For some participants, it was a question of money; they were better paid teaching English than working somewhere else:

“For 4 or 5 years I didn’t teach, I worked as an accountant. But it was precisely after these years, I realised that I was not happy with my job. I began to look for another job. I started my own business and also looked for a school where to teach, so I started to work for a well-known private school. I taught English but I also had my own business. Honestly, I was very happy when I went back to teaching” (Albert)

Ricky and Miguel also described a similar situation:

“Well, when I left the Corporation I used to work for, I was looking for a job. I went to companies. Honestly, the pay was really low and, as I continued teaching at CELe, well I could get by in one or two groups”. (Ricky)

“I never imagined that I was going to be a teacher for the rest of my life. I made that decision when I finished University. I graduated and started looking for a job in the Administration area. I was teaching six hours every day, which means 30 hours per week at CELe in the University. I don’t remember how much I was paid, but to put it in today’s context, I would be making \$15,000 every fortnight at CELe, while at a private company, they offered me \$5,000 for 15 hours. That is, I could earn as much as twice the money as a teacher. I went to a couple of companies: A well-known company and another one, I don’t remember the name. When I read the contract it was a job from 9 to 5. Many times I didn’t leave the office until I had finished my work. I thought: no, this is not for me. I prefer working at CELe, and I really enjoyed it. I used to work from 9 to 3, and I had the rest of the afternoon for me”. (Miguel)

Other participants mentioned that they were so comfortable teaching English that they decided to continue:

I taught English but I also had my own business. Honestly, I was very happy when I returned to teach. The private school had a system. I got training in the system and well, I didn’t like the system very much but I enjoyed teaching, I remember I returned to teach in 2012 and I haven’t stopped since then, I also took one class in CELe at that time”. (Albert)

A crucial factor for the teachers to continue in ELT was the good environment and how much they enjoyed teaching English:

“... it was OK (teaching English), and they offered some basic courses. I received some training, and, I can tell you, I was really happy. That’s how I started teaching English, and I really enjoyed it”. (Moses)

“... the fact of having an excellent instructor for the COTE training course helped me to understand what it really meant to be an English language teacher. We really enjoyed the course. This definitely helped me to continue teaching”. (Max)

In the case of Gina, the turning point was a little bit different. And what really forced her to take the decision of leaving her career and continuing teaching was the lack of opportunities and discrimination she suffered in a company:

"One of the things that convinced me to continue teaching English was the fact that I visited many companies. There I understood that

the working hours were really long and they didn't have women in the plant. I remember I asked the manager about this. He told me that they didn't hire women. In another company they told me that the few women they hired worked in the labs. I thought: "no, that's not for me, I don't want to be locked in a lab the whole day". Then, I decided to continue teaching English and forget about Agronomy". (Gina)

5.2.3 I am a professional English language teacher

In Chapter 2, I introduced the question about English language teachers regarded as professionals. Much has been said on this matter. However, I consider it necessary to raise the question because none of the participants study to become teachers. Therefore, they are many times questioned about their qualifications.

Even when I did not ask a direct question about professionalism, some teachers brought up the topic and discussed the issue of professionalism and professionalisation in their careers as English language teachers. As an example, Ricky mentions the following:

"For my thesis, I studied the topic of professionalisation of language teachers in CELe. I discovered six aspects that a teacher must cover to be considered professional. I don't remember all six, but one has to do with the use of jargon related to the profession. Obviously, when you start teaching English, and don't have the proper training, well, you lack that". (Ricky)

I consider it necessary to discuss the characteristics that, to most authors, are a requisite for an English language teacher regarded as a professional (Crandall, 1993,2000; Burton, 1998; Randi and Zeichner, 2004; González & Sierra, 2005; Richards, 2010; Hismanoglu, 2010; Intakhab, 2011; Leung, 2013; Liu, Jehng & Chen, 2014). I summarised the findings as follows:

A professional teacher must have:

- specialised knowledge of the area. In this case, the English language
- practical experience
- qualifications

- skills such as: organisation, self-observation and reflection, self-awareness, among others.
- community participation
- research involvement.

Judging from this list, I can attest to all my participants belonging to the category of professionals. After some years, they have received the training necessary to gain specialised knowledge in the area.

Some of the participants, also made reference to the training they had when they started and the number of courses that have helped them to get the knowledge of the area:

“...at that time (when I started teaching). CELe was offering the Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English. It was a good complement for me because, if I was already teaching, I had to understand what I was doing. Thanks to this course, I understood what a professional teacher is. Later on, I took other courses: I got my CAE in 1994, and the Proficiency in 1996. I did all these certifications, knowing that they were really important to my training. And I’ve followed a career path as an English language teacher” (Max)

In the interviews, I questioned the teachers about the opinion of other teachers and students regarding their professionalism. These are some of the findings:

“...the beginning at the Faculty was very difficult. And I had to convince everybody that I could do a good job. Even with a good CV under my belt, I had a different background from the teachers who were teaching English. My degree was the perfect excuse to attack me and say that I was not a professional English language teacher” (Max)

Miguel mentioned the aspect of specialised language used by the people who share the same profession:

“people don’t really understand what it is really like being a non-permanent teacher. For example, you are a permanent teacher, and although I don’t know for sure, I have the impression that you put 40 hours into designing programmes, preparing lessons, and so on. We have to use

our free time to do that. Many times at weekends, and we have to do it at home because we don't have an office. Well, I'm not trying to justify myself, but I think we are missing this part of professionalisation. For example, what I do with my students is use professional jargon regarding teaching or methodology. I don't do it with colleagues because it sounds "snobbish". I do that at the Faculty of languages, for example when talking about rubrics, distractors, items, but I never do it at other schools" (Miguel)

It is particularly revealing that Miguel should mention that he does not use jargon in conversation with colleagues. It is precisely what professionalism demands: the use of specialised language in forums or other spaces, where colleagues can exchange.

5.2.4 My community of practice: The English Department

After having amply discussed the concept of CoP (see 3.2), the characteristics of The English Department (see 2.3.1) and the characterisation of The English Department as a CoP (see 4.2), in this Section I present the opinion and experiences of the participants at the CoP of English in the Faculty of Languages.

The opinions are varied and revealing of the power that the The English Department can exert on colleagues.

I questioned the participants about their first experiences in the meetings of The English Department, because the perception and experiences change time and experience. The findings are the following:

"Wow, that's a very difficult question [the role of The English Department]. In theory, it has a role, but in real practice, it is completely different. The main idea of The English Department is that we work together towards a common objective, all teachers from all areas. In this case, English teachers should have the same aim. We should be able to know what others are doing because I know there's a textbook that everybody should follow. Still, I sometimes think that everybody does what they want. The English Department must be the place to unify criteria, help each other, share practices. Unfortunately, that doesn't exist. You may say, "look I have been doing this in class, and it has been successful, or ask the colleagues "what you would suggest in this situation and so on". Honestly, I think, nowadays, The Departments only exist as an administrative requirement. For example, in our English Department there is continuous teacher rotation. I think that is not

good, you cannot create an identity. The English Department of French works with this rotation. The result is that you cannot have long-term projects. Belonging to a The English Department gives us identity, structure, it can help us to specialise in certain areas. For example, this term I have no idea who belongs to The English Department”. (Albert)

Albert describes as ideal the role of The English Department as a CoP. A collaborative effort together towards a common objective. However, he also makes it clear that, in real practice most of the time, these objectives are not fulfilled. Furthermore, he confines the role of The English Department to that of an Administrative one, which is a harsh statement due to the fact that the The Departments regulate the academic work of all teachers and subjects at the Faculties of the University. Albert describes the CoP as a place where teachers can create and develop an identity, which is one of the main purposes of the community. Nevertheless, the CoP seems to be failing at this as well.

Ricky highlighted the importance of The English Department given that the work stemming from it is used by every single teacher. He also describes The English Department as the place where teachers can create an identity. Likewise, Norton and Toohey established that “a shift from seeing learners as individual language producers to seeing them as members of social and historical collectivities moves observers to ward examining the conditions for learning, for appropriation of practices, in any particular community.” (2002, p. 119).

“Well, the work in The English Department is essential to have the foundations of what happens at the Faculty, academically speaking. The experts in each area work in The English Department, so you need to take advantage of this. Unfortunately, the teachers change a lot from one The English Department to another one. Consequently, it is very difficult to create an identity in the different The Departments. I know this is more of an administrative problem, but The English Department is entitled to take the responsibility to say how the teaching of English should be conducted locally, but also throughout the State”. (Ricky)

On the other hand, Luke has a positive opinion of The English Department in the field of English. He makes a comparison between this CoP and others at the same Faculty and he mentions that the work is acceptable:

“Well, traditionally, and in my experience, it is one of the best The

Departments. It works with certain regularity. Even when, it is often the case that no agreements are reached on the planning. Everybody just says: “we must do, it needs to be done”, but nobody says “I’ll do it”. Still, there is an open dialogue and there are different interactions and activities, that’s why I consider it to be one the best”. (Luke)

In the previous comment, Luke refers to the importance of having an open dialogue between the members of the CoP. As I mentioned in “3.2 Communities of Practice”, the trajectories of successful members in a CoP share the characteristic of an engagement in the practices of such communities. In The English Department, the most important activity is the participation at the meetings that take place regularly. As a member, you can decide to participate actively (by expressing opinions and taking part in the projects), or passively, by attending meetings without sharing your views. Luke demonstrates his agency by suggesting that he participates through maintaining an open dialogue with the rest of the members of The English Department.

Lucy is more critical to the work of The English Department. She considers the work in the CoP obsolete routine to fulfil the administrative aspect of The English Department:

“Well, The Departments should not be like dictatorships telling us what must be done. The Departments should work differently. Well, that’s my point of view. I remember that, basically, The English Department decides on the book, and a bad one if you can’t. The reality is that the new generations have a different mentality and the students have many issues like: broken families, complicated life stories, rife with substance abuse, not just alcohol or drugs making reference only to alcohol but drugs. Nowadays, students don’t want to make an effort to learn; they don’t want to study; they belong to a generation which has been given everything and they have little tolerance towards frustration. That’s why I consider that The Departments, instead of regulating what a teacher does, should be designing programmes and strategies aimed at these new generations. For example, the use of multiple intelligence methodology or teaching how we can use the mobile phone to help them in the learning process. I really suggest The English Department should be more practical and make decisions based on reality, not on what is stipulated in the “Legislación”. I really think, nowadays the function of The English Department is just routine work”. (Lucy)

Whether or not The English Department exemplifies Lucy’s comments. In my

opinion, it cannot be a real CoP given that it does not cover the characteristics that Wenger posits as the dynamics of a CoP. One of the main downsides of this English Department is the lack of participation of most members. However, I consider that Lucy confided in me to express these comments, I cannot be sure if she would be as vocal at a meeting of the community.

Newcomers to the CoP need to be integrated and receive the help of experienced members to be full members of the community so as to only stay in the periphery. Lucy went on to describe her first experiences in The English Department as unpleasant:

“Well, it was not a very good one. I remember I was more afraid than excited to attend the first meetings of The English Department. I considered it an obligation and I went to the meetings, but I was not happy to be there. I did not utter a word at the meetings. I was all quiet praying for them to finish quickly. Still, but little by little, when I got to know teachers, I started to feel at ease at The English Department. I think, I am a sociable person, and I tend to be very talkative, but nobody invited me to feel part of the community; nobody said: “hey participate, join us”. So, honestly, It was a pain in the ass, this English Department thing”. (Lucy)

From the previous comments, I can deduce that at the beginning of her trajectory, Lucy chose to stay in the margins of the CoP. However, she found the way to navigate the CoP and position herself in the centre. After only two or three years, she was in charge of a very important academic post at the Faculty, regulating all the work in the The Departments, including English.

Another example of a bad experience at the first meetings of The English Department is expressed by Moses.

“... I have seen two types of Departments: the ones that work well and the ones that don't. In some Departments it is really relaxing, and you can play an active role. Others, well, I find them quite pretentious, like you know, everybody wants to demonstrate that they know more because they have studied harder, or they have more qualifications than the rest. I think it depends on the area of knowledge. I always try not to speak because, in the end, I think that I find it traumatic because I don't know many methodological aspects, or the academic jargon, that is, academic, pedagogic terms. I know how to teach, and I have the practice and the experience. But obviously, I don't have much knowledge of linguistics and that's why I try not to participate. I have found that some Departments are fun, and it's nice to attend the meetings, while others are just a place to

wield power, and as I'm not interested, well, I don't say much". (Moses)

Moses describes The Departments as places where teachers go to give free rein to their egos, where certain teachers demonstrate their power. He did not make particular reference to the CoP of English. However, he has participated in The English Department for some years. He decided to remain on the margins. He chose to do this because he believes he does not have enough knowledge in the field of Linguistics. This self-marginalisation is the result of not having a degree in the area. In his trajectory, Moses has described as a participant who prefers to be in the periphery as a personal decision.

The aim of this chapter was to describe the participants in depth, before doing the analysis in Chapter six. This was deemed to better understand the teachers' decisions in their different trajectories in the CoP.

In this chapter, I was able to discover the many similarities and differences that all the participants have in their life stories and in their participations and in contributions to The English Department. The positioning analysis in the next chapter will help to identify specific stories which were narrated in the interviews.

Chapter 6: Trajectories in the Community of Practice

In Chapter 5, I examined the main topics which emerged in the life story interviews. The main aim of the previous chapter was to have a general view of the main stories from the collected data while having a backdrop against which I could analyse the stories using the positioning analysis and the theory of Communities of Practice in Chapter 3.

The analysis in the present chapter has helped me answer the research questions: How English Language Teachers, who are not official teachers, construct and negotiate their identities in a Community of Practice, and also how the rest of the community categorise these teachers.

In this Chapter, the stories will be more specific and analysed, taking into consideration the different trajectories the teachers presented when navigating the CoP. The analysis was based on the trajectories identified by Wenger (1998). The participants are presented according to the ways in which they participate in the CoP. This analysis leads up to the conclusions in Chapter 7, about the contributions which this positioning analysis adds to the understanding of the evolution of the teachers' professional identities in the CoP.

Before introducing the teachers' trajectories, I consider it necessary to refer back to the discussion in Chapter 4, where I included the different trajectories, participants can have when navigating the CoP. The evolution of the practice continues – new events, new demands, new inventions, and new generations all create occasions for renegotiating one's identity.

The participants navigated different trajectories. However, as it is the case with identity and trajectories, they are far from fixed. Nevertheless, there are some salient characteristics in the narratives which enabled me to classify them in one of the trajectories. In telling their stories, teachers talked about who "they are", and how they have created an identity in the context of the CoP. Although the boundaries between some trajectories are blurred, and the experiences of my participants reveal that they can be included in more than one trajectory. I chose

noteworthy small stories which helped me place them in a particular trajectory. Each trajectory describes certain complexity in its learning processes and how this is shaped by different, personal, and power relationships.

In a Community of Practice, we face the existence of different identities. Sford and Prusak (2005) introduce the concept “designated identity”, which makes reference to the identity given by the Institution or, in this case, The English Department, in contrast to the “actual identity”, which comes from the subjects’ everyday practices. To succeed in the CoP, the teachers must cope with these conflicting identities and adapt to survive. This is what authors, like Urciuoli (2008) and Block (2017), called this the *neoliberal citizen*. This means that teachers enter a “market” and sell their “skills” in return for a salary. They also engage in a series of strategies in order to participate in that “market”. For that reason, they will present themselves as flexible, autonomous problem solvers, amongst other marketable traits.

The analysis operates on different levels. Particularly relevant is the interactive performance of the story, and the positions that the participants take in using their agency. In Chapter 3, I introduced the concept of **agency**, which has been largely discussed by different authors. For example, Vähäsantanen and Eteläpelto (2015) insist on portraying agency as a useful way for employees to make sense of and act out their lives in their working life. Agency must be seen as one of the integral components of a person’s professional identity, their career and its practices. (Vähäsantanen and Eteläpelto 2015; Bucholtz and Hall 2005).

Agency can be understood as the individual’s capacity to act, be reflexive, intentional, self-regulating, goal-oriented, strategic, and determined (Miller, 2016). In this sense, the present analysis demonstrates how a positioning analysis gains insight of the participants’ actions in each trajectory, by including different actors in the performance of the different life stories. I also interpret the way teachers exercised their agency to strengthen their professional legitimacy, not only in the CoP of English, but also in their professional lives. The teachers who constitute my participants had to demonstrate that their lack of a

BA in the area of English and Teaching is not a shortcoming but an asset.

In chapter 4, I defined small stories as the pieces of discourse extracted from big stories. The advantage of analysing these stories as interactive constructions instead of content analysis, lies in the fact that the co-construction and interpretation of the stories is dynamic. Also the data provided by the participants can be analysed as embedded, in a context and a reality, or, as Block (2017) calls them, “socioculturally-situated co-productions”.

With the use of narratives, I aim to understand the complexities of the trajectory of learning in The English Department and, at the same time, show the different power relationships that shape and reshape teachers’ identities, and their trajectories.

The context in which the stories are embedded cannot be discarded. The changing reality in the lives of the participants, and the different processes in which the University is immersed, have led me to include aspects of neoliberalism at the University, and how these changing situations have led these teachers to find themselves in the midst of neoliberal forces, and thus creating a *neoliberal self*. McGuigan (2014) defines the *neoliberal self* as “the preferred form of life in the economic, political and cultural circumstances of present-day developed and developing capitalism.” (p. 223)

In Mexico, we tend to believe that government schools are free from this stance of neoliberalism, and that only private schools have adopted these practices of converting education into business, regarding students as clients. Nevertheless, this is far from true, a clear example is provided by the participants in this study, who sell their skills and enter into a market which was not constructed by them. This decision has different repercussions in their life stories.

The extended positioning analysis, which takes place at three different levels, allows me to interpret the stories both locally and in their relationship with wider themes, which help participants to construct and reconstruct their professional identities, such as neoliberalism, and its influence in education.

The discussion of how willingly these teachers can construct their identities discursively is relevant to both positioning analysis and identity research. Wenger (1998) described three possible forms of belonging in a CoP: *engagement*, *imagination* and *belonging* (1998, p.173). These three modes of belonging may represent an obstacle to act freely, as participants with agency. Clearly, in order to belong to a CoP, the member must follow certain rules, and participate according to certain procedures by the CoP. These rules or procedures may be enforced by external participants or within the same community. In this sense, I intended to discover the different reactions each teacher has when facing the rules and procedures they must follow in order to adapt to the CoP, as an active participant.

The analysis will follow the positioning model proposed by Bamberg (1997) and then expanded by Barhuizen (2010). For the purposes of this chapter, I will focus on levels 1 and 2 to refer to the characters and events constructed in the narrated world, and in the interview. Level three, connections with societal issues, will be reserved for the discussion in chapter seven.

6.1 Peripheral trajectories

In this trajectory, I included one participant *Moses*. However, as I mentioned in chapter 3, at different moments of their trajectories, all participants have had a peripheral trajectory. Moses started teaching English in 2012. The main characteristic of this trajectory is the absence of full commitment to the Community. There is the feeling in these participants' stories of not wanting to belong but needing to fit in The English Department. This means there is an imperative to fit in the CoP. It seems that the Community is forcing them to behave as neoliberal citizens with initiative, flexibility and the drive to self-improvement. These features, according to Block (2018), are typical of today's societies: the result of having penetrated all sectors of society. Moses is driven by the costs and benefits he may have by participating, or not, in the CoP.

6.1.1 Moses: "I don't want to play the game"

A salient characteristic of this trajectory is the absence of full participation in the CoP, either by choice or by the rejection of the members of the community. In the first story, Moses recounts his first experiences at the Faculty. Moses constructs an identity as a non-participant by choice. However, he also makes it clear that he does not participate in the CoP because of his background –he’s an architect. Another aspect which resonates in this story is how he considers The English Department meetings to be pretentious and only a space to show your credentials. He even goes on to say that some Departments are places to wield power.

Neoliberal practices regard language just as another marketable service. In this case, the education market. As Block pointed out: “neoliberalism has meant the adoption of the market metaphor as the dominant way to frame all manner of day-to-day activity” (2017, p.6). Moses did not attend the University to become a language teacher; he has a degree in Architecture. However, he found himself immersed in this dilemma, so in order to survive in the market, he veered to the area of language teaching.

In this sense, Barton and Tusting (2005) criticise the lack of aspects of power and conflict and social context into communities of practice. It is evident with Moses' words that attending and participating in the CoP is far from being an enjoyable experience for him.

Moses had recounted his story by emphasising how much he enjoys teaching and all the experience he has accumulated throughout all his years as a teacher. Still, his facial expression and the tone of his voice changed when I asked him about the role of The English Department and his experience as a member. He hesitates, and there is a long pause before answering my question. As I found him reluctant, I decided to rephrase my question with a yes/no answer. It was then when Moses started to talk about his experience in the different Departments.

Moses, based on his vast experience as a member of various Departments, contrasts two types of The Departments, each one with particular attributions:

"the ones that work well and the others that don't". Thus, those "that work", are defined as relaxed and inclusive (sharing). While the ones that "don't work" are described as "pretentious". It is precisely in these The Departments that Moses seems to be reluctant to participate. His colleagues' conceitedness, together with the fact that he feels theory is not his strong suit. These are the reasons that prevent him from playing a more active role. He clearly does not engage, does not imagine himself as part of the CoP. Consequently, he feels he does not belong.

Wenger assumes that "when learning takes place in communities of practice, issues of power are at the core of the perspective" (2000, p. 8). Moses feels free to say that as "I am not interested, I don't say much". This is an example of non-participation, a type of experience shaping his identity. Wenger (2000) states that, to a great extent, the way you experience non-participation depends on your degree of identification with a practice.

The process in which a newcomer can become a full participant can be viewed as a process of realignment (Wenger p.3, 1998). This process can turn into full participation and identification with the CoP, but also into dis-identification with the practices of the community. This non-participation could be a personal decision or the consequence of rejection on the part of the participants in the CoP or their practices. In the case of Moses, he does not become a full participant, because of his decision not to participate. It is important to clarify that he has another job at a Languages School. As a consequence, he does not feel the necessity to fit in this community or even to aspire to promotion at the Faculty.

The process of learning within the CoP can lead to an identification with the community. Wenger (1998, p.3) claims that identification involves modulation: "one can identify more or less with a community, the need to belong to it, and therefore the need to be accountable to its regimen of competence". However, it is possible to have the opposite mode of identification, as in the case of Moses. A perceived lack of knowledgeability may lead to disconnection from the

practices of the CoP.

A closer look at Barkhuizen's extended positioning analysis, shows the three levels of the story. In the narrative of this story, the protagonist is Moses, and several secondary characters. The rest of the characters in this story are represented by the other members of the CoP. Moses introduces himself as the "odd" one, the participant who does not "fit", and, apparently, is not interested in adapting to the rules of the CoP to be accepted as a full participant. The other members of the CoP are teachers who want to exert power through a pretentious use of theory and jargon. In so doing, they claim a role as full participants and at the core of the CoP.

Now, following on from what was previously said about neoliberalism and education, the commodification of education is not an exception. Block (2017) warns us against the practices taking place in many government schools, which mirror the ones in private schools. Neoliberal practices, as a manifestation of capitalism, involve giving prominence to aspects such as competition and efficiency, to the detriment of the main mission of government education: render a service to society. Consequently, teachers need to materialise all these requirements, in the forms of qualifications, certificates, etc.

Moses sees himself involved in this market dynamics: the more qualifications you have, the better teacher you are. The fact of not feeling competent enough for not having all these certifications, prevents Moses from becoming a full-fledged participant in The English Department. Consequently, remain in the periphery.

Moses positioned himself as an outsider, he made the decision to not to play the "game" and acted in consequence. As a result of this, he has been seen as an outsider, a teacher who does not belong in The English Department as he is not willing to fulfil the duties he has been assigned. The tensions within the CoP forced him to stay in the periphery, with the rest of the Community also positioning him there. Moses does not abide by the regulations of the CoP, so he ends up facing the consequences of not engaging in the practices of the Community, thus this feeling of exclusion.

6.2 Inbound trajectories

In this trajectory, it is expected to find newcomers, teachers who, somehow, have not become full-fledged participants. However, some of these teachers prefer not to do so, which is also a manifestation of their agency, thus choosing to stay in the periphery. As previously noted, non-participation is also a form of participation, as long as there is some mutual recognition on the part of the other participants in the CoP. The case of *Ricky* is not very different from that of *Moses*. He is an accountant who first worked for private businesses and started teaching English at the public University at a later point. He started teaching at the Faculty of Languages while he was studying the MA in Applied Linguistics in 2011. In his interview in chapter four, he mentioned that he had studied accountancy and worked for some years in the field of Finance for a private company. Still, he decided to go on to teach because at the school he was working for offered flexible hours and job security. This aspect of “job security” is crucial when opting to work for the government as this guarantees a pension after 35 years of uninterrupted work.

In an inbound trajectory, the newcomer has the choice of participation. *Ricky* decides to take advantage of the repertoire at hand and involve himself in the activities of The English Department. Despite the fact that *Ricky* had a short participation in The English Department (only six months), he played an active role, resulting in his being considered a member of the community of practice.

Wenger (2000) clarified that, to be a competent member, you must understand the functioning of this community, be able (and allowed) to engage productively with others in the community and appropriately use the repertoire of resources that the community has accumulated through its history of learning.

6.2.1 Ricky: “I know what I’m doing”

Ricky understands the participation in The English Department as an opportunity to gain knowledge and understand how the work in the The Departments is organised:

“...Well, the work in The English Department is essential to have the foundations of what happens at the Faculty, academically speaking. The experts in each area work in The English Department, so **you need to take advantage of this...**” (Ricky)

In Ricky’s words, I understand a logic not different from what happens in a capitalist market. In Miller’s words (2016), the individuals’ actions position the market as a central organising framework which puts an emphasis on individual choice. Ricky looks to work with masters in the different areas, which would allow him to take advantage of this knowledge and use it to his favour, as he mentioned in his interview. Different authors have found how workers are multi-skilled and flexible, the resulting of their neoliberal selves (Gee, Hull and Lankshear 1997; Soto & Flores, 2013; Miller, 2016).

“Unfortunately, **the teachers change a lot from one Department to another. In this way, it is very difficult to create a certain identity in the different The Departments.** I know this is more an Administrative problem, but The English Department is entitled to take the **responsibility to say how the teacher should conduct his/her class**”(Ricky)

In the previous paragraph, Ricky points out two aspects of identity in the CoP. First, he confirms how his identity is far from rigid. In order to be accepted as an entitled member of The English Department he needs to change, be flexible, and follow rules. The English Department dictates how you should teach and one has no say in the matter, lest you are left on the margins. However, he also becomes passive and accepts the power exercised through the rules dictated by The English Department; especially when he says that The English Department determines how you teach and ascertains how apt you are as a teacher.

Ricky exemplifies how alignment works as a mode of belonging. The participant coordinates his energy and activities to fit in broader structures, thus contributing to its endeavours.

In respect to the relationship a member can have with broader structures, Ricky understands the importance of the nexuses and relationships to move up in, thus gaining respect and recognition:

(1) **M: And what was your first experience in The English Department like?**

(2) R: Good. I like to be everywhere hahaha. A teacher keeps telling me: you never say no, hahaha.

(3) If there’s a meeting and I didn’t have classes, **I always attended the reunion. That’s**

(4) important because you start gaining recognition inside and outside The English Department. I
(5) remember I always approached Dr. Luna (pseudonym) because she was my MA supervisor
(6) and with her experience she helped me a lot, also Dr Sol (pseudonym) helped me and they
(7) have great experience, so when I had a question I always contacted them because you share
(8) your experiences with other professionals in the field. I have had the opportunity to
(9) attend conferences in Guadalajara, Puebla, Hidalgo, Guanajuato and you can compare the
(10) conditions under which they're working. I also belong to an academic network of
(11) English language teachers who do research. In this network, we try to find out about
(12) common problems that we may encounter in our contexts.

By looking closely at his biography, we find that Ricky has been a success, from working for private companies as an accountant to being the Head of an Academic group, and a highly regarded researcher in the field of Education. He has been awarded important distinctions in the field. That is the reason why he portrays himself as a multi-tasker, another characteristic of neoliberal workers. Ricky also demonstrates characteristics of **outbound** and **boundary** trajectories, in that the way he navigates the trajectories is used to create links with different communities of practice. In lines 10-12, Ricky demonstrates the advantages of moving within communities of practice. Although this can be a complex daunting task. Wenger says that "sustaining an identity across boundaries is one of the most delicate challenges of this kind of brokering work" (2008, p.152). He is also aware of how to navigate the community by learning from senior colleagues (e.g. his MA supervisor). He presents himself as someone able to watch and learn; the *Do It Yourself* (DIY) attitude, the hallmark of neoliberalism.

Ricky demonstrated flexibility and adaptability, one of the main characteristics of neoliberal selves or, as Urciuoli (2008) says in one of her articles, "a bundle of skills". This makes reference to the "different aspects of personhood with exchange value on the labour market" (p.211). If Ricky had not demonstrated these different skills and adaptability, it would have been difficult for him to succeed in moving along the different Departments, and with such a successful trajectory.

Dardot and Lavat (2013) define neoliberalism as a form of alignment with the rules. Ricky, in lines 2-4 makes it clear that he is willing to do whatever is necessary in order to fit in the CoP.

At the first level of an extended positioning analysis, Ricky mentions different characters, primary and secondary, who intervene in her lifetime story: fellow

teachers, administrative staff at the University and students. Barkhuizen (2009) highlights the importance of listing the events of the story. This aspect is particularly relevant when unfolding a life story, as it is precisely a succession of events which results in your present situation. Despite the fact that all life stories are different, they have common traits: all the teachers started working in a field completely different to what they do now: teaching English.

At the second level, the focus is on the performance aspect of the life story. Ricky and I, the interviewer, co-construct the story. However, Ricky holds the floor most of the time. The first question of the interview asked him about his degree at the University. From that point on we discussed his first experiences teaching English. Finally, he talked about his current role as a teacher and member of different communities of practice.

The crucial moment in his life story is when he mentions that he decided to make the decisive change of moving from accountancy to Languages:

“I found that the Faculty of Languages was offering a MA in Applied Linguistics. I had no idea what Linguistics was, but I asked some teachers at CELe and everybody recommended taking the MA. So, when I started the MA, I was also offered six classes at CELe, so everything was perfect. In those years, I used to work from 7-3, my classes in the MA from 5-8. That’s how I moved definitely from accountancy to Languages”.

In the previous paragraph he describes the situation as “perfect”, even though he also mentions that he “had no idea” about his new career. In this paragraph, I can also recognise the importance given to qualifications, in this case, a MA. This represents a salient characteristic of neoliberalism in education. The discourse used by governments, disguised into skills and qualifications as a synonym of success, has converted education into another aspect of our daily lives, which has been commodified. (Soto and Pérez-Milans, 2018; Codó and Patiño-Santos, 2018; Urciuoli, 2003, 2008)

6.2.2 Lucy: “I don’t feel welcome”

Lucy also represents a case in which moving along communities of practice represents an asset. Lucy understood that the knowledge and skills you provide to the CoP are considered, as Harvey (2005) says “market exchanges”. Lucy has a degree in computer sciences. However, her work at a private institution did not satisfy her. That is the reason why she decided to apply for a job at this public University. She learned English while she lived in

England for some years and her father ran an English language school for many years. Therefore, she has been in contact with the language all her life. She started teaching English at a very young age: she was only a teenager when she became the teacher of family friends and neighbours.

When she is asked about her opinion of The English Department of English, she has a critical view of it: she did not like to participate. Unlike Ricky, she did not really see the point of attending the meetings and participating in them.

Researcher: What’s your opinion of the role of The Departments?

- (1) Well, the The Departments can be real dictatorships as they are supposed to say how the teachers
- (2) should teach. I disagree, I consider the The Departments should be places where the participants
- (3) exchange ideas about the syllabus, new strategies and methods or the books we must get and so on
- (4) Instead, The English Department establishes rules, if you don’t follow them, you are in trouble. I think
- (5) this is unfair because you can be an excellent teacher, but if you don’t follow the procedures
- (6) dictated by The English Department, well it turns out you aren’t.

Lucy did not become a full member of The English Department as she resisted the practices of the CoP. She preferred to create a bond with students so as to feel part of the community.

Researcher: can you describe your first experience in The English Department?

- (7) At first, I was really afraid of attending the meetings. It meant more work, more
- (8) responsibilities and nothing extra as payment. I used to attend the meetings, but I never
- (9) participated, I was all quiet because I really did not want to be there. I think that I started to
- (10) feel part of the community thanks to my relationships with students. I am an easy-going
- (11) person, so I never had problems getting along with people, but in The English Department
- (12) nobody welcomed me and asked me to be part of it..

Lucy also expressed her discontent with the power relations perceived in the CoP. She mentioned “being afraid of speaking” (lines 7-9), a feeling similar to what Moses expresses earlier in this chapter. Also, in lines 8-9, she aired the beliefs that many teachers have towards The English Department but are afraid

to say: “Belonging to The English Department represents more work, more responsibilities, and nothing extra as payment”. However, as a teacher, you’re forced to belong and participate; otherwise, the consequences of being rejected can mean losing your job. With these two trajectories of learning, the experience of participation (or non-participation) in the Community is not successful. A newcomer is expected to bring contributions as a new element of competence, but Lucy refuses to do that. Wenger (2000) calls this as a “dis-identification process” with the community.

In Lucy’s words, I can see a lack of support to newcomers on the part of the rest of the members of The English Department. This clearly is a weakness of the CoP. Lucy expressed, in lines 5-6, that other members of The English Department never “welcomed” her. In Wenger’s words (2008, p.26) “learning is the vehicle for the evolution of practices and the inclusion of newcomers while also the vehicle for the development and transformation of identities”. When newcomers do not have the opportunity to join the practices of the community, their inclusion is never complete, even when, officially, they are part of The English Department.

Full membership to a CoP should not be a question of novices or old-timers, as both types of participants can identify with the community. It is the access to the practices of the community which makes the difference. However, the ability of a newcomer in terms of capability and legitimacy, is determined by both: the newcomer, and the other members of The English Department. Newcomers need to gain positions in The English Department. It is only through their participation in the activities of the community that they can gain full access. The roles of expert and novice need to be negotiated, but they also need to be active, it seems that in this CoP the novices do not feel welcomed by the “experts” or old-timers.

As regards the positions of Bamberg and Barkhuizen, the narrated event, we can see that the characters in Lucy’s story are herself, the rest of the teachers in the CoP. For the first time, we see the inclusion of students. At all moments, Lucy comes across as an active character, one who makes decisions on her own and

to her benefit, lines 8-9. She portrays herself as a very agentic person.

At Level 2, we find how the story outcome, and the reason why it was told, that is, the narrative Lucy used in telling her story. The lines where Lucy introduced conflict are 1-2 and 7-8. Lucy is harsh towards the power she perceives is wielded inside the CoP. Nevertheless, including students in the conversation positions her as a strong character. Even if students are not direct participants in the CoP of English, they are the reason this Department exists. For Lucy, the students represent an ally who somehow substitutes the lack of allies inside The English Department.

6.3 Insider trajectories

The trajectories I describe in this section are from “insiders”. The main two reasons I decided to put them in this group are: their long permanence in this English Department and the central positions that they have occupied within The English Department. As mentioned in Chapter 4, The English Department is integrated by all the teachers who teach English at the Faculty. Nevertheless, there are two hierarchical positions: The President and the Secretary. Some of the following participants have been either Presidents or Secretaries at The English Department, and their visions are different from those of the other members, who have never occupied these positions.

Wenger (1998) considers that the formation of an identity does not end with full membership. The evolution of the practice is a continuous renegotiation of one’s identity, particularly in this CoP, where the roles are temporary and tend to change quite often. Sometimes, the teacher moves from one community to a different one every term. This has an impact on those who may wish to participate. At this point, it is important to remember what was mentioned in chapter 4.2 on knowledge and power: The participant who possesses the knowledge has a clear advantage over the rest of the members of The English Department. An insider has full membership, as evidenced by their identification with the practices of the community. I include four participants in this trajectory: Miguel, Gina, Max and Albert. However different their trajectories may be, what

they have in common is a position of privilege in The English Department.

6.3.1 Miguel: "It's not fair"

The first participant can be described as an exception to the rule. Miguel has a long trajectory at the Faculty of Languages; he started teaching in 2001. Normally, "asignatura or non- permanent" teachers are not eligible to become Presidents of The English Department. This is mainly due to the limited amount of time they can devote to The English Department. It is important to remember they are not paid anything extra for being in the Presidency of a The English Department. Miguel has been President of The English Department of English on more than one occasion. However, he is critical of full-time teachers and their attitude towards the work in The English Department.

Researcher: In your experience. What is the role of The English Department in the Faculty of languages?

- (1) Miguel: Well, I have been president and secretary of The English Department. Before being president I
- (2) was a member. In the first sessions, well, you may find something which is interesting
- (3) and you can learn a lot from your colleagues and use this knowledge in your classes, and in
- (4) theory, it has many benefits to work in The English Department. Having said that, not everybody is interested,
- (5) and not everybody participates. The reality is that half of the people or less in The English Department
- (6) participate in an active way, and not at the meetings. This is because everybody can attend the
- (7) meetings but then the teachers don't work. **I think this has to do with being a**
- (8) **permanent or a non-permanent teacher at the Faculty. A permanent teacher can devote**
- (9) **part of their time to The English Department because their payment includes these types of activities,**
- (10) **I have always been a non-permanent teacher, and the** time that I have devoted to the
- (11) **The English Department has been on my free time, I have heard full time teachers complaining about**
- (12) **the meetings and they don't go if the meeting is not on their working time. I think this is**
- (13) **really unfair. Permanent teachers sometimes don't work on projects which don't**
- (14) **benefit their work as permanent teachers while, as a non-permanent teacher, you invest**
- (15) **your time and money for no pay at all.**

This view is highly critical of the practices of The English Department. In theory, the relationship among participants is supposed to be one of equals, with the same degree of participation and opportunities. According to Wenger (2000), the basis for power in communities is horizontal, mutually negotiated, and often tacit and informal (p.8). In the previous extract from Miguel's story, the difference between permanent and non- permanent teachers is clear, and it reveals the importance of their practices inside the community.

Miller (2016) discusses how it is certainly more advantageous, for some individuals, to succeed and advance in their careers thanks to institutional privileges, rather than individual effort, and the skills and capacities underpinning the neoliberal discourse. Conflicts and struggles may not be openly

expressed in the practices of the community. However, they cannot be ignored. Participants construct and reconstruct their identities in navigating the communities they belong to.

Miguel addresses the importance of creating an identity as a language teacher who is, therefore part of the English Department.

“I really think that we need to cultivate **this identity**. A solution could be to make it possible for more teachers to stay for a longer time in the same English Department. Some teachers jump from one Department to another every term. This way you cannot create an **identity in** The English Department you belong to. I also understand that for the authorities it is important to see the work and participation in the Departments, because this is how they see that teachers are working.”

The fact that you move from one English Department to another one in a short period of time can result in a lack of bonding within The English Department. The teacher knows that their membership is set to expire at the end of the six-month period. With this in mind, teachers may not be fully committed to participate in all the practices of the community.

At the Level 1 of positioning analysis, the characters appearing in Miguel’s story are: Miguel, teachers in The English Department, permanent and non-permanent teachers, as well as Faculty officials.

Miguel positions himself as a person who has “sacrificed” a lot for The English Department. He makes this clear by saying that “a permanent teacher can devote part of their time to The English Department because their payment includes these types of activities, I have always been a non-permanent teacher and the time that I have devoted to The English Department has been my free time”.

One can sympathise with this criticism leveled at some of the characters of the story: permanent teachers and authorities. Miguel thinks it is unfair to have such a heavy workload for the few benefits he receives. However, it is necessary to remember that being the President of a The English Department gives you access to higher levels at the Faculty and as a consequence, certain political power over your peers, who are also part of the CoP.

As the narrative unfolds, Miguel justifies his criticism by giving different examples from permanent teachers who have complained about the activities in The English Department (lines 11-15). In this second level of positioning theory, the interactional level, the co- construction of the story was relevant. As a permanent teacher. I might well be one of the colleagues Miguel complains about. Atkinson (1998) reminds us that the story we are told by the interviewee is the one he chooses to tell, in the way he prefers to tell it.

6.3.2 Gina: “I love my job”

Gina is another participant who has been involved in The English Department since her first teaching experience in the Faculty back in 1998. Particularly interesting is her view on the legitimacy as an English language teacher. **Legitimacy** is essential for teachers to be recognised as full-fledged members. Legitimacy can take on many forms. Wenger (1998) lists a variety from being useful to being sponsored, feared, the right kind of person, to having the right birth. To a great extent, this legitimacy depends on the type of CoP. Still, granting the newcomers legitimacy is important because, as Wenger says; “newcomers are likely to come short of what the community regards as competent engagement”. (1998, p.101).

Gina illustrates how she had a hard time when trying to be recognized as a legitimate member of the CoP:

M: Have you ever been questioned about being an Engineer and teaching English?

“When I started teaching, yes. I was questioned about my university degree. Some people went as far as to ask: Why is an agronomist teaching us? You know, there were comments about it. At the Faculty of Languages there were a lot of specialists in the area, so some students “mmm”, what is she doing here? At one point, the Director of the Faculty felt it was necessary to go to my classroom to stand up for me, so he told the students: “well she did study agronomy, but she is teaching English because she knows the language. She has got the certificates, the experience and the training and so on. Ever since then, I haven’t heard any other nasty remarks.”

When Gina recounts her episode, it is clear that the support of another member of the CoP is crucial to be recognised as a fully-fledged member of the community. Also, the Director's answer: "she is teaching English because she knows the language, she has got the certificates, the experience and the training and so on", I acknowledge, one more time, the importance of skills to succeed in the labour market. Urciuoli (2008) calls them "skills discourses", a salient characteristic of neoliberalism: you are as valuable as the number of skills you possess.

In another section of the interview, Gina talks about the importance of The English Department, and how she feels it has helped her teaching:

"Personally, The English Department has been very useful to me because I always learn from my colleagues. For example, when we have a reunion, and a teacher makes a comment or introduces a new topic, well I think: "I never stop learning" Even when we discuss the same topics, we have other views, and we keep learning and constructing. It is really nice because we learn from each other. Sometimes, we come up with new courses and ideas. It is also useful because help us standardise,so that everybody has the same objective, right? We are a team and everybody has strengths and weaknesses, but it is really enriching to work within The English Department. We also strengthen the relationships with the teachers, as everybody participates. It is not only the President or the Secretary working, no, all The English Department works towards the same objectives."

In the previous paragraph, Gina appeals to the very definition of what a community of practice is supposed to be: a community where learning takes place, where an individual has opportunities to involve in "practices of the community as well as the development of an identity, which provides a sense of belonging and commitment". (Handley et al., o. 642) Wenger's words are relevant here. "... Engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and so become who we are." (Wenger, 1998, p.i).

The previous definitions are ideal practices in the community and, I dare say, they are exceptions to what really happens in groups of learning. Gina goes on to talk about the importance of The English Department, by making reference to

marginal members, people who prefer to stay in the periphery (or are forced to be there).

“...If, as a teacher, you marginalise yourself by not attending The English Department sessions, well, you affect yourself; that is all, if I don’t go, I marginalise myself. I don’t know what was discussed, I don’t know the topics, and I am not allowed to participate in the activities. This can be reflected in your lessons, as the students realise what other teachers do. As you don’t attend the session of The English Department, well, you have no idea. I sometimes think, well, if you had attended the meeting, you could have known what everybody was talking about, and you wouldn’t feel excluded; also and you would be more or less in sync with the rest of the teachers. Then, I really think that a good way of feeling identified with the rest of your community is by participating in The English Department. That way, you learn from the rest. Definitely, it does affect your work and everybody’s work, as not everyone is on the same wavelength.”

Gina refers to the importance of knowing the practices of The English Department and participating in them. She criticises (as Miguel did) teachers who never attend the meetings, as they do not know the topics and issues under discussion. Gina excludes these teachers from The English Department; in her own words “the teachers who don’t attend the meetings affect everybody’s work”. This is harsh; all the teachers must be part of the CoP even when they cannot attend the meetings. Still, the other members of the community can exclude them as they may affect the other participants’ work.

It is necessary to remember that Gina is a legitimate participant; she is well-established as a permanent teacher. Therefore, she does not face the same problems as the non-permanent teachers. This is probably why her opinion towards the practices of The English Department tend to be more positive.

In her story, the characters who appeared at Level 1 of analysis are Gina, the main authorities, the students and colleagues. In the first excerpt she mentions “people” who questioned her legitimacy without mentioning who these people were. It can be assumed that she refers to her students. Later, when she retakes the story, she mentions the incident of the Director supporting her as a legitimate English language teacher.

In the narration of the events, she tells details about the problem she had with the students. She chooses to legitimise herself with the help of others. I can also define her as a “team player”, as she makes reference, in different parts of the narrative, to the importance of working as a team, with colleagues. For example, in excerpt two, she said “I always learn from colleagues... I will never stop learning... we learn from each other... we are a team... The English Department works towards the same objective”.Max: “Life is a continuous challenge”

Max is an “ideal” trajectory. In 1999, he started working in the Faculty; at the same time, he faced many difficulties, as shown in his life story. However, he knew how to succeed in The English Department and the Faculty in general. Consequently, he became one of the main authorities at the University. He knew how to navigate and used the tools at hand to overcome possible obstacles. He positions himself as a survivor, one who could stand up to the obstacles and succeed against all odds.

Max has the oldest trajectory in The English Department; he started to work in the Faculty a long time ago, and suffered rejection as he was not an English Language teacher, so a “stranger” to the school:

...And as I predicted, my arrival to the Faculty was very **complicated**. I was really young. It was difficult because the Vice Rector offered a few posts, and many people wanted to have the opportunity. As a consequence, **many people were jealous**. I distinctly remember that the Director of the Faculty, well, the person who was in charge of the Faculty at that moment, **was not very nice**. When I asked to talk to him he told me something like this:“Yes, we all know why you were appointed to this position. Let me tell you that I disagree with this decision, however, I can't do anything about it, so I have to accept you here at the Faculty, do whatever you want, I don't care”.

Max used the skills he possessed and his experience as a teacher to navigate The English Department, despite being not welcomed. As can be seen in the following extract, Max uses the word “difficult” a number of times in order to emphasise the many challenges he faced when he started teaching at the Faculty. Bearing this in mind, I can say that Max is the most neoliberal self. In the analysis of the third level, I discuss this in more detail.

Researcher: And, how did you feel at the time?

Max No, well, I felt awful. I clearly noticed that I had landed in a very **difficult** place, in a **hostile** environment. Evidently, I realised that **many people weren't happy** with my new appointment. These people were angry on account of this, it was very **difficult** to gain the confidence and the empathy of the people working there. The beginning was very **difficult**, and I worked hard to convince them that I could do a good job. At that moment, yes, I can tell you that my background was meaningful. Still, the perfect excuse was to say: "what is he doing here? He's an engineer, how come? He was given a full-time position, ok? In those years, at the Faculty of Languages, a doctor, an agronomist, a lawyer and myself were teaching, so, were a motley crew; we all had different backgrounds. However, that was some people's perfect excuse to attack us in the professional field."

In the first lines from the previous paragraph, Max positions himself as someone who can overcome difficulties. He is flexible and can adapt to difficult working environments. Max also positions

himself as a "legitimate player", when he says that he had the skills to be teaching there. Also, he justifies himself in saying that he was not working as an English language teacher without the right credentials.

In contrast, in the last four lines in the paragraph, Max harks back to those years, and feels part of this group of teachers who were taunted for not being "professionals" in the area of English language teaching. He positions himself, and the rest of teachers from different backgrounds, as victims of unfair treatment.

However, in the interview, Max also revealed the different strategies he used in order to legitimise himself in front of the rest of the community colleagues and students:

Max "Well, I had a strategy which really worked and, in the end, **I found my place in the Faculty of Languages**. It was precisely **my work in The English Department which helped me most**. In one of the meetings of The English Department, the President asked us to think of a project in which we could help our students improve their English. So, I said that it would be a good idea to have some extra courses to prepare students to pass Cambridge exams, the FCE. The President told me: "No, the students don't need that, you should offer something else". I retorted: "No, **I really think this is important**, and students did need

it, and it is going to be beneficial to them”. So, to make a long story short, in the end she told me: **“Do whatever you want”**. And **I decided to launch my preparation course**. I started with a small group with twelve students. Fortunately, the course went really well. The students prepared for the exam, and they all passed. **My preparation courses became really popular**, because the students understood how useful the courses were. With this evidence, the Administration had to accept that the courses were a success, and they were important to complement the curriculum”.

In the previous paragraph, I can see how hostile a working environment can be to participants in the CoP, when they do not have the support and trust of their colleagues, Max received a negative answer to his proposal, and also indifference: “Do whatever you want”. In the narrative, I recognised the agency Max demonstrates so as to legitimise his positions in The English Department and before the rest of the CoP.

At the first level of the positioning analysis, Max included the following characters: authorities of the University at different levels, colleagues both inside and outside the CoP. Unlike other participants, he also included students as a main character in his story. As a narrator, Max starts describing his first years in the school, and provides a host of examples of the different challenges he faced when given the job.

Level 2 presents the interaction between the narrator and Max. In different parts of the interview Max introduces us to the challenges he had to face in his first years at the Faculty. He always survived and, according to him, the experiences strengthened him and improved his position within the CoP.

6.3.3 Albert: “I deserve recognition”

Albert is the newest in this trajectory. He started teaching English in the Faculty in 2011. Nevertheless, he also represents a successful trajectory as he was a newcomer whose legitimacy was questioned. Eventually, he managed to play an important role among the authorities in the University. However, he is the participant who appears to have received more negative comments towards his legitimacy in the CoP. In the extract below is part of the story told by Albert:

Researcher: Have you ever been questioned or criticised for not having graduated from the School of languages?

A: **Well, it's incredible that after 22 years I continue being criticised. It has just happened to me this semester.**

R: How come? Please tell me about it.

A: Well, **the students say: "you're an accountant, aren't you?"**

R: But you tell them that at the beginning of the course or what?

A: Sometimes it comes out as an anecdote, but I don't walk into the classroom and say: hey "I'm an accountant". Sometimes students ask me, and I tell them my story. **I have a number of anecdotes. For example, I always ask my students, at the end of the semester, to tell me about things they enjoyed and things they didn't, or how I could improve my class. Once I had a student who wrote: well my expectations were not high at all, but I found out that he does know about the subject.**

In the previous extract, he clearly illustrates the attitude of certain students to the fact of having an accountant as an English teacher, not a teacher with a BA in the area of languages. It is relevant to say how Albert acknowledges that he holds a college degree in a degree in a field different from what is expected in the area of TEFL, he has received unfair treatment, and his students do not have "high expectations". In this regard, it is necessary to remember what Wenger (2008) said about becoming a full participant in a CoP: "a participant must have access to all three dimensions of practice: mutual engagement with other members, their negotiation of the enterprise and the repertoire in use" (p.100) Following on this from Albert was a full participant; however, the fact that he does not have a degree in the area of languages undermined his identity before the students, indirect participants in the CoP.

In the same storyline, Albert provided more examples of harsh comments from students:

A: Yes, yes I have got positive feedback, but I have also found comments like: **What on earth can he teach us if he's an accountant? Or what the hell is an accountant doing at the Faculty of Languages? I have heard those comments directly and indirectly.** This semester I was in an English class and a girl who knows one of my friends from the Faculty of Accountancy and Administration told the rest of her partners that **I was an accountant, and they started to ask me what I was doing here. I told them my story. Obviously, you have to tell them about your background.**

As shown in the previous examples, legitimacy in a community of practice is of the essence. In the case of all these participants, none of them was legitimate “by right of birth”. Each of them had to “earn” this legitimacy. As we have read in the life stories, it was particularly difficult for some of them, as in the case of Albert. This participant pointed out to the importance of talking about “your background”, that is to show your credentials and qualifications as an important part of your identity:

M: Like to legitimise yourself

A: Yes, exactly because they realize that **I am not an impostor** that I have completed courses, related to the area, that **I have an MA and, a PhD**, but I remember when I started to teach here, at the Faculty, there was a small group of students who didn’t agree with the idea of having teachers from other areas, and decided not to register for my class, so the group had to be closed.

M: Because you were an accountant?

A: Yes, later I found out that it had been because I was an accountant.

The skills and qualifications are what identifies a neoliberal self. According to Urciuoli (2008, p.211) “In the neoliberal imaginary of contemporary capitalism workers’ employment value depends on their skills”. The participants in this study rely on these skills and qualifications to justify their participation in a CoP, like The English Department. Additionally, these teachers have been responsible for skills acquiring the necessary skills, as Urciuoli says “to the point of self-commodification” (p.212)

In the following extract, Albert describes another example of the difficulties to legitimise in front of the community, particularly in the eyes of the students:

M: But, did the Director support you?

A: Well, no, it was like gossip. They didn’t complain or anything, they just didn’t sign up for my group. Later, a girl who was my student in a different class told me that their partners had warned her against registering in the group.

From the previous paragraph, I can see the consequences of not being recognised by some participants in the CoP, and how it can clearly affect your belonging and the practices you do in the community. Nevertheless, Albert has become an active participant in The English Department with an important role to play. He has been involved in activities with the rest of the participants, that is, the English language teachers. In the following extract, Albert describes how this relationship has been:

R: And did you find it easy to fit in with the rest of colleagues in the Faculty?

A: Well, honestly, at the beginning, I didn't understand how the Faculty worked. I didn't understand the flexibility, or why the students could choose their schedules, teachers and so on. I started with the first cohort of the new curriculum, and I didn't understand why this college programme is made up of four programmes. My main problem was that I had one class and that was it, so I didn't know how the Faculty really worked. But, back to your question, yes, I felt integrated immediately because I knew many teachers from CELe. As I was their friend it was easy. In general, I am sociable, and I have no problem with that, my difficulty was understanding how the Faculty worked.

R: And, what is the role of The English Department in the Faculty?

A: Wow, that's a very difficult question, because in theory it has a role. Still, in practice, it is another story. The main idea of The English Department is that we work together towards a common objective, all teachers from all areas. In this case English teachers should work towards the same aim; we should know what the others are doing because I know there's a textbook that everybody should follow. I sometimes think that everybody does what they want. The English Department must be the place to unify criteria, help each other, exchange notes. Unfortunately, that doesn't exist, you could say "look I have been doing this in class and it has been successful" or ask the colleagues what they would suggest in this situation, and so on. **Honestly, I think nowadays, The Departments only exist as an administrative requirement. For example, our English Department has continuous rotation of teachers, and I think that is not good, because you cannot create certain identity.**

In the previous lines, Albert criticises how the CoP has evolved, and how it has only become an administrative instrument, not a site for sharing common practices. The lack of identity would be an obstacle for the adequate functioning

of The English Department, as participants only attend meetings and do tasks as a mere requirement, not as an opportunity to share practices and above all a learning space.

6.4 Boundary trajectories

Boundary trajectories represent special characteristics of identities. The participants in the CoP enter and leave the different communities successfully. Wenger (1998) describes this phenomenon as “histories which create discontinuities between those who have been participating and those who have not” (p.103).

Multimembership and the lack of participation is a feature of these trajectories as the participants belong to different CoP at this faculty. Consequently, they create different identities and collaborate in each The English Department, albeit with different degrees of participation.

6.4.1 Luke: “I know what I’m doing”

Luke is the most experienced teacher in this group of participants, he started teaching English in the Faculty in 2001. He has a BA in Translation and Interpretation. However, he prefers teaching English literature. He confessed he has never attended a course or seminar in teaching, it is mainly his experience and knowledge of the language which helped him in his career.

R And did you ever have any problem for not having the BA in English language teaching?

L: No, because at the beginning, I started with Translation classes, not with English. Remember that my BA is in Translation and Interpretation. I can say that I was an expert because I had also worked as an interpreter and a translator. I translated many things which were really boring, for example, how to use the microwave oven or contracts, or things like that, but I had to do it because they were the kinds of things which were available. I have taught it for many years, and I knew how this works. Even though when it was a huge change, I felt comfortable teaching.

R: Have you ever attended a course, or seminar on teaching?

L: No, honestly not

Luke represents a trajectory which moves smoothly between different communities. He has always identified more with Translation and Interpretation, rather than with the Teaching of English. However, as he has a very high level of proficiency in the second language, he has always been welcomed to the community. Wenger (2008) emphasises the fact of non-participation and self-exclusion as part of our identity, especially when we have the ability to exercise these decisions which represent our modes of belonging to the CoP.

In the same form Wenger (2008) argues that non-participation can take many forms: “being an outsider, being a peripheral participant, or being marginalised – each with different implications for the resulting identities” (p. 148)

T: Have you ever been discriminated, either by students or colleagues, for not having the BA in languages?

L: No, not at all. My BA is related to languages, not to teaching languages, but it covers aspects related to languages. Honestly my BA has been really beneficial. I started making money thanks to this BA and then I started teaching languages, not English. I reckon that they offered me certain lessons because they didn't have a better

option, but **I have learned through the experience you gain after many years teaching languages**, I know it is a flaw that I have, I know I should have got training on teaching languages, but it is too late to start from scratch.

The above comment highlights the importance of experience and years of practice in the CoP. Wenger (1998) says that the action of non-participation differs for novices and experts. Newcomers need this lack of participation to learn, observe and question. On the other hand, old-timers and experts decide not to participate. In some cases, they may even decide to stay on the margins. That is the case with Luke, he does not feel the need to participate in the activities of The English Department, nor does he feel rejected.

In his trajectory, I can see some actors like the students and other teachers. The way they interact is usually characterised by respect and tolerance. Luke

represents a long trajectory with important achievements, which accounts for the respect he enjoys in the community.

In this chapter I presented the view of eight different teachers regarding their participation in the CoP of the Faculty of Languages. I tried to understand in more detail how they perceive themselves as teachers who do not have the BA in languages or teaching, and yet teach English. In order to understand the different processes, I used the voices of secondary participants in the life stories, and also my own perspective.

With the different trajectories and the account of the life stories, I can conclude that the career paths within some communities, as well as the transition across communities over time, reflect identity as a complex learning process. The English Department is also a reflection of what Urciuoli (2008) calls “the new workplace”, where the worker sees himself as a product which can adapt to the demands of the market and sells his skills in order to succeed in the workplace. In the next chapter, I present level three of this positioning analysis. Where I discuss the broader discourses in which the participants are involved.

Chapter 7: Discussion

In the previous chapters, I discussed the professional identity of a group of teachers within a community of practice that I have called **The English Department**. In the different life stories, I was a co-participant of the ways in which each participated in the CoP. All the teachers shared the fact that they do not hold a college degree to teach English. Still, they have differentiated trajectory, these trajectories are shaped by the community to whom they all belong.

The participants in this research did not plan to have a career teaching English; they all went to university to pursue different BA, such as Accountancy, Engineering, Architecture, and others. Nevertheless, they all ended up making English language teaching their way of living. Their trajectories have not been straightforward. One way or another, they have all faced difficulties, for instance, lack of recognition from their colleagues and/or students, doubts about their legitimacy as English language teachers, and a crisis of professional identity, a consequence of exercising a profession for which they did not originally train.

I decided to use a positioning analysis approach in narrative inquiry for my research as the most appropriate methodology. This is mainly because it provides an interactional analysis divided into three categories. This methodology also recognises that tellers construct and negotiate their selves in the stories they tell. These categories allow me to analyse the content of the life stories, the role of the participants and, most importantly, I am able to put the life stories into a broader context. It is into this macro or broader context that I try to make sense of the decisions made by the participants. In doing so, I attempt to understand how they exercised their agency in making a decision but also, how The English Department and the market forces led them to start teaching English. My experience as a colleague and as an English language teacher who is in a similar situation –I, myself am an English language teacher without a BA in English language teaching – has been used as data to triangulate

and contrast their stories with the realities that they report.

Throughout this work, I have intended to answer the following research questions outlined in Chapter one:

- 1. How do English Language Teachers (my participants) position themselves in the CoP called *The English Department*?**
- 2. How do these non-official English Language Teachers construct and negotiate their identities in the CoP (The English Department) across time?**
- 3. How do other participants in the CoP (students, colleagues, authorities) perceive these teachers, and with what consequences?**

The objective of the present chapter is to discuss the answers to these questions together with the narratives provided in the interviews. These discussions with my participants, were supported by the theory analysed in chapters two and three. In addition to these research questions, I am going to review the third level of Barkhuizen's theory (2010), "Extended Positioning Analysis".

In chapters 5 and 6 I already analysed the first two levels, which make reference to the content, characters and the interaction performed in the story. At level 3, I will discuss the positions of the participants and the "normative discourses", as they are called by Barkhuizen (2010). This third level allowed me to position the participants as part of a socioeconomic reality, from which they cannot be separated or isolated. In analysing levels two and three, I investigated the discourse elicited from the teacher and the secondary participants. However, these levels did not allow me to reflect and analyse the teachers' positions in the context in which they are living.

The stories narrated by all the participants are embedded in a context which shapes both teachers' identities and the moment they narrated. This wider context has been described by various scholars as neoliberal (Block 2018, Harvey, 2005, Holborow, 2015; Sayer, 2016, 2018). It has been characterised as an

imposition of market values to the rest of human activities. As a result, we will recognise that the stories collected and analysed in this thesis represent important accounts of how neoliberalism has transformed the higher education structures in Mexico, and indeed around the world (Block, Grey and Holborow, 2012).

Moreover, I have been able to see how this transformation is understood and experienced by the participants of this research.

It would be impossible to try to understand their accounts if we did not take into consideration their past actions, and all the events that took place in their lives before they became English teachers. This last level, the third one, Barkhuizen (2009) presents a variation from Bamberg's (1997) original positioning analysis. Bamberg suggested the use of this level to include the relationship of the participants' stories with broader discourses in the world.

The third level, as proposed by Barkhuizen (2000), analyses the agency that participants exercise against the macro discourses out there. This analysis allowed me the opportunity to include aspects which did not necessarily appear in the interviews, but cannot be separated from the stories, as they contribute to shaping the teachers' identities. After having analysed the life stories, I can conclude that some participants demonstrate their agency differently. I will illustrate the above comment with some examples: Moses participates in the CoP by staying on the margins. I see this as a passive reactive discourse. He decided to do his work well, to participate actively when asked, but nothing else. Based on his stories and having spent time with him as a colleague for twelve years, I would say this is a silent form of protest against the practices of The English Department. By contrast, there is Ricky, who has learnt to "play along", which has helped him to reach higher positions The English Department, and at the University. I can also find other "successful" trajectories, such as Gina and Max's, both of whom have demonstrated an ability to be heard and make demands, but also to adapt and be leaders at the CoP. They both have navigated The English Department with confidence.

The importance of analysing the third level in an extended form means that I can introduce extra information about current activities in which all the teachers are participating, and how macro discourses affect their positions and life decisions. The analysis, in the extended version, includes normative discourses or, as Barkhuizen (2008, p.284) calls it: “ a broader ideological context”. In this analysis, instead of containing or delimiting the research to what the participants told me, I include extra information gathered while carrying out my research. In the same way, I was a co-participant in the construction of the life stories and I am able to expand the discourses from the participants.

This level allows us to connect those localised discourses with societal and global issues. The narratives analysed in Chapter 6 are important because they show how my participants experience the processes in which they were involved in The English Department, such as neoliberalism, and the commodification and marketisation of the education system in Mexico.

7.1 What is life like in The English Department?

After the analysis of the trajectories, I can conclude that three topics that appear as common themes in the trajectories are the ones related to: **legitimacy, power, and neoliberalism**. All the teachers who took part in this research are legitimate English Language teachers with the same rights and duties as the rest of the teachers who work for the Faculty of Languages. The three aspects mentioned above have to do with a certain hierarchy which operates in an unnoticed way – without established rules– with consequences to everybody: it is not the same to be a permanent teacher as a non-permanent one.

In their navigation of their trajectories, the participants faced a number of different obstacles, some related to colleagues who questioned their legitimacy, others with people in power situations; still others related to students and, by the same token, the Institution. These consequences answer question number two: how other participants in The English Department perceive these teachers.

In chapter 4, the participants agreed that one of the forms of gaining **legitimacy** is by having the documents that certify you have the credentials to become an English language teacher, even if your degree is different from the one provided by the faculty of Languages. At this point, it is necessary to remember what Wenger (1998) said about gaining legitimacy in a CoP "... newcomers must be granted enough legitimacy to be treated as potential members ... granting the newcomers legitimacy is important because they (newcomers) are likely to come short of what the community regards as competent engagement" (p. 101).

Nowadays, in Mexico, it is imperative to possess a BA in the area of knowledge you want to teach. According to the University policies (Legislación Universitaria, 2012), for teachers to be employed by any of the Faculties or schools in the University a BA diploma is an absolute must. However, my group of participants have a BA in areas completely different from the ones related to teaching a second language. The teachers justify themselves on the strength of their mastery of the language. Evidence of this are the certificates and long experience as teachers of English. Thus, for example, Lucy had been an English language teacher for over twenty years, before entering the University as a language teacher.

Currently, there has been an explosion in the demand for such certificates. Most private schools offer certification in English and other foreign languages, as a plus to children and teenager's education. Needless to say, access to these certificates is almost impossible in public schools on account of the cost. It is this requirement to have a certificate and qualifications to teach the second language that many authors have attributed to the commodification of education, a result of aligning education with neoliberal practices (Soto & Perez-Milans, 2018; Codó & Patiño-Santos, 2017; Sayer, 2015; Urciuoli, 2008; Block, 2017; Block, Gray & Holborow, 2012). However, even when this is a common characteristic of this group of English language teachers, the way they have navigated the CoP is different for permanent and non-permanent teachers. These nuances between the two categories of teachers become more evident in their answers related to the activities of The English Department. Moses, Lucy and Miguel expressed

certain dissatisfaction with the uneven treatment they are given as non-permanent teachers.

A second aspect mentioned by Lucy had to do with “performance in class”. Clearly, these teachers had to make an effort to be well prepared and deliver good lessons so that they could justify their lack of official documents to teach English. Experience has been valued by all the participants. This experience has allowed them to show that they are capable. Thus, for example, Lucy’s testimony demonstrates how she has considerable experience. She is able to deliver successful lessons independently of The English Department demands. According to Vähäsantanen, Paloniemi, Räikkönen & Hökkä (2020, p.1)” The academic profession is traditionally believed to enjoy a high degree of freedom, such that academics can fairly freely determine their own work tasks, with possibilities to act according to their own professional ambitions and goals”.

The previous quote can be partially true at the University. In fact, one of its guiding principles is academic freedom. However, all teachers depend on a Department. Officially, so the decisions made within it may have an impact on their teaching. Here, a teacher’s agency comes to the fore. Agency, in my opinion, must be exercised, not only granted. I consider it relevant to highlight voices like Moses’s and Lucy’s who decided not to participate actively in the CoP and thus exerting their agency. Vähäsantanen & Eteläpelto (2015) explain that professional agency can be understood as “enacted through influencing and making choices in ways that affect one’s professional identity, career, and work practices” (p.2).

The fact of working in an area for which they do not have the proper qualifications can be seen as both a direct consequence of a lack of opportunities to develop in the field of your choice or the personal decision to become an English language teacher, making it a way of living. We can clearly see neoliberal selves in these teachers, as they demonstrate great flexibility. Some recent studies (Vähäsantanen, Paloniemi, Räikkönen & Hökkä, 2020; Priestly, Biesta &

Robinson, 2015) have warned us against the new form of managerial practices in education and how this affects the teachers' work, roles, and identities. In consequence, through the voices collected in this thesis, I can affirm that the decision of teaching English for this group of teachers was far from easy; it was full of tensions with one's identity and also with the rest of the community of practice.

In this sense, in Chapters 4 and 5, we heard the complaints of *asignatura* teachers, like Miguel, Lucy and Moses, who had to devote extra time to attend meetings, to participate in the different activities of the CoP, and, as Miguel mentioned, "without extra pay". Beside this is true, I also found "other privileges" of participating in the CoP. As the President or Secretary of the CoP; you become part of a select group of teachers who have access to meetings of a different level. In this way, the reward is not monetary, but one of prestige, whose benefits can be reaped in the future.

Issues related to power cannot be discarded in a CoP. In their accounts the participants pointed out that tension and unequal relations in The English Department were a common practice. However, only Lucy expressed these power relations clearly: "it is like a dictatorship". This is undoubtedly one of the most important findings of this thesis: the presence of power relations which create more tension in the relationships among the different actors in the CoP.

The aspects of power and lack of homogeneity in a CoP was originally ignored by Wenger (2008). Authors like Barton & Tusting (2005) confirm that "issues around power, resistance and inequality were overlooked within the theory of communities of practice" (p.6). By the same token, Creese (2005) and Rock (2005) shed some light on the question of diversity in the CoP and challenge the vision of homogeneity in a community such as The English Department. Likewise, Harris and Shelswell (2005) narrated that although communities of practice in a programme of Adult Basic Education were generally successful, they did encounter some problems that mirror some of my findings.

Harris and Shelswell (2005) criticise how the lack of experience of new participants in the CoP can affect the whole experience of newcomers, thus leading to marginalisation and disempowerment. In this respect, I can make reference to Moses's and Lucy's cases who had to stand up to challenges the first time they had attended a meeting at the CoP. They did not feel welcome, according to their narratives. This meant that they never fully participated in the practices of the CoP. Harris and Shelswell (2005) also mention that it is important to remember that communities of practice are self-regulated systems whose members approve or disapprove of the new members and their practices (p.167) New participants in The English Department are colleagues, but also rivals, in the sense that newcomers can take over my classes if I am not approved of by students, authorities and the members of The English Department.

The role of power is **one** of the relevant findings in this research: the relations in the CoP are far from smooth. In the case of this group of teachers was even more evident, as they had to enter a CoP, to which they were supposed to have had access. In the first place, I discovered that actors in the CoP were far from having untroubled relationships with each other. I also found that the practices of the community are rife with power struggle, which affects the decisions made by The English Department, with the benefits involved in participating in the CoP. This is the reason why Wenger (1998) emphasises that a salient characteristic of a community of practice should be mutual respect and support among participants. Nevertheless, in The English Department this is not the case most of the time.

It was particularly revealing that secondary participants also had a key role to play in the CoP. I am referring to authorities and students, even when they do not attend the meetings of The English Department. It is precisely to students that the CoP owes its existence. The decisions made by the CoP affects students directly. Max told us about his "bitter encounters" with the Principal and his refusal to welcome him not only to the CoP, but also the Faculty. On the other hand, Albert narrated how he was questioned by students on several occasions

for not having studied a degree in Languages and English teaching.

The influence of secondary, but decidedly relevant, actors in the CoP is a **second** finding of this research. For example, Lucy justified her lack of participation in the community of practice by saying that, as long as she could deliver good lessons, it did not really matter what the authorities of The English Department in the Faculty said. Another participant who regarded students as allies was Max. He thought the authorities were opponents. However, he used the argument that the students enjoyed his lessons, which went some way to make up for not having the support of the authorities or the CoP; he was a “successful” teacher. Nevertheless, the authorities are not always the “enemy”. Albert mentioned that the principal of the school supported him when the students questioned his presence, as an Accountant and teaching English at the Faculty of Languages. With these examples, it is clear that the participants can position different actors in various roles, depending on how they navigate the CoP, and their personal experiences and interpretations of different events.

Lave and Wenger (1991) denied the existence of an “illegitimate peripheral participant”. However, in practice, I can say that participants who are excluded by other members, or by personal choice, from the practices of the CoP display this illegitimate peripheral participation. In this respect, Harris and Shelswell (2005) suggest that “choosing to define some form of participation as illegitimate can be a significant stage in the development of a community of practice” (p.168). A characteristic of this illegitimate peripheral participation is the presence of “driving competence” or “legitimization conflicts”. Both denominations make reference to the struggles some participants have when they try to become participants of the practices in the community of practice. For example, when Moses decides not to actively participate in the decisions of The English Department, the consequence of this decision is not gaining access to the benefits of being in the core of the CoP. As a result, he has never been voted President or Secretary of the CoP.

A **third** finding in my research is related to the construction of participants’

identities. In this respect, one of the aspects gathered from Wenger (1998) has to do with *alignment*, compliance with the practices of The English Department. The participants in such practices somehow “mimic” the other participants, thus in adapting the practices of The English Department and becoming active members of the community of practice. For example, Lucy told me she just did what the rest of the teachers did at the meetings and tried to be quiet the rest of the time. This is a common practice among the newest members of The English Department. Nobody tells them how to react, what to say, when to participate, etc. It is only after some sessions that a member can really understand what happens at the meetings.

Resistance to participate in certain practices of The English Department does not necessarily mean a refusal to learn, as Wenger points out (1998, p. 270), “it may reflect a genuine thirst for learning of a kind that engages one’s identity on a meaningful trajectory and affords some ownership of meaning”. Unfortunately, the other members may regard this as a refusal to be involved in the CoP and in the learning process. As we can see in Lucy’s navigation, her first participations were uncomfortable experiences. However, in due course, she became one of the main authorities at The Faculty.

The previous paragraphs have summarised how the practices in The English Department are challenging most of the time; they are also complicated and haphazard. Needless to say, these conditions are even more complicated for non-permanent teachers as they do not have the certainty to be offered a contract every term, and these non-permanent teachers enter and leave the CoP often. It is hard to imagine how a participant can identify with The English Department if they do not feel part of it.

7.2 Neoliberalism and other normative discourses

Block (2018) claims that we must see neoliberalism as a whole concept which includes policies, practices, ideology, and rationality. With the aforementioned statement, it is impossible to separate teachers and their practices from the

current practices of The English Department. Park (2013, p. 559-560) affirms that “... a neoliberal participant displays initiative, responsibility and flexibility, willingly taking risks and engaging in projects of endless self-improvement (e.g., by taking up new skills and developing new careers)”.

The previous lines describe the teachers in the CoP discussed in this study. All the teachers started a new career, acquired different skills in order to be accepted in the market and they show flexibility as regards the tasks they have to complete in their everyday lives. They can be identified easily as entrepreneurial citizens and *neoliberal selves*, another term used by some authors who make reference to the characteristics of today’s citizens (Block 2018, Brown 2005). It is also clear that self-improvement plays an important role for these teachers, they are asked to enrol in new courses and be updated in their teaching practices. Members of the CoP who do not meet these requirements may be refused participation in The English Department, or even worse, put their jobs on the line.

With this in mind, I can conclude that most of the participants in the CoP take on neoliberal selves. However, this flexibility, which is a characteristic of neoliberal selves, is not found in the participants to the same extent. For example, Ricky, Max and Gina, seem to have a greater disposition to be flexible and adapt to the norms and rules of The English Department. In contrast, Miguel, Lucy and Moses in their stories objected to most practices of the CoP or were adamantly opposed to some of them. The trajectories and navigation of the participants did not always have the same result: Max, Gina, Albert and Lucy had very important positions as authorities in the Faculty. This demonstrates that navigation of a CoP is a personal matter, one rife with contradictions and challenges.

In recent years, the field of education has shifted towards a sociocultural conception (Block, 2012). However, this shift cannot be isolated from other changes taking place in the world. Undoubtedly, one of these is related to neoliberalism and its impact by influencing all fields, including education. Sayer (2015) demonstrates how education in Mexico is framed by neoliberalism with the discourse including phrases such as the following: *employment opportunities, economic development, internationalisation and others*. The adoption of these

policies, many times come affects limited equity and access to better jobs.

The participants in this research took advantage of these neoliberal characteristics by speaking a foreign language, having qualifications in the second language. This gave them access to a job that, “in theory”, was to be reserved to teachers who had studied a BA in languages. However, there are differences in the way the participants adopt these neoliberal practices, and Moses decided not to participate in the CoP. At the other end, Ricky willingly adopts them.

Typically, neoliberalism has been studied and discussed in fields other than education. It is traditionally related to economics and finance. Nevertheless, many recent papers have closed this gap and included neoliberalism in education, pedagogy, and linguistics. How does neoliberalism influence education? Block, *et al.*, (2012) summarise such influence by saying that “... neoliberalism creates a market and the implementation of market principles where none had previously existed” (p. 114).

Drawing on Block’s discussion of the neoliberal citizen (2018, 2011), it seems that citizens are supposed to be satisfied with what the neoliberal practices offer: badly paid jobs, long hours, which often including weekends, and extra hours, not to mention all the work that teachers usually take home in order to complete their tasks. Citizens accept these appalling working conditions as they know there are many others eager to take over their positions. As the saying goes better a badly paid job, than no job.

On this third level of analysis, teachers are immersed in a dominant narrative: swim or sink. Ricky is a clear example of this. During the interview, he was the fiercest critic of the CoP of English teachers. Still, years later, he became the President of The English Department. Criticism levelled at to today’s societies seems to focus on one particular point: is lack of care for others. It does not matter what it takes to survive in this dog-eat-dog market as long as I can keep my position.

The English Department is also a reflection of what Urciuoli (2008) calls as “the

new workplace”, where the worker sees himself as a product which can adapt to the demands of the market and sells his skills in order to succeed. The participants in this research were interviewed about their English lessons, however, all of them teach other subjects if they are offered the opportunity.

This chapter has discussed the findings of the eight participants in a CoP. It has reflected on the challenges the teachers face as members of The English Department, and their immersion in a labour market that offers, more often than not, disadvantageous conditions. It is admirable how the participants adapt and do their best to be excellent English language teachers.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

The main aim of this research was to analyse the navigation of the different trajectories of eight teachers in a community of practice at a Mexican University. This chapter summarises the findings of the study as well as it aims to establish the scope of this study and possible further research.

8.1 My findings

At the beginning of this research, I intended to answer the following research questions:

1. **How do English Language Teachers (my participants) position themselves in the CoP called *The English Department*?**
2. **How do these non-official English Language Teachers construct and negotiate their identities in the CoP (The English Department) across time?**
3. **How do other participants in the CoP (students, colleagues, authorities) perceive these teachers, and with what consequences?**

In order to answer the above questions, I followed the theories of Communities of Practice by Lave and Wenger (1991, 1998) to guide my research, as well as other authors who enriched the notion of *identity* (Barkhuizen, 2008; 2016; Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik, 2014; Block, 2007, 2013; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Norton 2006; Tsui, 2007). The methodology which guided my research was narrative inquiry, in the form of life stories.

The answer to the first question about the positioning of the eight participants in the CoP was given through a semi-structured interview, during which each teacher narrated some of the salient events leading up to their careers as English language teachers. These life stories presented personal and varied navigations of the CoP called *The English Department*. The different trajectories revealed the following:

- The participants demonstrated a flexible, neoliberal self, to different degrees.

- All participants are legitimate members of The English Department despite the fact that they do not have a BA in English Language teaching.
- The trajectories demonstrated that the participants use their agency to overcome challenges and the different obstacles encountered throughout their professional life.

In question 2, I wanted to understand how these teachers constructed and negotiated their identities in the CoP across time. I found that navigation is not a straight line; instead, their trajectories are full of detours, contradictions, and conflicts. With regard to the type of participation they had, I divided them into five different ways of navigation within the CoP. Nevertheless, some participants displayed characteristics belonging to more than one trajectory.

The participants with full membership and participation in the practices of The English Department show an **insider** trajectory. In this category, I included: Miguel, Gina, Max and Albert, all “successful trajectories” on the CoP. Others remain on the margins of the CoP and have a **boundary** trajectory. Luke and Ricky portrayed some of the characteristics of this trajectory. Newcomers are considered to have an **inbound** navigation in the CoP, Ricky and Lucy. Finally, **outbound** trajectories lead out of the CoP. Ricky presented some of the characteristics of this type of navigation. Nevertheless, I want to emphasise that all demonstrated to have a **peripheral** participation at some point in their interventions in The English Department. Thus, it is of the utmost importance to follow their trajectories across time. As this change, some participants refused to fully participate in the CoP at some point, only to eventually be in the core of The English Department. I would like to highlight that the different trajectories are neither good nor bad; they are just characterizations of their different ways of navigating the community of practice over time.

In the third research question, I wanted to discover how the participants were perceived by other participants in the CoP. The rest of the external participants do not take part directly in the activities of The English Department; however, they are as important as the members of the community of practice. I called

them secondary participants even when their role is crucial. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasise how decisive their opinions are in the interpretations provided by the teachers in this research.

The main finding is related to legitimacy. All the members of The English Department are officially legitimate participants of the CoP. Nevertheless, the teachers in this research had

their legitimacy questioned by students, colleagues and authorities for not having a BA in the area of English Language teaching. In the narratives, I found that the teachers legitimise their presence in the CoP in different ways:

- Teachers demonstrate their competence as legitimate English language teachers by demonstrating different qualifications: documents and certificates which support their credentials.
- Teachers legitimise their presence in the CoP with their practices in The English Department. The participants played an active role to be taken into account and heard in the community. Some of them became leaders of The English Department at one point on their trajectory. I found that the more participation, the more legitimate a member you are.
- Teachers demonstrate their agency to legitimise themselves. Teachers with an inside trajectory positioned themselves as flexible, determined, capable, creative, etc. However, teachers who decided to stay in the periphery also demonstrated agency, as their personal decision not to participate in the practices on the community and stay on the margins.

The community turned out to be rife with site conflict, struggle, and contradiction. The interaction among participants is far from smooth and hassle-free of obstacles, which contradicts the definition of a community of practice as a place for learning and the development of an identity, conducive to a sense of belonging and commitment (Wenger, 1998). The findings show the complexity and contradictory nature the (re)construction of a professional identity.

My work captured processes which started more than twenty years ago. I was able to historicise the trajectories of neoliberalism of people who did not have a BA in teaching. This allowed me to understand the historical moment whereby all the participants had different ways of navigating a community of practice.

8.2 Implications of the research

After having analysed the results of this study, I would like to emphasise some aspects:

- The role of The Departments needs to be questioned and rethought. They have lost their original purpose. Their very existence must be questioned. The same teachers who form the different communities of practice have to organise themselves and make decisions about their professional decisions in their classrooms, while the authorities should just play an administrative role, without meddling in the functioning of The English Department. The CoP must be the place where teachers collaborate for the benefit of the students and their own teaching practices. Newcomers need to be welcomed and introduced to the practices of The English Department to guarantee their full participation in The English Department, and access to all the resources at hand. Old timers should be in charge of guiding and providing support to the newer members of the community of practice.
- The Universities in Mexico must renovate their policies concerning the contractual rights of teachers and the categories they are assigned. A bachelor's degree does not determine you as a professional as much as a number of practices inside and outside the classroom do. I would like to add that, unfortunately, in Mexico, English language teachers are still not regarded as professionals in the field of teaching. This belief has not helped to create a strong community of English language teachers. Not surprisingly, some authors like Randi and Zeichner (2004) have found that practitioners in TESOL around the world face daunting challenges to have

full-time and long-term jobs. This, in no small measure, explains why some literature still describes teaching as a *quasi-profession*.

- For obvious reasons, I have a real interest in the case of Mexico. As I mentioned in Chapter two, in the last twenty years, Mexico has undergone different economic transformations that have an impact on the education system. Neoliberal policies have been implemented in an effort to disguise the discourse of internationalisation and modernisation. In actual fact, what governments are trying to do is to adopt globalisation practices that have little to do with education. Authors like Sayer (2018, 2015), Ramirez-Romero and Sayer (2016) have documented the different actions taken by the Mexican government regarding the teaching of English in public schools. Sayer claims that this “more and earlier turn to English should be understood as part of the response to align education curricula and programs to neoliberal policies” (2015, p. 40).

8.3 Limitations of the research

The main aim of this study was to give an account of the ways in which a group of English Language Teachers construct and negotiate their professional identities in a Community of Practice in a Mexican Public University. From the outset, I knew that the stories told and (re)constructed by the participants were going to be influenced by my understanding. I was a co-constructor of the stories and the narratives, which have been written, interpreted, and analysed through my lens. During the whole process, I followed the methodology and processes that all research must have. However, these life stories, with a different researcher, would have turned out to be somehow different.

It is also unavoidable to regret not having had the possibility of using the richness of all the data available. Much information had to be left out, but with a view to using for further research with a different aim. Time is always a consideration in

this type of project. Due to time constraints, a researcher needs to bring analysis to an end.

I consider that not having given voice to relevant actors in The English Department is also a shortcoming. Students, colleagues, and authorities also play a relevant role in the community of practice of my participants.

8.4 Suggestions for further research

As I mentioned in the previous section, much data was left out, which can be used in a different research project. However, I would suggest the following lines of research:

- The focus of this research was on teachers who do not have a BA in the area of English teaching. Nevertheless, it would be beneficial to contrast these findings with the professional identity of teachers who do have a BA in English language teaching. I also pointed out the importance of the rest of the indirect participants in the community of practice.
- The aspect of broader discourses was of paramount importance in this research. It is necessary to look at the global discourses out there to better understand the participants and their decisions on how to navigate their trajectories.
- Neoliberalism and other normative discourses influence not only the decisions made by the participants, but also the policies, regarding education, that directly affect all the participants in the Community of practice. It is necessary to raise awareness of this influence, as the discourse of neoliberalism has permeated every single aspect of society. Consequently, it should be mandatory to include, in the future research projects, factors such as: globalisation, neoliberalism and colonisation among others, and their impact on education.
- I would also recommend broadening the instruments and

methodologies that can be used in this type of research. Undoubtedly, I could have enriched my study if I had added other methods for gathering data.

This study has meant an incredible experience that has contributed to my professional and personal growth. Now, I see my colleagues with profound admiration as I understand their life stories include challenges and detours, contradictions in their attempts to legitimise themselves.

Appendix A: States in Mexico with highest rates of poverty.

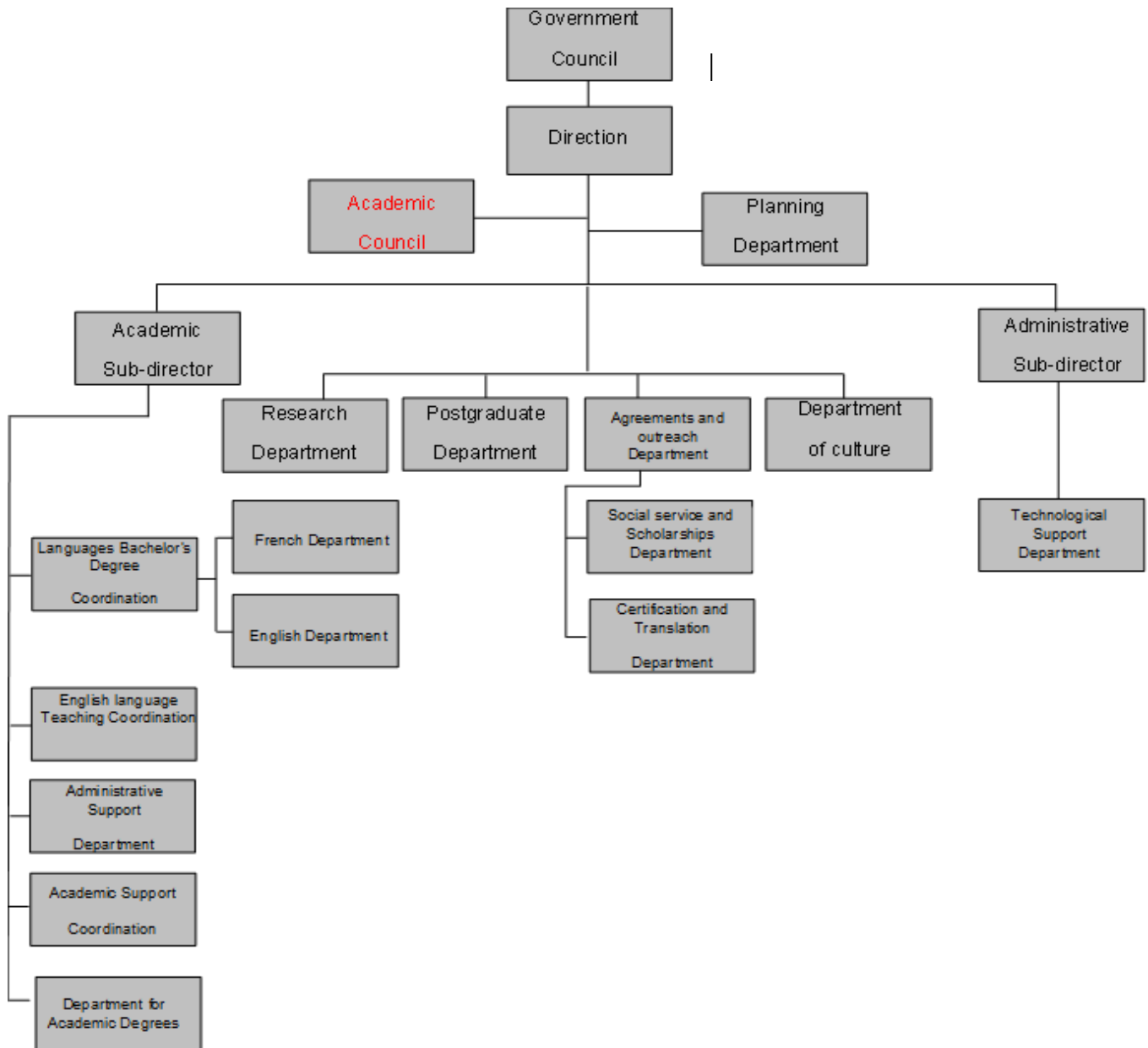
State	Percentage 2014	Thousands of people
Chiapas	74.7	3,782.3
Guerrero	69.7	2,442.9
Puebla	64.5	3,878.1
Oaxaca	61.9	2,434.6
Tlaxcala	57.9	711.9
Veracruz	52.6	4,141.8

Source: CONEVAL Index of poverty, 2014.

Appendix B: Levels of proficiency in a foreign language: CEFR and Cambridge main suite exams

CEFR	Cambridge main suite exams
A1 Breakthrough	
A2 Waystage	KET Key English Test
A3 Threshold	PET Preliminary English Test
A4 Vantage	FCE First Certificate in English
A5 Effective Operational Proficiency	CAE Certificate in Advanced English
A6 Mastery	CPE Certificate in Proficiency in English

Appendix C Faculty of Languages Organigram



Appendix D Consent forms

CONSENT FORM

Study title: Teaching without “being a teacher”: the case of English Teachers’ Professional Identity in a Community of Practice in a Mexican University

Researcher name: Margarita Aurora Caballero Gastélum

Study reference: 18386

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

I have read and understood the information sheet 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 without my legal rights being affected

I am happy to be contacted regarding other unspecified research projects. I therefore consent to the University retaining my personal details on a database, kept separately from the research data detailed above. The ‘validity’ of my consent is conditional upon the University complying with the Data Protection Act and I understand that I can request my details be removed from this database at any time.

Data Protection

I understand that information collected about me during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used for the purpose of this study. All files containing any personal data will be made anonymous.

Name of participant (print name).....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

AUTORIZACIÓN

Título del estudio: Enseñar sin ser “maestro oficial”: la identidad profesional de los maestros de inglés en una comunidad de práctica en una universidad pública mexicana.

Nombre del investigador: Margarita Aurora Caballero Gastélum.

Favor de indicar (X) en los cuadros si está de acuerdo con lo siguiente:

He leído y comprendido la hoja de información y he tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas acerca del estudio

Estoy de acuerdo en tomar parte en esta investigación y en que mi información sea usada para dicho estudio

Entiendo que mi participación es voluntaria y me puedo abstener de participar en cualquier momento sin que mis derechos legales se vean afectados

Estoy de acuerdo en ser contactado por la Universidad de Southampton para cualquier otro Proyecto de investigación y por lo tanto doy mi consentimiento para que la Universidad tenga mis datos personales en una base de datos separada del presente estudio. La validez de mi consentimiento está condicionada al cumplimiento del Acta de Protección de Datos y entiendo que puedo pedir que se borren mis datos en el momento en que yo lo requiera.

Protección de datos

Entiendo que la información proporcionada durante mi participación en este estudio será resguardada en una computadora protegida y que dicha información será utilizada únicamente para esta investigación. Todos los archivos que contengan datos personales serán anónimos.

Nombre del participante.....

Firma del participante.....

Fecha

Appendix E Interviews' transcripts

Lucy's transcript Original Spanish

M. Muchas gracias por la entrevista. Vamos a comenzar hablando de tus estudios universitarios.

M. ¿Qué estudiaste en la Universidad?

Soy licenciada en estudios computacionales administrativos, esos son mis estudios universitarios.

M. ¿Y siempre quisiste estudiar eso?

No, yo estudié eso para no ser profesora como mis papás que son profesores, entonces decidí estudiar algo que me metiera algo que era muy diferente de ser profesor, pero no resultó (risas)

M. Pero ¿disfrutaste tus estudios?

Sí, sinceramente sí, la parte de sistemas computacionales me ha dado mucha estructura en la vida y la he podido aplicar ahora a muchas áreas de la administración escolar.

M. Y ¿cómo fue que empezaste a dar clases de inglés?

Pues yo desde muy pequeña, cuando era chica le dieron a mi papá una beca para poder irse a Inglaterra, entonces yo a los siete años me fui a Inglaterra, a los siete años de edad me fui y cursé el tercer año de primaria allá. Y prácticamente estuve todo ese año viviendo en Inglaterra, ese año la primera parte como que había una escuela en la que primero te adaptabas para la nueva cultura y duré ahí dos meses y ya lo restante, los otros diez meses ya estudié como la parte de inglés. Cuando regresé de Inglaterra, me hicieron un examen de conocimientos aquí en México y ese examen de conocimientos lo contesté en inglés. Entonces fue caótico porque no me podían revalidar los estudios y de ahí prácticamente empecé a estudiar inglés bueno aprendí el inglés prácticamente en Inglaterra. De ahí a los 15 años, cuando yo tenía quince años mi papá puso una escuela de inglés y pues ahí les hacían falta maestros que hablaran inglés y que dieran clases, entonces yo prácticamente a los 15 años empecé a dar clases de inglés. A adultos, a jóvenes, yo era muy feliz.

M. ¿Y cómo preparabas tus clases?

Sí me acuerdo mucho de mi primer libro que tenía a Rosa Rabbit, Elizabeth Elephant, este Thomas Tiger era un libro para niños, entonces la primera clase que di era de niños de seis años y yo tenía quince entonces era muy fácil y yo recuerdo que yo tenía el método que explicaba exactamente cómo tenías que dar la clase, entonces yo como buena principiante seguía al pie de la letra lo que decía el libro, el teacher's book, y así empecé a dar clases, prácticamente desde los quince años, mi papá me daba una lana, entonces era muy gratificante dar clases porque trabajaba y también empecé a tomar cursos de capacitación para dar clases de inglés.

M. Entonces te empezaste a capacitar

Sí, sí, digamos que yo empecé a dar clases de forma empírica, bueno de un teacher's book, pero como una receta de cocina, entonces me fui a tomar cursos al A, a la ciudad de México, mi papá daba clases de Teacher Training acá, mi papá es profesor de inglés de profesión, me enseñaba cómo, me daba tips, me daba retroalimentación,

prácticamente a los 17 años de edad yo ya le daba clases a algunos Magistrados ya algunos Diputados de ese entonces en el Centro Cultural Mexiquense y eso me ayudaba a pagar mis estudios de prepa en el Tec de Monterrey. Entonces yo le daba prácticamente a todos los niveles. Ya después cuando nacieron mis hijos, yo quería una beca para ellos en una escuela particular y me puse a dar clases en un kínder, entonces sí, prácticamente en todos los niveles.

M. ¿Y ejerciste tu profesión?

Sí, sí, terminé mi licenciatura y estuve tres años en General Motors como servicio social, prácticas profesionales y luego me quedé ahí. Terminó mi contrato y muchos salimos de ahí, realmente lo que querían era contratarme pero como Secretaria Ejecutiva del Gerente porque hablaba inglés, pero no por el área de Sistemas, entonces había una empresa que se dedicaba a darle soporte técnico a General Motors al área de proyectos, se llama EDS, entonces ahí me pagaban, no recuerdo la cantidad, pero pon tu 500 pesos a la semana, y siendo Secretaria Ejecutiva del Gerente me pagaban 2000 pesos, entonces era, era totalmente diferente. Yo hubiera querido quedarme en el área de inglés pero sabía que no iba a poder desarrollarme tanto, entonces me fui al área de sistemas no a EDS, me fui a otra empresa y estuve desarrollando sistemas y a la par estuve dando clases en el Tec de Monterrey y daba clases de inglés, entonces nunca dejé las clases de inglés y sí, ejercí mi profesión de sistemas hasta no sé, unos ocho años después de haber egresado estuve desarrollando sistemas en un despacho, sí.

M. Y después ¿cómo llegaste a la Facultad?

Aquí a la Facultad fue fortuito, fue muy padre. Yo estaba buscando una posición de planta en el Tec de Monterrey y me encuentro a Max en un pasillo y me dice Max, oye te quieres ir a la Facultad allá conmigo, él era subdirector de la Facultad y me dijo: pero no hay otra cosa más que auxiliar de posgrado, y yo le dije: no pues de lo que sea, yo ya me quiero ir del Tec de Monterrey, ya me quiero meter a otro ámbito. En ese entonces estaba Clarita como coordinadora del posgrado y me meto yo como su auxiliar de Clara y empezamos a organizar cosas: eventos, symposiums y demás y ya de ahí pues también daba clases, daba 10 horas de clases de inglés y medio tiempo con Clarita de auxiliar de posgrado, ya de ahí pasé a coordinar la licenciatura de lenguas y también daba clases de lenguas, como que la Administración Escolar ya fue como que lo último que adquirí porque realmente dar clases era lo que hacía, aunque ahorita lo llevo a la par: la Administración y la docencia.

M. ¿Y alguna vez tuviste comentarios acerca de porqué alguien del área de Sistemas está dando clases de inglés?

No, creo que prácticamente nunca me enfrenté a esa situación.

M. ¿No?, ni de alumnos, colegas, empleadores

Pues, ah bueno pudiera ser que de colegas, pero como que las cartas credenciales de saber inglés no, como que no, como que no había chance de eso, más bien el problema que tuve es que como empecé muy chica y el problema de la edad si era muy fuerte, prácticamente yo llegaba con el uniforme de la secundaria a dar clases, de calcetas y uniforme de la escuela a dar clases de inglés a Diputados a señores que en ese entonces tenían 45 o 50 años de edad y pues creo que no, como que nunca, como mi papá siempre se desarrolló en ese ambiente de profesores de inglés como que siempre tuve como que esa sombra de decir yo te protejo para que tu des la clase de inglés y como que nunca hubo una, la realidad es que había pocos profesores de inglés, había mucha gente extranjera que hablaba inglés pero que no sabía dar clases. Había mucha gente que venía de Canadá, Estados Unidos o Inglaterra y daban clases de inglés en sus casas, a ejecutivos o así, y entonces como que la licenciatura en lenguas o la especialidad en

inglés no había, entonces se echaba mano de quién se podía y en ese momento yo creo que más me dio impulso porque ya no importó si era mexicana o esta chica de edad o licenciada en sistemas computacionales, de hecho yo en GM terminando mi horario de trabajo le daba clases a los ejecutivos, me quedaba a dar clases de inglés hasta las nueve de la noche, entonces como que siempre, no se dudó que pudiera dar clases porque estaba muy probado que sí sabía hacerlo. Por ejemplo, sí tenía teacher courses y todo, pero tuve la fortuna de que nunca me pedían nada porque yo llegaba, daba mi clase muestra y decían no pues sí, sí sabe. Y en la Facultad pues tampoco tuve ese problema, hasta que estudiamos la maestría como que fue que dije oye como que tenemos muchos perfiles diferentes y qué estamos haciendo dando clases, pero fue más bien una pregunta introspectiva y no que alguien llegara y me dijera: ¿y tú qué haces dando clases de inglés? O sea fue más bien como decir qué padre, no soy del área de lingüística, pero estoy haciendo una

Maestría en Lingüística, pero yo no sabía nada y estaba aprendiendo un montón, yo no sabía nada de fonética de nada, sabía los símbolos fonéticos porque mi papa me los había enseñado, pero yo no tenía ni idea de lo que era nada, hasta que llegamos acá a la maestría, que me legitimó o bueno que me ayudó a entender muchos de los procesos que ya sabía.

M. Tu estuviste en la subdirección y te tocó contratar profesores, ¿qué tomabas en cuenta en sus CVs para contratarlos?

Sí ya cuando yo estaba en la subdirección académica como que me llegó la conciencia de que si yo iba a contratar a contratar alguien ya no era como en la escuela de mi papá, ya tenía que contratar gente que realmente supiera cómo enseñar, entonces no es lo mismo hablarlo que enseñarlo, entonces en la Facultad primero les hacía entrevista en inglés, eso era para mi básico, ya después que veía que sí sabían hablar inglés y pues ya me fijaba en la experiencia docente que tenían los profesores y entonces me ayudó mucho a elegir los profesores, maestros que sí realmente podían dar clases.

M. ¿Fue con ustedes que empezó lo de contratar únicamente gente con nivel C1?

Sí, realmente se hizo a través de un acta de consejo y todo el rollo.

M. ¿Cómo ves el papel de los Departamentos en la Licenciatura?

Pues los Departamentos más que ser dictatoriales y decir el deber ser, los Departamentos deberían trabajar mucho, digo ya lo veo con otra visión, había una serie de pasos que el Departamento debía seguir: que ver los programas, que ver el libro, que se haga esto, que se haga lo otro, o sea idealmente el Departamento es regulatoria y voy a decirlo así Administradora curricular de la materia en cuestión, en este caso inglés, eh, y debe ser como muy dictatorial, es decir si cubres eres buen maestro, si no cubres eres mal maestro, la realidad es que las generaciones vienen cada vez como con más cosas no resultas, voy a decirlo así, vienen de familias desintegradas, nuestros chicos, vienen con problemáticas muy fuerte, vienen con vicios, y no solo con vicios de tomar, fumar que es otra cosa diferente, sino con vicios de poco estudio, de poco esfuerzo para lograr objetivos, son generaciones a las que se les ha dado a manos llenas y tienen poca tolerancia a la frustración, entonces yo creo que los Departamentos deberían estar regulando no lo que el maestro hace sino estudiando lo que viene como materia prima de los alumnos para poder con ellos diseñar vamos a tomar por ejemplo las inteligencias múltiples, tomar eh, inteligencias múltiples y adaptar los métodos y los sistemas a estas generaciones, sin ser totalmente permisibles y darles todo lo que quiere, sino más bien hacerlos que puedan aprender, ahora la comunidad de aprendizaje en un celular, cosa que no tuvimos muchas generaciones, ahora está al alcance de la mano todo el

conocimiento, el problema es que nosotros éramos vamos a decirlo así, una enciclopedia en donde tu te aprendías algo y dependiendo de lo que aprendías era lo sabía que eras, vamos a decirlo así, o lo nerd, o como lo quieras decir, ahora ya no hay sabios en la generación es quién encuentra el camino más fácil de llegar a la información, entonces el menú de opciones es muy amplio y los maestros tenemos paradigmas que no nos permiten entender a esta generación, que es una generación de aprendientes diferentes que aprenden por necesidad y nosotros aprendíamos por ego, tú no puedes ser la burra del salón, ajá y aquí no les importa ser el burro del salón, aquí les importa aprender discrecionalmente lo que les importa, lo que les es significativo a ellos, ya lo dijo Chomsky en la Convención para los aprendientes del 2030, el profesor en un facilitador que le ayuda a l alumno a discriminar la información, no es el sabio que tiene la información, entonces en esa Convención que hubo para los aprendiente 2030, es muy interesante porque es precisamente esta comunidad de aprendientes tiene necesidades muy diferentes a las de nosotros que aprendimos con el método tal, ¿no?, entonces sí es como muy importante que los Departamentos retomen su función no regulatoria sino su función de aprendizaje significativo para las nuevas generaciones. Un trabajo colegiado, pero un trabajo más de campo, más de investigación áulica, más de ¿cómo le podemos hacer para que estos chavos les interese aprender?, porque aquí aunque les piques el ego y les digas los burros se van a la esquina, pues se van a la esquina, no les importa, para nosotros era deshonra, desgracia irte a la esquina, para ellos no, para ellos es como irse a la esquina es más cómodo es mejor, entonces hay que ponerles otro target para ellos de

aprendizaje y los Departamentos se quedaron en la función regulatoria, en cubrir el programa, en tantas horas para el programa y ya no hicieron más, y las juntas ya son muy rutinarias.

M. ¿Y cuál fue tu experiencia en tus primeras reuniones de Departamento?

Pues yo creo que el Departamento en su momento me daba más miedo que ganas de pertenecer a ella, como que en su momento era más obligaciones, más trabajo, más cosas que sinceramente no, pues le tenía miedo entrarle a la Departamento, porque yo decía ay no qué flojera estar ahí la reunión. Sí iba a las reuniones, pero no participaba, me quedaba callada para que se acabara más pronto y yo creo que para integrarme fue más bien la convivencia con alumnos y con maestros, pero sí a lo mejor un factor que me ayuda es mi carácter, como que platico mucho con los alumnos y con la gente, me interesa saber de la gente, pero no hubo algo que me dijera ven intégrate, participa, colabora y trabaja, los Departamentos cuando yo llegué a la Facultad eran para mí más bien como un mal necesario y no como algo que me ayudara a hacer las cosa y como normalmente yo los métodos de inglés yo los llevo de acuerdo al ritmo del grupo, no soy tan cuadrada en el sentido de ir cubriendo las horas y entonces a veces me salto unas cosas y otras veces recalco otras que no saben, entonces a mi me daba miedo opinar en las Departamentos porque qué tal si yo hacía algo que no estaba dentro de la regla, entonces más bien como que me daba pena entrar a opinar.

M. Y después de diversificaste también.

Sí es verdad, ahorita estoy dando clases de inglés pero he dado Microenseñanza, Estudios Históricos, Docencia, a raíz de la maestría ya tuve muchos elementos para poderme diversificar, antes de la maestría sinceramente no me atrevía a dar otra cosa que no fuera inglés o computación, por mi licenciatura, pero otra cosa no me atrevía a dar, pero ahorita sí he dado muchas cosas que la maestría me ayudó, he dado Evaluación que es por ejemplo el tema de mi tesis de la maestría, pero antes de la maestría no me atrevía.

M. ¿Y cambias tu identidad cuando das clases de inglés?

Sí, sí, por ejemplo cuando doy clases de inglés me siento como pez en el agua, porque es algo que he hecho toda la vida, más natural, ajá, me gusta que los chicos, a veces sobrecorrijo la pronunciación porque traen muchos vicios, normalmente estoy dando inglés 1, 2 y 3, el clásico three o tree les cuesta muchísimo trabajo, me empecino en que lo pronuncien porque digo mis niños tienen que empezar desde nada pero bien, este, y pues sí me siento otra persona, sí como pez en el agua, pero sí tengo que decirte que me alejé un tiempo de las clases de inglés, como dos años y medio porque me sentí exageradamente viciada, ya no estaba aportando nada, ya me estaba volviendo muy automática en mis clases y dejé de meter elementos de cultura y dejé de meter mucha emoción y ganas y todo este tipo de cosas, me aburrí de dar clases de inglés y dije ya no quiero dar clases de inglés, llevo toda mi vida y simplemente ya no quiero y sí, me dieron oportunidad de descansar y sí ahora que la retomo, la verdad es que lo hago con mucho gusto. Ay sí la verdad ya me daba pereza corregir, preparar la clase, porque aunque tengas mucha experiencia pues mínimo ves el teacher's book, entonces yo ya estaba muy molesta con tener que repasar inglés y me dije ya es momento que deje las clases de inglés y no di inglés en ninguna escuela, porque dije no, ya estoy harta y dije ya no estoy dando lo mejor de mí. Cuando doy clases de inglés, haz de cuenta que me pongo en un escenario, o sea yo son ahí la show girl de la clase

M Ay Lucy, ¿me dejas observar tu clase?

Ay claro que sí ve a observar mi clase, y soy así como guau, y cuando doy por ejemplo Lenguaje y comunicación soy más pasiva porque lo que quiero es que sean ellos los que se muevan y la voz y la postura y demás y en inglés sí acaparo la primera parte de la clase, yo soy el show los primeros 20 minutos y ya después ellos son los que tienen que producir el resto de la clase, ¿cómo?, pues con lo que ellos tienen de elementos, pasan, hacen, digamos como que les pongo la pauta del show y ellos ya tienen que pasar y armar su show con los elementos de gramática y todo que tienen las lecciones, entonces sí ahora me siento muy bien de estar dando clases de lengua inglesa después de haber descansado dos años, es más estoy feliz, no traigo nada, no traigo flashcards ni nada, todo es con el libro, por ejemplo la vez pasada vimos coffee shop y entonces empecé con coffee shop: where do you like the coffee?, Starbucks, Oxxo, lalala? Y ya que me dijeron todo eso mis chicos nos fuimos ese viernes al nivel 42 porque de los que estábamos ahí, solo uno lo había probado y nos fuimos a probarlo, está por Lusso café, acá en el centro, que por primero de mayo no se qué y me dijeron ¿vamos al nivel 42?, pues vamos, muy bonito lugar y todo, está en la misma calle y los chicos no querían hablar otra cosa que no fuera inglés, terminamos de hablar en inglés hasta las 10.30 de la noche que fue cuando ya nos fuimos a nuestras casas y eso fue un aprendizaje significativo de una leccioncita que venía en el libro, en el Straightforward pero para mí fue muy gratificante que se quisieran ir al café, que se quisieran seguir las instrucciones, pidieron el café en inglés y el pobre chavo que tomó la orden todo nervioso (risas), pero nosotros súper felices de que estábamos pidiendo todo en inglés, pero muy, muy padre. Sí hacen sus exposiciones, hago mucha lectura en atril, en español, pero en inglés me encanta la lectura en atril porque corrigen muchas cosas. Los métodos normalmente lo que hago cuando ya veo que el tiempo es muy corto y que ya estoy con el tiempo encima o sea que ya no alcanzo a terminar el libro me voy por todos los puntos de gramática y les armo textos y los textos los tienen que ir a decir los chavos al auditorio y los tienen que leer enfrente de todos, no, no, no padrísimo. Entonces ellos ven y dicen es que a esto no le entiendo miss y yo les digo ve la lección tal, se van al libro lo referencian y dicen ah entonces sí cubrimos el programa, pues sí, claro que sí cubrimos el programa, pero no lo cubrimos así ven y ahora escucha y luego resuelve el ejercicio, no, no, no.

M Y ahora qué eres coordinadora de lenguas en otra Universidad ¿qué tomas en cuenta para contratar maestros?

Pues la verdad solo contrato a mis exalumnos (risas), no pues es que yo sé lo que estamos haciendo aquí en la Facultad de Lenguas, conozco la formación de los chicos y sé de su calidad, entonces puedo decir que yo sí consumo el producto de la UAEM. La realidad es que sí me han llegado profesores con otra formación, con otras licenciaturas así como tú o yo empezamos y si son buenos son mantenidos, pero la verdad es que todas las nuevas contrataciones las hago yo y todos son licenciados en lenguas y la gente que ellos me recomiendan son también exalumnos lalala, entonces a casi todos los conozco y acá en la Universidad sólo contrato gente de aquí, me ahorro andarlos buscando, conozco su formación y ya sé de qué pata cojean, sé cómo hablarles, etc. He conocido a algunos allá, y la verdad es que padrísimo porque les digo a ver como si estuviéramos en la Facultad de lenguas, vamos a hacer esto y aquello y ya.

M. Y ¿no tienen su grupito de puros maestros de lenguas?

No, para nada, se integran con todos, hacemos juntas de Departamento, la presidenta de Departamento es egresada de lenguas está Jorge , está Cynthia , está Laura , Roberto, tengo a un buen de egresados y cuando hay un profesor que no tiene la licenciatura pero que tiene experiencia, se le integra muy fácilmente porque las reuniones son en inglés, no le llamamos Departamento, le llamamos grupo de trabajo en inglés y es muy fácil integrarse y respondiendo a tu pregunta nuestro trabajo de Departamento es más sencillo que el de la Facultad de Lenguas, porque solo tenemos tres eventos al semestre, por ejemplo este semestre tenemos el spelling bee, el rally de conocimientos de inglés y hacen los chicos un discurso y el chico que lo haga mejor concursa contra los chicos de otros salones, como de oratoria o del Discurso Público en inglés y entonces se elige al mejor y el ganador da el discurso final del año escolar.

M. Pues es muy buen premio

Sí y muy padre porque aparte es en inglés y es enfrente de todas las familias, en el auditorio, son 800 personas y el chico se viste de frac o si es niña con vestido largo, tipo los óscars y entregamos los Awards, bien, bien padre y son estos estos tres eventos, en el semestre no, son tres eventos, la fiesta de bienvenida en inglés, el día de la lengua inglesa y no es otra cosa más que todos hablan en inglés y si alguien no sabe, por ejemplo los señores de intendencia pues llevan un traductor que les va ayudando todo el día, esto lo hacemos solo en preparatoria son solo seis horas completamente en inglés y está padrísimo porque los maestros que no hablan inglés tienen que hablar como puedan.

M. Pues habría que implementarlo aquí

Está padrísimo, y luego el otro es poesía, pero es poesía que hacen los mismos chavos, entonces hacen sus composiciones literarias, las leen y es como concurso, si pero ese no es en salones, ese es a nivel preparatoria, se van haciendo eliminatorias y ese que gana recita su poesía en el centro de Metepec, en el museo del barro, en un evento que se hace en los semestres non.

M. Bueno, OK, Lucy ¿te arrepientes de haber estudiado la licenciatura en sistemas?

No, yo creo que estoy en el punto ideal, porque gracias a la estructura que me dio la licenciatura en sistemas puedo hacer mucha incidencia en la Administración Curricular de Lengua pero además en todas las demás licenciaturas.

M. Y ¿Cómo te identificas cuando alguien te dice y tú en qué trabajas?

Pues es chistoso porque yo digo que estudié Sistemas computacionales en el Tec, pero después reivindicé mi paso y estudié la maestría en Lingüística Aplicada en la Facultad

de Lenguas y ahora puedo decir que soy orgullosamente egresada de la Facultad de lenguas y esto lo digo pues porque la gente piensa mucho que del Tec eres sangrón, eres fresa, eres bla, (risas) y como que no tienes apertura mental para aceptar muchas cosas y yo creo que en parte sí hay una cierta razón o sea como que se cree que te preparan para comerte al mundo y a lo mejor mucha gente se queda con esa idea ¿no?, incluso egresados y cuando tienes la diversidad de estudiar como en mi caso la maestría en la Facultad, me abrió puertas infinitas y mundos infinitos que no conocía y para mí sí, la Universidad y en específico la Facultad de Lenguas fue un parteaguas en mi vida que me dio los conocimientos de lo que ahora ejerzo y lo hago con mucho gusto porque soy ordenada y cumplida como en el área de sistemas, pero además tengo todos los elementos de la Lingüística Aplicada y lo cual me da mucho chance de hacer muchas cosas, ahorita mi idea es empezar con el doctorado en Educación en junio, porque ya me dediqué a la educación.

M. Y cuando terminaste en el Tec, que es tan caro, no te decían, ¿ahora sí ya vas a trabajar?

(risas) sí, es como la pregunta que le hacen a nuestros alumnos ¿estudias la licenciatura en lenguas y qué más? O lo confunden con CELe, así de que ay qué bueno sabes inglés y ¿qué otras lenguas?, pues en realidad sigo trabajando en sistemas, ahorita estamos trabajando un software para el área de administración escolar y la verdad no me desligado del área de sistemas y aunque ahora ha evolucionado mucho, la estructura de sistemas me ha ayudado mucho para la Administración escolar, la verdad es que nunca he dejado un área o la otra. No se, nunca me he sentido mal por haber elegido la lingüística.

M. ¿Algo que quieras agregar?

Yo creo que la identidad de los profesores de inglés con la Facultad de lenguas se fortalecería hablando inglés, si bien por algún lado te segmentaría, ya que no cualquiera puede entrar a esa comunidad, también cuando estás dentro pues ya difícilmente te quieres salir porque ya es poca la gente que maneja el inglés a cierto nivel, creo que nos hace mucha falta en la Facultad que se hable inglés o francés solamente y que la gente no estemos hablando en español, no es fácil, teníamos un programa muy padre English Everywhere, y lo deberíamos retomar y hablar inglés siempre.

M. Gracias.

Lucy's interview English translation

M. Thank you for this interview. I'd like to begin talking about your studies at college. What did you study?

I have a BA in Computer and Administrative Science.

M. And, did you always want to study that?

No, I study this BA because I didn't want to be a teacher just like my parents, they are both teachers and I decided to study something completely different in order not to teach. Clearly, it didn't work out (jajaja)

M. Did you enjoy doing your BA?

Yes, honestly, yes. I feel that having studied a BA in computing has given me some structure in my life. Now, I can use much of this knowledge to my everyday life and in the scholar administrative duties that I have.

M. And, how did you start teaching English?

Well, when I was Little, when I was a little girl, I moved to England. My father was granted a scholarship to study there, and I moved there, and I did my third grade of primary school there. I spent the whole year living in England trying to adapt myself. I went to a school where first, you try to adapt to the new culture. I stayed there for two months and the rest of the year, ten months left, I did study English. When I came back to Mexico, I was given a test and I answered it in English. So, it was a bit of a chaos because I didn't have my studies validated in Mexico. But, since then I have continued studying English. When I was 15, my father opened a school of English and he needed teachers of English and even when I was so young, I was 15, I started teaching English. My students were adults, teenagers, I was really happy!

M. And, how did you prepare your lessons?

Yes, I remember, I had a book with Rose Rabbit, Elizabeth Elephant, and Thomas Tiger, it was a children's book. In my first lesson, my students were little kids, they were 6 years old, I was 15. So, it was really easy. I remember I had a method with the instructions of every single step of the lesson. As a good novice teacher, I followed word by word what the book said, the teacher's book. That's how I started teaching. My mother gave me some money. It was really rewarding to teach because I used to work and at the same time, I started to have some teacher training lessons.

M. Then, you did have training lessons

Yes, yes. Let's say that I started teaching empirically, well I took what the teacher's book said, you know, like a recipe. Then, I had some training at the A, in Mexico City. My dad used to teach training courses here, he is an English language teacher, he has proper training as an English Language teacher, so he used to tell me what to do, some tips, some feedback. When I was 17, I was already teaching English to Magistrates, some Deputies, I used to teach them at the Centro cultural Mexiquense and with the money I made, I could pay for my high school studies at the Tec de Monterrey. Then, I was teaching all levels of English. Later, when my kids were born, I wanted to apply for a scholarship for them. At a private school, I started to teach at a kindergarten, then, yes, at all levels.

M. And did you work in the computing business?

Yes, yes. I finished my Ba, and I worked for General Motors for three years. I did social service; professional practices and I started working there after that. When my contract ended, many people left the company. However, what they really wanted me to do was to work as the Executive Secretary

of the Manager. They offered me this job because I could speak English, not for my knowledge in computing. A company which used to provide technical support to GM, called EDS, offered me a job. I don't remember how much money I made, let's say 500 pesos every week, and as an executive secretary I would have made 2000 pesos, so, it was something completely different. I would have liked, having stayed in the English area, but honestly, I didn't see much of a future in my career. Then, I decided to accept a job in a different company which worked with computing systems, and at the same time, I was teaching English at Tec de Monterrey. I could say that I never stopped teaching English. However, I did work in the area of my BA.

M. And, how did you start teaching English at the Faculty?

Well, it was really random. It was really cool. I was looking for a better position as a full-time teacher at the Tec de Monterrey, and one day I bumped into Max. He told me: "Hey, you should come to the Faculty and work with me". At that time, Max was the Academic coordinator of the Faculty. He offered me the position of Research Auxiliary and I

accepted as I wanted to work somewhere else. I used to work with Clarita, and we had many projects, organised symposiums, and many other things. I also taught English, I had a ten-hour class per week. After that, I was appointed with the academic coordination of the Faculty, but never stopped teaching. Nowadays, I combine both the Administrative area and my English lessons.

M. Have you ever been questioned for teaching English without having a BA in the area of teaching or languages?

No, never. I think I have been in that situation

M. Not even from students, colleagues or employers?

Well, maybe some colleagues have criticised me. I consider that the qualifications that I have are enough. The problem that I had is that I started teaching at a very young age and that always represented an issue when teaching. I remember, I arrived at my lessons wearing my secondary school uniform, you know with my pleated skirt and socks. I used to teach important people like Deputies, and they were like 45 or 50 years old. But no, maybe because my father has always been surrounded by English language teachers, and he was always there, to protect me. The reality was that there weren't many English language teachers. There were many foreigners, from Canada, the USA or England, but they didn't know how to teach. Sometimes, these people gave lessons to executives at home. I think this situation gave me the push I was needing, it didn't matter that I was Mexican, I was always called for English lessons. For example, when I worked for GM, I stayed until 9pm, because I had to teach the directors and other people. So, I can say there wasn't any problem because everybody knew that I was good at teaching English. I had some teacher training courses, but I was never questioned because they observed my lessons and they said "she knows what she's doing". Later, in the Faculty, well I didn't have that problem either. When we entered the programme of the MA, I realised that we all had completely different profiles and I questioned myself: "what are we doing teaching English?" but it was an introspection, not because someone else had asked me: "What are you doing teaching English?". It was really cool, because I was not in the Linguistics area, but I was doing an MA in the area. I knew nothing, but I was learning a lot of new stuff. I had no idea about phonetics, well, I knew the symbols because my father had taught them to me, but I didn't have the slightest idea of anything that we were studying in the MA. However, I feel that doing the MA gave me legitimacy or somehow helped me understand many of the processes that I already knew.

M. You were in charge of the Academic coordination and one of your duties was to hire new teachers. What did you take into consideration in their CVs for hiring them?

Yes, I was in charge of hiring new teachers as the coordinator of the Faculty. I was very conscious that I was in the Faculty of Languages and not in dad's school. If I was going to hire someone, I needed a teacher who really knew how to do their job. It isn't the same speaking the language as teaching it. First, I interviewed the candidates in English, which was really important to me. After that,

if they had demonstrated their proficiency in English, well I paid attention to their experience and those aspects helped me a lot to decide well and choose the best candidates.

M. It was your Administration that started hiring people with C1, wasn't it?

Yes, there was a document approved by the English Department

M. What's your opinion of the role of different Departments in the BA?

Well, The Departments shouldn't be dictatorships and tell you what to do. The Departments should work harder, but with a different vision, that's what I think. There is a series of steps that The Departments must follow. For example, check the syllabus, the textbook, do this and that, so it is to regulate the teachers. It is a kind of "syllabus administrator" of every single subject in the Faculty, in this case, English. And, it must be like a dictator, what I mean is, for example, if you cover the textbook, you are a good teacher but if you can't finish with it, then, you are a bad one. The reality is that the new generations are different. The students come from disruptive environments and disintegrated families. Our students have to deal with serious difficulties, vices, and not only smoking and drinking vices but bad habits vices. They are not used to studying nor making a good effort to reach goals and objectives. They represent a new generation that have everything at hand, and in consequence, they have little tolerance towards frustration. I believe that The Departments should be regulating not what the teacher does but doing research on the students' characteristics and behaviour. In this way, the Departments will be able to design material for them, for example, multiple intelligences and adapt methods and systems to them. It is not a good idea to be extremely soft, but we have to provide them with the tools so that they can learn to learn. Now the communities of learning are found in the mobiles, something completely different to past generations. Nowadays, the students can find everything in their mobiles. We used to be different, for example you could find information in an Encyclopedia, so you were considered a nerd. Nowadays, we don't have wise people in this sense, the students look for the easy way to get information. In consequence, the options menu is huge, and sometimes teachers have these paradigms that don't allow them to understand this new generation. Our students are different, they want to learn because they need it, our generations used to learn because of their ego. For example, you can't be the worst student of your class, and our students don't care about this. They want to learn discretionary what they really care about. Chomsky mentioned in the Learners Convention 2030 "the teacher is a facilitator who helps the students to discriminate the information". The teacher is not a wise man, know-it-all, who knows all the answers. This Learners Convention was really interesting because they mentioned that the current communities of learners have completely different needs to our generations. It is crucial that the Departments move away from their dictatorships and start doing their work in terms of providing tools which mean significant learning for new generations. Making agreements in the Departments, but working in the field, in the classroom and not only theoretical aspects. We should question ourselves; what we can do to interest our students in really learning, because nowadays, you can tell them off but they don't really care. In our generations, it was shameful if you were told off in front of the rest of the class. Our students don't really care about this, they feel even comfortable with this, so we should give them a different learning target. The Departments must stop just giving orders and worrying about finishing the syllabus and covering the teaching hours. The meetings of the Departments have turned into mere routines.

M. And, what was your experience like in your first meeting in the English Department?

I consider that I was more afraid than interested in attending the meetings of the English Department. I thought that it was just extra work, more duties, extra things that honestly, I was really afraid to take part in. I used to say that the meetings were so boring that I didn't want to go and participate. I did go to the meetings, but I never spoke, I was all silent and, in that way, the meetings were going to finish soon. I really think that, in my case, in order to belong to the English Department, I started getting along with students and other teachers. I am a very sociable person, so I find it easy to get along with people. I talk a lot with the students and with everybody. I am interested in the people; I like to know about them. However, nobody told me "Come, integrate, and participate! When I

arrived

at the Faculty, I was never interested in the Departments. I considered them as a necessary evil and not like something that was going to help me. I usually follow the textbooks at my own pace and the class I have. I am quite flexible, and sometimes I skip exercises, or modify them. In consequence, I was afraid of airing my views in the English Department because I knew I was not following the rules dictated by the English Department. That's why I never gave my opinion in the meetings.

M. And then, you started teaching other subjects, didn't you?

It's true, currently, I am teaching English, but I have also worked with Microteaching, History, Didactics, and others. I started teaching other subjects when I finished the MA, I felt I had the knowledge to teach other subjects. Before the MA, I didn't feel capable of teaching anything else but English or Computing. Nowadays, I can teach many different subjects, for example, I teach "Evaluation" which is also the topic of my thesis, before the MA, I wouldn't have dared teaching it.

M. And do you change your identity when you're in front of the class?

Yes, yes. For example, when I am teaching, I feel like a duck to water. It is something that I have done all my life, it's natural to me. Yes, I like working with young people, sometimes, I overcorrect the pronunciation because they have many fossilised sounds. I usually teach basic levels, and I always make them see the difference between three or tree. I am really stubborn about it, but I think that they should have a good start in learning English. So, yes, like a duck to water, and I feel as if I were a different person. However, I need to tell you that I abandoned my classes for a while some time ago. I felt bad, as if I wasn't useful anymore. My classes became predictable, and I was teaching for routine. I stopped including cultural elements in my lessons, I wasn't excited and all those things. I got bored of teaching English and I decided not to continue. I was given the opportunity to rest and now that I have started again, I am really happy and excited. I wasn't preparing the lessons anymore; I was really tired, and I didn't correct my students. I have a lot of experience, but, as a minimum, you always check the teacher's book. I was fed up and stopped teaching English. Now, when I teach English, I imagine myself on a stage. I am the show girl of the class.

M. Wow. Can I observe one of your lessons?

Of course, yes, come to my class. I am like wow! For example, when I teach Language and Communication I am more passive, because I am interested in them moving. I check their voice, posture and so on. In English, I usually monopolise the first part of the lesson. I am the show for the first 20 minutes. After that, my students take the floor and produce the language for the rest of the lesson. How do I do it? Well, I set an example and then, with the elements they have, the students produce with the grammar and vocabulary reviewed in the lesson. I feel fantastic with my English lessons after having rested for two years. I never have any extra material like flashcards or anything similar. I just use the textbook. For example, last week the topic of the lesson was "The coffee shop". I started with a coffee shop, Where do you like the coffee? Starbucks? Oxxo? And after we had discussed the lesson, we went for a coffee to "Level 42". Only one of my students had tried that coffee, and we went there to try it. It is a cafeteria in the downtown, by 1st of May Street. They asked me: Teacher: Can we go for a coffee? Let's go and it is a beautiful place and the students kept speaking in English the whole time. We finished our lesson at 10.30 at night. We went home and that was significant learning from a lesson in the book, Straightforward is the name of the book. I think it was really gratifying that they wanted to go to the cafeteria and ask for a coffee in English. It was really cool. The

poor waiter was really nervous (jajajaja), but we were super happy asking for our orders in English. I do a lot of desk reading. I love it! Because I have the opportunity to correct their pronunciation. When I consider that we're running out of time, I tend to focus only on grammar aspects. We check the texts, and they go to the auditorium and speak in front of an audience. Really, really cool. When the students don't understand a topic, I help them with a reference. In that way, we can cover all the programmes. We finish with the programme but not answering every single exercise in the book, no.

M. Currently, you're the languages coordinator at a different university. What do you take into consideration to hire teachers?

Honestly, I only hire former students (jajajaja). This is because I know what we're doing in the BA, here in the faculty of languages. I know the training of the students, their quality. I can say that I consume the University's product. The reality is that I have interviewed teachers with a different background, with other BAs, just like you and me. These teachers are good. However, all the new hirings are from our BA recent graduates or former students. I only hire people from our BA, as I know them, I don't have to worry about finding out their background or their previous jobs. I know how to relate with our students, we are confident. I can say, it is as if we were in the Faculty of Languages.

M. And do they (our former students) mingle with the rest of the teachers?

Yes, they have integrated very well. In the department, you can find Jorge, Cinthya, Laura, Robert. There is a very good number of our former students. When there is a teacher without the BA, but a solid background, there is no problem, they integrate very well. All the meetings are conducted in English, we don't call it The Department, we call it working groups in English. It is really easy to participate. If you ask me, it is much easier to get into this department than the ones in the Faculty. We only have three events per year: the spelling bee, the rally of knowledge and the public speech contest. In this contest, the students prepare a speech that is delivered in front of students from different groups. The winner makes the speech at the end of the year.

M. It is an excellent reward

Yes, and they have to deliver the speech in English, in front of all the families, in the auditorium. There are 800 people, and the boy or girl who gives the speech dresses up. Like the Oscars. We also give the awards. It's really cool. These are the three events. The welcome party, the day of the English language. That day, everybody spoke in English. For example, if someone doesn't know a word, let's say the maintenance staff, they have a translator who helps them throughout the day. We do this in high school, there are six hours that everybody speaks in English. It's really cool, because the teacher who does not speak English must find a way to do it.

M It's a nice idea that we should implement at the Faculty

It's really cool. Another event is the poetry one. It is poetry written by the students. They write their texts, then read them, and it is like a contest. We do this in high school, we have different rounds until we get a winner. The winner reads his/her poems in Metepec's downtown. In the clay museum. It is an event that takes place once a year.

M. Ok, Lucy. Do you have any regrets for having studied Computing Systems?

No. I think I have the best of both worlds. Thanks to my BA, I can deal with many aspects related to the Administration of the Curriculum.

M. And, how do you identify yourself?

It's funny because I say that I studied Computing Systems at the Tec of Monterrey.

However, I tell everybody that I corrected myself by doing the MA in Applied Linguistics at the Faculty of Languages. Now, I can say that I graduated from the Faculty of Languages. I say this because people believe that if you graduate from Tec of Monterrey, you are a snob (jajajaja). You aren't open-minded enough. People are partly right because that slogan of "eating the world" can be misleading. Thanks to the Faculty, I have endless opportunities. I can say it was a turning point in my life. I am disciplined and organised like in the area of Systems, but I also have all the knowledge from Linguistics. This combination gives me plenty of opportunities to develop myself. Now, I'm starting my PhD in Education, next June.

M. And when you finished your BA at the Tec, which is so expensive, weren't you asked: "Are you really going to start working now?"

(jajaja) Yes. It is like the question asked to our students. You study languages and what else? People also get confused with CELe and the Faculty of Languages. Honestly, I continue working in the Systems area. I am designing software for the school administration. So, I have continued working with Systems. However, the area has evolved a lot. But, yes, I can say that I have never abandoned Systems and computers. I have no regrets about choosing linguistics either.

M. Would you like to add something?

I think the identity of the English language teachers at the Faculty would be strengthened if all the teachers spoke in English all the time. I understand that it would be a group separated from the rest, but it is a particular community. I reckon this is a weakness in the Faculty, the teachers must be speaking in English or French, not in Spanish. We used to have an excellent programme "English everywhere", we should go back to it.

M. Thanks

Ricky's interview

Muchas gracias por la entrevista, vamos a comenzar con algunas preguntas relacionadas con tus estudios universitarios.

M. ¿Qué estudiaste en la Universidad?

Bueno, pues yo estudié la licenciatura en Contaduría en la Universidad, eso fue en el año de 1999, no es cierto, en el 94 y yo estudié la preparatoria en Tlalnepantla en el estado de México, en el 94 cuando terminé me mudé para Toluca, pero yo me mudé en agosto, entonces el proceso de la UAEM ya había pasado, entonces entré a la Universidad Mexiquense que es una Universidad privada y estudié Contaduría, ahí la carrera dura cuatro años y medio y esta era incorporada a la SEP y ahora ya está incorporada a la UAEM, entonces ahí estudié y pues fui el primero que se graduó de la licenciatura eh hice una tesis sobre, es un catálogo contable para la Central de Abastos, para unas cuentas especiales que ellos tenían, entonces como ellos no tenían este catálogo pues de ahí surge la problemática y entonces decido desarrollar esta tesis, yo me tardo cuatro años en graduarme de la licenciatura, eh y entonces yo estuve trabajando en el área contable, estuve trabajando en Robert B, en el área de cuentas por pagar, pero mientras estudiaba la licenciatura yo estudiaba en el CELe, en el centro de lenguas de la UAEM, entonces termino en el 99 la carrera y en el 98 hice la certificación, el FCE y en mayo de 99, el 1º de mayo de 1999 eh, un amigo que era jefe de Control Escolar me dijo: "oye necesito que me ayudes, que des una clase de inglés porque el maestro que tenía el grupo lo dejó, entonces empecé a dar clases así, porque tenía el dominio de la lengua y empecé a dar clases a las siete de la mañana y así fue como empecé, estudiaba contaduría y estudiaba inglés al mismo tiempo y casi casi al egresar empecé a dar clases de inglés.

M. Y volviendo a tus estudios universitarios, ¿siempre quisiste estudiar Contaduría?

Pues cuando estaba en la prepa, nos hacían los exámenes de actitud o vocacionales y siempre salí en el área Económico-Administrativa, de matemáticas, pero la verdad ni sabía, entonces me llamaba la atención mercadotecnia, y cuando llegó el momento de tomar la decisión, como mi hermano estudiaba Contaduría, y dije bueno pues estudio contaduría como mi hermano.

M. ¿Y ejerciste tu carrera?

Sí, como cinco años estuve trabajando, empecé en la Central de Abastos como servicio social, y después me ofrecieron trabajo en el área contable, después estuve en Robert B y luego en L Corporation, así que sí, sí ejercí mi carrera un poco.

M. ¿Y cómo fue que dejaste la contabilidad y te dedicaste solamente a las lenguas?

Bueno cuando salgo de L Corporation estaba buscando trabajo, y fui a Bimbo y a otras empresas, pero pagaban muy poquito, a diferencia de lo que yo ya estaba ganando, y pero yo seguía dando clases de inglés en el CELe, entonces tenía uno o dos grupos y una ocasión yo llegué al CELe, daba clases a las siete de la noche creo, y llegué y el mismo maestro que me había dado las clases me dijo: a ti te estaba buscando, estaba con la coordinadora del CELe de Atlacomulco, y me dice: oye están buscando un maestro de inglés, son cinco horas, ¿te interesa? Y pues sí, yo estaba buscando trabajo y me fui a Atlacomulco. En Atlacomulco empecé en el CELe, pero también empecé a dar clases en la Unidad Académica de Atlacomulco, empecé a dar clases de inglés en la licenciatura en Contaduría por el mismo perfil, y también daba clases de inglés en la licenciatura de Psicología. Y así estuve como tres años en Atlacomulco y después pues hubo unas

cuestiones como de no tanta empatía con la coordinadora y llegó un momento que dije, si ya me voy a dedicar a dar clases de inglés de tiempo completo pues necesito formarme en el área de lenguas, en lingüística y empecé a buscar maestrías y antes de entrar a la maestría tomé un Diplomado en el área de Enseñanza del inglés en el CELe, lo ofreció el CELe, con la maestra BB y pues lo estudié en el área de lenguas y en CELe cada semestre teníamos que tomar cursos intersemestrales, pero ya cuando decidí dejar Atlacomulco y me regresé a Toluca, decidí buscar la maestría y dije pues ya aunque no tenga trabajo pues me dedico a estudiar la maestría, y fui a la normal Anexa que está en Carranza y tienen una maestría para profesores de inglés, y entonces hice mi examen pero por el mismo sistema como no soy normalista pues no, no me quedé, de 10 aceptaron a 9 menos a mí. Entonces pues llegué a la Facultad de lenguas, vi que tenían una Maestría en Lingüística, yo no sabía qué era la Lingüística, pero en el mismo CELe me la recomendaron, platicué con la coordinadora de la Maestría y decidí entrar y entonces cuando yo decido entrar a la maestría, la directora del CELe en automático me dio 6 horas de clase, que es la carga máxima de horas que podemos tener, entonces yo creo que esa parte de formación me ha servido bastante, entonces entro a la maestría, me dan seis horas en Toluca, entonces todo se acomodó súper bien, entonces yo trabajaba en la mañana de 7 a 3 y después me venía a la maestría de 5 a 9. Y fue cuando ya decidí la parte contable y formarme en la parte de enseñanza de lenguas.

M. ¿y te acuerdas de tus primeras clases?

Pues tenía 22 o 23 años cuando empecé, y pues sí era complicado, como yo les digo ahora a mis alumnos de lenguas pues que muchas veces imitas cuando das clases, no tenía una capacitación con los cursos, entonces las primeras clases sí me llevaba mucho tiempo la preparación, enfrentarte a muchas preguntas a las cuales a veces no tienes respuesta, enfrentarte a jóvenes, porque el CELe tiene alumnos desde los 19 años hasta los 99, entonces tenías alumnos muy críticos, los adultos entonces sí era complicado, te sentías nervioso, pero ya poco a poco la práctica te va sirviendo, pero sí servía la preparación de las clases, yo creo que en un principio le pones más atención a la preparación que después que uno ya tiene años de práctica.

M. ¿Y cuándo empezaste a dar clases en la Facultad de Lenguas?

Pues yo entré a la maestría en 2005 y vi que la Facultad era diferente a CELe, entonces hablé con la subdirectora Académica para ver si me daba unas clases, entonces me dijo: trae tu CV y si hay oportunidad pues adelante, y sí al siguiente semestre sí clases de inglés. Les daba clases a los alumnos de la licenciatura en lengua y cultura francesa, les di clases de inglés en el 2006 fue cuando empecé a dar clases aquí, y después me fui diversificando, di clases de inglés como dos años y después ya fui cambiando de área.

M. Y al ser de otra área, ¿te has enfrentado a cuestionamientos al respecto por parte de alumnos, colegas o autoridades?

Pues siempre está esa cuestión ¿no? De por qué das clases si no eres del área, pero pues le explicas a los alumnos, cuando yo llegué a la Facultad ya estaba estudiando la maestría entonces eso ayudó a que no se me cuestionara tanto. Y los alumnos pues sí te preguntan, sobre todo al principio, pero pues tu les dices que tienes experiencia, que tienes cursos, Diplomados y yo así lo justificaba y bueno pues nunca me criticaron así de y ¿tú por qué das clases? Era más bien y ¿cómo llegaste aquí?, ¿Cómo sabes inglés?, ¿Cómo sabes gramática?, ese tipo de cuestiones es como curiosidad y también me preguntan, ¿ejerces?, ¿No quieres regresar? Aquí la crítica es más fuerte que en CELe

porque allá la clase de lengua que des en más general y aquí pues estás formando a los futuros maestros y traductores, entonces como que ellos son más celosos de la formación que pueda tener un docente pero pues con la experiencia y dando las clases como que te justificas.

M. Y volviendo a tus clases, dices que imitabas un poco, pláticame de eso por favor.

Pues sí, de los maestros que a mí me habían gustado, pues yo creo que vas agarrando patrones o copiando patrones de los maestros que has tenido a lo largo de la vida y por ejemplo ahorita en maestría doy la clase de Enseñanza de una Segunda Lengua y pues mis alumnos también me platican eso, que tratan de tomar lo que les gusta de sus maestros favoritos y los aplican a sus clases, así que hacemos lo mismo, no se tal vez actividades que recuerdas que a ti te gustaron o te sirvieron pues las usas con tus alumnos, yo recuerdo a la maestra Pichardo, de ahí del CELE, una maestra ya mayor, yo no sé qué formación tenía, pero por ejemplo los viernes era de speaking, entonces a ella le gustaba hablar de cosas sobrenaturales y nos decía investiguen de este tema y entonces pues la verdad era una buena actividad y entonces yo la usaba o por ejemplo canciones que vienen tantos ejemplos en los libros y pues así vas copiando. Y ahora como me dedico a la formación de profesores pues se me hace importante.

M. ¿Y qué es lo más importante para la formación de nuevos profesores: la lengua o la didáctica?

Pues las dos, porque en este sentido puedes tener el dominio pero te falta la didáctica, entonces se tienen que combinar ambas cosas y como dicen en clases de formación de profesores, los libros te dicen la teoría, te dicen el ideal, lo estándar a nivel internacional pero las situaciones particulares a las que se enfrentan cada uno de los alumnos de los egresados en diferente, entonces el dominio de la lengua es una fortaleza pero también saber enfrentar y resolver situaciones que se te presentan en el aula, entonces la pedagogía o la didáctica, así como el dominio de la lengua pues son básicos, se ve cuando un profesor tiene nada más una certificación en el dominio de la lengua, pero que nunca se ha formado en la enseñanza, entonces por ejemplo nociones de fonética, un egresado de aquí no te dice lo de poner la lengua atrás de los dientes o juntar los labios, ya está formado para hablar con lenguaje formal de fonética y saben explicar con un vocabulario especializado y cuestiones técnicas y pueden hablar de un punto de articulación o si es oral o nasal, esto es lo que hace que un egresado de lenguas tenga un plus.

M. Eso lo dicen algunos autores cuando hablan de profesionalización ¿no?, usar la jerga del área

Sí, se llaman idiolectos creo ¿no?

M. Pues no sé, pero dicen que eso le falta al docente de lenguas y con mayor razón a los profesores que no son del área. En tu tesis de doctorado hablas de eso, de profesionalización.

Sí ese es mi tema principal

M. OK, y recuerdo que yo no estaba de acuerdo contigo porque tú decías que el docente de lenguas es el que más se prepara en el área y en mi experiencia es todo lo contrario.

Pues no recuerdo la verdad, pero si quieres te presto mi tesis, y yo hablo de átomos, son

como átomos, las características que forman la parte profesional del docente y hay otra que es de calidad y así se van formando como diagramitas y dentro del perfil profesional está la formación profesional, en este caso lenguas, eh está el dominio de lengua, y también tiene que ver la cuestión laboral y son como seis o siete aspectos necesarios para la formación, pero la verdad no recuerdo eso que me dices ahorita. Pero, yo creo que tienes razón, por ejemplo a los que nos estás entrevistado ahora pues ya tenemos mucha formación en el área de lenguas, o sea por ejemplo yo no he vuelto a tomar un curso de Contabilidad, entonces yo creo que pues es la realidad lo que valida tu perfil, tus papeles, tus documentos, entonces también quizás los alumnos piensan que como no tienes un título en el área de lenguas, piensan que te falta esa formación, pero con los cursos, la maestría, etc., pues ya tienes eso para subsanarlo, entonces los cursos te sirven para la teoría porque la práctica ya la tienes, pero como te decía a veces esa teoría no empata con la realidad a la que nos enfrentamos.

M. ¿Qué experiencia tienes con los Departamentos en la Facultad?

Bueno, pues yo creo que los Departamentos tienen que tomar decisiones básicas para sentar las bases en la formación de los estudiantes, estas bases están en el currículum, entonces muchas veces decía el Doctor L, él trabaja en el IESU, él hizo el primer currículum de la Facultad de Lenguas, él decía que tienes que juntar a los expertos del área, entonces si Margarita Caballero es experta en el área de Lenguas, pues ella tiene que trabajar esa parte, si la Doctora V es experta en Lingüística, pues ella debe trabajar esta parte, en investigación el maestro que sea especialista, pero tristemente no se hace así, tristemente se hace un grupo o una comisión y esa comisión toma la decisión de qué materias, qué contenidos y ellos toman la decisión sin consultar con los verdaderos expertos, ese es el problema y el Departamento está formada por verdaderos expertos de cada área, generalmente no, porque aquí hay tanta movilidad que los expertos quedamos en otros Departamentos, digo esta es una cuestión administrativa, pero el Departamento tiene que tomar ese rol de sentar las bases internamente y también la parte social y no nada más el contexto local del Estado de México, sino a nivel ya internacional, en este momento que estamos viviendo, ya los alumnos cada vez más emigran a trabajar o a estudiar fuera y hay que ver esas necesidades en ese estudio y si no se integran los Departamentos pues mucha información queda de lado en estos papeles.

M. ¿Y cómo fueron tus primeras experiencias en el Departamento?

Pues buena, a mí me gusta estar en todos lados, como dice una maestra: yo nunca digo que no, entonces su había junta y no interfería con mis clases sí asistía y eso también te va dando presencia dentro del Departamento, y dentro de la Facultad, o sea yo me acercaba con la Doctora V, porque ella fue mi directora de tesis, entonces con su experiencia pues sí me fue ayudando, de cómo conducirme para ir creciendo académicamente, eh con la doctora P fueron las que más me apoyaron en este sentido y sí el asistir a juntas, el tener presencia en los Departamentos pues sí te ayuda bastante a relacionarte, a ver puntos de vista y pues la verdad sí ha cambiado mucho la visión de cómo daba clases en el 99 a ahorita, una visión que ya no nada más es llegar al salón y dar clases, sino ya es un contacto a nivel nacional e internacional y ya se ve una problemática a nivel nacional de la falta de formación del docente de inglés, entonces sí te cambia la visión entrar a los Departamentos, el opinar, el traer puntos de vista internacionales, he estado en la universidad de Guanajuato, de Hidalgo, de Guadalajara y ves las condiciones en las que trabajan ellos y ves los logros de ellos y los de nosotros, entonces sí, sí te ayuda bastante. Y pues por ejemplo está la red de Cuerpos Académicos de inglés, que es la RECALE y se estudian problemáticas comunes como el nivel de lengua, en todas las universidades, por ejemplo yo estoy sorprendido de que en

Guadalajara desde el primer semestre todas las materias son en inglés, pero ellos tienen una matrícula e de 40 alumnos en el primer semestre, algo que no se puede dar en Toluca por la misma demanda de los alumnos, pero yo creo que sí se puede exigir que las materias sean en inglés, entonces cuando los alumnos en Guadalajara egresan pues alcanzan un nivel C1 fácil, sin esforzarse y ellos tienen un programa que se llama PRO, que es como un CELe, pero los que dan las clases son los mismos alumnos entonces les pagan o les dan beca es un muy buen programa que tiene la Universidad de Guadalajara, la BUAP, creo que ya tienen algo parecido, ellos han tenido muchos problemas porque creo que primero tenían un programa de cinco años y ahora es de tres, ellos tienen egreso cada semestre y creo que sí tienen requisito de lenguas, entonces en las Departamentos esas experiencias te permiten ver fortalezas y debilidades, así como áreas de oportunidad que cada espacio tiene. Pero sí te puedo decir que a nivel nacional el principal problema de la licenciatura es el nivel de inglés y esto viene desde el nivel básico y después se refleja en el superior, entonces ahora en el PNIEB, ¿sí lo conoces?

M. Sí

Los maestros de nivel básico tienen que dar clases de inglés, pero la situación es más crítica porque son maestros normalistas que ellos son formados tal vez en Pedagogía del Español o en otras áreas, pero no en inglés, los maestros normalistas no tienen la formación de inglés, entonces es como una bola de nieve, ¿cómo vamos a alcanzar el nivel C1 que quiere la Universidad si no certificamos esos dominios, entonces si en la prepa el alumno certificara un nivel B2, pues el alumno ya no tendría que cursar desde A1, entonces son situaciones que se dan en todos lados y pues sí ayuda saber que todas tienen ese problema.

M. ¿Y tú cómo ayudas a los nuevos maestros a integrarse?

Bueno, pues yo contrato maestros para la maestría y aquí es imposible que den clases si no tienen la formación en el área, pero cuando vienen a pedir informes y me dicen oye yo soy arquitecto y pues yo les platico mi historia y los invito a que se formen porque si ya tienen la lengua pues pueden tomar la maestría, que tú te formes siempre lo aplaudo, lo que critico es que sigas dando clases sin seguirte preparando, que lleves 10 años dando clases y no estudies maestría o doctorado.

M. Pero a los nuevos maestros, ¿cómo los integras?

Pues los nuevos deben cubrir un perfil específico, no importa que no tengan la licenciatura del área, pero sí deben tener un posgrado relacionado con el área, entonces es muy difícil en posgrado que alguien llegue sin la información y gratamente cada vez hay más maestros preocupados por formarse. En el CELe no se necesita tener licenciatura, por ejemplo, hay maestros con estudios secretariales o con la prepa únicamente, no sé si ya actualmente por política de la Universidad haya cambiado, pero maestros que ya tienen muchos años pues no tienen ni licenciatura, pero lo que sí te piden es un certificado de la lengua que vayas a dar. En el SILC sí te piden la formación porque tienen un tabulador y te van pagando más conforme mayor grado de estudios tengas.

M. ¿Te arrepientes de haber estudiado Contaduría?

Pues a mí el área me gustaba, cuando estuve en las dos empresas yo trabajé en el área de cuentas por pagar a clientes extranjeros, entonces estaba muy padre porque yo tenía contacto con personas del país y del extranjero, entonces eso fue muy padre, ¿qué no extraño?, que siempre estás haciendo las mismas actividades, que no conoces tanta gente como cuando estás dando clases, en las clases cada semestre hay gente nueva, de ¿qué me arrepiento? Ahora que ya estoy en el posgrado de todas esas oportunidades que ofrecía la Universidad de intercambio, yo me fui de intercambio cuando acabé la Universidad y la verdad la Universidad ofrece muchas oportunidades de intercambio y yo

veo que los chavos de lenguas tienen esa ventaja sobre los demás, chavos con un nivel de lengua B2 tienen oportunidad de ir un semestre a estudiar a otro país, entonces eso yo me lo perdí en la licenciatura, veo la calidad que tiene la universidad, entonces eso también me lo perdí, pero no me arrepiento porque eso me dio otra visión el área de contabilidad, ahora estoy acá, me he formado bastante y pues me gusta mucho, bueno pues ahora en Inglaterra estuve dando clases de inglés a asiáticos.

M. Y tú ¿cómo te identificas?

Pues lo que pasa es que tal vez como los médicos te dicen soy doctor y no se ponen a decirte todas sus especialidades.

M. OK, pero ¿tú qué dices?

Pues para no entrar en detalles de qué hace un lingüista o que hago en CONACYT, o cosas así, pues yo digo que trabajo en lenguas y que doy clases de inglés porque así me identifican, lo cual no me molesta eh porque pues así empecé.

M. Y cuando empezaste a dar clases de inglés ¿no te decían y por qué no te dedicas a la Contabilidad?

Pues sí pero es trabajo ¿no?, yo creo que lo hacen por desconocimiento, no saben todo lo que implica dar clases de inglés, por ejemplo, yo les digo a mis alumnos que cuando les pregunten ¿y cuántos idiomas hablas en la Facultad de Lenguas? Pues que expliquen todo lo que estudian, las materias, la gente no sabe del área en la que estamos, lo que pasa es que es un área relativamente nueva comparada con química o medicina. Por ejemplo, luego dicen el dialecto otomí o mazahua y los alumnos se enojan y yo les digo pues no te enojen porque la gente no sabe y es como si habláramos de medicina o términos legales que no conocemos, el jargón que utilizamos, entonces sin entrar a detalle pues yo digo que soy maestro de inglés.

M. Pues muchas gracias, ¿quieres agregar algo?

Pues nada, que yo siempre digo que hay que seguir con nuestra formación, que uno solito busque formarse sin que te obliguen, uno nunca deja de aprender. Muchas gracias

Ricky's transcription

M: Thank you for the interview. I'd like to start by asking you about your studies at the University. What did you study at the University?

R: Well, I studied the BA in Accountancy in the University, that was in 1999, no that's not true, 1994, I studied the high school in Tlalnepantla and when I finished, I moved to the capital of the State in 1994 and when I moved the semester had already started in the public University, so I decided to start the BA in the Universidad M, which is a private University, I spent 4.5 years in the University and I graduated as an accountant. The topic of my thesis was related to an accounting catalogue for the supply centre in the city. I found out that they didn't have this catalogue and I decided to do it as a topic for my thesis. When I graduated, I started to work for Robert B in the area of debts. However, when I started to study at the University, I also started to study at CELe, so when I finished my BA in 1999 I had already got my First Certificate in 1998 and I remember I had a friend who worked for CELe and he asked me to help him with an English lesson there at CELe. I accepted and I started to teach English in May, 1999, that's how I started, I used to teach at 7 o'clock in the mornings.

M: And did you always want to study Accountancy?

R: Well, when I was studying high school, I did my vocational exams and my result

was always in the areas of Administration, Economics, Mathematics, but honestly, I didn't have any idea. I wanted to study Marketing but when I had to make the decision, my brother was studying Accountancy, so I decided to study the same.

M: And did you work in an area related to Accountancy?

R: Yes, for five years I worked for the supply market as a social service, then I stayed a little bit longer. After that, I worked for Robert B and then in L Corporation, so yes, I worked in an area related to my degree.

M: And how did you decide to leave the area of Accountancy and start a career in languages?

R: Well, when I left L Corporation I was looking for a job. I went to Bimbo and other companies, but honestly the payment was really low and as I continued teaching at CELe, well I could survive with one or two groups. One day, the same person who offered me my first groups, introduced me to the Director of CELe Atlacomulco and she told me that they were looking for a teacher to work 5 hours every day and I accepted. In Atlacomulco, I started in CELe, but I also work in the Faculty there, in Atlacomulco. I started to teach English in the Faculty of Accountancy and Psychology. I worked there for three years but then I started to have certain problems with the Academic Coordinator and I decided to leave. When I quitted, I made the decision to start training myself in the area of languages and teaching because apparently, I was going to continue with this career. I had some courses and seminars before starting with the MA in Applied linguistics. I found that the Faculty of Languages was offering an MA in Applied Linguistics , I had no idea what Linguistics were but I asked some teachers from CELe and everybody recommended to take the MA, so when I started with the MA I was also offered 6 classes in CELe, so everything was perfect. In those years, I used to work from 7-3 and then my classes in the MA from 5-8. That's how I moved definitely from Accountancy to Languages.

M: And do you remember your first lessons?

R: Well, I was 22-23 when I started, and it was complicated. Now, I tell my students that many times when you start teaching, you tend to imitate your previous teachers. I didn't have any training so in my first lessons I spent hours preparing the class. I also remember that the students asked me and I didn't have the answers, the students were of all ages, and many times they questioned you because of your age not your knowledge. It was complicated, I got really nervous but little by little with practice, and a good lesson preparation you can survive.

M: And how did you start teaching at the Faculty?

R: Well, I started the MA in 2005 and I realised the Faculty was different from CELe. I decided to talk to the director to ask for some classes, she asked me for my CV and in the next term I started to teach at the Faculty of Languages. I used to teach the students from the area of French and English languages. I started in 2006 teaching English, and some years later I also started to teach in other areas.

M: And have you ever been questioned for teaching in the Faculty of Languages and not having studied anything related to languages?

R: Well, I think there is always this question: why are you teaching English if you studied Accountancy? But I always explain to the students that I started in the Faculty when I was doing my MA in Applied Linguistics and with this they stop doubting my legitimacy. And the students always askyou, particularly at the beginning of the course, but if you tell them that you have experience, courses, seminars, and that's the way I usually justify myself, they have never criticised me like: why are you teaching me? No, honestly not.

It's more a question of curiosity, like have you ever worked as an accountant?

M: A moment ago you mentioned that many times when you start teaching English, we tend to imitate other teachers. Tell me more about it.

R: Yes, I have taken many things from teachers that I have enjoyed, and I think that's very common, and you follow certain patterns from people or teachers that you have liked and that you have enjoyed their lessons. For example, currently, I'm teaching "Second language Teaching" and my students tell me about that, they say that they have to take the things that they like about their favourite teachers, and I think we do the same. I try to remember some activities from certain teachers and I adapt them, I remember very well Professor Pichardo from CELe, she was an older teacher, I don't know their academic background, but for example, every Friday we had our speaking session and she liked to talk about supernatural things and she used to tell us do your research and with our information we discussed in class. I consider it a good activity and I also used it, or songs and from there you start using your own ideas. Now that I'm training future English language teachers, I realised how important this is.

M: And what is more important in the training of new teachers: pedagogy or the language?

R: Both, you must be proficient in the language you are going to teach but if you don't know the methodology you can't be a good teacher, you will be incomplete, you must combine both aspects and in the teachers' training I always clarify that the books give the theory, but it's ideal, later in the classroom you face many things which many times you're not ready for. For example, our graduated students know about phonetics and even when they sometimes do not teach about it, it is knowledge that means a plus as a teacher.

M: Is that part of the professionalisation, to use the jargon of the field?

R: Yes, the name is "idiolects", I think.

M: I don't know, but many authors consider that this is what many English language teachers lack, particularly the teachers with a different background.

R: Yes, and this is the main topic I discuss in my PhD dissertation.

M: Yes, and I remember that I disagreed with you because you used to say that the English language teacher who graduated from here is the most professionalised and in my experience, it is quite the opposite.

R: I don't remember honestly, but you can borrow my thesis to have a look at it. I mentioned six aspects which are essential to be considered a professional in the field. But I think you're right because for example, all the teachers you are interviewing, well we have been training ourselves for many years and maybe that is what students don't see, they don't know all the courses, seminars that you have been taking because you're trying to fill this hole that you have for not having graduated from this area.

M: What is your experience working in The English Department in the Faculty?

R: Well, the work in The English Department is essential to have the foundations of what happens in the Faculty academically speaking. The experts in each area work in The English Department, so you need to take advantage of this. Unfortunately, the teachers change a lot from one Society to another one, and in this way, it is very difficult to create a certain identity in the different Departments. I know this is more an administrative

problem, but the English Department is entitled to take the responsibility to say how the teaching of English should be locally but also in the State.

M: And what was your first experience in the English Department like?

R: Good. I like to be everywhere Jaja Jaja. A teacher says: you never say no jajaja. If there's a meeting and I didn't have classes, I always attended the reunion and that's important because you start gaining recognition inside and outside The English Department. I remember I always approached.

D. V because she was my MA supervisor and with her experience she helped me a lot, also D. P helped me and they have great experience, so when I had a doubt, I always contacted these experienced teachers. I also consider that you can broaden your vision if you attend all these meetings because you share your experiences with other professionals in the field. I have had the opportunity to attend conferences in Guadalajara, Puebla, Hidalgo, Guanajuato and you can compare the conditions under which they're working. I also belong to an academic network of English language teachers who do research, and in this network, we try to find out about common problems that we may encounter in our contexts.

M: And in what ways can The English Department help new teachers to get integrated in the Faculty?

R: Well, I'm in charge of hiring new teachers for the MA and here it's impossible to teach if you don't have the appropriate background. However, when teachers come and ask for information, I always share my experience and I tell them: "Look, it doesn't matter that you don't have a BA in the area, you can do what I've done, and the MA in Applied Linguistics is a good beginning". Now, the new teacher must cover a specific profile, it doesn't matter that they don't have the BA in Languages, in other schools you can find teachers who don't even have a BA.

M: Do you regret having studied Accountancy?

R: I like the field of Accountancy and Administration. When I started working, I really enjoyed it because I could contact foreigners and it was a good experience. However, I don't miss the routine, I was always doing the same things. It's quite repetitive and you don't have contact with many people as you do when teaching. Every term, you meet new people. I would have liked though to have travelled abroad when I was studying. You know, there are many interchange programmes in the University and I didn't take any, I also regret not having studied in this University. Now that I work here, I can see the quality of the programmes and teachers and I do regret that.

M: And how do you identify yourself?

R: Well, I have a PhD in Education, but I usually say that I work in the Linguistics field or in Languages. Some people still think that I only teach English, and it's OK because this is how I started.

M: And did your family and friends react when they find out that you don't work in something related to Accountancy?

R: Well, yes at the beginning they didn't understand but I think this happens because they don't really understand what implies being a language teacher. It is what happens with our students because don't know the difference between studying English in a school and studying a degree here in the Faculty

M: Well, thank you Ricky.

R: You're welcome.

Albert's transcript

Muchas gracias, Albert, vamos a empezar con tus estudios universitarios. M:

Tú ¿qué estudiaste en la Universidad?

A: Contaduría Pública.

M: Y, ¿te gustó?

A: Sí, sí me gustaba, desde niño, yo pensé estudiar contaduría porque mi papá estudió Contaduría y Administración, entonces yo veía todos sus libros de contaduría y Administración y yo decía ay eso está padre, las empresas y me llamaba la atención y me gustaba, entonces este, incluso antes de empezar la carrera trabajaba como auxiliar contable en un despacho en las tardes un ratito, y sí me gustó la carrera, este, mis estudios universitario sí me gustaron e hice buenos amigos ahí, así que, estuvo bien.

M. Entonces tú sí ejerciste tu carrera

A: Sí, después de terminar mi carrera, estuve dos años trabajando, dando clases de inglés y luego, me contrataron en una empresa y en esta empresa estuve cinco años, pero no me gustó, no me gustó ese trabajo en la industria no, no, no.

M: ¿Por qué?

A. Porque es un trabajo muy competitivo, bueno aquí también lo es, pero allá es muy competitivo, muy deshumanizado, muy metalizado y pues no sé, se tomaban decisiones con base en dinero con las que yo no estaba de acuerdo y aparte no era bueno, no soy bueno con los números, si no, necesitas una sensibilidad especial entonces y pues yo no la tengo, es la verdad y pues no, no era bueno, lo que sí es que aprendí muchas cosas, aprendí a trabajar, los buenos hábitos de trabajo que tengo, bueno que los considero buenos hoy en día son resultado de lo que aprendí en la industria, pero en realidad no me gusta, este, no me gustó por esas razones.

M. Y ¿cuándo empezaste a estudiar inglés?

A. desde joven, bueno cuando era niño mi mamá me enseñaba inglés, no sé si te acuerdes de estos libros de inglés idiomático

M. Sí

A. Bueno mi mamá me enseñó con esos, son de los sesentas y con eso me enseñaba mi mamá y a mí me gustaba, nada más que los veía muy mecanizados, desde entonces yo ya los veía ay siempre es lo mismo y repeticiones pero aprendí vocabulario y aprendí cosas culturales de los "pilgrims" y así, en muchas cosas culturales a mí siempre me gustó la historia, entonces me llamaba mucho la atención y bueno, yo siempre le decía a mis papás que quería estudiar inglés, total que cuando termino la secundaria me meten al CELe, entonces fue cuando empecé mis estudios formales, desde antes yo me metía mucho pues trataba de leer en inglés, me gustaba la música, me gustaban mucho los deportes, entonces trataba de leer en inglés y veía cosas en inglés, o sea desde joven me fui metiendo con la lengua y este pues ya mis estudios formales empezaron cuando terminé la secundaria, o sea lo más chico que podía yo empezar en el CELe así me metí y así estudia, pues tenía como 15 años, de hecho no sé si ya había cumplido los 15 años y había terminado la secundaria y ya estaba estudiando en el CELe y este, ahí estudié los niveles básicos, estudié hasta avanzado, hice my First, este en aquel entonces no había First en Toluca, lo fui a hacer a México, a una primaria en donde las bancas estaban súper chiquitas, este y ahí hice el First, y ya, después seguí estudiando todos los niveles hasta que terminé.

M. ¿Cómo fue que empezaste a dar clases?

A:- Ay fue una coincidencia, yo estaba estudiando el nivel avanzado, no sé si te acuerdas de Jacob, bueno, él era el subdirector académico del CELe en aquél entonces, un holandés, este, quién fue mi maestro y luego con él fui a hacer el First, él nos llevó, nos trajo de regreso y bueno nos conocía bien a mí y a un grupo de amigos que nos llevábamos porque habíamos sido sus alumnos, entonces yo estando ya en el nivel avanzado, un día muy chistoso porque iba caminando, era un cuate así grandote entonces daba unos pasotes, entonces iba caminando y voltea y me dice: tú, y me señala así con el dedo, me dice tú ya tienes tu First, ¿verdad?, y le digo: sí, me dice: ¿y no te interesaría dar clases? Y le digo: sí, pero no sé cómo, jajaja.

M. ¿Qué edad tenías?

A. Tenía como 18 o 19 años, y pues sí no sabía cómo y me dijo: no importa yo te enseño cómo ser maestro porque me urge un maestro, entonces pues ya me tomó así del hombro y me dijo: lo que pasa es que se va a ir de vacaciones tal maestro, por cierto, los maestros que se iban a ir de vacaciones eran M y G G que por cierto también acababan de entrar a dar clases, entonces pues yo entré a sustituir a uno de los dos o a los dos, no me acuerdo, y este, y ya, así empecé mi carrera de maestro en el CELe, y me gustó mucho, al principio mis clases eran terribles.

M. Eso te quería preguntar, ¿cómo fueron tus primeras clases?

A: Más o menos me acuerdo de mis primeras clases, y pues no eran buenas, yo no sabía, Jacob no me dijo gran cosa, me dijo yo te enseño pero pues no, y era mitad de trimestre, en el CELe en ese entonces todavía eran trimestres, era mitad de trimestre, yo entré a sustituir a este par de maestros un mes, y un nivel era avanzado, ya habían terminado este texto de gramática de Upper Intermediate, era uno morado, Advanced Grammar in Use, uno de esos, era ese y uno de tercer trimestre que era un inglés A2 a lo mejor, la mayoría de los alumnos eran más grandes que yo, bueno algunos eran de mi edad pero no había más chicos, entonces pues mis primeras clases fueron a ver en este libro una mitad era la explicación y la otra era la de los ejercicios, y pues yo los ponía a hacer los ejercicios y revisaba el Teacher's Book, el otro libro que llevábamos se llamaba: "In Tune", ¿no lo conociste?

M. No

A: Y bueno, pues más o menos yo trataba de hacer lo que decía el Teacher's Book, pero luego dije no, no, no,, yo tengo que preparar bien mis clases y entonces lo que hacía era acordarme de mis buenos maestros de la carrera, que fueron muy pocos y trataba de hacer lo mismo que ellos, pero por supuesto nada que ver, entonces o sea no, y eran fatales mis clases.

M. Pero, tu sentías que eran fatales o alguien te llegó a decir eso.

A. No, no, no, nadie me dijo,

M. pues a lo mejor no eran tan malas

A. Pues a lo mejor, pero hoy en día que veo hacia atrás, incluso al poco tiempo, terminé ese trimestre y empezando y me metieron a un curso de preparación, de habilidades, de hecho lo tomé con B, con B B, ella fue mi primera instructora en esto y pues muy padre, porque yo dije: esto que me están enseñando no tiene nada que ver con lo que hago, al poco tiempo me metieron a hacer el COTE del Consejo Británico y pues bueno, ahí sí se me abrió el panorama y dije no pues ahora sí, y me gustó, me gustó mucho y bueno.

M. Y desde ahí nunca paraste de dar clases

A: Sí, sí, hubo un tiempo, bueno yo seguí dando clases en el CELe, terminé mi COTE, seguí tomando cursos, todos los cursos que podía los tomaba, pero bueno llegó el tiempo que ya me titulé, terminé mi carrera, me titulé dos años después y recién me titulé, este, luego, luego me contrataron en esta empresa, traté de no dejar el CELe, pero en esta empresa, entonces traté de no dejar el CELe, pero esta empresa donde yo trabajaba estaba, bueno está delante de Ixtlahuaca, entonces tenía que tomar el autobús de regreso, este y según yo, salía a las 6 y quería yo llegar a clase de 7, pues claro que no, siempre llegaba 7.10, 7.20, entonces hubo un trimestre, ya eran semestres, bueno el siguiente semestre, me dijeron que ya no me iban a dar clases a las 7 sino a las 8, pero pues yo faltaba mucho porque mi trabajo a veces había que quedarse tarde y si no me venía yo a la hora que salía el camión, pues me tenía que esperar hasta que mi jefe regresara, entonces faltaba yo mucho, entonces me dieron horas de auto-acceso, me dieron una hora de auto-acceso de 8 a 9 de la noche, no la acepté, y este, entonces fue cuando dejé de dar clases, fueron como 3 años y medio, 4 años, que interrumpí mientras estuve en la industria, después de que, este, me di cuenta que no me gustó, empecé a buscar otras cosas, empecé a hacer negocios por mi cuenta y también busqué donde dar clases, entonces encontré B, entonces en B me contrataron mientras en B tenía clases pues también tenía mis negocios, ah, entonces pero bueno entonces sí interrumpí esos años, cuando regresé me gustó mucho, eh, estuvo muy padre cuando regresé a dar clases.

M. Además es diferente dar clases en B, ¿no?

A. Sí, sí, en B bueno pues tienen un sistema, me entrenaron en el sistema y bueno pues no me gustaba mucho pero bueno era padre, entonces este, pues bueno regresé a la docencia del inglés y desde entonces no la he dejado, tengo ya ahorita, esto fue en el 2002, este, entonces ya tengo 14 años sin interrumpir dar clases, luego regresé al CELe también, al poco tiempo de que dejé la empresa 7y empecé en B, también tomé una clase en CELe, así que estaba con B y CELe.

M. Y luego llegaste a la Fac.

A. Luego llegué a la Fac, sí porque tenía mis clases en CELe, y lo que pasa es que en B no nos pagan, este bueno pagan por clase dada, entonces hubo un año en diciembre que recibí mi cheque por 100 pesos o 150 pesos y fue muy frustrante, entonces le hablé a Manolo que era el subdirector académico de la Facultad de Lenguas y le dije oye: ¿tienes clases para el siguiente semestre? Y me dijo sí, justamente ahorita estoy haciendo la plantilla, entonces sí sí cuenta con dos grupos al menos, así que así estuve con dos grupos aquí y dos grupos en CELe por un rato y luego dejé CELe cuando me ofrecieron un puesto administrativo aquí, que fue en Planeación y ya pues así fue como llegué a la Fac.

M. ¿Y cómo fue que empezaste a dar clases en otras áreas?

A. Sí bueno eh, pues sí, cuando estaba trabajando aquí en la Fac. tuve que decidirme si me iba a ir por esta área, porque estuve haciendo algo de consultoría, hacía yo proyectos de inversión, este entonces estaba viendo si seguía con lo de la consultoría, me metía aquí a la maestría y eh, pues bueno, no decidí ni una ni otra, no regresé a la consultoría, eso ya lo dejé y no me metí a la maestría, pero sí seguí con las clases y luego me dieron un puesto administrativo, este, luego estando en la subdirección, me dan eh, me dan permiso para hacer la maestría y me empiezo a desarrollar en otras áreas, empiezo a ver que no solamente me gusta dar clases de inglés, sino que me gusta la Lingüística aplicada en general y me gustaba la sociolingüística, el teacher training, el diseño de currículum, me gustó mucho la maestría, creo que sí la aproveché, tenía el trabajo administrativo que fue muy fuerte y la maestría pues sí fue algo pesado, pero pues bueno, creo que sí

la supe aprovechar, y este, me metí a comprensión de lectura que fue mi tema de tesis en vocabulario, también por eso me interesé mucho en vocabulario, platicamos hace rato que el doctorado te abre mucho la mente, pues desde la maestría, yo creo que sí te da una visión total mente diferente y empecé a ver muchas de las áreas de la lingüística aplicada que me empezaron a interesar, me empezaron a invitar en proyectos de investigación y pues ya participé en ellos y conocí un mundo académico que me gustó mucho, entonces este, pues bueno poco a poco me empezaron a dar clases de otras cosas, empecé con Seminario que ni siquiera me había titulado de la maestría y no sabía que dar en Seminario y bueno pues lo pude sacar adelante, así empecé en otras cosas y así tengo varias áreas en las que me especialicé: en comprensión de lectura, en las áreas de docencia, eh, evaluación que me está gustando mucho y dentro de la evaluación me especialicé en diseño de exámenes y pues ahora con el doctorado todas esas áreas y mi investigación del Doctorado, pues me han ayudado mucho con los Seminarios y creo que me está ayudando mucho trabajar con los Seminarios, creo que sí, pues sí he podido aportar, pues siento que he podido aportar a los proyectos de los chicos, pues sí.

M. Pero no dejas tus clases de inglés.

A. No, no, es que eh pues finalmente creo que todo gira alrededor de esto y no dar clases de inglés o sea dar clases de docencia, de investigación y de evaluación de las lenguas, y no dar clases de inglés se me hace un poco incongruente, yo sí creo que hay que trabajar en ello, noi, incluso he pensado a veces en buscar clases fuera, porque dijo a veces ahorita estoy muy cómodo en la facultad, tengo todo, tengo gente que me prepara los materiales, tengo a la biblioteca, pues una biblioteca bastante decente para mi gusto, bueno creo que es una biblioteca bastante buena, pues están todos los materiales ahí, el acceso a la red es bastante bueno también, entonces creo que estoy muy cómodo para dar unas buenas clases, este eh, pero a veces se nos olvida a nosotros en esa comodidad, se nos olvida cómo se trabaja allá afuera y me han dado ganas de salir a dar clases allá afuera, pero no he tenido tiempo, en algún momento a lo mejor sí lo hago, pero de momento no, este creo que sí es importante que esté uno todavía ejerciendo, porque si no pierdes mucha sensibilidad.

M. Sí, te quedas en tu zona de confort.

A. Ajá. Y te vuelves teórico y nada más enseñas lo que dicen los libros y creo que lo que puede uno aportar desde el punto de vista en ambos sentidos teórico y empírico pues es muy enriquecedor, que trabajar únicamente dando las clases teóricamente.

M. ¿Y alguna vez fuiste cuestionado por no ser del área?

A. Bueno, es increíble porque todavía pasa, tengo 22 años dando clases y todavía este semestre me pasó.

M. ¿Cómo crees? A ver pláticame.

A. Pues siempre me dicen los alumnos ¿eres contador? Y yo digo sí.

M. Pero ¿tú les dices o cómo?

A. Pues, en ocasiones ha salido como anécdota, no llego y les digo yo soy contador, no, pero surge el tema como anécdota y lo platico y todos se quedan así como, a poco sí, y tengo varias anécdotas en ese sentido, por ejemplo, una vez, siempre les pido al final del semestre una apreciación sobre la clase acerca de qué les gustó, que no les gustó, y cómo podría mejorar la clase y una vez me encontré una que decía pues a mí me habían dicho que era contador entonces mis expectativas no eran muy grandes la verdad pero ahora me encontré con que sí sabe.

M. Ah bueno

A. Sí, sí los comentarios han sido buenos, este pero sí ha habido cosas como que pues yo me he enterado que han hecho comentarios así como: "y este qué nos puede enseñar si es contador", o "¿qué tiene que estar haciendo un contador dando clases en la Facultad de Lenguas?", esos comentarios los he escuchado, directamente o por terceros, este, este semestre, estábamos discutiendo algo en clase, creo que de inglés, y entonces una chica que conoce a uno de mis amigos de la facultad de contaduría, este, sabe que yo soy contador y pues ellos estaban trabajando en pares, yo los estaba monitoreando y entonces me voltean a ver dos o tres y me dice uno: "a poco profe ¿usted es contador?" y yo les contesto "sí", porque esta chica les comentó, y me dicen: ¿y qué hace aquí?" y yo pues esto me gustó y a esto me dedico, pero les tienes que dar todo el background.

M. ¿Como forma de legitimarnos?

A. Sí exacto, entonces este me dicen, bueno pero ya estudió algo del área, y yo les digo sí, sí, ya estudié mi maestría y estoy en el doctorado y entonces pues sí, me acuerdo cuando empecé a dar clases aquí en la facultad, sí hubo incluso un grupito que decía, no, no estamos de acuerdo que nos dé clases porque es contador, incluso creo que el segundo semestre, yo llegué el primer semestre a dar clases, para el segundo semestre se cerró el grupo porque sólo se habían inscrito tres personas.

M. Pero ¿fue porque eras contador?

A. Ajá, luego me enteré que porque ellos decían que yo era contador.

M. Oh, ¿y el director no te defendió?

A. Pues no, era, bueno es que no se quejaron con él, nada más no se inscribieron porque se corrió el chisme, no pues no se inscriban porque este cuate es contador.

M. Pues tampoco se hubieran inscrito conmigo o con el ingeniero.

A. Pues no, pero pues así pasó, a mí me dijo una chica que después fue mi alumna en otro grupo y no sé porqué estábamos platicando eso, que se había cerrado mi grupo, y ella me dijo ah sí yo sí me enteré, estaban diciendo que como era contador pues ya no se quisieron meter y bueno el horario no ayudaba tampoco y finalmente se cerró el grupo y qué otras cosas me han pasado, pues de colegas no, porque cuando yo empecé no existía la licenciatura entonces toda la gente de mi edad, de esa generación sobre todo del CELe, pues la licenciatura ni había empezado, ni existía en aquél entonces, no existía la escuela de lenguas, pero en el CELe era común, no había licenciados en lenguas, no existían, y bueno pues la gente me empezó a conocer en el medio, porque no era tan grande como hoy en día pues puedes pasar desapercibido, en ese entonces te conocías con la gente del gremio y este pues no no, la verdad que nunca hubo algo, algún comentario en contra de mi carrera.

M. ¿Y se te hizo fácil integrarte cuando entraste a trabajar en la Fac?

A. Pues muy al principio, la verdad, no entendía cómo trabajaba la Facultad, no entendía esa parte de la flexibilidad, no sabía porqué los alumnos elegían sus clases, maestros y horarios. A mí me tocó la primera generación del nuevo currículum y no entendía la razón de tener cuatro carreras si era una sola licenciatura. El problema era que yo venía a dar mis clases y me iba, entonces no sabía qué era lo que pasaba realmente en la Facultad. Sí me integré rápido porque conocía a algunos, a P, a M, a R, entonces pues sí siendo amigo de ellos pues ya me empecé a integrar, la verdad es que

a mí no me resulta difícil integrarme en ningún lado, lo que sufrí fue entender todo el funcionamiento de la Fac.

M ¿Y qué papel crees que juega el Departamento en la Facultad?

A. Híjole, qué pregunta tan difícil. Porque en teoría sirven para algo, pero en la práctica es otra cosa. La idea es que trabajemos con objetivos en común, que todos los maestros de las distintas áreas, en este caso el inglés, pues que trabajáramos con el mismo objetivo, que sepamos qué están haciendo los otros porque si no pienso que aunque hay un libro de texto, cada maestro hace cosas muy diferentes y pienso que los Departamentos deberían unificar criterios, armonizar muchas cosas, eh crear objetivos en común, ayudarnos, compartir prácticas, yo hago esto, a mí me funciona esto, pero no existe, la verdad es que ese trabajo no existe y hoy en día yo creo que los Departamentos solo existen para fines administrativos. Por ejemplo, nuestro Departamento de inglés tiene mucha rotación y ese es un problema, el Departamento de francés trabaja diferente, pero ahí rara vez cambian los maestros. El principal problema con la rotación es que no te deja tener proyectos a largo plazo, pero si cada semestre cambian la mayoría de los maestros o si en cada Administración cambian las políticas de trabajo. Además, pertenecer a un Departamento nos da identidad, nos da estructura, nos ayuda a especializarnos, además yo creo que no es bueno estar brincando de materia en materia, cada semestre es borrón y cuenta nueva y creo que eso no es sano. Por ejemplo, este semestre no hemos tenido junta de Departamento y yo hace rato platicaba con otra maestra que no tenemos idea de los nuevos maestros, no tenemos idea de quién está en el Departamento de inglés.

M. Y volviendo a tus inicios. ¿Te arrepientes de haber estudiado Contaduría?

A. No, no me arrepiento, creo que todo lo que ha pasado me ha ayudado a estar en donde ahora estoy., por ejemplo el haber sido Contador me ayudó a conseguir primero una plaza administrativa aquí y luego a ejercerla, tenía conocimientos de procesos administrativos, manejo de recursos humanos, financieros, todo eso, entonces me ayudó mucho en mi trabajo en la Subdirección y pues no me arrepiento, lo único que me arrepiento es de haber trabajado tanto tiempo en la industria, trabajé cinco años, sí sí, era terrible, yo salía de aquí de Toluca a las 6.30 de la mañana en mi camioncito y regresaba a Toluca a las 8 de la noche, este a veces no veía el sol, porque yo encerrado en la oficina todo el día, entonces sí era muy deprimente. Entonces yo creo que al tercer año cuando ya ví lo que era el trabajo y vi que no me gustaba, entonces tuve que haber dicho que no, por razones personales y familiares no lo hice, sí me hubiera gustado haber estudiado la licenciatura, bueno la de entonces, aunque aquel programa incluía cosas como teatro que la verdad no me gustaban, pues yo veo que la gente egresada de esta licenciatura sí sale bien preparada pues sí me hubiera gustado, pero bueno, no me arrepiento de mi carrera porque hasta la fecha tengo muy buenos amigos que sigo viendo y nos seguimos llevando y además me dejó muchas cosas en lo personal mi carrera y bueno finalmente aquí estoy, estoy haciendo lo que me gusta, lo que es mi vocación que es dar clases y no dudo en ningún momento que es mi vocación yo creo sinceramente que para eso nací para dar clases.

M. Y cuando te tocaba contratar maestros. ¿Tenías problemas con contratar a alguien que no tuviera esta licenciatura?

A. Bueno, aunque no contrataba yo directamente, sí me pedían opinión o recomendaciones. Yo recomendé a algunas personas que fueron mis colegas en B o en CELe, pero ¿qué crees? Que con el tiempo me fui dando cuenta que mis recomendaciones no funcionaban y yo lo atribuyo a que trabajar aquí es muy diferente a trabajar en esas dos escuelas y los maestros que yo recomendé no encajaban, pues no sé, creo que mi generación de colegas en CELe se estancó y daban sus clases como cuando empezaron

y pues aquí en la Facultad no funcionan y era chistoso porque me decían oye tú recomendado no sabe dar clases, pero ¿cómo? Si lleva dando clases más de quince años jajaja, entonces yo basaba mis recomendaciones en que los conocía y sí vinieron algunos maestros que me decía oye échame la mano y pues no y además ninguno tenía esta licenciatura, pero es bien curioso porque ahora sí soy más parcial hacia gente de clases aquí y no tenga esta licenciatura porque yo apoyo a los chicos que estamos formando aquí. Sí creo que es bueno enriquecerte de otras personas de background diferente, pero son casos excepcionales.

M. Y cuando alguien te pregunta ¿a qué te dedicas? ¿Qué dices?

A. Yo digo que soy lingüista, claro que después viene la aclaración de lo que hace un lingüista y también tengo que explicar que solo domino el inglés y el español, jajaja. Claro y al principio cuando empecé a dar clases era peor, recuerdo que una vez en un descanso en B, me encontré a un vecino y me saluda, y me pregunta ¿qué andas haciendo? ¿Vienes por tu hijo? Y ya le dije no aquí trabajo y me dice: hígole sí es que a veces no hay chamba jajaja y ya le dije no yo trabajo aquí por gusto, sigue siendo subestimada la profesión de maestro de inglés, sí entiendo que mucha gente pues efectivamente no tiene de otra, pero tan es mi vocación que yo la dejé y regresé, mi familia siempre me apoyó, otra gente sí me decía ay tanto estudiar en la Universidad para terminar de maestro de inglés, pero no es mi caso.

M. Pues muchas gracias Albert

A. No, de qué, gracias a ti.

Transcription Albert

M: Thank you Albert. I would like to start by asking you about your studies at the University?

A: Accountancy

M: And did you enjoy studying that?

A: Yes, I did, since I was a kid, I wanted to study that because my father is an accountant and I used to look at his books and I said: woo this is cool. I wanted to work in a company or a big enterprise so, even before I started my BA I was already working as an auxiliary in an accountancy department. I remember I worked some hours in the afternoons and yes, I did like my days at the University and I also made very good friends.

M: Did you work as an accountant?

A: Yes, when I finished my BA I worked for two years teaching English and then I was hired to work in a company. I worked for this company for five years, but I didn't like it, I didn't enjoy this work, no, no, no.

M: Why?

A: Because it's a very competitive work, well teaching is also a competitive work but in the company, they didn't pay attention to the human being, it was all about the money, all the decisions were about money and many times I didn't agree but I couldn't do much, plus I wasn't good with numbers, you need a specific ability and I don't have it, that's the truth, I wasn't good at it. Yes, I did learn many things, for example I learned good working habits, well I consider they are a result of that work, but honestly, no I didn't enjoy it.

M: When did you start studying English?

A: I started when I was young, my mom used to teach me, with these books "Idiomatic English". Do you remember them?

M: Yes

A: Well, my mother used those books which were from the 70s and I like them. Obviously, they are very mechanical, very repetitive but I learned vocabulary and I learned cultural aspects like the ones of the pilgrims coming to America and as I like History well, I enjoyed learning these things. I asked my parents to send me to an English language school and when I finished secondary school, I was sent to CELe to study English. This is when I started to study English formally, I started to read a lot in English, to listen to songs. I liked sports so I watched television in English, and I was like 15. I studied all the levels, and I did my FCE. I had to go to Mexico City because there wasn't a school who offered this certification.

M: And how did you start teaching English?

A: It was pure coincidence. I was studying English at an advanced level. I don't know if you remember Jacob, well, he was the academic coordinator in CELe. He had been my teacher before, I remember he took us to Mexico City to do the FCE, so we had a good relationship, my friends and I with him. When I was in the advanced level, I remembered that I was walking around the school and he saw me and said: "Hey, you've got FCE, right? Would you like to teach a class?", and I said yes, but I don't know how, Jaja Jaja.

M: How old were you?

A: I was like 18 or 19, and I had no idea how to start teaching and he told me: "Don't worry and I can teach you, but it is urgent to have a teacher for this group" and that's how I started teaching.

M: And, what were your first classes like?

A: Well, I don't remember my first lessons very well, but obviously they weren't good, honestly Jacob didn't help me much. I remember the classes were divided in three-month cycles and when I started teaching it was in the middle of the course, most students were older than me and what I did was to follow the book exercise by exercise and I followed the teacher's book. I more or less tried to do everything the Teacher's Book said, after some time I thought that I had to plan my classes better and what I did was to try to do what my good teachers did and I tried to imitate them, but my classes were really bad.

M: But somebody told you that your classes were bad?

A: No, no, no, nobody told me.

M: Well, maybe they weren't that bad

A: Well, maybe you are right. But now that I think of my first lessons I consider that I didn't have any training or methodology but after my first course I started to take training courses and I also started to realise that what I was doing wasn't good and I really liked all this training, later I did the COTE with the British Council and this course really opened my eyes and I did like it a lot.

M: And have been teaching English since then?

A.No, after some years in CELe, I finished my COTE, and I did all the courses I could, two years later I graduated and I was hired by a company. I tried not to leave CELe but in this company where I started to work is far from the city where I lived, so I had to take the decision of leaving the classes and concentrate myself on the company. At the

beginning, I tried to combine both, but I was always late for my class because I had to take the bus at 6 and start the class at 7, but I always arrived at 7.10 or 7.15, so I decided to take the 8pm class, but it was the same, I was late, or I had to be absent because there were problems in my work and I needed to stay, in the end I decided to leave the CELe. For 4 or 5 years I didn't teach and worked as an accountant, but it was precisely after these years that I realised that I was not happy with my job. I started to look for another job, I started my own business and also looked for a school where to teach, and I started to work for B. I taught English but I also had my own business, honestly, I was very happy when I returned to teach. In B they have a system. I got training in the system and well, I didn't like the system very much but I enjoyed teaching. I remember I returned to teach in 2012 and I haven't stopped since then, I also took one class in CELe at that time.

M: And when did you arrive to the Fac?

A: Yes, I remember that one year, in December my payment was like 100 or 200 pesos, nothing, because in these schools they don't pay you holidays, they only pay you the hour you teach, it was really frustrating and I decided to call Manolo, who was the academic supervisor in the Faculty of languages and I asked for some classes. Luckily, there were needed some English language teachers and I started with two groups in the Fac and two groups in CELe. Later, I left CELe because I was offered an administrative charge in the Faculty. I was in charge of the Department of Planning.

M: And how did you start teaching in other areas?

A: Well, when I was working here in the Fac, I had to decide if I was going to continue in this area because I was also working in consultancy, I made investment projects for businesses, so I was considering if I continued with the consultancy or entered the MA in Applied linguistics. I decided to leave the consultancy and I was offered the administrative department in the Faculty, at the same time, I started to study the MA and I started to develop in other areas, for example, my thesis was in the area of reading comprehension and I realised that I had other interests like: sociolinguistics, teacher training, curriculum design, I really enjoyed the MA. I have to tell you that it was really hard to combine both things: the administrative work and my studies. I really think that it was a very enriching experience. I also discovered aspects related to vocabulary in which I am interested. It definitely opened my mind to new fields in the area of languages. At the same time, I was invited to participate in different research projects, and I knew a new academic world that really caught me. Because of all this I was invited to teach other subjects apart from English. I started, I remember, with a research seminar, and honestly, I had no idea because I hadn't even graduated from the MA but I prepared the lesson very well and that's how I have specialised in different areas now. For example, now my main area of study is Evaluation. I have just started with my PhD and it is related to Evaluation and the ethics of the teachers. I also feel that now with my experience I have been able to help students with their projects.

M: But have you continued with the English lessons?

A: Yes, I think that in the end, everything is about English and for me, not teaching English is kind of contradiction, because our students are going to be teachers or translators of English and if they lack the knowledge of the language, there isn't much point in being an expert in the rest of the subjects. What's more, I have been thinking of teaching English outside the Faculty because here I'm really comfortable, I have people who help me with the materials, a decent library, good internet, etc. Outside the Faculty you face a different world, which is the world that our students will find, so I think that being in contact with it can also help you with your students and be more sensitive about it.

M: Are you talking about a comfort zone?

A: Yes, you become very theoretical and only teach what the books say, and I consider that as a teacher you must be able to teach both sides]; the theory but also the practice.

M: Have you ever been questioned or criticised for not having graduated from languages?

A: Well, it's incredible that after 22 years I continue being criticised, it has just happened to me this semester.

M: How come? Please tell me about it.

A: Well, the students say: you're an accountant, aren't you?

M: But you tell them at the beginning of the course or what?

A: Sometimes it has come out as an anecdote, but I don't arrive at the classroom and say: hey I'm an accountant, but sometimes students ask you, and I tell them my story. I have a number of anecdotes in this sense, for example, I always ask my students at the end of the semester that they tell me about things they enjoyed and things they didn't or how I could improve my class and once I found a student who wrote: well, my expectations were not high at all but I found out that he knows about the subject.

M: Well, that was positive.

A: Yes, yes, I have got positive feedback, but I have also found comments like: What on earth can he teach us if he's an accountant? Or what the hell is an accountant doing in the Faculty of Languages? I have heard those comments directly or indirectly. This semester I was in the English class and a girl who knows one of my friends from the Faculty of Accountancy and Administration told the rest of her partners that I was an accountant and they started to ask me what I was doing here, and I told them my story but obviously you have to give them all the background.

M: Like to legitimise yourself

A: Yes, exactly because they realise that I am not an improvised that I have studied aspects related to the area, that I have an MA and now a PhD but I remember when I started to teach here in the Faculty, there was a small group of students who didn't agree with the idea of having teachers from other areas and decided not to register for my class, and the group had to be closed.

M: Because you were an accountant

A: Yes, later I found out that it had been because I was an accountant.

M: But did the Director support you?

A: Well, no, it was like gossip, they didn't complain or anything, they just didn't register in my group. Later, a girl who didn't register in that group and was my student in a different subject told me that their partners told her not to register in the group.

M: And did you find it easy to integrate with the rest of colleagues in the Faculty?

A: Well, honestly, at the beginning I didn't understand how the Faculty worked, I didn't understand the flexibility, or why the students could choose their schedules, teachers and so on. I started with the first cohort of the new curriculum, and I didn't understand why to have four degrees in one degree. My main problem was that I had one class and that was it, so I didn't know how the Faculty really worked. But answering your question, yes,

I felt integrated immediately because I knew many teachers from CELe and as I was their friend it was easy, but in general I am sociable and I have no problem with that, my difficulty was in understanding how the Faculty worked.

M: And what is the role of The English Department in the Faculty?

A: Wow, that's a very difficult question, because in theory it has a role, but in practice it is completely different. The main idea of The English Department is that we work together towards a common objective, all teachers from all areas, in this case English, should work with a same aim, we should be able to know what the others are doing because I know there's a textbook that everybody should follow but I sometimes think that everybody does what they want. The Department must be the place to unify criteria, help each other, share practices, but unfortunately that doesn't exist. You could say look, I have been doing this in class and it has been successful or ask the colleagues what would you suggest in this situation and so on. Honestly, I think nowadays, the Departments only exist as an administrative requirement. For example, our Society has a continuous movement of teachers and I think that is not good, because you cannot create a certain identity. The English Department of French works differently, you rarely have new teachers or different teachers. The main problem with this rotation is that you cannot have long-term projects. Belonging to a Society gives us identity, structure, it can help us to specialise in certain areas. For example, this term I have no idea who belongs to The English Department.

M: Do you regret having studied Accountancy?

A: No, I don't regret that. I think everything that I have lived has helped me to be where I am now. If I hadn't been an Accountant, I wouldn't have got the administrative charge here in Languages. I also had knowledge of administrative processes, human resources, financial resources and so on. What I do regret is having worked for five years in the company where I worked. It was really depressing; I didn't see the sun. I used to leave at 6.30 and return home at 8 in the night, I was locked in my office the whole day. So, I really believe that I should have left that job earlier when I saw the conditions, I should have said no but for personal and familiar reasons I didn't do it. I would have liked to have studied the degree in Languages because now that I see the subjects, well I do like them, well I don't like theatre, but the rest of the subjects are OK and I have also seen that our graduates are well-prepared. I also don't regret having studied my BA because many of my best friends are from those days, but the important thing is that nowadays I do what I like, this is my vocation and I really enjoy it.

M: When you hired teachers. What did you take into consideration?

A: Well, I didn't hire them directly but many times they asked for my opinion, and I also recommended some teachers from B and from CELe, but believe it or not, my recommendations never worked. Little by little I started to realise that the teachers I recommended didn't work because teaching in those schools and in the Faculty is completely different. I also consider that many times, in these schools' people don't continue studying and preparing lessons and that's why they couldn't with the challenge of teaching here, and people told me: Hey, guess what the teacher you recommended doesn't know how to teach and I said: How come if they have been teaching for many years, jajaja. Sometimes many teachers came to see me and asked me to help them to enter to work here and I said: No sorry, I don't recommend people anymore. And a curious thing as well, is that now I am more partial to people who studied here, and I support that more graduated students from here can start teaching here. I think that you can learn a lot from people with different educational backgrounds, but it's an exception.

M: What do you answer when someone asks you about your profession?

A: I say that I'm a linguist, of course that you need to explain what a linguist does, jajaja. I also have to explain that I only speak English and Spanish, jajaja. Of course, and when I started teaching it was worse, I remember that once when I was teaching in B, I found a neighbour who asked me: Are you here for your kid? And I said: No, I work here and he replied: well, when you don't have any other option, it's ok, jajaja, and I said: no I like working here. I consider that people continue underestimating the profession of English language teacher. Yes, I do understand that some people do not have any other option, however, my family always supported me, and it is really my vocation that after I left it for five years, I came back. Other people told me: how many years studying at the University to end up teaching English, no, but my family never said that.

M:
Albert.

Thank you

A: Not at all.

Moses' transcription

Muchas gracias por la entrevista Moses. Me gustaría empezar a platicar sobre tus estudios universitarios. ¿Qué estudiaste en la Universidad?

Me: Yo estudié aquí en la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, estudié Arquitectura.

M: Y ¿siempre quisiste estudiar eso?

Mo: No, la verdad es que he llegado a la conclusión que cuando tienes 18 años y tienes que escoger lo que vas a hacer el resto de tu vida, pues en realidad eres una persona que no sabes qué vas a hacer. Me gusta mucho la arquitectura, me gusta mucho ver los edificios, como hace rato hablábamos un poco del sol, pero este no sabía, honestamente eché un volado, porque no no sabía qué quería, yo les digo a mis alumnos que están muy jóvenes, a lo mejor yo ya no voy a madurar, es lo más probable, que yo no sabía que quería hacer, pero le atiné, de todas las probabilidades fue la más acertada, por ejemplo, sabía que Medicina no era algo que yo quería hacer.

M: Y ¿disfrutaste tu carrera?

Mo: Sí, sí, te digo me gusta mucho el arte, me gustan mucho los espacios, mi esposa siempre me dice que cuando llego a las casas siempre estoy haciendo sugerencias: mira si haces esto, si mueves esto y creo que fue lo que se me quedó, y me sale natural, me gusta, me gusta, me gustó y me sigue gustando.

M: Y ¿ejerciste tu carrera alguna vez?

Mo: Sí, sí, estuve haciendo unos proyectos aquí en Toluca de casa habitación y después trabajé en una ONG parecida a H, que se llama, bueno se llamaba S Now, ahora se llama S for Life que se dedica a hacer casas para gente que pierde sus casas por desastres naturales o en zonas de guerra y me tocó ir a Centroamérica un par de años a diseñar casas, también fui a Buenos Aires como parte de H, un proyecto de prevención de accidentes pero que tenía que ver con construcción de vivienda

M: Y el inglés ¿cómo empezó a formar parte de tu vida y cómo empezaste a dar clases?

Mo: Yo le digo a la gente, yo creo que fue una de esas cosas que te gusta pero no lo sabes identificar, cuando yo era chiquito, yo empecé a hacer mi propio diccionario inglés-español, no se ni porqué, mi teoría era, para que veas qué tan niño estaba, es que la letra de una lengua se debe sustituir por otra, por ejemplo: perro-dog, entonces la p debía sustituirse por la d, la o y bueno siempre tenía el problema de que las palabras era más largas o más cortas, de hecho pensaba lo mismo con los himnos nacionales, es decir todos tenemos el mismo himno, nada más cambiamos el idioma, risas, no tengo idea, estaba en primera pero eso era lo que yo pensaba, desde ahí, viéndolo sé que me gustaban los idiomas desde chico. Cuando salí de la prepa, surgió la posibilidad de irme de intercambio, y entonces me fui de intercambio a un pueblito cerca de Nueva York y fue muy interesante, no estaba preparado, no existía como ahora todas esas cosas que te preparan para un choque cultural, ni nada por el estilo, había viajado por México, pero ir al extranjero solo, sin mi familia fue una experiencia nuevo, y digamos que fue cuando empecé a soltarme, también tenía la estupidísima idea, no sé por qué, de que mis papás me decían estudia inglés y yo les decía cuando llegue a Estados Unidos ya voy a hablar, risas, no se yo pensaba que llegando a Estados Unidos iba a hablar, rápido se me iba a dar, y no pues fue todo un drama, pasé porque mis maestros fueron con mucho corazón,

yo llegué con el inglés de la secundaria y la prepa y de un vecino, entonces sí sabía lo más básico, habíamos tenido en casa intercambios de verano, pero pues vienen a aprender español no a hablar en inglés y ahí empecé con inglés, cuando regresé a México, originalmente empecé a estudiar Ingeniería y me di cuenta que no era por ahí, y empecé a estudiar Arquitectura, la situación es que en esa época, la facultad de Arquitectura iba desfasada un semestre, el semestre empezaba en enero no en septiembre, por huelgas habían sido muy grilleros y me dio mucha pena, vergüenza con mis papás, no hacer nada un semestre y entonces vi en el periódico que estaban buscando un profesor de inglés en una escuela que se llama H H y dije pues voy a ir a ver qué pasa, tenía 19 años, fui y me dijeron el examen, la entrevista es el próximo fin de semana, creo que eran dos o tres fines de semana, fui y me fue bien, me aceptaron para dar clases básicas, me aceptaron nos dieron una capacitación vamos a entrenarlos y van a trabajar para nosotros y yo dije qué bueno. Y así fue como empecé a dar clases y me gustó mucho, la verdad yo creo que aprender idiomas fuera de la Facultad es algo que la gente hace por gusto, entonces no estás correteando a las personas y para mí fue muy interesante porque el que era director en la Facultad de Arquitectura era mi alumno, risas, entonces era una relación un poco extraña, a alguien que respetas mucho por un lado, pero por otro lado tienes que estar impartiendo conocimientos, entonces fue muy muy bonito, súper nervioso, yo me acuerdo que no ponía la mano en el pizarrón porque siempre quedaba sudada esta parte.

M. Era lo que te quería preguntar, ¿cómo fueron esas primeras clases?

Mo: Bueno, yo ya había intentado dar clases antes, en una, también necesitaban maestros, para dar clases en unas fábricas y era con ingenieros, también súper intimidante, pero nunca di clases porque los ingenieros, en C, todavía se llama así, pero nunca di clases porque los ingenieros, llegábamos y para no darle clases a un solo ingeniero, no sé eran como 6 o 7, el salón de clases era el salón de usos múltiples y había como tres mesas de ping-pong, no pues empezábamos a jugar y nunca di clases, risas. En el H H, me acuerdo que siempre estaba muy nervioso, te digo que no pegaba la mano al pizarrón porque sudaba y yo creo que temblaba también, risas, me concentraba mucho no tengo que pegar la mano al pizarrón, eran niveles básicos, me ponía muy nervioso con la gente grande y estaba muy cómodo con los jóvenes, yo creo también la inmadurez, tenía 19 años y si la riegas, pues dices si me corren no importa: me han corrido de las escuelas, me han corrido de la casa, entonces no importa, risas, o sea sería normal, pero no y de hecho le gustaba a los alumnos que hiciera cosas hasta entonces que los otros maestros no habían hecho, entonces bailábamos, cantábamos.

M: ¿Y cómo preparabas tu clase?, porque no tenías ningún curso de metodología.

Mo: En el sistema H te decían qué dar cada día de la semana, cada curso, eran cursos de 40 horas, la primera hora veías el libro, que le llamaban la biblia, si yo no sabía del tema me acercaba con alguien más, porque yo no conocía la gramática, yo hablaba inglés como hablaba español, no tenía la menor idea, entonces empecé a ver ah esto se dice así por esto y por esto, y así empecé a aprender, no me acuerdo si me hacían preguntas, porque ahora soy muy honesto y digo, si me preguntan algo y no sé pues se los digo, antes como que me intimidaba, sí que la gente supiera que no se, para mí era no se, pero ahora entiendo que es muy humano.

M: A mí me pasaba lo mismo y decía cada tontería. Una vez me preguntaron cómo se decía lunar y les dije lunar, risas”, y claro que nunca se me olvidó después que se dice *mole*, “risas”.

Mo: Sí, sí, y luego uno decía ay ojalá que no se den cuenta, y creo que los alumnos aprecian eso, claro que no puedes decir no sé no sé, constantemente, no tengo

estadística pero una o dos veces por semestre está bien, de hecho hacía cosas muy muy, mira dos cosas de las que me acuerdo, una vez tenía unos alumnos, el curso duraba dos meses, entonces al final llegaba el director y los invitaba para que siguieran estudiando, era la iniciativa privada, eh, dejaba unas tarjetitas y el maestro tenía que poner pasaba o no pasaba, no ponías calificación y te daban un descuento si te inscribías pronto, pues obviamente era el negocio y una vez en un curso que estaba dando tenía varios amigos y entonces les dije: ustedes ya saben ¿no? Y entonces llega el director, da su discurso se sale y les digo: ya saben muchachos cómo es para pasar y entonces dos de mis amigos me dan dinero, fue muy chistoso porque los más chicos se acercaron conmigo y me decían sabes qué Memo no traigo ¿puedo darle mañana? Y las señoras: jamás pensé que fuera a hacer esto, se veía tan decente, "risas", no pues ya no pude aguantar la risa, no saben que discúlpenme fue una broma, una muy mala broma.

M: ah, pero ellos no sabían que eran tus amigos

Mo: No, no sabían, porque yo a todos los trataba igual, les ponía nombres en inglés: Jorge-George, Carlos-Charlie y tenía un ingeniero que se llamaba Austreberto, y era un señor ya grande y pues yo creo que se sentía excluido y un día al final de clase se acerca conmigo y me dice: "Memo en inglés Austreberto se dice Austrebert", risas, yo jamás había escuchado Austreberto en español, menos en inglés, pero a partir de ahí, le empecé a decir Austrebert al señor Austreberto. Risas. Ah y la otra es que yo estudiaba arquitectura y era mucho desvele, yo daba clases de 4 a 9 de la noche en H H y había un salón que a las 4 de la tarde el sol le pegaba riquísimo, entonces les empecé a decir a mis alumnos: "les voy a enseñar cómo soñar en inglés", ellos me dicen ¿en serio?", sí cerramos las cortinas, le pusimos seguro a la puerta les dije "pongan la alarma" y todos nos quedamos dormidos jajaja. Y pues todos los chavos fascinados, como una o dos veces me tocaron alumnos más grandes, pero agarraron la onda, no lo hacía muy seguido, pero sí lo hice varias veces, jajaja.

M. Es bonito dar clases en ese tipo de escuelas, ¿no?

Mo. Sí, la verdad me fui adaptando y la gente me entrenó bien.

M. ¿Y cómo era tu relación con los otros maestros, eras tú el más chico?

Mo. No, había otros de mi edad, entonces eso también facilitó las cosas porque éramos varios los que no sabíamos, sí yo creo que hubiera sido muy intimidante si yo hubiera sido el único que no sabía, entonces hubiera pretendido hacer lo que todos hacían, pero como éramos varios que estábamos entrando entonces primero les preguntaba a ellos y luego a los que con el tiempo les fui agarrando más confianza, había un señor que era muy muy serio y se enojaba mucho conmigo, sabía mucho, era el que más sabía, se llamaba Fernando y pues yo sabía que si llegaba el momento en que no sabía yo podía ir con Fernando a preguntarle, no le gustaban mis bromas, no le gustaba yo cómo daba mis clases, porque él en todas las clases con saco y corbata o sea muy muy formal el señor, debió haber tenido yo creo unos 60 años cuando yo tenía 20, pero bueno.

M. Y desde qué empezaste, ¿nunca has dejado de dar clases de inglés?

Mo. Sí cuando me fui de México, casi siempre que he dejado de dar clases hay alguien que me pide que le de clases, pero ha sido muy de cuates y es más bien como para resolver dudas, yo salí de México en el 96 y regresé a México en el 2011.

M. Fue cuando entraste a trabajar aquí.

Mo. Sí exactamente, regresé porque mi papá estaba enfermo y necesitaba trabajo y empecé a buscar, dejé de trabajar en el H H porque pidieron a los maestros, bueno no se los pidieron, obligaron a los maestros a no usar jeans, no usar tenis y a usar corbata

así que esa tarde renuncié al H. Para mí era inimaginable usar ese tipo de atuendo, ahora uso corbata de vez en cuando pero aquí nunca la uso.

M. ¿Y cómo llegaste a la Fac?

Mo. Empecé a trabajar en el CELe y muchos de mis amigos del CELe ya no estaban allá, se habían venido a trabajar a la Fac y me hablaron y me preguntaron si me interesaba porque necesitaban un maestro y dije voy a ver y sí me vine para acá y empecé a trabajar y cada semestre desde entonces he estado trabajando aquí.

M. ¿Y notaste alguna diferencia con dar clases aquí y en los otros lugares donde habías estado?

Mo. Sí es diferente, la gente, uno entiende porque las clases son obligatorias y la gente lo que quiere es aprender la lengua y cuando es obligatorio como que las cosas ya son diferentes otros alumnos lo que intentan es mantener un promedio y muchas veces saben que peleándole aunque no tengan la razón lo van a ganar, así que esa parte a veces es complicada, sí es, creo, menos agradable la clase por esa obligatoriedad, los grupos son numerosos, y también eso cuenta y creo que la otra cosa que creo que afecta es que por ejemplo en el CELe se ven una hora al día y son cuates y si no son cuates ni se pelan, pero aquí si no son cuates sí se hace muy evidente en los salones y como es más de una hora y es de hecho toda la carrera algunas actividades son difíciles y te dicen: "yo con este no voy a trabajar", hay ciertas diferencias, pero bueno son jóvenes.

M. A ver creo que me adelanté, estabas en H, después en CELe, ¿o cómo fue?

Mo. Sí cuando nos pidieron que nos vistiéramos bien, ah y que las maestras no lleven minifalda jajaja, eso no me afectaba, pero había maestras muy guapas, jajaja, renuncié y casualmente iba a ir a Estados Unidos a una boda y dije ay pues me da tiempo de mochilear y regresé y vi las cuentas y dije tengo que pagar las cuentas de todo lo que me gasté y casualmente una maestra iba a tener un bebé en otra escuela privada, y me dijeron si quería trabajar y yo lo hice más por dinero que por gusto, sí porque trabajar con chicos de secundaria es muy muy difícil, grupos muy grandes, niños muy consentidos, muchos de ellos, algunos de ellos con problemas de adicción y cosas así y pues fue difícil, terminó el año y en ese momento hice mi solicitud en el CELe y si fue un gran cambio, al principio fue muy parecido al H, muy relajado y encontré muchos amigos, también contemporáneos y que también estaban muy locos, G G, él y yo por ejemplo nos quitábamos la playera los viernes y bailábamos enfrente de los alumnos jajaja y cantábamos y a los alumnos les gustaba mucho, se ponían a bailar con nosotros y como los salones eran muy grandes y todavía no había tanta demanda él llevaba sus alumnos a mi salón y hacíamos una pachanga y les poníamos canciones siempre de Meat Loaf, les poníamos vocabulario y la gente cantaba y él y yo divertidísimo, mucha gente se acuerda que nos disfrazábamos de musulmanes y así, pero fue ese momento en que te encuentras a alguien y están en la misma sintonía y fueron cosas muy chistosas.

M. Creo que debería ir a entrevistar a G jajaja

Mo. Sí pues era él, R, M, A, H y fue en el curso del COTE que conecté con G y a A y R los conozco desde niños, entonces pues era fabuloso, celebrábamos cumpleaños tres veces por semestre para no tener clases y cosas así jajaja

M. ¡Qué bárbaros! Y qué chistoso todos ellos han sido mis maestros, menos tú, ah Hugo tampoco. ¿Y tu manera de dar clases evolucionó?

Mo. Pues sí, es desafortunado decirlo, pero es difícil seguir con ese "edge", como que quitarme la camiseta ahorita ya no jajaja, aunque todavía aliento a mis alumnos a que se vistan como hippies pero yo ya no, sí como que pierdes eso, a mí me da un poco más

de vergüenza hacer cosas, además ya tengo 51 años y ya no eres la misma persona de 25 años que hace desmanes a un señor con canas, por otro lado he ganado esta confianza que conozco más lo que estoy haciendo y tengo mucho más confianza en decir lo que estoy diciendo, puedo tener la honestidad de decir sabes qué esto no lo sé después te digo y le puedo preguntar a alguien más, también creo que los métodos se han vuelto un poco más rígidos, en el CELe y aquí también pues tienes que cubrir el material en poco tiempo y no te da espacio para hacer mucho extra, entonces vas rapidito y dices ay no me va a dar tiempo de terminar ¿no? Pero trato de hacerlo variado, agarras callo, sabes qué le gusta mucho más a los alumnos, sabes leer a las personas, a los grupos y dices estos ya se están aburriendo, hay que cambiar, hay que variar y hay grupos que no los complaces con nada.

M. ¿Y alguna vez te has sentido cuestionado por ser de otra área y dar clases de inglés?

Mo. Entrar a la Facultad ha sido extraño porque en las otras escuelas donde estuve ves a los mismos maestros, no conoces a todos pero ves siempre a los mismos maestros, por ejemplo ahorita vengo del CELe y estuve hablando con el maestro P, S, con el maestro Py entonces haces como que un grupo y aquí es mucho más móvil, por ejemplo el lunes vienes y te encuentras a J y tenía como seis meses de no verlo, entonces ha sido como un poco más, es decir a la gente que conoces pues sí la conoces pero es difícil crear nuevos espacios y la gente de Toluca somos así, somos como raros, este es mi grupo y es difícil.

M. Sí, es cierto

Mo. Si no sabes los chistes no entras, como tu chiste local.

M. Entonces ¿te fue difícil?

Mo. Un poco, no mucho quizás por mi personalidad, por ejemplo, hay maestros que no se me los nombres, soy malísimo con los nombres.

M. Y el Departamento ¿te ayudó en algo?

Mo. Mmmm pregunta difícil. Bueno, creo que el Departamento, eh, (largo silencio)

M. Por ejemplo, ¿ibas a juntas?

Mo. Al principio sí cuando trabajaba en las mañanas, pero ahora vivo en Pilares y está muy lejos, a veces sí entro a juntas, trato de por lo menos venir a una reunión por semestre cuando recibo invitación, también es eso, creo que hay como una falta de comunicación y como das varias materias pues estás en una Departamento o en otra, y esto hace más fácil que evadas tu responsabilidad en la Departamento y me he encontrado de dos tipos, hay unas que, bueno, por el modo de ser de las personas se vuelve como muy ameno para platicar y hay otras que se vuelven un poco pretensiosas como yo he estudiado más, yo sé más, creo que depende, yo trato de no hablar porque pues al final, y creo que ahí está un poco mi trauma, porque desconozco algunos términos académicos, no, no académicos, más bien pedagógicos porque uno conoce y sabe dar clases tienes práctica, pero no, vamos de lingüística no tengo mucha experiencia y pues obvio no digo nada, y también el sentirte nuevo en un ambiente, entonces trato de no participar, pero este sí he notado esto hay algunas Departamentos son muy agradables como más personal que hay cierto interés en sacar un producto y en otras pues es sólo decir yo sé, yo lo hago y por mi está bien si alguien va a tomar la responsabilidad, pues yo no hago nada, no se mucho de eso de estar luchando por poder, así que si me dicen que puedo contribuir pues está bien.

M. Y después de arquitectura, ¿estudiaste un posgrado?

Mo. Sí estoy en medio del doctorado en Teología, estudié en Orlando, yo ya había estudiado griego y Hebreo entonces está muy relacionado aunque te da una perspectiva diferente. La maestría fue muy muy padre, el ambiente está muy relajado, vas en shorts en huaraches, entonces llegas y andas descalzo, muy muy padre. Nada más tener cuidado con los cocodrilos jajaja. Una vez yo salí descalzo a la calle porque en mi casa pues andaba muy a gusto y me encuentro a uno de mis maestros y me dice: "oye Moses, si no te es molesto el fin de semana mi esposa y yo te podemos acompañar a comprarte un par de zapatos" jajaja y ya le dije no sí tengo zapatos lo que pasa es que ando muy a gusto sin zapatos. Si si si, o sea soy de México pero no estoy tan fregado, aunque sea unos huaraches de San Mateo sí tengo jajaja Cuando nos casamos estábamos buscando departamento y ya sabes pues allá son pantanos y casi todos los departamentos tienen un laguito o una isleta, y entonces en un departamento había una isla y había un cocodrilo y yo pensé que era una estatua y yo le pregunto al que nos estaba enseñando el departamento y esa escultura y me dice no es de a de veras y es que el reglamento de la fauna silvestre dice que mientras no midan, no me acuerdo si 3 o 4 pies, no pueden venir por ellos digo cuando crecen los reportas pero pues también muerden.

M. Y volviendo a la Fac. ¿tú le dices a los alumnos tu background?

Mo. Sí, yo al principio del semestre les doy una presentación, les digo estoy estudiando teología, quiero ser pastor y sí genera algunos comentarios, pero también les platico otras cosas, por ejemplo mi esposa y yo hicimos un viaje en bicicleta de California a Guatemala y entonces para que vean que por una parte si está la parte académica pero por otro lado está la parte más lúdica, pero también lo hago para que salgan, es decir que se tomen un tiempo porque a lo mejor están en mi caso que estudian algo y se dedican a otra cosa y está bien. Sí les digo, si se van de reven cada fin de semana pues vayan uno sí y al otro viajen de mochilazo porque viajar te abre un panorama completamente diferente. Por ejemplo, siempre les hablo de un grupo de ciclistas que existen en el mundo y los contactas y te puedes quedar en sus casas, entonces conoces un montón de gente súper interesante, por ejemplo, hemos tenido a una pareja que ella es canadiense, él es francés y le están dando la vuelta al mundo, con una niña de dos años.

M. Y ¿tú qué respondes cuando alguien te pregunta, tú qué haces?

Mo. (largo silencio) pues depende hay gente con la que sientes química inmediatamente y yo digo viajero/mochilero.

M. Pero, what do you do for a living?

Mo. Generalmente respondo: doy clases de inglés, como te dije estoy preparándome para ser pastor, pero todavía no soy pastor entonces como que me siento mal de decir algo que no soy, pero sí me crea como cierta angustia existencial: ¿qué eres? Porque es difícil a veces explicarle a la gente, la gente está acostumbrada a un modelo, esto estudias y luego trabajas en esto relacionado, para siempre y no, nos dimos cuenta cuando nos mudamos a Toluca en la aduana, pues ella de Estados Unidos, nuestros hijos argentinos, y yo mexicano, y me preguntaban "dirección de residencia" pero no teníamos casa aquí, no teníamos casa allá, entonces no somos de ningún lugar y a la gente le cuesta trabajo entender eso. Pero ya me desvié mucho

M. No, no, no. Está muy interesante, pero ¿te arrepientes de haber estudiado arquitectura?

Mo. No, bueno si hubiera tenido dinero, habría estudiado Administración, pero por ejemplo mi viaje a Centroamérica surgió por lo de mi carrera, también tuve otra beca por lo mismo en Estados Unidos, entonces como te digo disfruto mucho los espacios veo cosas y pienso uy esto tiene potencial, se puede hacer esto y lo otro, la puerta debía

estar más acá y soy un poco crítico en ese sentido.

M. Pues es natural yo creo. ¿ y si alguien te dijera y tú qué haces aquí en lenguas si eres arquitecto con maestría en Teología? ¿Qué le dirías?

Mo. Jajaja, sin golpes, lo primero sería decir qué te importa jajaja, no en serio, por ejemplo un concepto con el que yo lucho mucho porque lo entiendan los alumnos es career, que no es lo que estás estudiando si no es lo que haces y en este caso esta es mi carrera (career) y por un lado la disfruto, que para mi es esencial, la mayor parte del tiempo que cuando hay que calificar exámenes no la disfruto y creo que la experiencia que he tenido pues enriquece y justifica que esté aquí, tengo COTE y tengo Trinity nivel 12, entonces tengo experiencias de vida, el haber vivido en diferentes partes del mundo creo que te da una posibilidad de compartir algo que específicamente en esta Facultad es necesario porque la mayoría de los chavos no han salido, entonces cuando yo les pregunto "¿han salido?" Me dicen: "sí, vengo de Valle de Bravo", y ese es su concepto de salir, y por ejemplo este mes me contactó un alumno que me describió y me dice" estoy en Cancún, tomé tu desafío y me vine a vivir acá y ahora se quiere ir a Estados Unidos y a mí eso me da mucho gusto.

M. Muchas gracias Moses

Moses' transcription

M: Thank you for the interview, Moses. I would like to start this talk by asking you about your studies at the University. What degree did you study?

Mo: I studied here at this University the degree in Architecture.

M: And did you always want to study this?

Mo: No, honestly, I have come to the conclusion that when I was 18 and I had to choose what I was supposed to do for the rest of my life, well I had no idea. I love architecture, I love observing the buildings and constructions. Honestly, I had no idea, I tossed a coin because I didn't know what I wanted. I always tell my students, my young students that I am not going to get mature, but they have to take this seriously and see all the possibilities, but anyway in the end I think it was the correct decision, because for example I knew Medicine was not for me.

M: And did you enjoy your studies at the University?

Mo: Yes, a lot. I love art in general, I like the spaces. My wife keeps telling me that when I get home, I'm always making suggestions: look why don't you move this here or if you put this chair over there, it is natural, I like it, I really do.

M: And have you ever worked in anything related to your degree?

Mo: Yes, yes, I have been doing some projects here and I also worked in an ONG similar to H, well its name is S Now, or S for Life. This ONG makes houses for people who lose their home due to natural disasters or in war zones. I went to Central America for a couple of years, after that I went to Buenos Aires to work with H in a project to prevent accidents that had to do with housing construction.

M: And how did English start to be part of your life?

Mo: I always tell people that it was one of those things for which you don't have an explanation, I liked the language, but I didn't know why. When I was a kid, I remember I did my own dictionary Spanish-English, I don't even know why. My theory was, so please notice how little I was, that one letter of a language needs to be substituted for another one, for example: perro-dog, so the p was dropped and I added d, obviously I

always had problems because the words were longer or shorter, in fact, I also thought the national anthems are the same around the world, and they had been translated, jajajaja. I had no idea I was in first grade but that was what I thought, what I can tell you is that I liked the languages since I was a kid. When I graduated from high school, I had the opportunity to go in an interchange programme, I went to a little town near NY. The experience was interesting, but I was not ready for it. It was, for me, a cultural shock because I had travelled around Mexico, but I had never travelled alone, without my family. It was the first time I travelled all alone, I had the most stupid idea that once I landed in the USA, I just had to start speaking English jajajaja and no jajajaja, well it was drama because my teachers in secondary and high school, poor of them, had no idea about English. I had had certain experience with English because I used to receive in an interchange programme kid from the USA, but they were in Mexico to learn Spanish not to practise English. Well, after that experience in NY, I returned to Mexico and started studying Engineering, but I soon realised that it was not for me and moved to Architecture, but I had a free term before starting university, there were some strikes and political things at the University and as I was ashamed of doing nothing for six months, one day I found an ad in the newspaper in which they were looking for an English language teacher in H H, and I said, ok let's go and see what happens. I was only 19, I went for an interview, it was OK, and they offered me some basic courses, I received some training and I can tell you I was really happy. That's how I started teaching English and I really enjoyed it. When you learn a language because you are really interested, it becomes really easy for the teacher, so you don't have to be fighting all the time with the student and imagine the principal in Architecture was my student jajajaja, it was a weird relationship, I respected this man but also you're teaching him, it was really cool, well, I used to be nervous all the time, I remember that I never put my hand on the board because the students could have noticed that I was sweating jajajaja.

M: Tell me about your first lessons

Mo: Well, I had already tried to teach English before, the idea was to teach in a company to engineers, it was absolutely intimidating, but I never taught, because the engineers in C, I don't know if still exists, well they arrived to class, they were like 6 or 7, well the classroom was the room of "multiple uses" and we had like 3 or 4 pin-pong tables and well we played instead of having the class, jajajaja. On the other hand, in H H I was always super nervous. I already told you I didn't use the board because I didn't want my students to notice that I was sweating and probably shaking as well, jajajaja. I remember I felt more comfortable with young people but with older people I got nervous, I was immature, I was only 19 and I made mistakes but at that age you're not really conscious of what you're doing, and I can tell you that my students enjoyed the class because with me they danced, they sang, and they had fun.

M: And how did you prepare for your lessons?

Mo: Well, in the system of H H, they tell you what to teach every week, every course, I remember we had courses which lasted 40 hours, in the first hour you had to cover the topics from the book, we used to call it The Bible and if I had any doubt I always asked someone else because I had no idea about English grammar, I spoke English the same way I spoke Spanish, I had the faintest idea about grammar, but little by little I started to learn the way some structures are constructed and that's how I started to learn, I don't remember if the students asked about their doubts because for example nowadays I'm really honest and I tell students look I don't know, I'll try to find out but when I started teaching it was really intimidating to say look I don't know but now I understand that you're human and you don't have all the answers, I used to think: oops I hope they don't realise I don't know.

M: And how was your relationship with the older teachers? Were you the youngest?

Mo: No, I wasn't the youngest. Other teachers were also really young, that made things easier because I wasn't the only one who had no idea. Can you imagine if I had been the only one? So, I always went with them first and they helped me but if they didn't know either, I approached a teacher who was older, and I remember he used to tell me off all the time. This teacher was really serious, and he knew all the stuff, his name was Fernando and I knew that sometimes he was the only one who could solve my doubt, but he didn't like that I played jokes on students and he disliked the way I taught, I remember he wore a suit and a tie for all the lessons, he was very formal, he was 60 and I was 20 so you can realise how different we were.

M: And have you kept active teaching English all these years?

Mo: No, I have been abroad for some years, and I had stopped teaching English, sometimes some friend had asked for a private lesson but that was it. I left Mexico in 1996 and returned in 2011.

M: Is that when you started teaching here in the Faculty?

Mo: Yes, exactly. I came back because my father was ill, and I needed a job. I started to look for a job, I didn't go to H H because I remember the reason I left was because they started to ask the teachers to wear a tie. For me it was unimaginable to wear those kinds of clothes, even now I rarely wear a tie.

M: And how did you start teaching here?

Mo: I started to work for CELe and many of my friends were teaching at the Faculty and they called me and asked if I was interested in working here because they needed a teacher and since then I have been working here. And I like it, the people are different. You notice that the students need the language and they come to classes and are interested in them. However, it is sometimes difficult because they want good grades because they want to have a good average and sometimes, they insist on it and you know they are not right and it can become a problem, but well, it is part of their development.

M: OK, but I think we missed part of your teaching. What happened when you left H H?

Mo: Ah, ok, when they asked to dress up jajaja and the female teachers couldn't wear a mini-skirt jajaja well that didn't affect me but there were pretty teachers jajaja, well I quitted and as a coincidence I was getting ready to attend a wedding in the USA and I took advantage of being there and stayed a little bit longer and went backpacking. When I returned to Mexico, I realised I had to pay all my debts and I remember there was this teacher who was pregnant, she was working in a private school and they asked me if I wanted to work there. I did it for the money because to work with secondary kinds and in large groups is really hard, I didn't like the experience, but it was only a year. After that, I asked for a vacancy in CELe and the change was huge. At the beginning it was similar to H, very relaxed. I found many friends who are really crazy just like me: G G was one of them. For example, he and I used to take off our shirts on Fridays and used to dance in front of the students jajaja and sang songs and the students really enjoyed it. I remember we put together both groups and organised a party and used to play Meat Loaf songs, we worked with vocabulary and the students sang, it was super fun. Many people remember that we used to wear costumes and things like that, but those are things that happen when you find a person you have good empathy with, and we had lots of fun Jalaja.

M: I think I should interview G Jalaja

Mo: Yes, it was me, R, M, A, H and it was in the COTE course that I knew G and I have known A and R since we were kids, well it was fabulous, we used to celebrate our birthdays three times per week so we didn't have classes and things like that jajajaja.

M: That's funny, I think all of them were my teachers, well neither you nor Albert. Ok, how has your teaching evolved since then?

Mo: Well, it has obviously evolved, it is unfortunate, but you cannot continue with that "edge" like taking off my shirt Jalaja, though I still encourage my students to dress like hippies but not myself, as you grow older you miss that, not I feel more embarrassed of doing stuff that I did 30 years ago, I'm 51 now and I'm not the same person now I have grey hair. On the other hand, I have gained the confidence that I lacked when I started teaching English, now I know what I'm talking about. I also

think the methods are now more rigid, now you have to cover a lot of material in a short time and that causes you don't have much extra time to do other activities in the classroom, you go really fast so that you can finish with the programme. However, with the experience you start by saying this works, this doesn't, this is more difficult so let's devote more time and so on, I try to vary the activities and exercises in my classes, and I notice when my students enjoy the class.

M: Have you ever been criticised for not having studied languages?

Mo: Mmmm, the faculty has been a strange experience because in the other schools where I have been I always see the same teachers, for example, now I have just finished my classes in CELe and I have been talking to the teachers: P, S, P, so it is always the same group and here people come and go easily and there are always new teachers, so it has been more difficult to have a group to join in and well, people from here are like this, we are closed. It is like if you don't know the local joke, you don't get in.

M: It was difficult then?

Mo: Mmmm, a little, but it is also my personality, for example I don't know the names of many teachers, I'm terrible at learning names.

M: And did the English Department help you with the process?

Mo: Mmmm, the Department, well, the Department (long silence)

M: For example, did you attend the meetings?

Mo: Yes, at the beginning when I worked in the mornings, now it's difficult because I live far from the Faculty, I sometimes attend the meetings. I try to be present at least once every semester. Now, there's also a lack of communication because I don't receive the invitations all the time and sometimes, I belong to different Departments, and that makes things even more difficult. I have seen two types of Departments: the ones that work well and the others that don't work. In some Departments it is really relaxed, and you can share and in others, well, I find them quite pretentious, like you know, everybody wants to demonstrate that they know more because they have studied harder or they have more qualifications than the rest, I think it depends on the area of knowledge. I always try not to speak because in the end I think that is my trauma because I don't know many methodological aspects or the jargon in academic terms, not academic, pedagogic terms because I know how to teach and I have the practice and the experience, but obviously, I don't have much knowledge of linguistics and that's why I try not to participate, but I have found that, some Departments are fun and it's nice to

attend the meetings while others are just a place to exercise power, and as I'm not interested well, I don't say much.

M: And did you study a masters after Architecture?

Mo: Yes, I'm studying for a doctorate in Theology. I studied in Orlando first, I had studied Greek and Hebrew before and that helped me a lot. My master's was really great, the atmosphere in Orlando is really relaxed, I used to wear shorts and sandals all the time or barefoot, Jalaja, really cool. You just have to be careful with the crocodiles, once I left my house barefoot because I felt really comfortable like that and I found one of my teachers who told me: "Hey Moses if it's OK with you, my wife and I would like to buy you a pair of shoes?" Jalaja, and I told him: look I do have shoes but I feel more comfortable like this, yes, yes, I'm from Mexico but I'm not that poor, Jalaja.

M: And talking about your classes in the Faculty of languages. Do you tell your students about your background as an architect?

Mo: Yes, at the beginning of the semester, I always tell them that I'm studying Theology because I would like to be a pastor and I always have some comments, but I also tell my students about my trips to Central America by bicycle. I also tell them about the importance of having some relaxed times, that they should have some time off before working or studying something else, because maybe some of them chose this degree for the wrong reasons.

M: And what do you answer when someone asks you about your profession?

Mo: (long silence), well, it depends on who asks, if I feel this confidence I say that I'm a backpacker.

M: But if the question is: What do you do for a living?

Mo: I usually answer that I teach English, as I mentioned before I would like to be a pastor, but I'm not there yet. I don't know, this question poses me in an existential crisis because who am I? Wow, it's not easy. People are used to these models like first you study, then you work in something related to what you studied.

M: Do you regret having studied architecture?

Mo: Not at all, well If I had had the money, I would have chosen Administration but I don't really regret it, because thanks to my degree I have travelled a lot, I have had different grants and scholarships abroad. It is like when students get confused with the word "career" and I always tell my students that what I do is my career, it doesn't matter that I had studied something that is not related because I really enjoy what I do, and for me that is essential, well, I don't enjoy marking exams and these kinds of things. On the other hand, I think my experience and my qualifications justify the fact that I'm working here. Particularly in this Faculty, my experience can help students because many of them have never travelled abroad and I always encourage them to travel, to know new people, to expand their horizons.

M: Thank you Moses.

Gina's transcript

M. Me gustaría empezar con algunas preguntas de tus estudios universitarios. ¿Qué estudiaste en la universidad?

G. Yo estudié la carrera de Ingeniero Agrónomo industrial en la Facultad de Ciencias Agrícolas de la UAEM.

M. ¿Y siempre quisiste estudiar eso?

G. Siempre quise estudiar algo en Ciencias Naturales, las Ciencias Naturales era lo que me llamaba la atención y cuando yo iba a decidir mi carrera me llamaba la atención la Biología y la Agronomía.

M. ¿Y disfrutaste tus estudios universitarios?

G. Sí, sí la verdad es que mi carrera me gustó mucho y de hecho ya estando pues en el área de acá de las lenguas una vez que hicimos un ejercicio de revisar planes de estudio de todas las carreras porque venía todo lo del cambio curricular a la flexibilización y yo revisé los planes curriculares de ciencias agrícolas y los planes curriculares por ejemplo de aquí de lenguas y me seguían llamando mucho la atención los planes de allá, o sea, mi carrera me gustó mucho, yo sí la disfruté.

M. ¿Y qué papel ha jugado el inglés, en qué momento empezaste a estudiar inglés y después como se dio ese salto a la docencia?

G. Bueno, el inglés lo empecé a estudiar pues desde niña, mucho por la influencia de mi mamá, entonces ella desde niñas formaba grupitos para darnos clase en la casa invitaba a los vecinos, amiguitos y entonces nos empezaba a dar clases de inglés desde entonces. Y es por la influencia familiar pues siempre estuve en contacto con el inglés y me gustó y todo. Formalmente lo empecé a estudiar al entrar al CELE, en cuanto tuve la edad para que el CELE nos admitiera ya empecé a ir ahí a CELE a estudiar inglés. Fue en la prepa, o poco antes de entrar a la prepa, entonces qué como a los 15 o 16 años, yo creo que fue a los 16 años fue cuando yo entré a estudiar inglés en el CELE y de ahí me seguí, me seguí, ¿no?, este, entonces bueno pues aquí sigue la parte de que yo me sigo preparando en inglés en el CELE, mi mamá después se hace directora de CELE y en ese entonces pues cuando yo terminé la prepa no existía esta licenciatura para formar, todavía mi mamá no la fundaba, no existía la carrera y yo tenía ya que elegir mi carrera y como te comenté hace ratito pues a mí me llamaban las ciencias naturales y fue cuando me decidí entre biología o química, la química también me gustaba mucho y agronomía, decidí irme a agronomía. Entonces, este, entro allá, en septiembre del 89 y para enero del 90, se da la oportunidad de que yo ya entre como maestra de inglés en el CELE, entonces yo apenas iba en mi primer semestre de licenciatura, pero yo ya empecé a trabajar como maestra de inglés, porque en ese entonces pues como no había una carrera, pues no se te pedía un título podíamos empezar a ejercer ya teniendo una certificación de Cambridge, entonces teniendo por lo menos un nivel first podíamos empezar a dar clases. Entonces antes de que empezara yo a dar clases cuando se vio que ya íbamos a poder entrar y todo, que yo ya iba a tener mi certificado, la universidad daba cinco cursos de formación docente, entonces en el semestre anterior y en el inter del semestre anterior yo ya empecé a tomar esos cinco cursos de formación docente, entonces por la parte de la didáctica, de la docencia, esa fue la capacitación y por el área de inglés pues tener la certificación, entonces para enero del 90, yo ya entré a la universidad como maestra de inglés de asignatura en el CELE, entonces a la par yo llevaba yo mi carrera de ingeniero agrónomo industrial con que ya empecé con la docencia, entonces yo sigo y sigo así siendo maestra de asignatura y un poco más adelante se me dio la oportunidad también de entrar de asignatura, bueno un poquito más a los tres años, yo ya llevaba cursando

tres años de mi carrera de ingeniero agrónomo cuando mi mamá funda la licenciatura en lengua inglesa, entonces yo en ese momento lo pensé ¿no?, me sigo en mi carrera o me regreso y me voy a estudiar lengua inglesa y la verdad no lo pensé mucho porque mi carrera me gustaba mucho y dije ya son tres años de mi vida para regresarme a ser la primera generación de otra carrera y me gustaba mucho mi carrera, entonces no dejé mi carrera y me seguí, me seguí y aparte inició la licenciatura, y no fue inmediatamente, fue como en el siguiente año que entro y también como maestra de asignatura a la licenciatura en lengua inglesa, igual porque todavía no había egresados entonces no se nos exigía un título para poder enseñar inglés, entonces yo les empecé a dar de asignatura como a la cuarta generación ya de la licenciatura en lengua inglesa yo ya les daba inglés, y luego seguí avanzando en mi carrera de ingeniero agrónomo cuando estaba como en octavo semestre, cambia el plan de estudios allá, meten el inglés curricular y me piden dar clases también ahí, siendo alumna, entonces yo era alumna de agronomía y terminaba mis clases y me pasaba como maestra de inglés ahí mismo, entonces yo estaba haciendo mi carrera muy contenta y dando clases de asignatura en CELe, en la licenciatura en lengua inglesa y en agronomía. Entonces ahí estaba yo y este entonces me seguí a terminar mi carrera, y ya al terminar mi carrera yo ya tenía más grupos y todo y pues estaba así y estaba muy contenta en la docencia y entonces ahí llegó un momento crucial de poder decidir ¿ahora qué? Ya egresé me voy ya de lleno a trabajar como agrónoma o me dedico a la docencia, y tampoco lo pensé mucho, me dediqué a la docencia, porque una de las cosas que también influyó, aparte de que toda mi carrera me gustaba casi fue como en noveno semestre que llevamos una materia de control de calidad, me gustó mucho también esa materia y estuvimos haciendo visitas a distintas empresas porque mi rama era ingeniero agrónomo industrial, entonces nos dedicamos a visitar varias industrias y eso también me ayudó a decidir que, este, yo veía cómo estaban las condiciones del agrónomo industrial y sobre todo de una mujer, entonces eso también, yo veía que las jornadas laborales iban a ser muy pesadas, hubo una empresa inclusive que a la hora de que la visitamos y todo, este, al final hacíamos preguntas o algo, porque yo no veía mujeres entonces yo les pregunté y en una sí me dijeron: "no, aquí no contratamos mujeres", en otras empresas y fábricas decían: "sí pero en los laboratorios", las mujeres estaban encerradas en los laboratorios, no me desagradaba, pero tampoco era mi máximo, yo mi servicio social lo hice en el laboratorio de biotecnología vegetal, de ahí saqué mi tesis, en un laboratorio, entonces sabía también lo que era estar trabajando en un laboratorio, estar horas ahí también a lo mejor en la cámara de flujo laminar con esto y con lo otro, entonces como que sabía lo que era estar- el laboratorio de biotecnología vegetal tenía su invernadero- entonces sabía lo que era estar ahí encerrada y sabía lo que era estar en la práctica docente y estar con los alumnos y estar con una parte más social ¿no?, entonces al ver esas situaciones de que las mujeres, la mayoría eran así encerradas en los laboratorios o que de plano que te dijeran que no y ver la otra parte de la docencia dije me quedo con la docencia, me gustaba mucho, entonces por eso de ahí decidí, que aunque egresé y me gustó y todo y me titulé y demás, dejar esa parte de la agronomía y mejor dedicarme ya a la parte del inglés y de ahí me seguí a que tomé la decisión de mejor seguirme como maestra de inglés.

M. ¿Y recuerdas tus primeras clases?, ¿cómo fueron?

G. Sí, si recuerdo estaba muy nerviosa (risas), sí había tenido un poco de la capacitación y sí me hicieron ver muchas cosas, pero ya el enfrentarte por primera vez a un grupo (GLUP) ¿no?, muchos de esos alumnos, de mis primeros alumnos, algunos tenían mi misma edad, pero la mayoría pues eran más grandes entonces durante varios años la mayoría de mis alumnos fueron mayores que yo, entonces sí me veía chiquita, así como que "¿ya eres mi maestra? ¿no?, pero a la vez sirvió porque con muchos hicimos una muy bonita amistad, que a la fecha de repente nos encontramos y es bien bonito encuentro a alumnos de muchos y "ay cuando fuiste mi maestra", es más, en ese

entonces CELE ni siquiera tenía la capacidad de tener a todos los grupos ahí porque solo era el de Rafael M. Hidalgo, entonces recuerdo mis primeros grupos nos prestaron aulas de odontología, de enfermería llegué a dar en otros espacios entonces toda esa parte también era muy interesante el conocer otras instalaciones, pero sobre todo el trabajar con otros alumnos ¿no? Y aprender de ellos, entonces si estaba nerviosa, pues sí (risas), pero bueno poco a poco vas tomando experiencia, empiezas a observar, también después vino la capacitación del Consejo Británico, entonces también pude tomar el Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English, entonces como que ya me preparé más específicamente en docencia del inglés, entonces sí pues a empezar a hacer mis observaciones, recuerdo cuando eran mis observaciones con el COTE oh pues sí, sí me daban nervios, yo creo a la fecha si me dices te voy a ir a observar (risas) o en el concurso de oposición, no ya ya después de todos estos años de experiencia ya vamos controlando algo más, hay que tener confianza.

M. ¿Y cómo te has ido diversificando en otras áreas?

G. Por muchos años fue inglés, inglés, inglés y después en CELe según las necesidades fue asesor en centros de auto acceso, bueno en ese entonces no era el auto acceso, era el laboratorio de idiomas, entonces también llegaba yo a dar unas clases en el laboratorio de idiomas, pero principalmente era inglés, después, bueno retomando un poquito lo que te comentaba hace rato yo estaba de asignatura en CELe, en la licenciatura en lengua inglesa y en ciencias agrícolas, después se dio, cuando mi mamá estuvo de directora en CELe, luego se pasó a fundar la licenciatura y después dejó la licenciatura y se fue a fundar el CILC, el CILC durante como un año nada más era ella como directora y el subdirector académico y el administrativo para echar a andar todo el proyecto, cuando ya autorizan cuatro tiempos completos se me da la oportunidad de irme ahí de tiempo completo, entonces casi dejé todas mis asignaturas en un lado y el otro para concentrarme ahora en ese entonces era el Centro para Extranjeros, y me voy de tiempo completo para el Centro para Extranjeros, entonces estando ahí me empiezo a diversificar y me voy a enseñanza de español a no hispanohablantes que también fue una experiencia súper enriquecedora y para iniciar ahí de tiempo completo también nos mandaron a capacitar, entonces por parte del Centro para extranjeros nos mandaron al Centro para Extranjeros de la UNAM al CEPE de la UNAM, a tomar un Diplomado en enseñanza de español a no hispanohablantes, entonces en ese Diplomado pues tengo yo más herramientas de enseñanza de español entonces continuo con formación en docencia, pero ahora del español entonces fue muy bonito que fuéramos las maestras y que estuviéramos yendo a tomar nuestras clases presenciales a la UNAM, entonces tener la experiencia también de allá pues fue muy bonita, entonces ahí me empiezo a diversificar y entonces daba inglés y daba también español, entonces el trato con los extranjeros también y todo lo que aprendes de tu lengua y de tu cultura fue muy interesante, entonces sigo ahí y el CILC cambia de ser CEPE a ser CILC –Centro Internacional de Lengua y Cultura- cambia de instalaciones, primero estuvimos en Torre Académica, después estuvimos en Colón y ya después en el edificio que está ahí en CU, entonces ahí seguía yo con inglés, pero también con español para extranjeros, después llega en el momento que en el 2002, en el 2002 hay cambio de administración y la nueva persona que llega me dice: ¿sabes qué? Como que tu plaza no debe de estar aquí, es un centro y es mejor que tu plaza de tiempo completo se vaya a Facultad de Lenguas y es entonces cuando me vengo para acá y se hace una permuta de alguien que se va para allá y yo me vengo para acá porque era mejor para la administración y para la conveniencia de las administraciones ¿no?, y de ahí entonces pues fue otro cambio, pero yo súper contenta porque entonces ya vengo y entro como maestra de inglés también, mi plaza se cambió así, pero ahí me empiezo a diversificar porque las necesidades de la facultad eran otras, entonces ahí empiezo a dar por ejemplo inglés, pero a los de francés y ahí ves otras cosas, también empecé con otras materias como control de errores en inglés,

entonces no era enseñar lengua tal cual ya era empezar a ver otras cosas, también entrando luego, luego, me dan literatura en clase de lengua y yo no había llevado cosas de esas, entonces empieza a prepararte ya en otras áreas y casi todo el tiempo tenía una o dos de inglés, pero ya me empezaron a dar otro tipo de materias. Más adelante otro cambio fue cuando empecé en el área de investigación también por las necesidades de..., como que me empiezan a decir: "¿y si empiezas a dar seminario I?" y yo decía: "Pero yo nunca he dado de eso", pero pues yo estaba en las cargas administrativas de todo tiempo completo pues yo estaba a cargo del departamento de titulación, entonces sí se relacionaba cuestiones administrativas que yo veía con los contenidos que iban en el programa de investigación, entonces ahí fue un punto otra vez donde me empiezo a diversificar porque otra vez me empiezo a meter a las de investigación. Entonces me sigo, me sigo y me sigo con las de seminario de investigación y ahora ya he dado de todas, entonces me empiezo a inclinar por esas de investigación, también en la licenciatura en enseñanza del inglés me empiezan a pedir también para que dé a distancia y las que me dan también son de investigación: seminario de investigación, metodología de la investigación, entonces ahí empecé a cargarme hasta que llegué a un punto que en un semestre ya no me dieron de inglés y yo empecé a extrañar mucho mis materias de inglés, porque yo toda la vida había dado materias de inglés, pero las necesidades eran más de que yo diera investigación, en parte también llegó el momento en que entramos a la Maestría, entonces ya la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada en el curso 2005-2007, me gradúo y todo, y entonces de ahí ya me empiezan a pedir materias de lingüística como he dado fonética y fonología, análisis del discurso, ah también he dado de docencia incluso antes ya había dado historia de la metodología de la enseñanza, entonces he estado en varios Departamentos como la de docencia, de lingüística, pero ahora principalmente en la de Investigación y pues la de inglés.

M ¿Qué papel juega el Departamento de inglés en la Facultad de Lenguas y en la labor de los docentes?

G. Bueno, el Departamento es un buen punto de reunión entre los docentes que compartimos una misma área, en lo personal a mí me ha servido mucho también para seguir aprendiendo, porque aprendo mucho de mis colegas, este, entonces cuando tenemos uno por ejemplo en la de investigación, que va a ser el Foro, qué van a presentar, y salen algunos temas que yo digo bueno uno nunca deja de aprender ¿verdad?, pero los mismos temas de cómo construyen esto o cómo unos dan para construir el protocolo y cómo lo van haciendo, cómo unos se van más hacia cuestiones epistemológicas que otros y todo, entonces como que es un punto muy bonito donde convergemos, comentamos y seguimos construyendo y aprendiendo de todos, donde surgen también iniciativas de trabajo y ¿saben qué? que necesitamos un curso de esto, y entonces nosotros mismos detectar nuestras necesidades y decir ¿sabes qué? Hay que pedir un curso, pero antes de nosotros llevarlo a los alumnos, hemos detectado que nosotros necesitamos formarnos más en esto, también como que estandarizar y no que uno jale para un lado y el otro para el otro, no, somos un equipo y a ver unos tienen fortalezas y debilidades pero vamos a tratar todos ahí de verlo, entonces como que es enriquecedor ese trabajo en Departamento, pueden surgir proyectos, no sé, esto de los exámenes diagnóstico pues es mucho trabajo de Departamento, también eso nos hace fortalecer mucho los lazos entre unos y otros de decir ¿sabes qué? Esto no lo va a sacar solamente el presidente de la Departamento, o sea la Departamento de inglés, la Departamento de francés hace la aplicación de los exámenes, la Departamento de titulación hacemos los foros, eso no es labor nada más del presidente, si no está toda la Departamento trabajando por esa meta que es algo bueno por los alumnos pues no lo podemos sacar. Si uno como docente se margina al no asistir a reuniones de Departamento, pues te afectas a ti mismo, o sea si yo no voy, yo solito me margino, no sé de qué hablaron, no sé qué asunto trataron, yo mismo no me incorporo a las

actividades que hay, a participar y luego se refleja porque los mismos alumnos te dice: "hay maestra el maestro tal no hizo esto, o no nos dijo lo otro" y tú nada más te quedas pensando pues es que nunca viene a las reuniones de Departamento o sea si hubiera venido a la reunión de Departamento, se habría enterado, habría participado, se habría incluido y estaríamos más o menos con las mismas, bueno con las diferencias de cada persona, pero estaríamos con el mismo canal y tratando de llevar parejito el barco y no que de repente alguien, pues quien sabe en dónde está, o qué hace. Entonces yo creo que sí es una manera de no sentirse identificado, no ver qué puedes aprender de los demás y qué les puedes aportar a los demás, y pues sí puede llegar a afectar el trabajo de los demás al no existir una sincronización ahí.

M. ¿Y sobre todo para los nuevos maestros?

G. Sí, porque además siempre es rico que los nuevos, los medianitos y los de ya más experiencia todos compartamos y entonces si llegan y no tengo tiempo, o no quiero, a veces ni siquiera se dan la oportunidad de ver qué es eso del trabajo de Departamento, o sea no vienen, no sé si es flojera, falta de tiempo, falta de interés, falta de comunicación o algo y no vienen y no vienen.

M. Tú y yo compartimos el hecho de haber estudiado una carrera diferente a la de Docencia del inglés, ¿Alguna vez te has sentido diferente o señalada, por haber estudiado Agronomía y estar dando clases de inglés?

G. Yo creo que fue más al principio, al principio, más cuando llegué, a lo mejor cuando fui de asignatura no tanto, por lo mismo como no se pedía la licenciatura, las primeras generaciones estaban acostumbradas a tener maestros de todas las formaciones y no había tanto el porqué, ¿por qué? Me está dando este maestro, sí llegó a haber comentarios, sí o sea de plano decían: "¿por qué un agrónomo nos está dando clase? Entonces, así como que MMM, Sí, pero entonces fue más cuando regresé de tiempo completo, porque entonces sí ya tenían muchos maestros formados en el área y entonces cuando se enteraban de que era yo agrónoma entonces sí y algunos era en buen plan, pero otros era en tono despectivo: "Por qué una agrónoma me está dando clases de inglés? Una vez que de plano sí tuvo que ir la autoridad y decir: "ella está dando clases de inglés, sí es ingeniero agrónomo, pero tiene una formación en inglés y tiene una experiencia de tantos años, tiene formación como esto, como esto, como esto, como lo otro, para ver cuál era la otra parte que estaba respaldando que, aunque fuera yo agrónomo, yo era maestra, lógicamente en ciencias agrícolas esto no sucedió, ¿verdad?, ahí no hubo esos comentarios de ¿por qué?, al contrario, allá era un plus, porque allá sí les podía dar inglés para propósitos específicos y conocía yo tecnicismos y podía investigar más y cubrir las necesidades, entonces en ese ámbito de allá no fui cuestionada pero acá sí, ¿por qué un ingeniero agrónomo?, entonces sí llegó el momento de aclarar y decir oigan pues sí he estudiado y en cuanto a certificaciones puesto tengo esto, y en cuanto a docencia tengo esta formación y tengo tanta experiencia porque sí, sí llego a haber comentario de ¿por qué? Y no recuerdo en qué materia inclusive hasta los mandaban de repente a entrevistarnos, no sé si de lingüística o de algo, había un proyectito, y mandaban a entrevistarnos como para ver bueno ya nos preguntaban de qué éramos y porqué ya después y ¿cuál es su línea de investigación y de publicaciones y de esto? Pero sí había algo ahí, como de que mandaban a entrevistar a tal, y a tal y a tal, espero que no haya sido por señalarnos, porque no sé qué hacían después con esa información, pero bueno, después poco a poco ya se fue quitando eso y ya no se fijaban tanto en mi puerta o en que yo firmaba en mis documentos como IAI o me estuvieran preguntando qué es eso, ya después como entré a la maestría en lingüística aplicada, entonces ya que como ahí se empezó, bueno primero un poco como que la experiencia lo fue poco a poco quitando, quitando, y ya después al entrar a la maestría en lingüística aplicada, entonces como que uno sí podía decir pues sí son agrónoma pero estoy

estudiando la maestría en lingüística y tengo esto y tengo esto, entonces de ahí empecé a disminuir eso, uno que ya en la Institución te conocen más y saben que sí eres maestro de inglés y la otra bueno pues ya ven tu formación de que ya tienes una maestría, de que tienes esto, entonces ahora sí, últimamente ya no, el tiempo como que va quitando algunas cosas y ahora ya es raro de que me cuestionen de que si soy agrónoma industrial y porqué doy clases de inglés.

M. ¿Cómo se puede uno legitimar?

G. No sé si sea tú mismo trabajo, yo siento que tarde o temprano todo cae por su propio peso, y si tú estás formado, si te sigues profesionalizando, no si no te quedas sí soy maestra de inglés y con tu trabajo demuestras que sabes inglés y que sabes enseñarlo, que no nada más a veces llegaba un nativo de la lengua y por ser extranjero ya era maestro de inglés pues no, porque los mismos alumnos se daban cuenta de que no bastaba tener el conocimiento de la lengua sino también se necesitaba saberlo enseñar, entonces tarde o temprano si tu empiezas a demostrar que tú sabes y que tienes esos dos conocimientos: la lengua y la parte de la pedagogía, pues entonces empiezas a mostrar y adedir pues a lo mejor, el papelito a veces tiene que decirlo pero también la práctica que diga que sí eres capaz de ser maestro de inglés.

M. ¿Y a ti te pasó que la gente no veía como algo profesional dar clases de inglés, lo veía como una afición?

G. (Risas) sí yo creo que sí, en muchas ocasiones sí se llegaba a mencionar como que sí efectivamente se tenía la idea de que nada más era un hobby, un pasatiempo nada más, un relleno de tus actividades, pero que no era realmente un trabajo, no era algo muy profesionalizado, entonces pues fue otra de las cosas que todos teníamos que demostrar de que sí es un trabajo y se requiere de muchas cosas, uno de los momentos que ay que se tenía que hacer a la sociedad entender era el momento de CELE y Facultad de Lenguas, bueno al principio Escuela de Lenguas, si a la fecha se sigue todavía sin entender la diferencia, en el momento que surgió era mucho más, es más como que al principio pues el Edificio era de CELE donde inició la Licenciatura, ya después hubo una separación física y ya, órale este edificio es de Lenguas y ahora Facultad, el otro es de CELE, pero para muchos fue y ¿cuál es la diferencia?, y para mucha gente era muy difícil entender que estudiabas una carrera, para tener una licenciatura, para ser licenciado en lengua inglesa o licenciado en lengua y cultura francesas, ahora licenciado en lenguas, porque no entendían que alguien tuviera que estudiar tanto para ser maestro de inglés y yo decía no pues es que es igual porque así como hay licenciados en letras, y hay ingenieros y hay químicos y hay de todas las carreras, se estudia una carrera igual de cinco años porque no solo vas a estudiar la lengua, en el CELE nada más vas a estudiar el curso de idioma como tal, pero no te van a enseñar todo lo demás complementario de la enseñanza, de la literatura, de la cultura, de todas las otras áreas de formación: la de investigación, ¿no? Todas las áreas que están en el currículum, entonces era el decir vas a igual a obtener un título, un título universitario en lengua inglesa que fue el primero, pero entonces para mucha gente era: "¿cómo es posible que invierta cinco años de su vida para ser maestro de inglés?", y entonces tú decías ARGH, o sea esa es la idea que tienen de un maestro de inglés que nada más tiene que ser así, pero no, para ser maestro de inglés, de francés o del idioma que sea necesitas más formación, entonces yo creo que es algo con lo que seguimos luchando, pero por lo menos ya se ve más la presencia de un licenciado a alguien que solo está así, pero ahora sí la Universidad y en muchos lados ya se exige el título para dar clases.

M ¿Y tú, cómo te identificas a ti misma?

G. Yo digo que soy maestra, ¿de qué?, les digo que soy maestra de inglés y de investigación, porque como ahora es el área en la que estoy mucho, me dicen "¿de qué?"

Soy maestra de inglés y de investigación, "¿qué haces?" Soy maestra de tiempo completo, "¿en qué área?" en inglés y en investigación, "¿nada más?" bueno pues a veces una de lingüística o de docencia, pero yo me identifico como maestra de inglés o de investigación.

M. ¿Qué opinas de la política de dar peso a la certificación y no tanto a la licenciatura?

G. Pues también es algo que ha cambiado, antes con que tuvieras mínimo el first podíamos entrar a dar clases, en el momento en que ya egresan de aquí y que ya se titulan en ese momento se empiezan a exigir los títulos, en ese momento yo pude seguir dando clases de inglés porque yo tenía mi título de ingeniero agrónomo, entonces aunque fuera en otra área pero yo tenía mi título, entonces llega el momento en que puedes dar clases de inglés mientras tengas un título y no tenía que ser el título de aquí, podía ser otro título, entonces igual se podía seguir empleando, contratando a gente con título aunque fuera de otra área, lo que pedían era titulado, ahora, pues sí llegó el momento de la política de que en tal Departamento fuera pero que tuviera cierta certificación, por una parte yo estoy de acuerdo porque lo que pidieron no fue nada más pedir un tu KET, tu PET, fue pedir un CAE porque si vamos a ser los formadores y si una de las cosas que estamos observando es el nivel con el que egresan los alumnos, pues entonces que nosotros mismos como maestros que pusiéramos el ejemplo, y yo creo que no te están pidiendo nada extraordinario, al contrario, es algo que te conviene, poder tener una certificación y poder presentar tu Proficiency sí, estás actualizándote, y estás demostrando que eso es algo bueno porque tú sigues estudiando más y eso va a redundar en la formación de tus alumnos, entonces yo creo que si decías bueno ¿sabes qué? no tienes certificación no te va a hacer daño, tómala, hazlo, el poder decir toda nuestra Departamento está certificada, es bueno, y que se nos exija un nivel más alto, bueno a lo mejor mientras lo logras seguirte preparando, motivarte a seguirte preparando, mientras da a lo mejor los niveles más bajos, o da estas otras materias, ok, tienes tu licenciatura de aquí mismo, qué bueno, ¿por qué no me empiezas a dar niveles bajos de inglés? Mientras obtienes una certificación más alta y a lo mejor das otras materias, pero te invito a seguirte preparando y lograr y yo creo que a veces es hasta digno no se un poco de presunción de que se pueda decir "toda mi Departamento de inglés tiene la máxima habilitación en la certificación de tal", yo creo que este es un logro que se pueda presumir de que todos mis maestros de francés cuentan una certificación, no se, C1 o C2, eso te está garantizando más.

M. ¿Alguna vez te has arrepentido de no haber seguido con tu carrera de Agronomía?

G. ¿Qué crees? Que no (risas). Una, de la parte de agronomía no me arrepiento, no la he ejercido pues no, no la he ejercido, nunca, he seguido en contacto porque mi esposo es agrónomo, ahorita hemos tenido la oportunidad de tener ahí, de estar plantando y cuando voy y planto y cosecho y hago labores de campo, la verdad las disfruto, o sea sí me gusta y hay veces que con las amistades que estamos en el ámbito de los agrónomos entiendo lo que se trata aprendo y sabes de otra área en la vida ¿no?, de haber estudiado una carrera como tal, no, tampoco me arrepiento, porque al ver planes de estudio me gustó mucho mi carrera de ingeniería agrónoma, me gustó la industria, y siéndote sincera, si yo veo los programas de aquí y veo las materias de literatura y de esto y del otro, no se me antojan, entonces como que esa parte tampoco digo no, no me hubiera gustado toda la carrera donde yo tuviera que llevar estas y estas materias, hay ciertas materias que no me llaman la atención, entonces también por eso digo: "hay, hubiera estudiado esta carrera". No, tampoco lo digo, la verdad estoy contenta de qué padre porque pude combinar y llevar esto y lo otro, a lo mejor ahora como madre también veo la parte de ¿qué dirían mis papás de que me pagaron una carrera para la que nunca ejercí? ¿no?,

porque ahora mis hijos van a ir, yo espero que si se les va a apoyar para una carrera que la ejerzan, pero en realidad "nobody knows what is in stock for you" dice algo así, no, pues no sabes, o sea si la vida te lleva a algo que la vas a ejercer qué padre, porque fue algo que estudiaste, que le dedicaste, que tienes las habilidades, las capacidades y todo y vas a darlo mejor de ti, pero si por algo en la vida se te presenta algo y a mí se me presentó esto y lo he disfrutado y todo, pues adelante, tampoco voy a decir no, no me voy a ir como maestra de inglés porque los maestros de inglés, eso ni es un trabajo, mejor yo soy ingeniero, si tú estás contento con lo que haces pues adelante, sí en realidad lo he disfrutado.

M. Muchas gracias, ¿te gustaría agregar algo?

G. No, muchas gracias a ti, estoy para servirte y mucho éxito.

Gina's transcript

M. I'd like to start this interview with some questions related to your studies at the University. ¿What did you study at college?

G. I did Agronomy in the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, here, at this University.

M. Did you always want to study that?

G. I always wanted to study something related to the Natural sciences. I have always been interested in the Natural sciences . I was in between Biology and Agronomy.

M. And did you enjoy your time at college?

G. Yes, yes. Honestly, I love my degree. I remember that some years ago, I had to check the syllabus of Agronomy and the one of Languages. I can tell you that many subjects from Agronomy continue to be attractive to me. So, yes, I really enjoyed studying Agronomy.

M. What has been the role of English in your life? When did you start studying English? When did you start teaching English?

G. Well, I started studying English since I was a child, my main influence was my mother as she has been an English language teacher for many years and when I was a child she got together different groups of children from the neighbourhood and we were her students and I can say that I have always been in contact with English thanks to my family, and I liked it a lot. Formally, I started to study English when I got into CELe. When I was old enough, I started attending English lessons at CELe. I was in high-school or earlier when I started studying English. I was like 15 or 16, maybe 16 when I started, and then, never stopped. Some years later, my mother was appointed as the CELe's director and in those years, the BA in languages didn't exist. My mother was going to create it some years later. And, as I have already told you, I was attracted to the Natural Sciences. So, I had to decide between Biology or Chemistry, I also liked Chemistry. I decided to take Agronomy. I got into the Faculty of Agronomy in September 1989, and by January 1990; I had the opportunity to start teaching English at CELe. I was studying the first semester at the Faculty, and I was already teaching at CELe. To become an English teacher, you didn't need a degree, I had my certification of Cambridge. If you had B2 level, you were allowed to teach. When I was about to start teaching, I found that the University was offering some teacher training courses. There were five teaching courses and I decided to take them. Then, I had the pedagogy and didactics; apart from my FCE certificate. By January 1990, I started teaching English at the University, at CELe. At the same time, I was studying at the University and teaching English. Later, I was given the opportunity to become an "asignatura teacher". Three years later, my mother

created the BA in English Language, and I questioned myself: Should I quit and start studying the Ba in English?. I decided to continue with my BA in Agronomy because I really liked it. I started to teach English in the BA of English Language four years later. Once again, I started as "asignatura" teacher, as there were no graduates, I didn't need a BA to teach there. I was really happy doing both things, teaching and my BA in Agronomy. When I finished college, I was teaching more classes, not only one. There was a turning point to say; should I look for a job as an agronomist or continue with my English lessons? I picked teaching English. One of the things that influenced my decision was that once we went to visit different companies. It was part of our subject called Quality Control. I really liked this subject. My area was Industrial Agronomist, so we visited different companies in the industrial zone. Those visits helped me with the decision, because I saw the working conditions of my colleagues and they weren't too good. Such conditions were worse to women. The working hours were too long. I remember that in one of the companies I asked if there weren't any women in that company, and they answered that women were only employed in the labs. I didn't dislike the idea of working in the lab, but there were too many hours. In fact, I did my social service in the biotechnology lab in plants. This is my thesis topic. However, it wasn't my dream to be locked in a lab. In another factory, they told me they didn't employ women and also, I realised that sometimes I had to stay the whole day and teaching English was much more convenient. I also enjoy the social part of working with many people. So, I didn't continue with Agronomy and focus 100% on my English teaching career.

M. Do you remember your first lessons?

G. Yes, I remember I was really nervous (jajaja). I had had some training, and they helped me with many aspects of my teaching. However, reality is very different, when you face a class for the very first time (GULP). Right? Many of those students, my first students, were of my same age, but most of them were older than me. For many years, my students were older than me, I looked really young, and they asked me; are you really my teacher? Right? At the same time, it was really nice, because I had the opportunity to become friends with many of them. Sometimes, I bumped into them, and they remember my classes. My classes took place in Odontology, because the venue of Rafael M. Hidalgo was really small, so we borrowed some classrooms in odontology, or nursing. I enjoyed teaching at different venues, because it was also interesting getting to know other facilities in the university. I always learn from my students, it was also nice, but yes, I was really nervous. Little by little you get experience, you start observing classes and have some training. I had some training courses at The British Council. I was able to do COTE, and yes, I got nervous when they observed my classes. Even today, I get nervous if you come to see my class. With the experience you can more or less control the nerves, we must be confident.

M. What about teaching other subjects?

G. For many years, the only subject I taught was English. At CELe, I was also an assessor in the self-access centre, no, in the languages laboratory. I sometimes had classes in the lab. Talking about what you asked me earlier, my mother was the director of CELe, then she created the Faculty of Languages and then, she also created the CILC (International Centre of Culture and Languages). There, at CILC, I was given the opportunity to have a full-time job as a teacher, and I accepted. I had to leave all my other classes and focus on my job at CILC. It is there where I started teaching other subjects. I started to work with teaching Spanish to foreigners. I really enjoyed teaching this subject. I had some training at UNAM. I had a Diploma for teaching Spanish to foreigners, so I had more tools for teaching Spanish. I had my English and Spanish lessons. I learned a lot from having contact with foreigners. I learned from their culture, but I also learned about Mexico's culture. We also moved from the original facilities at Torre Académica to Colón, and finally

in CU, the current location. I continued with my English lessons, and in 2002 there's a change in the Administration and the new director told me: You know what? Your position is not here, it would be much better if you went to the Faculty of Languages and changed your full-time post there. And that's how I arrived here, to the Faculty of languages. I can say I started a new journey, and I have been very happy since then. I started teaching English, but also other subjects because the Faculty needed teachers in other areas. I remember teaching error correction, English to French students. I also had Literature in English, and I didn't have any experience in those subjects, so I had to study and train myself in other areas. Some years later, I started working in the area of Research. They needed teachers in this area, and they asked me if I was willing to teach "Seminario I". I answered: But I have never worked in that area. I understood, as a full-time teacher, teaching different subjects and working with administrative activities is part of your job. I was in charge of the graduating office. So, this office was related to Research, that's why I started working with these subjects. Nowadays, I am more inclined to work in this area of Research. I remember, I didn't teach English for one semester, and missed my English lessons a lot because I had been working with English all my life. There was also a change when we entered the MA in Applied Linguistics in 2005-2007. I graduated and I started to ask for subjects in the Linguistics area. I have taught Phonetics and Phonology, Discourse Analysis, also in the Teaching area. I worked with History of English Methodology and, yes, I have belonged to different Departments, but now, it is Research and English mainly.

M. What is the role of the English Department in the Faculty and within teachers?

G. Well, The English Department is a good meeting point among teachers who share the same lessons. Personally, it's been really useful to continue learning. I learn a lot from my colleagues. For example, in the Research Department, we have the Forum every semester, and sometimes the students choose topics which aren't familiar to me. I always think that you never finish learning. Even when we have the same topics but with a different methodology, it is really interesting to find out how students construct their methodological framework. Some students prefer to focus on the epistemology, and others don't. I can say it is a very nice convergence of ideas and points of view. We learn from each other and sometimes, we realise that we need to have some training on certain areas, so by ourselves we find our needs, and we decide to look for some training courses that cover those needs. The Departments are also useful to standardise the different criteria. This is important, as we are a team, and everybody is different, with their strengths and weaknesses, so I think it is really enriching work. We can also have new projects. For example, the mock exams. I know, it's a lot of work, but the President cannot do it alone, so everybody participates, and, at the same time, we strengthen our relationships. It is like saying, you know what? This is not the work of one only man, but everybody at the different Departments should participate. It is working together towards the same goal and the benefit of students. If as a teacher, you decide not to participate; if you do not attend the Departments' meetings, in the end, the only marginalised person is the same teacher. Because when I don't attend the meetings, well, I have no idea about what the rest of the teachers discussed. And this lack of attendance is also reflected on the classes and the students. The students always tell you: "The other teacher did this, another teacher told us that". And you have no idea, because you didn't integrate at the Department. If you had attended the meetings, you would have known about it. Every teacher is different, but we would be together towards the same goal. So, yes, I definitely think that one way of identifying yourself with the Faculty is by attending the Department meetings.

M. And this is particularly important for the new teachers...

G. Yes, because it is always important that the new ones, and the ones with more

experience get together. It is an enriching experience. There are no excuses like, I have no time, or they don't want to go. Sometimes, they are just lazy, and they don't come. I don't really get it, maybe it's lack of time, interest, communication. I don't know why they don't come.

M. You and I share the fact of having a BA different from Languages. Have you ever felt discriminated or signalled because of this?

G. "When I started teaching, yes, I was questioned about my university degree. At first, they didn't ask you about your BA. The first cohorts at the University were used to this. Yes, I hear some comments like why? and some people asked: Why is an agronomist teaching us? and you know, there were comments about it, and in the Faculty of Languages there were a lot of people who were specialists in the area, and some students were like: mmm, what is she doing here? And there was this time, when the Director of the Faculty had to go to my classroom and stood up for me and told the students: "well she did study Agronomy, but she is teaching English because she knows the language, she has got the certificates, the experience and the training and so on", and after that I haven't heard anything. I didn't have these problems in Agronomy, they didn't ask you about your BA. On the contrary, it was a "plus" that you had the BA in the area, but also the English. But, yes, I had to make it clear. Yes, I studied Agronomy, but I have all these certifications and experience, so, I am perfectly qualified to teach you. Yes, I heard rumours about it. I remember that once, I don't remember the subject, but some teachers sent their students to interview us (non-official teachers) and the students asked questions like: what did you study?, and why are you working here?, and honestly, I didn't see the point of it, and I always answered yes I did not study Languages or English language Teaching, I studied Agronomy, but I also studied: this and that, and I had to tell them about all my background and I really don't understand the purpose of sending these students to question us, I really hope the interview wasn't with the intention of signaling us, like look, these teachers shouldn't be teaching here. Recently, I haven't heard anything, because now, the students know you and understand that you are a capable professional.

M. How can we legitimise/justify?

G. I think your work speaks for you. Sooner or later, the truth is unveiled and if you have the correct training and qualifications, and above all, you undergo training and update yourself, well, there is no problem. It is important to demonstrate that you know the language and are also capable of teaching it. Sometimes, students and directors prefer native speakers to teach the foreign language. However, many times, they do not have the training as teachers, they just speak the language. So, if you demonstrate both that you are proficient in the language, but also the Pedagogy, well, you have the documents, but also, you can show it.

M. And did you receive any comments from people that thought that teaching English wasn't a professional activity, but a hobby?

G. (Laughs) Yes, yes. Many times, people mentioned that. They thought that it was just a hobby, something I did to spend the time. They didn't believe it was a real job. There was another thing that we had to demonstrate, that it was a real job, you need to have many qualifications to do it. We had to convince the society of the difference between CELe and the Faculty of languages, and that to be an English language teacher you need to study a lot. Even today, people don't understand the difference. At first, both schools shared the facilities, and it is true that the Faculty used to be a School of Languages. However, to be a graduate from the Faculty, you need to study five years. It is the same as if you wanted to be a chemist or any other degree. At the Faculty, you don't only study the language, you study culture, do research, and so on. All the areas included in the

curriculum. You were going to be given a degree, first in English language, then in languages. But many people didn't understand that, and they told me: "how come you invest five years of your life to teach English?". And I said ARGH, that is the idea people have of an English language teacher, or French or any other language. I think we continue struggling with that. The good thing is that, currently you are required to have a degree to teach English at the university.

M. How do you identify yourself?

G. Well, I'm a teacher, what do I teach? I always say, I'm an English language teacher, because now as I am more involved in research, people ask me, and I reply: I'm an English language teacher and I also teach methodology, What do I do? Well, I'm a full-time teacher, in what area? In English and research, Is that all? Well, I sometimes teach Linguistics as well and also Pedagogy, but I identify myself as an English and research teacher.

M. What's your opinion about some employers who give prominence to certifications over degrees?

G. Well, it has changed a little bit. In the past, you only needed an FCE to teach English. Now, you need to have a degree. I was able to teach because I had a degree, in a different area, but it was a degree. So, schools could hire people with a degree in different areas to teach English. Nowadays, the policy is a little bit different, you need a degree in the area, but also a certificate: in the English Department, now they require a teacher with a degree and a certification. On the one side, I agree with this, because the English Department is not asking you to have KET, or PET, but CAE. And, if we are training future English teachers, it's a good idea, because we have seen the level of English of our graduates is not good enough. I think we are setting the example, and we aren't asking for anything extraordinary. On the contrary, it is a good idea to have a certificate that backs your level. You are updating yourself, and as a consequence, you are going to help students. You know what? A certification isn't harmful, do it. Being able to say that all our Departments is certified is really good. It is also good that the Department has high expectations of us. It is motivational to continue updating and preparing yourself. When one starts teaching English, it's a good idea to do it with low levels of English while you continue studying to get a higher certification of English. So, we can boast and say "All our Department has been certified in English", in C1 or C2.

M. Do you have any regrets for studying Agronomy and not languages?

G. No, not really (jajaja). I haven't worked in anything related to Agronomy. I have been in touch with the area because my husband is an agronomist. When I work with him, when I have the opportunity, well I help him to plant and grow different things. And I work with the crops. I really like it. What's more, I understand about other areas in life and that's good, isn't it? No, I don't regret it. You know what, i compare both programmes, and honestly, I don't like all the subjects in languages. No, I'm really happy because I am able to combine both careers. Now, as I am a mother, I think, what would my parents say? Because they paid for a career in which I never worked. Now, my students are going to college and I am going to support them, no matter what they choose. But really "nobody knows what is in stock for you". You never know, sometimes life leads you on paths that you don't know. But, it was cool, it was something that you study, you have the abilities and yo do your best. It was something that I didn't plan but I took it, and I have really enjoyed it. If you are happy with what you do, well, go ahead. Because, I have really enjoyed it.

M. Thank you very much. Would you like to add anything?

G. No, thanks. It was my pleasure, good luck

Miguel's transcription

M. Muchas gracias, por esta entrevista, me gustaría empezar por preguntarte acerca de tus estudios universitarios, ¿tú, ¿qué estudiaste en la universidad?

Es un placer, yo estudié la licenciatura en Administración, no es en Administración de empresas, es sólo Administración.

M. ¿Y siempre quisiste estudiar eso?

No, yo creo que, como muchos, cuando sales de la prepa, no sabes realmente hacia dónde vas, pero mi papá estudió Administración y me gustó lo que hacía, así que fue una de las influencias que yo tuve y también algunos de los amigos de la prepa se fueron para allá, así que por eso decidí Administración

M. ¿Y disfrutaste tus estudios universitarios?

Si, o sea, súper relajado, bueno más que disfrutar la carrera, yo disfruté mi tiempo universitario, en dónde empiezas a tener libertad por parte de tus padres, de las clases que ya tú decides si entras o no entras o tú decides qué hacer con tu tiempo, eso fue lo que más disfruté.

M. ¿Y cómo fue que empezaste a dar clases de inglés?

Aquí yo me iría hacia atrás, a la secundaria, en uno de los semestres de la secundaria yo reprobé uno de los bimestres de inglés, entonces pues ya sabes, mi mamá con los pelos en el cielo y me dijo: "tienes que ponerte a estudiar inglés", y me mandó con mi tía, ella era directora de una escuela de inglés, del "H H", entonces me dijo vete con tu tía y ahí te poner a estudiar inglés, entonces, me metí al H H y al siguiente semestre o bimestre de la secundaria de haber reprobado con cinco o algo así, saqué 10, entonces lo que nunca aprendí en la secundaria lo aprendí en la escuela particular en un par de meses, la secundaria yo la estudié en una secundaria pública, mucho tiempo después me di cuenta, y no es por excusarme, pero yo creo que ahí la deficiencia era la maestra de inglés pues que no sabía nada, años después ella tomó uno de los cursos que yo daba, muchos años después y yo me dije, "¡cómo es posible que ella me estaba dando clases!" (risas), pero bueno, así fue, después continué en la Universidad, yo ya estaba en la Facultad, terminé el H, me metí al CELe y ya estaba yo terminando mis estudios y era para presentar el First Certificate, en ese entonces el director de CELe era nuestro maestro, el maestro Jacob, y un día me dijo: "oye Miguel tenemos una clase de 4 a 5, y hace falta un maestro ¿puedes dar la clase?" y yo le dije, pero es que yo no tengo ni idea, yo jamás he dado clases

M. ¿Qué edad tenías?

17, y pues no sé, no tengo idea, pero en ese entonces como que tampoco te importa mucho y entonces me dio el libro del maestro, me dijo "nada más es mañana, das la clase como la que tú has tomado y ya", era un nivel 1, pero resulta que ese maestro no fue nada más fue un día, no me acuerdo ni quién era, la incapacidad era por enfermedad y no era solo por un día, sino que fue por todo el bloque, entonces yo terminé dando todo el bloque, todo el curso, eran trimestres en ese entonces y al finalizar el periodo para formar la plantilla del siguiente trimestre me dijo que si quería tomar un curso formal y así fue como empecé a dar clases.

M. Y ¿estabas nervioso en tu primera clase?

No, porque eran chavos como de mi edad, entonces era como una aventura y era muy

divertido.

M. Pero ¿no sentías que te debías imponer por ser de la misma edad de tus alumnos?

No, porque la primera clase era nada más como para cubrir y preparar solo una clase, y uno de mis amigos, A M, que ya había sido mi maestro, trabajaba mucho con canciones, entonces yo pensé, esto es algo que les va a gustar, entonces puse una canción y de ahí sacamos todo el vocabulario y se nos fue la hora.

M. Entonces ¿tú preparabas la clase haciendo lo que te gustaba de tus maestros?

Sí claro, yo creo que tuve mucha influencia sobre todos de tres maestros de A M, de J y de la maestra B y dije esas clases me gustan y así fue como las planeaba yo.

M. ¿Y cómo combinabas tus estudios con las clases de inglés?

Pues estudiaba en la mañana y daba clases en la tarde, yo nunca me imaginé que me iba a dedicar a la docencia del inglés, la decisión la tomé al terminar la Universidad, obtuve mi título, la cédula y empecé a buscar trabajo en el área de Administración, pero para ese entonces yo ya tenía 6 horas diarias de clases de inglés, que son 30 horas a la semana en CELe de la Universidad, que además es la máxima carga horaria que se puede tener. No recuerdo cómo estaban los pagos en ese entonces, pero es algo por decir si ahorita te dicen, estás ganando 15,000 pesos a la quincena en el CELE y en una empresa en ese entonces me ofrecían 5,000 pesos por quince horas, o sea era el doble de tiempo y la mitad de dinero, fui a un par de entrevistas, fui a B y fui a otra empresa, no me acuerdo cuál fue y al momento de ver el contrato y el tiempo porque era de 9 a 5 si sales y si no sales pues es hasta que termines y dije no, y a mí lo que me gustaba mucho en el CELE era tu tiempo, entrabas a las 9 y salías a las 3, y ¿sabes qué? A las 3 ya estabas libre y no te tenías que quedar a nada más, tú tenías muchas ventajas en eso, en manejar tu tiempo.

M. ¿Y fue entonces que decidiste prepararte en Docencia?

Ya para ese entonces había tenido varios cursos de Docencia, porque ya tenía tiempo trabajando en el CELE, y siempre había cursos de capacitación intersemestrales o venía la editorial y te daba algún curso, los primeros fueron que te abren los ojos, uno dice wow, esto está súper genial, las actividades que te dan, pero en realidad no es mucha teoría, lo que te dan esos cursos de capacitación son prácticas, si prácticas, algunas técnicas, algunas actividades que puedes aplicar directamente en tu clase, pero sobre teoría y metodología pues no conocía nada, hasta que después tomé el COTE y ya fue mi primer curso formal de Docencia, yo decidí tomarlo porque se ofreció en el CELE, yo ya estaba trabajando ahí bien, y pues estaba buscando cómo prepararme más y se me dio la oportunidad y tomé ese curso.

M. ¿Y nunca ejerciste como Administrador?

No, en alguna empresa que haya sido contratado no, pero sí me ha servido mucho en la práctica profesional, porque bueno ahorita tengo yo una empresa que se dedica principalmente a dar consultoría académica, pero la parte Administrativa la llevo yo, entonces yo he rescatado mis conocimientos de Administración y los he llevado a la práctica en la empresa.

M. ¿Y cómo llegaste a la Facultad de Lenguas?

Estaba yo trabajando en CELe, empezó la facultad con la maestra Lucero y se me hizo una invitación para estudiar la Licenciatura, pero yo ya tenía licenciatura en

Administración, entonces decidí no tomarla y entonces llegué a la Facultad porque el CELe empezó a dar clases en las instalaciones de la Facultad, la Universidad ya estaba construyendo los edificios de la Facultad, pero todavía no estaban los alumnos, entonces el CELe usaba esas instalaciones así fue como llegué a la Facultad estaba yo dando clases en CELe y después iniciaron las clases en la Facultad y en unas instalaciones, no me acuerdo en qué instalaciones que yo ya estaba involucrado con alumnos y maestros de la Facultad, pero yo no era parte del profesorado de la Facultad, yo era parte del CELe, trabajando en las instalaciones de la Facultad, entonces mucha gente también me relacionaba como maestro de la Facultad porque ahí daba clases, me veían entrar a la Sala de maestros, saludar a las secretarias, firmar y todo pero no era maestro de la Facultad, ya hasta después recibí la invitación para trabajar ahí. También he trabajado en otras escuelas, he trabajado sobre todo en CELe y en la Facultad, también trabajé en el A muchos años y casi cuando inicié me ofrecieron unas clases en una escuela de secretarias que está en la Colonia Sánchez y dije vamos y también di clases ahí.

M. ¿Siempre clases de inglés?

Sí, siempre inglés, ya fue hasta que empecé en la Facultad y que estudié la maestría que me empezaron a dar otras materias como Docencia.

M. ¿Y alguna vez te has sentido discriminado por alumnos o colegas por haber estudiado Administración y no lenguas?

Fíjate que no, porque en ese entonces no existía en Toluca la carrera de Lengua Inglesa o carrera de Docencia del inglés como tal, entonces todos los maestros de inglés eran Ingenieros, Doctores, Secretarias, Enfermeras o si sabías inglés pues tú dabas las clases, entonces yo entraba con el grupo de esos maestros, ya hasta después que me fui formando pues yo podía decir no soy maestro de inglés pero tengo un certificado que es el COTE que me avala como Docente del inglés a nivel internacional y pues ese fue un gran respaldo.

M. ¿Y tú les dices a tus alumnos que eres Administrador?

No, lo que hago es que en la primera clase siempre les digo a mis alumnos que me pueden preguntar lo que sea en el ámbito académico, personal profesional o de mis gustos y que es el único día que contesto con la verdad (risas) entonces, ahí me doy cuenta que su interés por el maestro es más como qué te gusta hacer, qué música escuchas, qué deporte haces, por ahí sí hay alguno que te pregunta: qué estudiaste pero creo que es muy raro el que me pregunta cuál es tu licenciatura, tienes maestría o qué grado tienes.

M. ¿Tú crees que ellos dan por hecho, como es mi caso también, que tenemos la licenciatura en lenguas?

Pues yo creo que sí, ahora que lo dices, pues sí, depende la materia y también si se presta pues sí les comento que estudié Administración, pero nunca he tenido una reacción negativa.

M. ¿Y ahora en tu empresa tú contratas maestros, ¿en qué te fijas para contratar a un maestro?

Me fijo sobre todo en el nivel de lengua que manejan, porque principalmente nuestra empresa da capacitación a maestros, entonces sí necesitamos cuidar mucho el perfil del capacitador, del tutor que vaya a trabajar con los maestros, necesitamos por lo menos un nivel C1 o C2, en cuestión de inglés y estudio de maestría y que tengan experiencia en algún puesto administrativo

M. ¿Ay pues qué estricto (risas)?

Sí, pero creo que les pagamos bien, por ejemplo, un curso, la hora la estamos pagando entre 350 y 500 pesos la hora, libre, son pocos los maestros que cubren el perfil, pero las escuelas están contentas con los maestros que les mandamos.

M. ¿Qué opinas del programa que acaba de lanzar el Gobierno del Estado en el que le van a pagar a los alumnos por dar clases de inglés?

Yo creo que no lo puedes calificar de positivo o negativo porque dentro de todos ellos va a existir gente que es muy capaz, que tiene el interés, que tiene la capacidad y luego de ese programa poder sobresalir y también hay gente que lo va a tomar como un oportunismo completo y que solo va a estar ahí por el dinero, pero es muy difícil decir que es bueno o malo, es que hay gente que no ha tenido la oportunidad de estudiar profesionalmente para ser maestro de inglés, pero el ser maestro yo creo que no es sólo la formación académica que tienes es mucho de lo que tu das como persona el querer aportar a los demás, el querer aportar a la sociedad y eso no te lo enseñan en ninguna escuela. Y es que muchas veces uno oye cosas como: a ver si soy Contador a poco me voy a poner a dar clases de Anatomía y pues yo creo que no es válido porque sí podría dar una clase básica a nivel teórico de anatomía pero no sabría que decir acerca de una cirugía, pero un maestro de inglés que tomó un curso de Teacher's y que tiene un buen nivel de lengua pues yo creo que puede enseñar muy bien hasta cierto nivel, van a existir alumnos que tengan problemas de dislexia, de déficit de atención, problemas físicos de pronunciación y pues este maestro no los va a saber detectar porque no está capacitado, en contraste con alguien que tiene la formación profesional completa y puede decir: tu no necesitas una clase de inglés normal, lo que tú necesitas es apoyo en otras circunstancias.

M. Pero, fíjate que es una particularidad de la Facultad de Lenguas de nuestra Universidad, porque aún con egresados de la licenciatura, son muy pocos los que dan clases de inglés, más bien somos nosotros que venimos con una formación distinta

Pues es que muchos de nuestros egresados no tienen el nivel de lengua que se requiere para dar clases de inglés, y yo creo que para calificar a un maestro como buen maestro yo pienso que son tres partes las que debes cubrir, primero tu parte de trabajo dentro del aula, cómo es tu relación con los alumnos, la transmisión de tus conocimientos hacia los alumnos, en segundo lugar es cómo te estás desarrollando tú con la parte administrativa, porque es una realidad también que hay muchos maestros excelentes en el aula pero son muy tardos para entregas listas, para asistir a juntas para la parte de control escolar y toda la parte administrativa no les gusta, entonces si tú le preguntaras a un administrativo ¿oye cómo ves a esta persona como maestro?, pues te va a decir no pues es muy mala porque le está calificando la parte administrativa, si le preguntas a los alumnos ellos te pueden decir que es muy bueno, pero es que a ellos no les preocupa cómo está respondiendo con la institución y la otra parte es si trabajas con niños cómo respondes con los padres de familia o si es con adultos cómo respondes con la sociedad en general, qué les estás aportando, qué es lo que pretendes de esos alumnos para que se integren a la sociedad.

M. ¿Qué opinas de la retención de muchos alumnos de la Facultad a certificarse?

Sin embargo, muchos regresan, yo trabajo en certificación, después de años, regresan y te dicen oye René tengo esta beca y necesito certificarme o tengo este trabajo y me piden el certificado y la pregunta es ¿cuánto tiempo tienes para prepararte?, no pues lo tengo que entregar en junio, no pues olvídalos, o sea no es de dos meses, te lo dije hace

cuatro años. Y pues como siempre trato de llevar una buena relación con los alumnos, siempre les digo de la importancia de certificarse, siempre en mi práctica como a la mitad del semestre les pido que en una hoja me pongan cosas que les gustan de mi clase, que no les gustan o que les gustaría y así todavía tengo tiempo de tener algo de trabajo remedial de clase, después hago un concentrado y lo leo junto con los alumnos y así les dijo pues unos quieren más práctica en esto pero otros no, y así trato de tener un punto medio y así tratar de dar gusto a todos, yo creo que es también conocer esa parte y si alguien me hubiera cuestionado de que no soy maestro de lenguas, pues le hubiera dicho que efectivamente no se todo y que ningún maestro va a saber todo pero así estamos aprendiendo juntos.

M. ¿Y te han llegado quejas de colegas?

No que hayan llegado a mis oídos y si han llegado pues no son cosas que mantendría yo en mi memoria porque no me interesan.

M. ¿Qué papel ha jugado el Departamento en tu experiencia?

Pues yo he sido Presidente y Secretario del Departamento, antes de ser Presidente pues fui miembro, en las primeras sesiones, pues encuentras algo que pueda ser interesante y que puede aportar mucho en tu desempeño como docente y para tus clases, y en teoría yo creo que tienen mucho y muy buen potencial si toda la Departamento estuviera interesada y estuviera participando, la realidad es que yo creo que un 50% o menos de la gente que está en la Departamento está participando activamente, no en las juntas de la Departamento, en las juntas se puede juntar la gente, se puede decir sí lo voy a hacer, se levantan las manos, pero no todos lo hacen, eso tiene que ver yo creo con los maestros que son de tiempo completo y de asignatura en la facultad, un maestro de tiempo completo puede dedicar trabajo a la Departamento, pero lo está tomando el tiempo dentro de las horas que le están pagando en la Facultad, yo siempre he sido maestro de asignatura y el tiempo que le he dedicado a la Departamento siempre ha sido fuera de mis horas de trabajo de la Facultad y eso sí lo he escuchado de maestros de tiempo completo, que dicen yo no voy a ir a una junta que no está dentro de mi horario porque no me la están pagando, ajá, o no voy a hacer un proyecto que esté fuera de mi horario, yo salgo a las 6 de mi tiempo completo y lo que quieran hacer antes de esa hora lo hago, después ya no, y como asignatura en todas las actividades que nos toca participar, casi todas son fuera de nuestro horario de clases. Yo creo que falta esa identidad y algo que se puede hacer, me parece que el mismo Departamento debería procurar que la gente permanezca en la misma Departamento por un periodo más largo de tiempo, yo creo, por ejemplo, que si un semestre a lo mejor no me toca una materia que pertenezca al área de docencia, me pueden tocar materias de Lingüística y pertenecer a otro Departamento, pero mi participación no puede estar cambiando cada semestre, hay proyectos académicos que duran más de un semestre, son de un plazo más largo, entonces si yo estoy integrado de manera permanente en una Departamento podría estar contribuyendo un poco más a la Departamento aunque no de clases que pertenezcan al área del Departamento.

M. ¿En tu experiencia, qué consecuencias tiene no participar en el Departamento?

Pues es importante, porque, por ejemplo, del lado de las autoridades, pues ellos se dan cuenta de quién está trabajando y quién no.

M. ¿Y tú qué estrategia usabas cuando fuiste presidente del Departamento para lograr que los nuevos maestros se integraran?

Pues es que es importante porque aprendes y además con las aportaciones de todos

pues uno dice oye qué interesante y ves que ciertas cosas que salen en el Departamento tú también las puedes usar en tus clases. Pero, por otro lado, también hay cosas que si faltas a los proyectos o no vas al Departamento pues realmente no pasa nada, entonces muchos maestros caen en eso, dicen pues si voy o no voy al final del día sigo igual, y por ejemplo, eso pasa más con maestros que solo tienen una clase y pues no le ven mucha utilidad a ir a las juntas de Departamento.

M. ¿Y cómo ha evolucionado tu enseñanza desde las primeras clases?

Pues yo creo que mucho, afuera yo no socializo casi con mis alumnos, pero dentro del salón sí mucho. Por ejemplo, esta semana un alumno me preguntaba: “Oye Manuel, a mí me habían dicho que tus clases eran súper estrictas? Y la verdad esto está súper relax” y yo creo que tiene mucho que ver el tipo de clase que estoy dando, la clase que tu ahorita estás tomando, le dije al alumno, es un taller remedial de inglés y son cuatro alumnos, en todo el semestre, en las clases que llevamos en el semestre, nunca ha faltado uno, siempre han sido los cuatro, muy puntuales, trabajan todo, los ejercicios, las tareas, todo, muy, muy responsables los alumnos, entonces les digo a ustedes no los tengo que estar presionando porque ahí la llevan. Y también depende de la escuela, no es lo mismo dar clases en CEle que en la Facultad, por ejemplo, a los alumnos de Cele, no les digo qué es un sustantivo o un verbo en pasivo, en realidad mientras lo puedan expresar y mientras puedan lograr las competencias que les pides está bien, pero a los alumnos de la Facultad sí les pido, que conozcan eso, yo les digo ustedes van a ser los futuros maestros, profesionales en lengua, ya sea para Docencia o Traducción y necesitas conocer bien estas cosas. Pero definitivamente cuando empecé era más estricto. Pues también ha habido cuestiones, por ejemplo, hace mucho daba clases en una escuela, que no era la Universidad, y tuve un grupo que eran como ocho alumnos y de esos la mitad no había pasado el examen y al siguiente bloque veo que todos están aprobados, entonces me acerco con la coordinadora y le digo: “oye es que esos alumnos no pasaron y me dice no es que ellos vinieron después a hacer un examen aquí a la oficina y ya pasaron” y yo dije: claro pues aquí está el dinero y si no pasan pues se cierran los grupos y ya el siguiente curso que di ahí pues yo dije para qué me preocupó en poner las calificaciones reales, todos 9 o 9.5, o sea yo me preocupé porque aprendieran y di mis clases bien pero al momento de las calificaciones pues puse calificaciones altas. Y también recuerdo que hace muchos años aquí en la Universidad, di una clase en Medicina, que no me gustó, un semestre y ya, no me gustó, y también trabajé como dos años en la Facultad de Administración dando clases de inglés y yo precisamente escogí la Facultad de Administración porque yo dije: “yo le quiero regresar a la Facultad un poco de lo que me dio, pero me di cuenta que los alumnos de otras Facultades son muy, pero muy distintos a los de CEle o a los de Lenguas porque no les interesa el inglés, para ellos no es una materia primordial, los alumnos que tengo en el CEle o en el A por ejemplo, siempre son alumnos que quieren estar ahí, siempre están motivados porque les interesa y no los tienes que presionar para nada, entonces a ti como maestro eso te facilita. Los alumnos de la Facultad saben que esta parte es importante para su desarrollo, entonces por lo general están interesados, pero en otras instancias no les preocupa, aunque luego se dan de topes (jajaja)

M. Y cuando empezaste a dar clases de inglés, ¿qué te decían tus amigos y familiares?, ¿tenías que justificarte de alguna forma?

Pues, por ejemplo, a mí me pasaba mucho en Lenguas que los alumnos pensaban que yo sabía inglés y francés porque pensaban que era egresado de ahí y yo les decía que no hablaba francés y se quedaban extrañados, como que asumían que si dabas clases en lenguas era porque sabías muchas lenguas (jajaja) y de hecho sentí feo y me fui a estudiar francés a CEle dos años, pero la verdad no me gustó y no seguí, pero la verdad

eso sí me lo han cuestionado varias veces: ¿cómo, no habla otro idioma? No, sé un poquito de alemán y francés, pero la verdad no, mi fuerte es el inglés. Y bueno además no saben lo que significa ser maestro de asignatura aquí y allá, por ejemplo, ustedes maestros de tiempo completo, no sé bien todo lo que implica su trabajo, pero tengo la impresión de que usan sus horas de tiempo completo para preparar clases, diseñar exámenes, etc. Nosotros tenemos que usar nuestro tiempo libre y los fines de semana y generalmente lo tenemos que hacer en casa, porque no tenemos oficina. Y bueno lo de justificarse pues creo que a veces eso de la profesionalización nos falla, por ejemplo, yo con mis alumnos sí uso el lenguaje profesional o la jerga de docencia o metodología, no lo hago con los colegas porque suena chocante. Eso lo hago en lenguas por ejemplo hablamos de rúbricas, distractores, ítems, pero en el CELe no lo hago, porque los alumnos de ahí no necesitan saberlo o no tienen la necesidad de conocer esa terminología, pero los alumnos de la Facultad sí. Mira, hace tiempo estuve trabajando un proyecto con un lingüista importante del extranjero y platicando me preguntó que si cuántas clases yo daba a la semana y le dije que 30 o 35 horas clase a la semana, bueno abrió unos ojos y me dijo: "that's just not possible" y a veces doy hasta más horas clase a la semana y me dice "¿a qué hora las preparas?", y pues me dice acá en mi Universidad no puedes dar ese número de clases, es sencillamente imposible y pues aquí si no das ese número de clases pues no llevas el suficiente ingreso a tu casa, entonces tienes que buscarle.

M. Yo ya no podría hacer eso, es muy cansado.

Sí es súper cansado, acabo de empezar ahorita a dar unas clases a unos abogados, es un nivel A2, y yo hace mucho tiempo que no daba un nivel tan bajito, son 14 alumnos y ya sabes la clase es los lunes por la tarde-noche y todos llegan con una cara de estoy fatigado y es lunes, vengo a mi clase y además no te entiendo nada y es A2, entonces la primera clase me costó mucho trabajo porque yo daba estas clases y hacía muchas dinámicas y la verdad en los últimos años mi práctica profesional se ha encaminado a las certificaciones, a los grupos altos y es muy muy diferente, el maestro está más descansado, les pones una lectura, los pones a trabajar, organizas y ya y tienes tiempo de estar monitoreando y en los grupos básicos casi no se puede hacer esto, en A2 las actividades son más cortas, tienes que estar cambiando. Lo bueno es que como cambias a cada rato de grupo, pues en realidad no hay tiempo para aburrirse porque cada grupo es distinto, la parte humana es muy importante y es lo que te da motivación para seguir adelante, entonces cada grupo tiene su esencia propia y te alimenta a ti como profesor. Por ejemplo, el otro día en lenguas me preguntaban para usted: ¿Cuál es un grupo ideal?, pues para empezar para mí no es un grupo ideal en el que todos traigan tareas y que todos sean puntuales, o sea no, para mí un grupo ideal es aquel en donde todos están integrados y tienes una buena relación con ellos, porque para tí como maestro eso te facilita el trabajo, me ha tocado de los dos grupos, hay grupos que son muy cumplidos, muy cumplidos y muy responsables, pero todos tienen unas jetas, ay perdón, bueno sí o sea que no se hablan, contigo son bien serios y digo sí aprenden pero la verdad lo ideal sería una combinación y entonces generalmente te tocan grupos mixtos, siempre está el que es bromista y también le da una chispa al ambiente, están los que no saben y los tienen que poner a trabajar con los que sí, o el grupito de amigas que siempre se están riendo, o el que llega sudado porque viene de jugar basquetball, entonces eso te da un buen dinamismo en clase.

M. Y cuando te preguntan y tú ¿qué haces?

Ah pues yo siempre digo maestro de inglés, poor English teacher (jajaja), si creo que así me conocen ahora, porque si digo que tengo la maestría en lingüística me dicen y eso para qué te sirve (jajaja), sí claro depende quién pregunte porque yo siempre digo soy profesor de la Universidad, pero no es lo único que hago, trabajo en CENEVAL, trabajo como consultor para algunas escuelas tengo mi negocio, trabajo para Cambridge.

M. Y ¿tú habrás influido en tu hermano para estudiar la licenciatura en lenguas?

No sé, a lo mejor

M. Bueno me decías que tu tía tuvo influencia sobre ti, pero no tus papás

Aunque yo después me di cuenta de que el nivel de inglés de mi tía no es muy bueno (risas), bueno pero era buena administradora y buena maestra en ese entonces, porque ella empezó siendo maestra de H H y terminó siendo la directora de H H.

M. Bueno pues muchas gracias, Miguel

De nada Maggie, pero quisiera agregar algo: trabajar con la gente joven ayuda mucho, porque por ejemplo yo le dije a mi esposa, ¿quién se ve más grande, por ejemplo, Moses o yo?, no pues Moses, o sea yo creo, no sé si es algo general, pero fíjate que la gente que trabaja con gente joven se mantiene joven

M. Pues no lo había pensado, pero puede que tengas razón

Sí por ejemplo con los gustos, por ejemplo llegas a clase y te dicen maestro ya escuchó esta canción y hasta te obligas para saber qué está de moda, por ejemplo hace mucho cuando estaba de moda Backstreet Boys le daba una clase de KET o PET a unas señoritas y les traía canciones y me decían no guácala, traiga algo de Backstreet Boys y yo decía para cómo prefieren esto, me chocan, pero bueno dije si es algo que ayude pues se las llevé e hicimos actividades y ellas encantadas, entonces en cuestión de libros, películas, música, etc., redes sociales o cosas que hacen los chavos te mantienen muy actualizado.

M. Es cierto, muchas gracias.

Gracias a ti, Maggie.

Miguel's translation

M: Thank you very much for this interview. I would like to start by asking you about your University degree. What did you study at the University?

Mi: It's my pleasure. I studied Administration, not Business Administration, only Administration.

M: And did you always want to study that?

Mi: No, I think that my case is not different from many others, when you leave the high school you don't really know where you go, but my dad studied Administration and I liked what he did, so it was one of the main influences I had and also some friends went to that Faculty, that's the reason why I also decided to go.

M: And, did you enjoy your University studies?

Mi: Yes, well, super relaxed, and I can say that more than enjoying studying my degree, I enjoyed my time at the University. It is at the University when you start to have freedom from your parents and well, you decide if you attend the lessons or not, you can decide what you do with your time and that is what I enjoyed the most.

M: And, how did you start teaching English?

Mi: I have to go to earlier years of my life. In secondary school I failed one of the English exams and obviously my mother was worried and told me: "You have to study English in the afternoon after school" and she asked to go with my aunt. My aunt was the principal in an English language school "H H", so my mother asked to go with her to study English

and I started to study in that school and in my next exam I got a 10, so what I never learnt in secondary school I could learn it in H H in a few months. I studied in a public school, and it is now that it wasn't my fault, but honestly, my teacher was really bad, she didn't have any idea about English. After some years, she was my student in one of my courses and I thought: But how is this possible? She was my teacher, jajajaja. Well, after H H, I started to study at CELe and I was about to finish my degree in the University and I was to sit the First Certificate, in those times, the principal in CELe was my teacher as well, teacher Jacob, and one day he told me: "Hey Manuel, we need a teacher from 4 to 5 in the afternoons. Would you take the class?" and I told him: "But I have no idea, I have never taught English".

M: How old were you?

Mi: I was 17 and I don't know, well when you are that young you don't care much about it and he gave me a book and he asked me to teach the same way I was taught. It was first level, but it turned out that it wasn't a temporary thing, the teacher of that lesson was ill and I ended up teaching the whole course. We had lessons every day and the course lasted three months and when the course had finished he asked me if I wanted a class, I said yes and that's how I started teaching.

M: Were you nervous in your first class?

Mi: Not really, because the students were really young, just like me, so it was like an adventure, and it was really fun.

M: But the fact that students were the same age as you didn't cause any problems?

Mi: No, because the first class was just to cover this teacher and I just prepared one lesson and one of my friends, Alex Mejía, who had been my teacher, used to work with songs a lot and I thought of that. I thought that the students would enjoy working with songs in the class and I decided to play a song to have the vocabulary and I did that in that first classroom.

M: Did you prepare the lessons in a similar way as your teachers did?

Mi: Yes, of course. I had a great influence from my teachers in those years: A, J, B. I loved their lessons and I used to do the same they did.

M: And how did you combine your teaching with your University studies?

Mi: Well, I used to study in the mornings and teach in the afternoons, however, I never imagined that I was going to be a teacher the rest of my life. I made that decision when I finished University, I graduated and started looking for a job in the Administration area but I was teaching six hours every day, which means 30 hours per week at CELe in the University. I don't remember how much I was paid, but imagine it is as if nowadays you were making \$15,000 every fortnight at CELe and in a private company they offered me \$5,000 for 15 hours, that is I could earn as much as twice the money as a teacher. I went to a couple of companies: Barcel and another one, I don't remember the name and when I read the contract it was a job from 9 to 5 and many times you don't leave the office until you have finished your work. I thought, no this is not for me, I prefer working at CELe and I really enjoyed it. I used to work from 9 to 3 and I had the rest of the afternoon for me.

M: And how did you start preparing yourself in the field of teaching?

Mi: When I finished University I had already attended some courses on the field of teaching, in the holiday period we always had these training courses at CELe or some editorials visited us and also gave us some training. The first courses really opened my eyes, I used to say "wow", this is super cool, the activities they had, but honestly we didn't have much theory, because it is mainly training on practice, some techniques but nothing else, so I had no idea about theory and methodology. After some time, I decided to enrol in the COTE course and I can say it was the first formal teaching course I attended. I decided to take this course because it was offered in CELe and as I was working there, it was really convenient.

M: So you never worked in Administration

Mi: No, I never worked in a business or in a company, but I can honestly say that it has helped me a lot in my professional practice because now I have a company which provides academic consultancy and I am in charge of the Administrative area of the company so I have used my knowledge of Administration in this company.

M: And how did you start teaching at the Faculty of languages?

Mi: I was working at CELe when Professor Lucero started with the Faculty of Languages and she invited me to study there. I already had a degree in Administration, so I decided not to take it, but I started working in the Faculty because CELe used to use the facilities of the Faculty. The University had started the construction of the buildings of the future Faculty but there weren't any students yet. I remember I used to get along with both teachers and students from the Faculty but I wasn't a teacher of the Faculty. I remember I used to get into the teacher's room, greet the secretaries and everybody so people thought that I worked for the Faculty, but I wasn't. After some time, I was invited to teach at the Faculty and I accepted. I have also worked for other schools, I worked for the A many years and also in this school for secretaries in the Colonia Sánchez and I also worked there.

M: Have you always taught English?

Mi: Yes, English all the time. However, after some years in the Faculty I studied a Master's Degree in linguistics I could start to teach other subjects related to teaching.

M: Have you ever felt discriminated in the Faculty for having studied Administration and not Languages?

Mi: No, not really. When I started teaching, in the city, the degree in Languages wasn't available and all the English language teachers used to be engineers, doctors, accountants and so on. If you spoke English, well you were able to teach. I was one of those teachers. Obviously within time, I started to train myself into other aspects of teaching. I could say I am not an English language teacher, but I have a certificate –the COTE, which backs me up.

M: And do you tell your students that you studied Administration?

Mi: No, what I do is that in the first lesson I always tell my students that they can ask me whatever they want in the academic field, professional or my likes and dislikes and it is the only day that I tell the truth jajajaja. So, it is then that I realise that they are interested in aspects like my favourite music, my hobbies, sports and so on, but they hardly ever ask about my degree or my master's degree.

M: Is this because they take it for granted that you studied languages?

Mi: I think so, well now that you're asking me, I think that is the reason why they don't

ask me, but when I have mentioned that I studied Administration, I have never had a bad reaction or a negative comment.

M: And now that you are an entrepreneur. What is the profile that you look for in a teacher?

Mi: I pay particular attention to their level of English and this is because we train other teachers, so we really need to pay attention to the teachers we hire. We ask for a C1 or C2 level of English and a master's degree and preferably experience in an administrative area.

M: Woow. You are really strict.

Mi: Yes, but I think we pay well, we are paying \$350-\$500 an hour and even when we have few teachers, all the schools have had positive comments about our trainers.

M: What's your opinion about the government's program about paying students for teaching English?

Mi: Well. I think you cannot say it is either positive or negative because I'm sure some people are really good teachers and others who are not going to take this opportunity seriously. It is very difficult to say it is good or bad because there are people who haven't had the opportunity to study and become an English language teacher but in my opinion, in order to be a teacher you give more as a person than your academic training, that is, you help The English Department in many ways and this is not taught in any school or training course. And I have heard many comments like: if I'm an accountant I won't be teaching Anatomy and I think that is not valid because I could teach a basic course of Anatomy, obviously I would never perform a surgery. However, a person who has a teacher's course and a good level of English, I consider he can teach very well. Now, there are situations that a teacher without the appropriate training won't be able to handle, for example, if a student has a problem of dyslexia or physical problems of pronunciation, and other examples, obviously you need well-trained people to care about these situations.

M: Nevertheless, have you noticed that most of the English language teachers in the Faculty of languages are teachers with a different BA from languages?

Mi: That's simple, most of our graduates don't have a good level of English to teach at the University. I consider that to decide if a teacher is good or not, you have to take into consideration three aspects: your knowledge of the subject, your work inside the classroom and your relationship with the students; the administrative area is also important because you need to be able to fill in some formats, prepare lessons, attend meetings and other aspects which are an integral part of your job. Sometimes the administrative part is something that teachers don't like but if you ask an administrator about a teacher who doesn't do their paperwork appropriately well, they would tell you that this teacher is bad. And finally, if you work with kids, your relationship with parents is vital.

M: What's your opinion of certifications in English?

Mi: Well, when students are in the faculty they don't certificate because they don't see the need, however, they always come back to the Faculty to get a preparation course for the certifications. The problem is that sometimes they tell you, I need the certification to get a job, I have a month, and I always tell them that it's impossible, in a month you can have a proper preparation to certify yourself. I always try to have a good relationship with the students, and I try to convince them about the importance of having a certificate. In my classes, in the middle of the course, I always ask them to write in a piece of paper,

what they like about my class, what aspects they would like to change and as it is in the middle, I still have the time to do some remedial work and have for example more practice on certain aspects.

M: Have you ever received certain complaints from colleagues?

Mi: Not in my face Jalaja. And if it was the case, I wouldn't pay attention, I'm not interested in them.

M: In your experience. What is the role of the English Department in the Faculty of languages?

Mi: Well, I have been president and secretary in The English Department, before being president I was a member. In the first sessions, well you may find something which is interesting, and you can learn a lot from your colleagues and use this knowledge in your classes and in theory it has many benefits to work in The English Department, however, not everybody is interested and not everybody participates. The reality is that 50% or less of the people in The English Department participates in an active way and not in the meetings because everybody can attend the meetings but then the teachers don't work. I think the reason has to do with being a permanent or a non-permanent teacher in the Faculty. A permanent teacher can devote part of their time to The English Department because their payment includes these types of activities, I have always been a non-permanent teacher and the time that I have devoted to The English Department has been my free time and I have heard full time teachers complaining about the meetings and they don't go if the meeting is not in their working times. I think it is really unfair, permanent teachers sometimes don't work on projects which don't benefit their work as permanent teachers and as a non-permanent teacher you invest your time and money, and it is never paid. I really think that we need to cultivate this identity and a solution could be to promote that more teachers stay for a longer time in the same Society, because some teachers jump from one Society to another every term and in this form, you cannot create an identity with The English Department you belong to. I also understand that for the authorities it is important to see the work and participation in the Academy because this is how they see that teachers are working.

M: What strategies did you use when you were president of The English Department and wanted to integrate new teachers?

Mi: It is really important, because you learn and you have everybody's opinions and I always say: wow, that's interesting! And you take advantage of this interchange of opinions and many things which are mentioned in The English Department can also be used in your classes. However, if you don't attend the meetings in The English Department, well you miss many aspects which can be beneficial to your classes and the same work of The English Department. The problem is that there are no real consequences if you don't attend such meetings and many teachers say: well, it doesn't matter if I don't go to the meeting, this is particularly true with teachers with only one lesson.

M: How do you consider your teaching has evolved since your first lessons?

Mi: I think a lot. Outside the class I don't socialise much with the students but in the classroom, we have a very good relationship. For example, this week a student told me: "Hey Miguel somebody had told me that you were super strict and demanding and honestly they are really relaxed" and I think it has to do with the lesson I am teaching, for example this student is taking a remedial workshop, that's why it is more relaxed and the students are really hard-working, they are punctual, they do all the exercises, they

are really responsible students. So, I always tell them that I don't need to be pressing them and reminding them about all the tasks. It also depends on the school; it is not the same to teach at CELe and at the Faculty of languages. For example, in CELe, I don't tell students that this is an adverb or passive voice, as long as they can express themselves, there is no problem, on the other hand, in the Faculty of languages I do ask them about all this because they are getting prepared and trained to be teachers and translators and they need to know all these aspects of the English language. But what I can affirm is that when I started teaching English I used to be stricter. I have to tell you that I have had difficult experiences about being strict, for example, there was this school and I had a group with 8 students and half of them didn't pass the course and in the next course I discovered that all of them had passed. When I talked to the coordinator about this situation, she told me: "After you left, the students repeated the exam and they all passed" and I thought, of course this is business, they don't care about the learning of the students. The following course, well I didn't really care about the grades, I taught my classes well and everything, but my grades were high. I also remember that many years ago, I was teaching in the Faculty of Medicine, which I didn't like and I worked one semester and never came back. I also worked two years in the Faculty where I studied my BA. I wanted to teach in the Faculty of Administration because I wanted to pay back somehow everything that I had learnt there, however, I realise that the students there are very different from CELe and Faculty of languages, or A, for example, the students who study languages is because they are interested, they are not forced to take this class and students are always motivated and that makes your job as a teacher a lot easier.

M: When you started teaching English formally. What was the reaction of your family and friends?

Mi: Well, for example, when I started in the Faculty, many students assumed that I could also speak French because they thought I had studied Languages, they thought that you spoke many languages because you were teaching there jajaja. And to tell you the truth, I was ashamed of not speaking French and I started attending French lessons, but honestly, I didn't like it and I quitted, but even now I questioned myself for not speaking more foreign languages. And well, on the other hand, people don't really understand what it is really like being a non-permanent teacher, for example, you are a permanent teacher and I don't know for sure, but I have the impression that you invest your 40 hours to design programmes, prepare lessons, and so on. We have to use our free time to do that, for example many times at weekends and we have to do it at our houses, because we don't have an office. Well, I'm not trying to justify myself, but I think we are missing this part of professionalisation. For example, what I do with my students is to use the professional jargon regarding teaching or methodology, I don't do it with colleagues because it sounds "snobbish". I do that in the Faculty of languages, for example with talking about rubrics, distractors, items, but I never do it in CELe, because the students there don't need to know that terminology. Look, some years ago I was working in a project with an important linguist from abroad and once as we were talking we asked me: "and how many lessons do you teach?" and I told him that 30 or 35 hours per week, and he said "that's impossible" and sometimes I teacher even more hours and he also asked me "when do you prepare your lessons?", at his University it was impossible to teach these many hours, it is just impossible but here in Mexico we do it because we need that income to maintain our families, so you need to look for different options in different schools.

M: I wouldn't be able to do it, not anymore.

Mi: Yes, it is extremely tiring. I have just started some classes for lawyers, and it is a basic level (A2), and I haven't taught this basic level for a long time, there are 14 students

and well you know, the class is on Mondays evenings and everybody comes to class super tired and it's Monday and I don't understand a thing. The first class was really difficult because I was too dynamic and I wanted them to move and everything and honestly, lately my classes focus on certifications and advanced levels and the dynamics are different, the teacher is more passive, because for example they can read, you organise them and they do most of the work, but in basic levels, it's almost impossible to do this, in an A2 level the activities tend to be shorter, you need to keep changing. The good thing is that you cannot get bored because you change your groups very often, every group is also different. The human aspect of teaching is really important and, in my case, it motivates me to keep me interested and prepare myself. For example, the other day, students ask me, in the Faculty of Languages, about my ideal class and to start with my ideal class is not a punctual one or that everybody does homework, no. For me, an ideal group is the one who is integrated, and everybody collaborates and you have a good relationship with them. I have had very responsible groups, but everybody has a "bad face" (he apologises for saying this) and they don't talk to each other, they are really serious, I mean, they do learn but maybe an ideal class would be a combination of both styles. Unfortunately, most of the time, you have a combination of both types of students, there is always the "sparkling" one and that relaxes the class, but you also have the students who don't understand a word and you ask for help with the ones who know. You may also have the group of girls who are always laughing or the one who is sweating because has just finished a basketball game. The variety of personalities can give you good dynamics in your class.

M: And how would you define yourself when someone asks you what you do for a living?

Mi: OK, I always say that I am a poor English language teacher Jalaja. Yes, I think that's how people know me, because if I mention that I have an MA in Linguistics, they always ask me: and what for? Jajaja. Yes, of course, it also depends on who's asking, because I work for the university, but it's not the only place where I work. I also work for CENEVAL, I do consultancy for some schools, and I also work for the University of Cambridge in the exams division.

M: Well, it was a pleasure, thank you Miguel.

Mi: You're very welcome, but I would like to add something. The fact of working with young people can help you a lot, because for example, I usually ask my wife: "who looks older, Memo or I?", well Memo, that is, I believe that it is something very general but pay attention that people who work with younger people look younger.

M: I had never thought of that

Mi: Yes, for example your taste in Music is different. In class when the students talk about a song or a band, well that forces you to find out and be updated. For example, when Backstreet Boys was popular I used to teach a class for young girls and I used to prepare my lessons with songs from the Backstreet Boys because if I brought songs of my music they said: no way, it's awful, Jalaja. I told them but the Backstreet Boys suck jajaja, but we did activities and they enjoyed them and that's the most important thing.

M: It's true, thank you.

Luke's interview

M. Me gustaría empezar con algunas preguntas acerca de tus estudios. ¿Tú qué estudiaste en la Universidad?

De entrada, no es una Universidad propiamente dicho, yo estudié en el Instituto de Intérpretes y Traductores, entonces es una Institución digamos pequeña, tiene ya una trayectoria más o menos larga y, pero no entra en la descripción de universidad como la entendemos nosotros a pesar de que el grado es un grado de licenciatura aquí es donde yo me formé. Yo entré la verdad sin vocación a estudiar la carrera de interpretación porque yo veía en la televisión cuando salía la intérprete de los presidentes y yo estaba fascinado cómo podían pasar al otro idioma de manera así inmediata ¿no?, entonces yo siempre he sabido que soy una persona muy nerviosa, entonces cometí el error de creer que la carrera te da la vocación y eso no es así, entonces yo me metí y descubrí que pasé la carrera, la hice bien y todo pero no era para mí y de hecho durante mucho tiempo trabajé como intérprete y me iba bien, podía más o menos sostenerme con esto, pero no la pasé bien, la noche antes de ir a interpretar sufría mucho, no dormía, estaba con el estómago deshecho, no, no era para mí, entonces al mismo tiempo de que estaba estudiando la carrera yo empecé a dar clases de lengua por una razón chistosa, yo entré allí, estaba como en el tercer año de la carrera, no recuerdo, o segundo año a la mitad de la carrera que era de cuatro años, había turno en la mañana y turno en la tarde, una profesora se embarazó y su bebé y ya iba a dar a luz ella y entonces pues se iba la señora ¿no?, entonces alguien contó el chisme –la escuela era muy pequeñita-, de que yo hablaba francés y entonces necesitaban un maestro de francés para principiantes, entonces siendo alumno me dijeron que si quería dar clases yo, sin la formación, en la tarde, a los alumnos de la tarde de francés y pues yo, siempre me ha gustado viajar y lo vi como una oportunidad para tener dinero y poder viajar, porque no tenía dinero y fue mi primer sueldo, mi primer trabajo y me abalancé sobre la oportunidad, sin saber sin nada y tomé las clases, por fortuna me dieron un material para trabajar que era el mismo que yo había estudiado y me conocía las unidades y todo eso y me fue bien, la verdad me fue bien, y después de manera paralela al programa de licenciatura que tenían ahí eran dos licenciaturas: en interpretación y en traducción y había una especie como de Departamento de inglés que daba servicios al público para aprender inglés, entonces me ofrecieron también ahí que me metiera a dar inglés, entonces ya tenía mi trabajo como maestro de francés y como maestro de inglés, y así empecé a trabajar ahí, pero me lanzaron al ruedo y yo aproveché nada más la verdad porque tenía ganas de ganar dinero.

M. Entonces me dices que no era tu sueño o tu vocación estudiar eso, ¿Qué querías estudiar realmente?

La verdad, la verdad, lo que yo hubiera querido estudiar, pero mis papás me dijeron que estaba loco, cuando tenía 15 años yo estudiaba música, estudiaba violín, pero no porque me gustara el violín, a mí me gustaba el chelo, pero no había un solo maestro de cello en la ciudad donde yo vivía, en Irapuato, entonces no me quedó más que la segunda mejor opción que era el violín, pero yo quería estudiar chelo, entonces yo les dije al terminar la secundaria, yo no quiero ir a la prepa, quiero estudiar chelo y me dijeron que estaba loco y entonces no hubo, pero yo hubiera querido estudiar eso, pero también a mí me gustaban mucho los idiomas, inglés, francés, me gustaban mucho, de hecho cuando empecé a dar clases yo sé que nunca pensé que iba a terminar siendo maestro de lenguas ni nada, pero me gustan los idiomas, entonces soy feliz haciéndolo.

M. Y ¿recuerdas tus primeras clases?, ¿cómo te sentías? ¿Cómo planeaste tus primeras clases?

La clase era un método, mira yo creo que tengo un estilo de aprendizaje auditivo, entonces mi método era audiovisual, entonces era muy memorístico en el sentido de aprenderse los dialoguitos, luego quitaban el sonido de las imágenes y tenías que reproducir el sonido tú y a mí se me facilitaba eso, entonces cuando llegué el primer día de clase los alumnos en la tarde era gente que trabajaba y eran adultos más grandes que yo y entonces cuando yo llego el primer día un tipo me dice: "a mí no me gusta eso" cuando saqué la proyección, le dije "no espérame mira no lo has visto así" y me costó trabajo convencerlos de que sí funcionaba el método este y al final de cuentas sí, no fue tan fácil, y sobre todo tenía que lidiar con el rechazo de que me veían como alumno en la mañana y de que daba clases ahí mismo y es pues sí poco ético, más bien por la Institución, pero mira si me hubieran dicho vas a tener chamba de medio tiempo en Starbucks en aquella época, si es que hubiera existido, lo habría aceptado porque yo quería estudiar y quería trabajar para poder hacer cosas, eso era lo que yo quería hacer y esa fue la oportunidad y la tomé.

M. Y tu sentías un poco el rechazo de los alumnos, pero ¿Qué pasaba con los demás maestros?

Sí sentía el rechazo, sobre todo, no tanto en las clases de inglés, porque eso era un nivel más de lengua, el otro era una materia de licenciatura, el equipo de formación de francés sí como que veían este es un extraño, es un advenedizo, pero el problema se agravó porque me fue muy bien, me fue mejor que a los otros maestros que estaban como que con mayor formación y todo y me ayudó porque siempre he pensado en las clases estas de lengua en la idea de que si yo como profesor me aburro, los que me están oyendo deben estar el doble de aburridos, entonces llevaba mucho material, muchas actividades y lo trataba de hacer a mi entender, sin formación ni nada, más ameno, dinámico y más participativo y entonces empecé a ver los resultados y los muchachos se sorprendían que estaban aprendiendo y yo mismo vi que estaban sacando resultados, sacaban sus exámenes bien y entonces me fue bien y eso complicó más las cosas porque como que empezó a haber más recelo, más celo entre los compañeros del grupo de francés, mmm y después esa gente más grande se fue retirando, se fueron saliendo y entonces ocupé el lugar que tenían ellos, fui alcanzando más trayectoria, ¿no? en esas clases y así fue empecé a trabajar y después dejé las clases de inglés, llegué incluso a ser coordinador de esa digamos servicio al público de inglés y después vi que la coordinación no servía para nada porque era mucha responsabilidad sin toma de decisiones y lo dejé, pero me sirvió mucho de experiencia y eh, después de que finalmente acabé la carrera, me tardé mucho en acabar la carrera, la dejé a la mitad por razones personales así medio traumáticas, entonces la dejé y después reinicié la carrera y después de que volví a la escuela me di cuenta de que si no tenías un título universitario pero más serio, no servía para nada tu formación, entonces hice una maestría, pero ya había dejado las clases de inglés y ya estaba del lado de las humanidades

M. ¿En qué fue tu maestría?

La hice la maestría en Humanidades, una que ofrecía la Anahuac, pero me gustó porque no tenía que ir hasta la Anahuac, entonces era como una zona intermedia, no tenía que llegar hasta allá, iba a la escuela a la maestría esta que ofrecía el Instituto Helénico, iba dos veces a la semana y me encantó, porque leí muchísimo, libros que jamás yo hubiera seleccionado por cuenta propia, sino por orientación de los maestros y me abrió los ojos, esa maestría cambió mi vida completamente, fue una cosa muy, muy bonita, porque me hizo ver que había cosas muy, muy importantes, cosas más allá, yo estaba muy encerrado en mi mundito doy mi clasecita y toda, y no había un avance en mi vida, estaba muy encerrado en lo que llaman ahora "mi zona de confort" estaba muy encerrado ahí, y al estudiar la maestría había que entregar trabajos, había que hacer muchas lecturas, tuve profesores muy buenos y entonces eso fue muy valioso y aparte enriqueció mi propia

formación como maestro de lengua, porque empecé a ver que podía dar asuntos de literatura de inglés o francés que jamás hubiera considerado sin esa formación, entonces complementó lo que yo ya estaba haciendo en la práctica.

M. Entonces, ¿nunca has dejado de dar clases?

Nunca, empecé el 9 de mayo de 1983 y había hecho pininos antes porque fue muy esporádico, pero desde el 83 hasta esta mañana de abril del 2016 no he parado y he trabajado a ritmos muy pesados sí hasta hace dos años trabajaba 72 horas a la semana y siempre he trabajado así, siempre, siempre, siempre. Entonces, no me afecta, no me quejo.

M. Ahora pláticame ¿cómo llegaste a la facultad de lenguas?

Llegué de la manera más curiosa, llegué por razones que sí vienen al caso pero que son muy largas de platicar hubo conflictos en la Institución en donde yo trabajaba, los chamacos estaban yéndose a huelga, fue un relajo y entonces empezó la Institución como que a querer sacar a todos los maestros viejos y borrón y cuenta nueva y yo ya era uno de esos viejos, bueno viejo porque llevaba 16 años trabajando con ellos y afortunadamente ya había terminado mi carrera y ya no estaba yo a gusto allí y vine a Toluca porque los padres de mi esposa viven aquí en Toluca, entonces pues era el lugar, cerca del DF –ahora ciudad de México- y toda la cosa pues me vine para acá y fui a tocar puertas y estoy muy agradecido por ello al Instituto CENCA, una preparatoria, y me ofrecieron clases de literatura y entonces dije perfecto, porque acababa de terminar la maestría y tenía una salida a lo que había estudiado y al mismo tiempo clases de inglés, o sea tenía las dos cosas en las que me había estado formando o trabajando y este mi cuñada me dijo, oye si estás buscando trabajo yo estaciono mi coche pirata, o sea sin permiso, en el estacionamiento de un lugar en donde creo que dan clases de idiomas y era la Facultad de Lenguas, entonces me dijo en dónde era y entonces vine y entregué mi currículum, me dijeron que me esperara un rato y me ofrecieron una clase para preparar para el examen de First, y entonces fue mi entrada y nada más eran clascitas para un grupo de First y después una maestra curiosamente que también estaba embarazada y que dejó sus clases y todo, y otra maestra que pidió permiso para hacer la maestría, entonces dejaron dos vacantes que debían llenar, entonces fue donde yo pude entrar gracias a que ellas tuvieron que dejar sus clases y gracias a que me dijeron que aquí daban clases de idiomas, entonces llegué aquí como por accidente porque me dijo mi cuñada, entonces me metí aquí y tuve suerte porque al poco tiempo entré como medio tiempo y después se hizo tiempo completo y después pues ya me dieron la definitividad.

M. Y ¿tuviste algún problema por no tener la carrera de docencia o enseñanza del inglés?

No, porque en un principio me dieron clases del área de traducción y como yo tengo formación de intérprete, bueno pues intérprete-traductor, y además a lo largo de la carrera llevé muchas materias de traducción, ya que esta era una materia obligatoria entonces yo entendía del asunto y además al mismo tiempo que estuve trabajando en México también traduje durante mucho tiempo, y traducía cosas que no me gustaban pero de ahí salía para los gastos cuestiones como: el manual del microondas, contratos y esas cosas feas pero había trabajo de traducción, entonces lo hice durante mucho tiempo y sabía cómo funcionaba esto y además durante la carrera también había dado clases de traducción, entonces me sentí como que la transición fue menos traumática de lo que yo hubiera imaginado, ¿no? Y así empecé.

M. Y ¿alguna vez has estudiado un Diplomado, un curso de docencia de lenguas?

No, la verdad no

M. Y ¿tú no has visto la necesidad de hacerlo?

Pues, sí, sí he visto la necesidad, pero ya estoy tan metido en esto dando las cosas, tantos años, son más de 30, que siento como que ya no tendría la disposición mental para meterme en esas cosas, entonces me daría mucha pereza, confieso que sí tengo muchas deficiencias y que hay cuestiones técnicas y asuntos de metacognición y pedagogía que desconozco, pero pues no sé, sí debería hacerlo pero ahorita estoy interesado en otras cosas, por ejemplo me gustaría también seguir con el área de literatura y este pero sí debería regresar algún día por ahí.

M. Y ¿alguna vez te has sentido discriminado por alumnos o colegas por no tener la formación en docencia de lenguas?

No, para nada, no, nunca, en este caso como mi licenciatura es de lenguas aunque no es de docencia de lenguas, la verdad me ha ayudado mucho y yo me abrí camino en un principio en el área de traducción y ya después se abrió hacia lenguas, quizás por la necesidad de que no había muchos maestros y ahí, pero yo me he hecho sobre la marcha, y evidentemente es una deficiencia mía, yo debía formarme más y todo esto, pero pues ya estoy encarrilado en este asunto, ya no voy a empezar desde abajo otra vez pues ya estoy aquí.

M. Ahora vamos a platicar sobre el trabajo colegiado, ¿Cómo ves que funciona el Departamento de inglés?

Pues yo creo, que tradicionalmente desde que yo estoy aquí –ya llevo 16 años- es de las que mejor funcionan porque trabajan con muy marcada regularidad y a pesar de que no se llega a acuerdos, eso sí es una deficiencia todos dicen: “hay que hacer”, “hay que”, pero nadie dice “yo hago”, cuando menos sí hay un diálogo abierto y hay interacciones entre los diferentes miembros de la Departamento e incluso aunque no se llega a algún acuerdo, por lo menos está abierto el diálogo y sí hay actividad, hay bastante actividad, considero que es de las que mejor funcionan.

M. ¿Qué importancia tiene el trabajo del Departamento?

Mira, quizás en algún momento sí fue importante, pero ahora ya no. Por ejemplo, hay Departamentos aquí en la facultad que llevan más de un año sin reunirse y que es importante que existan y no pasa nada, entonces yo creo que sí se le debería dar la importancia, debería ser, debería tener un valor, pero en la práctica no ocurre porque no se si internamente o por alguna razón, la propia gente no valora eso, sí es importante que existan y se reúnan, pero pues ni modo, por eso digo que la de inglés es una excepción, con todo y sus deficiencias ¿no?

M. ¿Cómo se integran los nuevos maestros?

Yo he tenido contacto con algunos de ellos, porque algo que me ha ayudado en mi docencia del inglés es que yo sí me he preocupado por mejorar mi nivel de inglés, quizás no por la parte más pedagógica o más didáctica, por ejemplo yo presenté mi primer Proficiency en el noventa y algo, y lo hice nada más para acompañar a la que en aquél entonces era mi novia, para que no lo hiciera sola y me fue bien, pero yo quería una mejor calificación, entonces volví a tomarlo y me fue muy bien y siempre he tenido esa preocupación de que mi inglés esté bien, obviamente no es de nativo y yo se que tengo errores porque pues no soy hablante nativo y todo lo que se quiera pero si me he preocupado mucho por tener mi inglés como si fuera mi instrumento de trabajo que funcione, que sea mi herramienta de trabajo. Entonces me han tocado alumnos que son profesores aquí que están tomando algunos de mis cursos y entonces cuando están

tomando por ejemplo el nivel de Proficiency, pues el simple hecho de que estén preocupándose por tomar una certificación a ese nivel ya habla bien de ellos, porque siento que hay ese interés por mejorar su nivel y su materia prima, entonces eso es bueno. También es bueno, hay cursos como los de CAE, aunque yo sí diría que si vas a dar Docencia en una facultad, el nivel de CAE, o que apenas lo estés preparando, no se me hace el nivel de lengua adecuado que debería esperarse de un docente a nivel licenciatura, pero también es loable que el joven o el profesor se esté preparando para mejorar su nivel de inglés, eso es lo que me parece saludable.

M. Y ¿qué opinión tienes de la gran cantidad de profesores (como yo) en esta facultad que provienen de otras áreas del conocimiento?

Yo no lo veo mal, pero ahora que lo dices y hace rato que me preguntaste pues quizás uno no se da cuenta de ese rechazo, quizás lo digan a espaldas a espaldas de uno, pero honestamente y eso sí lo quiero decir con toda la insolencia y la vanidad del mundo me ha tocado ver que muchos de los egresados de esta facultad que, perdón si digo cosas que ofenden o no caen bien pero voy a decirlo, salen de aquí y empiezan a dar clases y si comparamos el nivel de lengua que poseen personas que están dando inglés aquí pero que vienen de licenciaturas como Letras, Economía o Interpretación, la verdad tienen mucho mejor inglés quienes vienen de fuera que los que están formados aquí y son productos de la propia facultad y eso es grave, lo mejor debería salir de aquí y no lo que viene de fuera, si tuviéramos que hacer un examen, y ya no una apreciación subjetiva si tu examinas las Certificaciones de dominio de lengua que tienen estas personas que vienen de otra profesión, vas a ver que en su mayoría, si tu tomas 10 de ellos tienen Proficiency y si comparas con egresados de aquí que están fungiendo como profesores de lengua, vas a ver qué difícilmente tienen el CAE, entonces eso pues no habla muy bien, y quizás no nos damos cuenta y de espaldas, se quejan que: ¿por qué da clases? ¿con qué derecho? Pues sí, pero quizás no tenga el papel o lo que tu tengas, pero algo rescatable es la experiencia, hay gente que tienen muchos años dando clases, tiene la experiencia y yo creo que no puedes tirar a la basura a pesar de que no tenga un papel que avalé que tomó tal curso: el TKT o lo que sea, pero tiene muchos años en la práctica demostrada y tienen buen dominio del inglés, quizás pueda ser un buen contendiente de peso contra alguien que recién egresa que no tiene una Certificación en inglés, a pesar de que pueda tener sus Certificaciones en Docencia, ¿no? Entonces la experiencia yo creo que es algo valioso. Por ejemplo, en administraciones anteriores se pedía una certificación CAE para dar clases de inglés y eso yo lo veía bien, yo creo que si ya no existe eso es un error muy grave, mira tu no puedes dar lo que tu mismo no tienes, entonces si tu nivel de conocimientos no es el adecuado pues tu no puedes elevar el nivel de tus alumnos o puedes hacerlo hasta un cierto punto, pero va a llegar un momento en el que tus conocimientos van a quedar rebasados, entonces tú mismo te limitas a dar niveles básicos por ejemplo, y eso es una limitante porque por ejemplo cuando las personas que están armando la plantilla de profesores buscan quiénes puedan dar los niveles de lengua avanzados, pues se van a encontrar con que no tienen muchos profesores y un problema que yo veo gravísimo aquí es este, pero quizás no tenga una solución fácil es que por ejemplo en mi licenciatura cuando yo estudié, yo tuve que hacer un examen de ingreso que era más o menos equivalente al CAE, cuando los alumnos salen de aquí después de los años de licenciatura, no alcanzan la certificación real de Advanced, entonces salen con un medio First, así tambaleándose y entonces eso cierra muchas puertas a los egresados, entonces yo por eso sí diría que sí es importante que se exija un muy buen nivel de lengua por parte de los docentes, que se les exija, entonces el hecho de que esto ya no sea un requisito para las clases de lengua me parece que es incorrecto, yo creo que sí se les debería de exigir.

M. Muchos que estudiamos otras licenciaturas, empezamos a dar clases como hobby o para tener un dinero extra, ¿te arrepientes de haberte ido por la

docencia de lenguas?

No, de la única cosa que me podría arrepentir, aunque arrepentir es un verbo que yo no uso mucho, es el hecho de que frené mis estudios de licenciatura por un tiempo largo, eso sí, que debí haber aprovechado el tiempo y debí haberme formado pues sin frenos, pero para nada me arrepiento de la carrera de lenguas, disfruto mucho lo que hago, por ejemplo, hoy, al rato tengo una clase en sábado, mucha gente en sábado no toca un pizarrón, no pone un pie en el salón de clases y yo llevo mi clase de los sábados y curiosamente es una de las que más disfruto, ayer viernes por la tarde todo mundo puede pensar en ir al cine, yo estoy dando una clase de las que más gusto y satisfacción tengo que es la de Proficiency para profesores que quieren certificarse, entonces ni me arrepiento sino que lo disfruto muchísimo y al mismo tiempo pienso que si a ti se te pasa el tiempo volando a tus alumnos también, si a ti te parece que la clase es una lápida o que llevas una losa en la espalda, peor para ellos, entonces no me arrepiento, quizás que sí pude haber hecho es que debí haberme formado mejor, en un comienzo y sumar digamos la formación teórica con la experiencia y todo y sería un bonito matrimonio pero ya yo siento que ya es muy tarde y además ya me da mucha flojera ahorita andar leyendo a Krashen y a todos esos señores, entonces yo disfruto más, hice mi doctorado después en literatura y en humanidades y me encanta la literatura y me encanta dar clases de lengua con la vertiente de literatura por ejemplo, entonces pues por ahí he logrado un maridaje de las dos cosas de las humanidades con las lenguas y estoy muy contento con eso, no y me siento feliz con mi trabajo, yo soy profesor de la Universidad y me formé en el área de literatura y de las lenguas y me gusta mi perfil.

M. Y ¿qué disfrutas más de dar clases?

Me gusta mucho dar clases a nivel de proficiency de lengua porque las otras yo creo que me aburriría muchísimo si las diera, además hace muchos años que no lo hago por cierto, tratando de explicar en can, to, los colores a niveles básicos por ejemplo, yo creo que a estas alturas me costaría mucho trabajo empezar por ahí y me gusta mucho el nivel de inglés avanzado porque nunca dejas de aprender, entonces muchas cosas que estás enseñando, también las estás aprendiendo porque pues nunca dejas de aprender y otras que tenías las estás activando y el material es un desafío, entonces eso me gusta, me encantan las clases de nivel avanzado y de proficiency de lengua y me gusta mucho dar clases de literatura, de libros que yo he gozado y que quisiera contagiar ese gusto a los alumnos.

M. Muchas gracias, ¿quisieras agregar algo?

No, al contrario, gracias a ti por la entrevista.

Luke's transcript

M Hello, thank you for the interview. I would like to start by asking you about your studies at the University. What did you study at the University?

L Well, to start with, I didn't study in a University properly speaking. I studied in the Institute of Translators and Interpreters so, it is, let's say a small Institute with a more or less long trajectory but it is not a University as we understand it, however, I did receive a BA in translation and interpretation. To be honest, I started studying for my degree without any vocation. I chose this BA because I saw on TV the interpreters of the presidents and I was fascinated how they could switch from one language to another one in an instant. So, I have always known that I am a nervous person, and I made the mistake to think that the degree provides you with the vocation and that's not true. I entered the school, and I discovered that I passed all the subjects, and I did it well, but I discovered that was not for me. And, in fact, I worked many years as an interpreter and

I made good money, I could more or less pay my expenses with that money, but I was not enjoying my work. The night before the interpretation I couldn't sleep, I had stomach aches and no it was not for me, then at the same time that I was studying the BA, I started to teach English due to a coincidence. I was in the third year of the BA, I don't remember well, but a teacher had asked for maternity leave and somebody told this teacher that I spoke French and they needed a French language teacher for a beginner's class, then as I was a student they asked me if I wanted to teach French, I had never had any training for teaching, but they offered me this course in the afternoon and well, I have always loved travelling and I thought, it was a good opportunity to have some income because I didn't have money and I could use this money to travel and these classes represented my first salary, my first job and said yes immediately. Without any experience or notion of teaching a language. Fortunately, they gave some material, a book and it was the same book that I studied when I was a student, so I was familiarised with the units and honestly, the classes went really well. Later, as in the Institute they had two degrees: one in Interpretation and another one in Translation, so they had some kind of Association of English, and they offered courses and other services to the general public, then they asked me if I wanted to teach English, I already had my job as a French language teacher and I also accepted and that's how I started teaching English, but they sent me without any previous knowledge but I liked it and I consider I did a good job but I must confess that I accepted because it meant to have some extra money.

M You are telling me that you were not really keen on studying that. What did you want to study?

L To be really honest I would have liked to have studied but my parents told me that I was crazy, when I was 15 I used to study Music violin, but I didn't like the violin, I wanted to play the cello, but there wasn't a teacher of cello in the city where I used to live, in Irapuato, so, the second option was the violin, but I wanted to learn to play the violin so, when I finished secondary school I told them that I didn't want to continue with high school, I wanted to learn how to play cello, my parents told me that I was crazy so I couldn't. On the other hand, I also enjoy learning languages, English, French. I really like them. In fact, when I started teaching, I knew I had never thought I was going to end up teaching languages, but I like languages so I am really happy teaching them.

M. And do you remember your first classes? ¿How did you feel? ¿How did you plan your first classes?

L. The class was a method. Look, I think I have an auditory learning style, so I used to memorise everything I used to memorise the dialogues then I took off the sound from the images and you had to reproduce the sound. I found that methodology ideal for me, so when I started with my classes, I had a group of older people who had to work in the morning and studied English in the afternoon. In my first class a guy told me: "I don't like that" and it was hard for me to convince them that the methodology did work, it wasn't easy but in the end, they realised that they were learning. I also had to deal with the fact that I was a student in the morning and a teacher in the afternoons, and maybe it wasn't ethical, but look, if at that time somebody had offered me to serve coffee in Starbucks, if it had existed I would have said yes, because I wanted to study but also I wanted to have money to do other stuff. I had the opportunity, and I took it.

M. And you felt the rejection from the students, but what about the other teachers?

L Yes, I felt that rejection, not so much, in the English class but in the French group of teachers. I'm sure, they thought that I was a kind of arrivistic, an alien, but to make matters worse, I had excellent results and comments from my students, I did it better than the rest of teachers who had more experience and more qualifications and I

have always had the idea that as a teacher if you get bored well, for sure the students will be double bored. What I did was to take lots of extra material, many activities. I tried to have a class which was interesting and entertaining, I had no training as a language teacher but I always did that and it worked for me. So, the fact that the students got good results in their exams came to complicate even more the situation because the rest of the teachers were even more jealous, mmm, yes, in the group of French teachers. After some time, the teachers with longer trajectories were getting retired and I occupied the position these teachers left. And I started to have more and more French courses and I abandoned the English lessons. Sometime later I was in charge of the Coordination, but I realised that being coordinator was something I wasn't really interested in. I had many responsibilities, lots of stress but I couldn't make the real decisions, so I decided not to continue. However, I learnt a lot, it was a very useful experience and when I finally finished the BA, well, it took me many years to finish the BA, because I dropped out in the middle of the BA. It was for personal reasons. It was a little bit traumatic, so I left it and after some time, I came back because I realised that without a degree you cannot do much. It was then, when I decided to study for a Master's Degree, and also to start teaching subjects related to Humanities.

M Which MA did you study?

L I did the MA in Humanities, it was an MA offered by the Anahuac University but the venue to take the lessons was in the Instituto Helénico. I remember, I had to attend lessons twice a week, and I have to say that I really loved it because I read a lot. I read books that I would have never chosen but the teachers recommended. I can honestly say that this MA opened my eyes, it changed my life completely. It was an incredible experience because it made me realise that in the world there are many important things beyond your lessons. I was so involved in my classes that I couldn't see beyond. At that moment I felt that I was in my comfort zone and when I decided to study the MA, well, I had to write essays and do homework, I had to read a lot. I felt alive again. I felt this MA enriched my life, personally and professionally, I had excellent teachers. I also realised that I could teach others subjects apart from languages. I started to teach Literature as well, both in English and in French. I really believe that I would have never taught these subjects without this training in the MA.

M Have you ever stopped teaching?

L No, never. I started on May 8th, 1983, and since then, I have never stopped. And I have to confess that at times, I have worked far too many hours. Two years ago, I decided to slow down a little bit because I was teaching 72 hours per week, but I am used to this rhythm, so I don't complain, I never complain.

L And how did you start teaching at the Faculty of Languages?

M It was really peculiar how I started. To cut a long story short, I started to have conflicts in the Institute I was working for. The students were on strike and the Institute decided to get rid of the older teachers and start over with new teachers. I had been working for 16 years with them and honestly, I was not happy anymore. So, I decided to move from Mexico city to this city (where the participants work). I decided to come to this city because my parents-in-law live here and it is also a city that is close to the capital city and I decided to come here and I started to look for a job. I found classes in a private high school and I am really thankful to them because I started to teach Literature and English lessons with them. One day, my sister-in-law told me: hey, I parked my car in a place where they teach languages and it turned out to be the Faculty of Languages, I have no idea how she could park her car here without permission (laughs). I decided to hand in my CV and they told me that I had to wait for an opportunity because they were in the middle of the semester. However, they offered a course to prepare students for

the FCE Cambridge exam. I started with a few hours, and then a teacher asked for maternity leave and I took her classes and almost at the same time, another teacher left her classes and they had two vacancies and I was fortunate because I started as a part-time teacher. Some years later as a full-time teacher and finally I was given tenure.

N **And did you ever have any problem for not having the BA in English language teaching?**

L: No, because at the beginning, I started with Translation classes, not with English and remember that my BA is in Translation and Interpretation. I can say that I was an expert because I had also worked as an interpreter and a translator. I translated many things which were really boring, for example: how to use the microwave oven or contracts or things like that, but I had to do it because they were the kinds of things which were available. I did it for many years and I knew how this worked and even when it was a huge change, I felt comfortable teaching.

M: **Have you ever attended a course, or seminar on teaching?**

L: No, honestly not

M: **Have you ever felt the necessity of doing it?**

L: Yes, I have felt the need, but I am so immersed in doing what I do, look, I've been teaching English for more than 30 years, and I feel that I am mentally blocked to get into these things. I am really lazy about all these courses, I also confess that I many deficiencies and that there are many technical things and also methodological aspects which I don't know, but, well, I don't know, I know I should do it, but right now I'm interested in others topics, for example, I am interested in literature, but I do know I should do something about it.

M: **Have you ever been discriminated, either by students or colleagues, for not having the BA in languages?**

L: No, not at all. My BA is related to languages, not to teaching languages but it covered aspects related to languages. Honestly my BA has been really beneficial. I started making money thanks to this BA and then I started teaching languages, not English, I reckon that they offered me certain lessons because they didn't have a better option but I have learned through the experience you gain after many years teaching languages, I know it is a flaw that I have, I know I should have got training on teaching languages but It is too late to start from scratch.

M: **Ok. Now, I would like to discuss the role of The English Department in the Faculty of Languages. What's your opinion about The English Department?**

L: Well, traditionally, and in my experience, it is one of the best Departments. It works with certain regularity and despite the fact that many times there are no agreements on the planned work, because everybody says: "we must do, it needs to be done", but nobody says I'll do it, there is an open dialogue and there are different interactions among the members in The English Department and even when there isn't a final agreement, at least it is open to the dialogue and there is certain activity, that's why I consider it is one the best.

M: **What is the importance of The English Department in the Faculty?**

L: Look, maybe some time ago, it was important but not anymore. For example, there are Departments in the Faculty that haven't had a meeting in a year, and nothing happens, and this is not correct. The importance of The English Department is really great, unfortunately, in practice nothing happens. The same teachers don't understand

its importance, but we can't do anything if the authorities are not interested in them.

M: And how can a new teacher integrate The English Department?

L: Well, for example I have been in contact with some of the new teachers, because something that has really helped me in my teaching is the fact that I have been interested in improving my level of English, for example, my first proficiency dates back from the 1990's and I just did it to be with a girlfriend that I had, it was ok but I wanted to have a better grade so, I decided to sit the exam one more time and I did it well. It is something I have always been worried about, to improve my English, obviously I'm not a native speaker, and I know I make mistakes but the English language is my working tool so it must be as good as I can. So, I have seen teachers who are also my students in the certification courses, and this is something good because they are interested in improving their English.

M: And, what's your opinion that in this Faculty there are many teachers who come from other BAs?

L: I don't see any problem, but now that you mention it and that you have just asked me well, I don't know, maybe you don't notice the rejection, but there is probably a certain disagreement on the teachers who have this BA. Maybe behind your back they say things, but honestly and I want to say this with all the vanity I have seen many teachers from this Faculty and I'm sorry if I'm offending someone or people dislike my comments but if we compare their level of English with mine or yours well ours is much better. And that doesn't speak well of our Faculty, the best level of English must be from here, but unfortunately this is not true. If they complain about our right to be here, well, let's compare our certifications and then we talk. I know that I don't have a certificate, like TKT, which says that I know methodology, but I have the experience and you cannot discard this. For example, some years ago, in order to teach here, they asked to have CAE and that's good, nowadays I have no idea what the authorities consider to hire new teachers and that's serious, look you cannot offer what you don't have and if our teachers are not well prepared, we cannot expect our students to have an excellent level of English. The problem with our graduates is that maybe at first, they don't care but when the doors start to close when they ask for a job, that's when they realise they are ill-prepared.

M: Have you ever regretted not studying language teaching or methodology?

L: No, the only regret I have, and I don't use this verb frequently, is the fact that I interrupted my studies for some years. I should have used my time more wisely and I didn't do it, but no, I don't regret having studied what I studied. I really enjoy what I do, for example, later today I have a class on Saturday, and many people would never teach on a Saturday and I have been teaching English for many years on Saturdays and curiously enough it is my favourite class, yesterday afternoon I had a preparation course for Proficiency, and once again, many people would use their Friday afternoons for going to the movies and I teach a Proficiency course, which is one of the courses that more satisfaction gives me. I always think that if time flies when teaching, it's because you're enjoying it and I'm sure so do my students. I think that I could have started with my theoretical training earlier, but I don't regret it. I feel very lazy about reading Krashen and all those authors Jalaja. I did my PhD in Literature and in Humanities and I love it. I love to read, and I love teaching my English lessons and include aspects related to literature and I'm very happy about it. I am a teacher at the University, I had training in literature, and I teach languages, that's my profile.

M: And, what do you enjoy more about teaching?

L: I prefer teaching advanced levels because I consider that at basic levels I would get

really bored, plus I haven't done that for a long time. At an advanced level, I also learn a lot and many times the material you use is more challenging. I also teach literature and I always recommend books that I have really enjoyed and I would like that my students could feel the same passion I have for literature.

M: Thank you for this interview.

L: Not at all.

Max's interview

M. Gracias por la entrevista. Me gustaría empezar con algunas preguntas acerca de tus estudios universitarios. ¿Qué estudiaste Max?

Yo tengo la licenciatura de ingeniero industrial y de sistemas

M. ¿Y siempre quisiste estudiar eso?

Pues sí, bueno yo creo que siempre tuve una mala orientación vocacional, eh y nunca dudé que yo quería estudiar eso, eh y me di cuenta que no debí haberlo estudiado cuando me gradué, porque cuando me gradué me tuve que enfrentar a una decisión, yo ya cuando estudiaba ingeniería había iniciado casi en paralelo a dar clase de lengua en un centro de idiomas, entonces cuando yo me gradué de ingeniero yo ya había pasado por mi servicio social y prácticas profesionales que hice como ingeniero y ahí me di cuenta que no me gustaba estar en un ambiente de ingeniería en una fábrica, en una línea de ensamble, midiendo tiempos, trabajando con máquinas y no con personas. Entonces cuando yo me gradué de ingeniería tuve que tomar la decisión de irme a buscar trabajo como ingeniero o quedarme como maestro, incluso tuve como una intención así muy leve, como que fue la única que tuve de meter mi currículum para una empresa que fabricaba dulces en ese momento y por alguna razón afortunada no me seleccionaron, entonces me quedé dando clases en el centro de idiomas, me quedé dando clases en la misma Universidad donde estudié y me olvidé por completo de la ingeniería.

M Bueno, ahora pláticame ¿cómo fue que empezaste a dar clases?

Bueno, pues que yo empezara a dar clases fue una cuestión de azar. Yo estudié idiomas en el centro de idiomas de la Universidad y fui la segunda generación del centro de idiomas de la Universidad que obtuvimos en certificado del first de Cambridge en 1990 y la segunda generación éramos cinco, la primera generación eran tres, entonces realmente era muy poquita gente y la persona, el profesor que me, que nos capacitó para esta certificación era en ese momento el coordinador académico del centro de idiomas y también daba clases en el Tec donde yo estudié la carrera. Entonces, pasé mi first en diciembre del 90 y yo empecé a estudiar ingeniería en agosto del 90 y fue en enero del 91, o sea yo llevaba un semestre de ingeniero cuando me encontré a mi ex profesor del Tec, de idiomas en el Tec y me dijo: ¿oye, se me acaba de ir un profesor de idiomas, acaba de renunciar un maestro para una clase de inglés de beginners en la noche y no te gustaría tomarle y así apoyarte para pagar tus estudios"?, y yo le dije que sí, pues sí. No sabía yo a lo que me estaba enfrentando.

M. ¿Qué edad tenías?

Tenía 18 años, iba a cumplir 18 años, tenía 17, estaba a un mes de cumplir 18. Y entonces llegué a mi primera clase con adultos, un lunes en la noche, fue un 8 de enero, me acuerdo muy bien, lo tengo muy presente, y este, y yo la verdad es que estaba sorprendido porque yo era el más joven de la clase

¿no? Pero bueno, fue algo que me gustó, que disfruté y que bueno a partir de ahí siempre seguí dando clases, nunca interrumpí mi antigüedad en la Universidad.

M. ¿cómo diste tu clase?, ¿cómo te preparaste?

Pues no tenía ni idea, porque no tenía ningún estudio de docencia, es más ni siquiera me acuerdo de lo que hice, seguramente llegué a trabajar con el libro de texto y a seguir estrictamente lo que decía el libro de texto y nada más allá. Bueno era una clase de beginners, pero no recuerdo realmente qué tipo de preguntas me habrán hecho y cómo las habré contestado o resuelto las dudas de los alumnos, pero pues, seguramente lo hice bien porque me siguieron contratando después y a mí me gustó también hacerlo

M. ¿Y desde cuándo se convirtió en algo formal dar clases de inglés?

Pues mira, a mí me pasaron muchas cosas inconscientemente o por inocencia porque pues el verme certificado con el first tan joven me abrió las puertas para optar por otras certificaciones que el mismo CELe estaba promoviendo para sus profesores, entonces después del first, en el 92 se ofreció el COTE, el certificado para teachers, entonces para mí era un complemento muy importante porque pues sí como yo ya estaba como profesor pues tenía que entender un poco más qué estábamos haciendo. Entonces me metí al COTE y tuvimos la verdad una profesora magnífica, este con la que hicimos click muy rápido, que nos entendió muy bien lo que necesitábamos y que nos ayudó muchísimo en nuestra formación y realmente ella fue la que por primera vez en la vida me sembró como la semilla de lo que significa ser un docente profesional de idiomas, entonces yo tuve el COTE en el 92 y ya de ahí me seguí, presenté el CAE en el 94 y el Proficiency no se ofrecía todavía en Toluca, lo tuve que hacer en la ciudad de México en el 96 pero ya ese lo hice con toda conciencia porque yo ya estaba graduado de ingeniería, ya estaba definitivamente para seguirme como maestro.

M. ¿Y entonces cómo ha sido tu trayectoria como maestro?

Pues mi trayectoria ha sido sobre todo en la Universidad. Empecé en el centro de idiomas y después me pasé acá a la Facultad y paralelamente trabajé en el A en Toluca y en el A en México porque esta maestra que nos dio el COTE después fue directora de un anglo en la ciudad de México, entonces ella fue nuestro vínculo para tomar el Proficiency en el A y para dar unas clases en México, eh pues así, esas son las principales escuelas en donde he trabajado, después trabajé en muchos otros lados, en algunas escuelas pequeñas, dí clases de preparación para los exámenes de Cambridge y el TOEFL, trabajé en el Tec de Monterrey muchos años, cinco años estuve en el Tec de Monterrey eh...

M. ¿Siempre dando clases de inglés?

Siempre dando clases de inglés, hasta que empecé a prepararme para dar los cursos en la Licenciatura, aquí en la Facultad, ehh, ya dando más clases de áreas relacionadas con la lingüística como sintaxis del inglés por ejemplo que es la materia que realmente tuve que estudiar por mi cuenta.

M. Pero bueno, tienes la maestría en Lingüística

Pero empecé a dar clases de sintaxis antes de la maestría, si yo recuerdo que en aquel momento la subdirectora académica me mandó llamar y me dijo: "no tengo maestro para sintaxis" y le dije: no sé qué es eso (risas) y me dijo: "aquí está un libro, por favor échame la mano", y dije OK está bien y me puse a leer y empecé a dar clases de sintaxis así y ya desde entonces.

M. Y ¿desde cuándo te decidiste por la Facultad, hacer carrera aquí?

Pues es que tampoco decidí yo eso. Fue una cuestión muy rara porque cuando ya se crea la escuela de Lenguas formalmente, el Rector eh, pues decide dar algunos nombramientos de tiempo completo para que los profesores dieran el apoyo completo a la Facultad y pues por fortuna fui uno de los seleccionados, entonces me mandó llamar el Rector y he, me explicó de qué se trataba el proyecto de la Facultad y me ofreció la plaza, que yo en ese momento ni siquiera sabía qué significaba esa plaza de tiempo completo y pues si te llama el Rector pues no le puedes decir que no y entonces le dije que sí, yo sabía en ese momento que eso significaba separarse del CELe completamente, me dolió porque yo tenía muchos amigos muy queridos en el CELe que sabía que iba a dejar y me estaba enfrentando a un mundo nuevo y fue muy difícil mi llegada a la Facultad de Lenguas en esa posición. Yo estaba muy joven. Mi llegada fue muy difícil porque no dieron muchas plazas, habrán dado dos o tres plazas nada más y como yo fui uno de los

seleccionados hubo mucha gente que se quedó con las ganas de tener la plaza y hubo muchos celos profesionales y recuerdo muy bien que el director en ese momento, el encargado del despacho, cuando yo llegué a presentarme con él, eh me dijo, algo así como: "sí ya sabemos todos cómo es que llegaste aquí y pues yo no puedo hacer nada y te tengo que recibir, pero haz lo que quieras a mí no me importa, isí!".

M. ¿Y qué sentiste?

No, pues yo sentí que estaba llegando a un lugar muy difícil, evidentemente me di cuenta de que había mucha gente que no me quería y que se habían molestado por lo que había pasado y entonces fue muy difícil arrancar y ganarme como la empatía de la gente, ¿no? Y convencerlos de que yo podía hacer un buen trabajo. Y bueno pues en ese momento sí te puedo decir que pesó mucho mi background como ingeniero porque de ahí se colgaron para decir, ¿qué están haciendo como para darle un tiempo completo a un ingeniero, ajá, había en ese entonces, bueno pues un ingeniero, un médico, estaba un ingeniero agrónomo y uno de leyes, entonces estábamos muy mezclados, con diferente background, pero era el pretexto perfecto para atacarnos profesionalmente.

M: ¿y tú cómo te legitimabas?

Pues yo tuve una estrategia que me funcionó y al final me dio mi lugar en la Facultad, fue precisamente trabajando en Departamento, en una de las juntas la coordinadora nos preguntó que qué proyecto podríamos trabajar para aportar en la Departamento y entonces yo propuse en la Departamento dar cursos extras de preparación para el first y la coordinadora de la Departamento dijo: no, los alumnos de la licenciatura no necesitan ese tipo de preparación, entonces mejor ofrezcan otra cosa y entonces yo no estuve de acuerdo y le dije: no, yo creo que es algo que sí necesitan y les va a servir mucho a los jóvenes esta preparación. Total que al final me dijo: haz lo que quieras y entonces yo decidí hacer mi taller de preparación para el first y empecé a lo mejor con un grupito de 12 alumnos, que afortunadamente les fue muy bien, se prepararon lo pasaron el examen y entonces fue la punta de lanza para que después estos talleres se hicieran como muy populares entre los alumnos porque veían la utilidad que tenían y al final no les quedó de otra más que aceptar que estos cursos eran importantes como algo extra a su formación.

M. ¿y los alumnos, ¿cómo te recibieron?

Los alumnos venían de un momento político muy difícil, los alumnos habían hecho en cierta medida un grupo de poder importante y querían, con todo derecho, desprenderse totalmente del CELe. La pugna de los alumnos era que la escuela fuera reconocida como escuela y que no fuera dependiente del CELe y que no se confundiera con el CELe, y eso significaba que tenían que quitar a la Directora del CELe y tenían que independizarse de alguna forma, entonces en ese momento político, difícil, hubo mucho resentimiento por parte de los alumnos y se abanderaron mucho con eso de la formación de los docentes porque como te decía, había ingenieros, médicos, contadores, etc. Entonces ellos peleaban que querían una formación profesional en donde los docentes de la licenciatura fueran especialistas y el argumento era en su momento que en la región no había especialistas. En ese momento había en la facultad solo una persona que cubría digamos el ideal porque venía de una licenciatura del área y nada más. Pero todos los demás teníamos esos huecos en la formación, pero fue un elemento importante para que los alumnos tuvieran un mayor peso político para el objetivo de esa independencia del centro de idiomas.

M. ¿y cómo te afectó en lo personal todo este movimiento?

Pues en realidad nunca me importó, porque hasta cierto punto yo ya tenía algo de terreno

ganado con los alumnos. A mí me fue muy bien muy rápido con los alumnos y a pesar de que era ingeniero, los alumnos se dieron cuenta de que sí podía yo aportarles mucho, por lo menos en su formación en inglés y como yo traía ya mi colección de certificados, realmente en ese momento yo ya tenía un perfil que nadie tenía, es más que muy pocos teníamos en la ciudad y nadie tenía de los maestros de la Facultad, a lo mejor había otros que los tenían pero no estaban aquí, entonces eso me ayudó muchísimo para que los alumnos me aceptaran fácilmente y claro yo creo que mis clases fueron muy buenas y eso también ayudó, a pesar de que los maestros podían estar en contra, los alumnos estaban a favor y el peso político en ese momento lo tenían los alumnos, no lo tenían los maestros.

M. ¿Y tu familia y amigos qué decían de que te dedicaras al inglés y no a la ingeniería?

iUuuuyyyy, no sabes cómo me molestaban! Fue horrible porque desde mi casa, desde mi mismo papá que me decía yo te pagué una carrera de ingeniería en el Tec carísima ¿no?, y este ¿qué haces dando clases? Y mis compañeros de clase que ya se empezaban a posicionar en puestos importantes en la industria, muchos fueron reclutados para irse a trabajar a Estados Unidos, entonces les empezó a ir muy bien muy rápido y sí, sí me decían pues tú ¿qué haces ahí? Pero creo que a la larga la cuestión se ha revertido porque yo ahora encuentro en el Departamento muchas satisfacciones que nunca hubiera encontrado en la ingeniería, ¿no? Desde la libertad de tiempos, por ejemplo, y la flexibilidad en horarios, vacaciones, y todo eso que en la iniciativa privada es muy difícil. Yo sí creo que si hubiera tenido una mejor orientación vocacional podría haber estudiado otra cosa y debí haber estudiado otra cosa porque a mí siempre me gustaron las letras por ejemplo, yo siempre fui muy bueno para cuestiones de concursos de ortografía, participé en concursos de oratoria, las clases de Lectura y Redacción me gustaban muchísimo y siempre era el que les ganaba en los concursos de cuento y de esas cosas a los compañeros, pero eso yo lo veía como una actividad de placer, como una actividad lúdica y como también era muy bueno para matemáticas, toda la familia me llevó para un área profesional en ese sentido, pero nunca me orientaron bien, porque me podrían también haber detectado esa otra habilidad en el área de letras y en el área de literatura y a lo mejor hubiera estudiado otra cosa.

M. ¿Y algo relacionado, qué opinión tienes del nuevo programa de Gobierno del Estado para becar a alumnos que den clases de inglés?

Es que es una posición que yo adopté desde hace mucho como director de la Facultad de Lenguas y no me puedo desprender de ella, que a mí siempre me preocupó que la Facultad ganara pues una posición legítima en la sociedad como profesión, creo que desafortunadamente el maestro en general, y el maestro de lenguas en particular no tiene reconocimiento social importante como profesionista en la sociedad al igual que el traductor y yo como Director y Subdirector en toda esta etapa de formación de la Facultad pues siempre me tocó pues buscar estrategias para convencer a la gente de porqué un maestro que es egresado de esta facultad y que tiene una formación profesional es un mejor elemento para una función de docencia que la tradición que existía en su momento de contratar a alguien que hablaba muy bonito inglés, pero no tenían las bases pedagógicas ni históricas para dar clases, eh, afortunadamente no fuimos la única facultad que estuvo peleando por este tipo de cosas y en un consenso nacional se logró que en su momento se reconociera este tipo de perfil, entonces creo que ahora, 25 años después, sí es como evidente que las escuelas buscan gente con perfiles, gente egresada de este tipo de programas y que tenga este tipo de formación y demás, pero todavía no hay suficiente oferta de profesionales en el área y por eso las escuelas tienen que seguir contratando gente que hable inglés bonito para cubrir los huecos que se tienen y pues a mí me preocupa mucho que este tipo de políticas desplacen a los egresados de estos

programas, porque yo creo que hemos trabajado mucho con mucho esfuerzo tantos años para legitimar esta profesión y que de repente por una política o una iniciativa que parece bien intencionada se obscurezca y se haga daño a esta profesión a nivel social, entonces sí me molesta y sí tengo posiciones radicales en ese sentido tanto para los docentes de inglés como para los traductores que sólo ejercen porque hablan bonito el inglés y creo que es nuestra obligación como Institución Superior pues levantar la voz y hacerle ver a la gente que esto no debe ser.

M. ¿Y no es un contrasentido con lo que pasa en realidad, que en muchas escuelas se prefiere el certificado de lengua a la licenciatura del área?

Sí, bueno no es un contrasentido porque yo creo que en realidad, por ejemplo yo les hago mucha conciencia a mis alumnos que por mucha licenciatura que tengan, es bien importante que tengan una certificación internacional porque es la única garantía que tienen objetivamente de que alcanzan un nivel de competencia que además es medible, observable y validado, ¿no?, entonces eh, sí creo que no son cosas que estén peleadas, el Licenciado en Lenguas debe de tener una certificación internacional para complementar su formación profesional, porque además así lo está requiriendo la sociedad los que ofrecen trabajo están buscando profesionistas que tengan cédula profesional y que tengan certificación internacional, entonces no es que tengan que ser independientes una o la otra. Sí es un hecho que muchas veces, todavía las escuelas contratan al que tiene la certificación internacional, aunque no tenga la licenciatura más que al que tenga la licenciatura y no tenga la certificación.

M. Y tú que has estado en ambos lados, es decir has sido director y maestro, ¿crees que a los nuevos maestros con licenciatura que no son del área, les es muy difícil adaptarse y legitimarse hoy en día?

No, mira la Facultad ha crecido mucho en muy poco tiempo y yo sí creo que nos hace falta un trabajo de integración importante como miembros de la Facultad, como profesores de la Facultad, creo que trabajamos mucho de manera independiente, in isolation, y creo que es necesario que trabajemos más en conjunto, es más el currículum está diseñado para complementarse de manera colectiva entre las diferentes Departamentos y no hay estrategias definidas para ese tipo de trabajo y creo que sí hace falta porque también creo que mucha gente que viene de fuera, de otros programas, no tiene el conocimiento pues completo de lo que significa la formación de nuestros profesionales en esta Facultad y pues hace falta ese acompañamiento para que entiendan perfectamente los objetivos de esta salida profesional y este tipo de cosas.

M. ¿Y qué papel juega el Departamento en esta integración?

Pues la Departamento tendría que jugar un papel importante porque para eso está, es decir la Departamento debería ser quién llevara la batuta en este tipo de cosas, invitando a los maestros a participar en pues, en las juntas de Departamento, en los proyectos de Departamento y en los proyectos fuera de la Departamento que pueden ser realmente netamente relacionados con la Departamento y complementarios como pueden ser proyectos de cultura, deportes, pero sí, sí tienen que salir desde la Departamento este tipo de compañerismo por el bien de la Facultad.

M. ¿Y crees que el grado de identificación del maestro de asignatura y el de tiempo completo es diferente?

Sí, claro que es diferente, y sí lo sé porque me tocó vivirlo en su momento. Hubo una época en la que yo daba un cierto número de horas al día, unas tres o cuatro en el Tec de Monterrey, quizás tres o cuatro en el CELe y quizás otras cuantas en el A, pero yo en el fondo sentía que mi identidad verdadera estaba en el CELe, porque era el lugar en

donde yo llevaba más tiempo, en donde yo había hecho vínculos más importantes, es en donde yo tenía las relaciones de vida que me daban satisfacción adicional en lo personal. Entonces yo sí creo que el maestro de asignatura tiene ese derecho de sentirse más parte de un sitio que de otro, pero pues eso no lo limita a que cumpla sus funciones.

M. Y ahora a la distancia, ¿te sientes señalado por tener una licenciatura diferente a la del área?

Pues la verdad ahora lo digo hasta como de chiste porque cuando se enteran que soy ingeniero pues ponen cara de sorpresa, no me identifican, no me ven como ingeniero, a mí ya me ven como un maestro de idiomas y piensan que soy egresado de aquí.

M. ¿Y tú dices que estudiaste ingeniería?

No, bueno sólo si me preguntan, no lo ando pregonando, pero creo que se sorprenden gratamente, la reacción es más positiva que negativa, pero bueno eso porque ya me conocen en la Facultad y saben de mi práctica, no sería lo mismo si les dijera a partir de mañana va a venir un ingeniero a darles clase, ahí sí se causarían problemas.

M. ¿Y tú cómo te identificas?

Yo soy maestro de inglés, esa es mi respuesta y normalmente digo soy maestro de inglés de la Universidad, esa es mi respuesta y ya si la gente quiere más detalles pues ya les digo más cosas que he hecho, pero en general esa es mi respuesta, siempre digo soy maestro de inglés.

M. Muy bien, te agradezco mucho tu tiempo

Al contrario espero haberte ayudado, gracias.

Max's transcript

Thank you for the interview. I would like to start with some questions about your university studies.

M What did you study at University?

Max I am an Industrial and Systems Engineer

M And, did you always want to study that?

Max Well... yes, ok I believe I always had a deficient vocational guidance and never doubted that I had to study that, and I realised that I shouldn't have studied that when I graduated. When I graduated, I had to make an important decision. I had started teaching English when I was at University, so, when I graduated as an Engineer, I had done a social service and professional practices as an Engineer and It was then when I realised that I didn't like the environment of engineering in a factory, in an assembly line, measuring time, working with machinery and not with people. It was then, when I graduated from Engineering Faculty, that I had to decide to look for a job as an engineer or continue working as an English language teacher, it even crossed my mind to hand out my resumé in a factory which made and distributed candy and for a reason, fortunately they never call me, and I decided to continue teaching in the School of Languages, and also in the University where I studied and I completely forgot about Engineering.

M Ok, Now tell me about your first lessons

Max Well, I can attribute my first classes to good luck. I studied English in the school of languages of the University (CELe). I belonged to the second cohort of CELe and we

obtained the First Certificate from the University of Cambridge in 1990. There were only five people in the second cohort, and in the first cohort there had been three students. So, it was a few people and the person, the teacher who trained us for this certification was also the Academic Supervisor at CELe and he was also teaching at the private University where I had studied. I passed my Certification exam in December 1990 and I started to study Engineering in August 1990 and in January 1991 I came across this teacher and he told me: "hey, one teacher (at CELe) has just left and I need a teacher for a beginner's class, it is at nights. Would you like to help me and have some extra money to pay your studies at University?". And I accepted, I didn't really know what I was about to face.

M How old were you?

Max I was only 18, well, I was about to be 18, I was 17, and then, I arrived to my first adults' class, it was a Monday night. I remember it clearly, and, honestly, I was really surprised because I was the youngest in the class. Anyway, I really enjoyed it, and since then, I have never stopped teaching at this Public University.

M And, how did you prepare your first lesson?

Max Well, evidently, I had no idea because I had never studied anything related to teaching and what's more, I can't even remember what I did. Probably, I turned up to the classroom with my textbook and followed every single instruction contained in the teacher's book, and that was it. Honestly, I don't really remember the type of questions the students asked and how I responded or solved the doubts, but I consider it wasn't that bad because they continued hiring me and, obviously I also enjoyed doing it.

M And when did you start considering teaching English as something more professional?

Max well, let's see I went through different circumstances, some of them happened because I was either too young or too naïve, because the fact of having an international certification at a very young age helped me to have many doors opened and I decided to continue with other certifications. At that time, CELE was offering the Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English (COTE), it was a complement for me because if was already teaching I had to understand what I was doing. So, I decided to study the COTE and we had an excellent teacher, this teacher understood us perfectly and we made "click" instantly with her. She helped us a lot and thanks to her, for the very first time in my life, I understood what being a teacher is. She also helped me to understand what a professional teacher is and, I obtained the COTE in 1992. After that, I continued with other courses, I got my CAE (Certificate in Advanced English) in 1994, and the Proficiency in Mexico City in 1996. However, I did all these certifications knowing that they were really important to my training and continue as an English language teacher.

M Now, tell me about your trajectory as an English language teacher.

Max Well, my career has been mainly developed in the public University. I started at CELE and then I moved to the Faculty of Languages, I also worked for a private School of Languages here (in this city) and also in Mexico City, because this teacher who trained us for COTE was also the principal in this private school in Mexico City, so, she invited us to work for this school. To be honest, I have worked for many small schools, mainly with preparation courses for international certifications, and I also worked 5 years at a prestigious private University.

M and, did you always teach English?

Max Yes, I always taught English, but when I started in the Faculty of Languages. I

started to study to teach other subjects, eh..., mainly related to linguistics like English syntax for example, I had to study on my own to teach this class.

M But... you studied a Master's in Linguistics...

Max Yes, but I started teaching English syntax before I remember that in those days the Academic Secretary called me and said: "I don't have a teacher for English syntax" and I said: "I have no idea what syntax is jajajaja". And she insisted: "Please, help me, look here, there is a book", and I finally accepted, and I started reading and started teaching English syntax since then.

M And when did you decide to continue your career in the Faculty of languages?

Well, I didn't decide that either. I was a very strange situation because when the School of Languages was formally created, the Vice Rector, eh..., well he decided to assign some full-time positions for teachers, and in that way the teachers could devote all their time to the Faculty of Languages. And, fortunately I was appointed with one of the positions, so the Vice Rector called me and he told me about the new project with the Faculty of Languages and he offered me the position. Honestly, in that moment I had no idea what the position implied, and if the Vice Rector calls you well, you can't say no, so, I said yes, and I knew what that decision meant, I had to leave my other classes at CELe, it was painful because I had to leave my dear friends at CELe, and I had to face new challenges and start from zero at an unknown place. And as I predicted, my arrival to the Faculty was very complicated. I was really young. It was difficult because the Vice Rector only offered few posts and many people wanted to have the opportunity and as a consequence, many people were jealous and I remember very well that the Director of the Faculty, well in that moment the person who was in charge of the School was not very nice. When I asked to talk to him he told me something like this: "Yes, we all know why you were appointed with this position, and let me tell you that I disagree with this decision. However I can't do anything about it, so I have to accept you here in the Faculty but do whatever you want, I don't care".

M And, how did you feel?

Max No, well, I felt awful. I clearly saw that I was arriving at a very difficult place with a hostile environment. Evidently, I realised that many people weren't happy with my new appointment and these people were angry with all the situation and it was very difficult to gain the confidence and the empathy of the people working there. The beginning was very difficult, and I had to try to convince them that I could do a good job and in that moment, yes, I can tell you that my background was meaningful and it was the perfect excuse to say "What is he doing here? He's an engineer, how come he was given a full-time position, ok? In those years, at the Faculty of Languages, a doctor, an agronomist, a lawyer and I were teaching. So, we were mixed, we had different backgrounds, but it was the perfect excuse to attack us in the professional field.

M And, how did you legitimise/justify yourself?

Max Well, I had a strategy which really worked and, in the end, I found my place in the Faculty of Languages, and it was precisely my work in The English Department which helped me most. In one of the meetings with The English Department, the President asked us to think of a project in which we could help our students improve their English. So, I said that it would be a good idea to have some extra courses to prepare students to pass Cambridge exams, the FCE, and the President told me: "No, the students don't need that, you should offer something else", and I disagreed, and said: "No, I really think this is important, and students need it and it is going to be beneficial to them". So, to

make a long story short, in the end she told me: "Do whatever you want". And I decided to start with my preparation course. I started with a small group with 12 students, and fortunately the course went really well, the students prepared for the exam, and they all passed it and my preparation courses became really popular, because the students understood how useful the courses were. With this evidence, the Administration had to accept that the courses had been a success and they were important to complement the students' subjects.

M And how did students welcome you?

Max Well, the students had just been involved in a very difficult political movement. The students got together and created a strong political group. They wanted, and I think they were right, to separate from CELe and become an independent Faculty, that movement meant to appoint a new Director in the Faculty and be recognised as a separate entity. So, as you can imagine, the political moment was really difficult and there was much resentment against the teachers who did not have a background in Languages or Teaching. What's more, the students adopted this issue to demand that all teachers had a background in Languages or Teaching. We defend by saying that in the area there weren't any specialists in the field. At that moment, at the Faculty, there was only one teacher with the required profile. The rest of the teachers, we had these gaps in our professional training, but this situation was used by the students to ask for independence from CELe.

M And personally, how did it affect you?

Max Well, honestly, I didn't give a damn. To a certain extent, I had gained certain recognition with the students. It went very well with the students from the very beginning, because the students realised that I could help them a lot, at least in the area of English and as I had my certificates collection. Honestly, at that moment I had a CV that no one else had. What's more, only a few people in the city could equal my CV. Maybe other teachers in the city were more trained but they were working somewhere else. This fact really helped me to gain the confidence and sympathy of the students, and of course, I believe my classes were good, and in my case, instead of having the students against me, they supported me and the political weight was with the students, not the teachers.

M How did your family and friends react when you were devoted to teach English and not engineering

Max Uyyyyy!! Jajaja, you have no idea how they bothered me. It was horrible, because in my house, my own father used to tell me: "I paid your BA in engineering at this private university which is really expensive right? and what are you doing? teaching English?" And to make matters worse most of my school partners started to position themselves in the industry. Many of them were recruited by companies to work in the USA, so my family and friends used to say: "What are you doing teaching English?". However, I think that in the long-term the decision has proved to have been the correct one because now, some of these engineers are unemployed and I have found personal and professional satisfaction that I wouldn't find in engineering. For example, I have a flexible schedule, I have vacations and all that is very complicated in the private sector. I really think that if I had had better vocational guidance, I could have studied something else and I am convinced I should have studied a different subject because I have always been attracted to writing and literature. For example, I was always good in the contests of reading and writing, spelling, I took part in public speaking contests. I liked a lot all the subjects related to Reading and Writing, I was always the winner in tale contests and this kind of stuff, but I always considered these subjects as a hobby, and as I was also good at math, all the family suggested that I studied something related to math, but I didn't have a good

educational guidance because I could have chosen something related to literature, writing or something similar.

M And, what's your opinion about the decision of selecting teachers with certifications and not the BA in Languages?

Max Well, it is a contradiction, because I really think, for example, I always tell my students that the BA is important. However, I always tell them that it is crucial that they have an international certificate because it represents the guarantee, objectively speaking, that they can reach a high level of competence which is measurable, observable, and validated, isn't it? Then, I do believe that both aspects -the BA and the certificate- are complementary. The university graduate must have this international certificate to complement their professional training, besides this is what the market and the society demands. The potential employers are looking for professionals which have a BA and an international certificate, so they aren't independent. Yes, it is a fact that many times, the schools are still hiring people with international certificates and with a BA which is not related to languages or without a BA.

M And, nowadays, is it still very difficult to legitimise and adapt to the field when you come from a different background?

Max No. Look, the Faculty has grown rapidly in the past years, and I really think that there is a lack of integration in the Faculty. As teachers in the Faculty, we work in an independent way, in isolation, and I consider it necessary that we work more together. Likewise, the programs in the Faculty have been designed to work in a collective form between Departments, and there aren't strategies to do so. I consider this is extremely important because as we have newcomers with different backgrounds, these people don't fully understand how the programmes operate and also how the professional training should be, and I have noticed that it is missing this kind of accompaniment so that these teachers understand perfectly the objectives this BA in Languages has.

M And, what is the role of The English Department in this integration?

Max Well, The English Department should play an important role because that's the reason why it was created, that is The English Department should lead all the decisions on this matter, The English Department should invite teachers to participate in the meetings, in the projects inside and outside The English Department, but I insist, The English Department must invite the teachers.

M And do you consider the degree of identification with The English Department is different with full-time teachers and asignatura teachers?

Max Yes, of course, it is different, and I know it because I experienced it. There was a time in which I used to teach a number of hours at the private university, at CELE and at the Faculty of Languages. However, deep inside, I really felt that my true identity was at CELe because CELe was the school where I started to work, and I had worked the longest. It was also the place where I had most of my friends, and also I had much personal satisfaction. I can really say I really liked working for CELe. So, I really believe that the "asignatura" teacher has the right to be identified with other schools, and not the Faculty of languages. However, this doesn't mean that they don't do their job well.

M And nowadays, do you feel discriminated for having a background different from Languages or Teaching?

Max Well, to be honest now I even mention it as a joke, and when I tell people that I am an engineer, well, there is always a puzzled face because they don't see me as an engineer. They think of me as an English language teacher and they automatically assume

that I have a BA in Languages.

M And do you tell everybody that you studied Engineering?

Max No, well, only if people ask me I don't boast about it but I think people get surprised in a positive way, but this is because people know me in the Faculty and they know about my teaching practice, it wouldn't be the same if I told my students "Look, for the rest of the term your English language teacher will be an engineer, that would cause a lot of problems.

M And, how do you identify yourself?

Max I am an English language teacher, that is my answer, and I usually say I am an English language teacher, and then if people require extra details, well I tell them extra stuff, but in general, that is my answer. I always say "I am an English language teacher".

M Than you Max, I really appreciate this interview

Max No, thank you.

References

- Aboites Aguilar, H. (2007). "Tratado de libre comercio y educación superior. El caso de México, un antecedente para América Latina". *Perfiles Educativos*, México, Vol. XXIX, Núm. 118, 3ra. Época, 2007, 22-53.
- Almayez, M. (2019). *The Professional Identity Construction of Non-local NNESTs in the Saudi Context*. (Doctoral Thesis). University of Southampton.
- Alsup, J. (2013). *Teacher identity discourse: Negotiating Personal and professional Spaces*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Apple, M.W. (2004). Creating Difference: Neo-liberalism, Neo-conservatism, and the Politics of Education Reform, *Educational Policy*, 18(1), 12-44.
- Arés, M. (2015). Dos décadas del TLCAN: México, Canadá y Estados Unidos en el espacio norteamericano. *Cuadernos de Conflicto y paz*. Vol.1, No. 3.
- Aristegui Noticias. (2nd. of May, 2023). "Nueva Ley de Ciencia va contra historia de la investigación científica": Antonio Lazcano. *Aristegui noticias*. <https://aristeguinoticias.com/0205/mexico/nueva-ley-de-ciencia-va-contra-la-historia-de-la-investigacion-cientifica-antonio-lazcano/>
- Atkinson, R. (2002). The Life Story Interview. In Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (Eds.). *Handbook on interview research: Context and method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Bamberg, M. (1997). Positioning Between Structure and Performance. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7 (1-4), 335-42.
- Bamberg, M. (2004). Positioning with Davie Hogan. In Colette Daiute & Cynthia Lightfoot (eds.). *Narrative Analysis: Studying the Development of Individuals in The English Department*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.
- Bamberg, M. (2006). Stories: Big or Small: Why Do We Care? *Narrative Inquiry*, 16 (1), 139- 47.
- Bamberg, M. (2007). Introductory Remarks. In Michael Bamberg (Ed.). *Narrative: State of The Art*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Bamberg, M., & Georgakopoulou, A. (2008). Small Stories as a New Perspective in Narrative and Identity Analysis. *Text and Talk*, 28 (3), 377-96.
- Bamberg, M. (2011). Who am I? Narration and its contribution to self and identity. *Theory and Psychology*. Vol. 21. Issue 1.
- Barkhuizen, G. (2006) Imagined Identities: Pre-immigrants' Narratives on Language and Identity. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 10 (3), 277-99.
- Barkhuizen, G. (2009). An Extended Positioning Analysis of a Pre-Service Teacher's Better Life Story, *Applied Linguistics*. 31 (2), 282-300.

Barkhuizen, G. (Ed.). (2011). Narrative Research in TESOL. *Special Issue of TESOL Quarterly*, 45 (3).

Barkhuizen, G., Benson, P., & Chik, A. (2014). *Narrative Inquiry in Language Teaching and Learning Research*. New York: Routledge.

Barkhuizen, G. (2016). A Short Approach to Analyzing Teacher (Imagined) Identities over Time. *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 50, Issue 3, September 2016, 655-683.

Barton, D. & Tusting, K. (2005). *Beyond Communities of Practice: Language, Power and Social Context*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge

Bates, T. (2014). The role of communities of practice in a digital age. *Online learning and distance education resources*. Retrieved in January ,2017 from <https://www.tonybates.ca/2014/10/01/the-role-of-communities-of-practice-in-a-digital-age/>

Bathmaker, A. & Avis, J. (2005) Becoming a lecturer in further education in England: the construction of professional identity and the role of communities of practice. *Journal of Education for Teaching: International Research and Pedagogy*, Vol 31, Issue 1, 47- 62.

Benwell, B. & Stokoe, E. (2006). *Discourse and identity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Block, D. (2007). The rise of identity in SLA research post Firth and Wagner (1997). *The Modern Language Journal*, 91, Focus Issue.

- Block, D. (2013). Issues in Language and Identity research in Applied Linguistics. *Estudios de Lingüística inglesa aplicada*. ELIA 13, 2013, 11-46.
- Block, D. (2017). Neoliberalismo, el ciudadano neoliberal y los materiales para la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa: un análisis crítico. *Ruta maestra*. No.21, 1-14.
- Block, D. (2018). *Political Economy and Sociolinguistics: Neoliberalism, inequality and social class*. London/New York: Bloomsbury.
- Block, D., Gray, J., & Holborow, M. (2012). *Neoliberalism and Applied Linguistics*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Block, D., & Gray, J. (2018). French language textbooks as ideologically imbued cultural artefacts: Representations and erasures of class and inequality. In S. Coffee and U. Wingate (eds). *New Directions for Language Learning in the 21st Century*. London: Routledge.
- Bonnano, A., Martínez, F. & Aboites, G. (2016). *El neoliberalismo, un momento de la globalización*. Saltillo: Fontamara.
- Borg, M. (2004). The apprenticeship of observation. *ELT Journal*. 58 (3), 274-276.
- Bourdieu, P. (2005). *The Social Structures of the Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, W. (2005). *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics*. Princeton; Princeton University Press.
- Brumfit, C. (1991). Applied linguistics in higher education: riding the storm. *BAAL*

Newsletter, 38, 45-49.

Bucholtz, M. & Hall, K (2005). Identity and interaction: a sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*. SAGE Publications. Vol 7 (4-5): 585-614.

Burns, E. & Bell, S. (2011). Narrative construction of professional teacher identity of teachers with dyslexia. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27, 952-960.

Burns, A., & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (2009). *The Cambridge Guide to Second Language Teacher Education*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Burton, J. (1998). A Cross-Case Analysis of Teacher Involvement in TESOL Research. *TESOL QUARTERLY*, Vol. 32, No. 3, 419-446.

Campos, S. E. (28th. of May, 2020). El neoliberal que lleva dentro la 4t. *El Financiero*. <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/opinion/El-neoliberal-que-lleva-dentro-la-4T-20200528-0093.html>

Chávez, V. (26th of April, 2023). Morena “truenas” al Conacyt: Se impone y aprueba reforma de AMLO en San Lázaro. *El Financiero*. <https://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/nacional/2023/04/26/morena-truenas-al-conacyt-se-impone-y-aprueba-reforma-de-amlo-en-san-lazaro/>

Cheung Yin, L. (2015). *Teacher identity in ELT/TESOL: A research review*. In YIN, L., C., SELIM, B., S., & KWANGHYUN, P. (Eds.). *Advances and Current Trends in Language Teacher Identity Research*, Oxon: Routledge

Cheung, Y.L., Ben Sais, S. & Park, K. (2015) *Advances and Current Trends in*

language Teacher Identity Research. Oxon: Routledge.

Ceneval (2016). Quiénes somos: Perfil Institucional. Retrieved in November, 2016 from http://archivos.ceneval.edu.mx/archivos_portal/7816/Institutionalprofile.pdf

Clandini, D. Jean. (2013). *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press.

Clandini D. J. & Connelly F. M. (1994). *Personal Experience Methods*. In N.K. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.

Clandini D. J. & Connelly F. M. (2000). *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco, CA.: Wiley.

Clarke, M. (2008.) *Language Teacher Identities: Co-constructing Discourse and Community*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Codó, E. & Patiño-Santos, A. (2018) CLIL, unequal working conditions and neoliberal subjectivities in a state secondary school. *Lang Policy*. 17:479–49

Connelly, F. M. & Clandini, D. J. (2006). Narrative Inquiry. In J. Green, G. Camilli, & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (3rd ed.), 477-87, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Coryell, J.E., Clark, M.C., & Pomerantz, A. (2010). Cultural Fantasy Narratives and Heritage Language Learning: A Case Study of Adult Heritage Learners of Spanish. *The Modern Language Journal*, 94 (3), 453-69.

Crandall, J. (1993). Professionalism and Professionalization of Adult ESL Literacy.

TESOL Quarterly, Vol. 27, No. 3.

Crandall, J. (2000). Language teacher education. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*. 20. 34-55.

Creese, A. (2005). *Mediating Allegations of Racism in a multi-ethnic London school: What speech communities and communities of practice can tell us about discourse and power*. In David Barton and Karin Tusting. (Eds). *Beyond Communities of Practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge.

Davies, B. & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The Social Construction of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20, 43-63.

De Costa, P. & Norton, B. (2016) Identity in language learning and teaching: Research agendas for the future. In S. Preece (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of language and identity*, 586-601, Abingdon: Routledge.

De Fina, A. (2009). Narratives in interview – The case of accounts: For an interactional approach to narrative genres. *Narrative inquiry*, 192 (2), 233-258.

De Fina, A. & Georgakopolou, A. (2012). *Analyzing Narrative: Discourse and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

De Fina, A. (2013a). Narratives as Practices: Negotiating Identities through Storytelling. In Gary Barkhuizen. (Ed). *Narrative Research in Applied Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge Applied Linguistics.

De Fina, A. (2013b). Positioning level 3: Connecting local identity displays to

macro social processes. *Narrative Inquiry* 23:1 (2013), 40-61. DOI
10.1075.

De Fina, A. & Georgakopolou, A. (2015). Introduction. In Anna de Fina and
Alexandra Georgakopolou (Eds.), *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis*.
Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

De Fina, A., D. Schiffrin, and M. Bamberg. (2006). *Discourse and Identity*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Deppermann, A. (2015). Positioning. In Anna de Fina and Alexandra
Georgakopolou (Eds.), *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis*. Oxford:
Wiley Blackwell.

Descombe, M. (2002). *Ground rules for Good Research: A Ten-Point Guide for
Social Researchers*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in Applied Linguistics: Quantitative,
Qualitative, and Mixed Methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Duff, Patricia, A. (2008). *Case Study Research in Applied Linguistics*. In the Series
Second Language acquisition research: Theoretical and
methodological issues. New York/London, Lawrence Erlbaum, ix-233.

Early, M. & Norton, B. (2013) Narrative inquiry in second language teacher
education in rural Uganda. In G. Barkhuizen, (Ed.). *Narrative research in applied
linguistics*,132-151. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fajardo, C. J. A. (2011). *Teacher identity construction: exploring the nature of
becoming a primary school language teacher*. (Doctoral thesis)
Newcastle University.

- Firth, A. & Wagner, J. (1997). On discourse, communication and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA Research. *Modern Language Journal*, 81, 286-300.
- Freeman, M. (2006). Life “on holiday”? In defense of big stories. In M. Bamberg (Ed.). *Narrative – State of the art*, 155-163. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Freeman, M. (2015). *Narrative as a Mode of Understanding: Method, Theory, Praxis*. In Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou. (Eds.). *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
- Gacel, J. (2000) “La dimensión internacional de las universidades mexicanas”. *Educación Superior y Sociedad*. Vol. 11 (1 y 2), 121-142.
- Gee, J., G. Hull, and C. Lankshear. (1997). *New work order*. Westview Press: Boulder, CO.
- Georgakopoulou, A. (2006). *Small and larger identities in narrative (inter)-action*. In D. Schiffrin, M. Bamberg & A. De Fina (eds.), *Discourse and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Georgakopoulou, A. (2015). *Small Stories Research: Methods – Analysis – Outreach*. In Anna de Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou (Eds.), *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
- Giddens, A. (1998). *Sociología*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
- Gill, S. (1995). Globalisation, market civilisation, and disciplinary neoliberalism. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 24(3), 399-423.
- González, G. F. & González, G. M. A. (2007). *Del porfiriato al neoliberalismo*.

Ciudad de México: Ediciones Quinto Sol.

González Moncada, A. & Sierra Ospina, N. (2005). The Professional Development of Foreign Language Teacher Educators: Another Challenge for Professional Communities. *Íkala, revista de lenguaje y cultura*, vol.10, núm. 16, 11-39.

Grix, J. (2010). *The Foundations of Research*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Handley, K., Sturdy, A., Fincham, R., & Clark, T. (2006) Within and Beyond Communities of Practice: Making Sense of Learning Through Participation, Identity and Practice. *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol.43, 3. Pp. 641-653

Harris, S. R., & Shelswell, N. (2005). *Moving Beyond communities of Practice in adult basic education*. In David Barton and Karin Tusting. (eds). *Beyond Communities of Practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge.

Harrison, J. & McKeon, F. (2010). Perceptions of beginning teacher educators of their development in research and scholarship: identifying the 'turning point' experiences. *Journal of Education for Teaching*. Vol. 36, 2010, Issue 1.

Harvey, D. (2005). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. London: OUP.

Hismanoglu, M. (2010). Effective professional development strategies of English language teachers. *Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 2(2010), 990-995.

Hoadley, C. 2012. "What Is a Community of Practice and How Can We Support It?" . In *Theoretical Foundations of Learning Environments*. 2nd ed. edited by D. Jonassen and S. Lund, 286–300. New York: Routledge.

Holborow, M. (2015a). *Language and Neoliberalism*. New York: Routledge.

Holborow, M. (2015b). What is neoliberalism: Discourse, Ideology, and the Real World. In David Block, John Gray and Marine Holborow. (eds). *Language and Neoliberalism*. New York: Routledge.

Intakhab, A. K. (2011). Professionalisation of ELT in Saudi Arabia. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*. Vol. 3, No. 1.

Jiang, Y., Min, H., Chen, Y. & Gong, Z. (2013). *A narrative inquiry into professional identity construction of university EFL teachers in China: A case study of three teachers based in a community of practice*. 12th International Conference on Information Technology Based Higher Education and Training (ITHET).

Johnson, K. E. (2009). *Second Language teacher Education: A Sociocultural Perspective*. New York: Routledge

Juzwik, Mary. & Ives, D. (2010). Small stories as resources for performing teacher identity: Identity-in-interaction in an urban language arts classroom. *Narrative Inquiry*, Volume 20, Issue 1, 2010, 37 –61.

Kirschner, P. & Kwok-Wing, L. (2008) Online communities of practice in education. *Technology, pedagogy and Education*, Vol. 16, No. 2, July 2007, 127–131.

Korobov, N. (2010). A Discursive Psychological Approach to Positioning, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 7:3, 263-277.

Labov, W. (1972). *Language in the inner city: studies in the black English vernacular*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Labov, W. & Waletzky, J. (1967). Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience. In J. Helm (Ed.), *Essays on the verbal and visual arts*, 12-44. Seattle: American Ethnological Society/University of Washington Press.
- Lantolf, J. (1996). Second culture acquisition: Cognitive considerations. *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1990). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lemke, J. L. (2008). Identity, Development and Desire: Critical Questions. In *Identity Trouble*. New York: Palgrave.
- Lemke, T. (2001). The birth of bio-politics: Michael Foucault's lecture at the Collège de France on neo-liberal governmentality. *Economy and Society*, 30(2), 190-207.
- Leung, C. (2013). Second/Additional Language Teacher Professionalism – What is it? In M. Olofsson (Ed.), *Symposium 2012: Lärarrollen/Svenska Söndagspråk*. N/A edn, vol. N/A, Stockholms universitets förlag, Stockholm. 11-27
- Linde, C. (1993). *Life Stories: The creation of coherence*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Liu, H., Jehng, J. J., Chen, C.V., & Fang, M. (2014). What Factors Affect Teachers in Taiwan in Becoming More Involved in Professional Development? A Hierarchical Linear Analysis. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*,

vol. 25, no. 3, 381-400.

López Olivera Cadena A. (2007). *Un breve recorrido por nuestra historia – Crónica de la Facultad de Lenguas*, Toluca: UAEMex.

Mares, M. (2018). (3rd of December, 2018). AMLO, fin del modelo neoliberal. *El Economista*. <https://www.economista.com.mx/opinion/AMLO-fin-del-modelo-neoliberal-20181203-0016.html>

Marum Espinosa, E. (1994). “La educación superior en México frente al TLC”. *Revista de Comercio Exterior de BANCOMEXT*, marzo de 1994, 205-210.

Mc.Guigan, J. (2014). The Neoliberal Self. *Culture Unbound Journal of Current Cultural Research*. Vol. 6, 223-240.

Mehrotra, S., Yam San, C. and Chuan Ong, J. (2014). Professional development for scaling pedagogical innovation in the context of game-based learning: teacher identity as cornerstone in “shifting” practice. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*. Vol. 43, 2015, Issue 5, 427-437.

Miller, J. (2008). Teacher identity. In A. Burns and J. C. Richards (eds) *The Cambridge Guide to Second Language Teacher Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, E., Morgan, B. & Medina, A. L. (2017). Exploring Language Teacher Identity Work as Ethical Self-Formation. *The Modern Language Journal*. 101 (1), 91-105

Miller, R. (2016). The ideology of learner agency and the neoliberal self. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*. Vol. 6. No. 23, 348-365.

Mills, A. J., Durepos, G., & Wiebe, E. (2010). *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*. Vol. I. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Morita Naoko (2004) Negotiating Participation and Identity in Second Language Academic Communities. *TESOL Quarterly*. Vol. 38. No.4.

Mota, C. (14th. of November, 2018). AMLO eliminaría inglés en escuelas. *El Heraldo de México*.
<https://heraldodemexico.com.mx/opinion/2018/11/14/amlo-eliminaria-ingles-en-escuelas-65057.html>

Norton, B. (2001). Non-participation, imagined communities, and the language classroom. In M. Breen (Ed.), *Learner contributions to language learning: New directions in research*, 159-171. Harlow, England: Pearson Education.

Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2002). Identity and language learning. In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics*, 115-123. New York: Oxford University Press.

Norton, B. (2006). Identity as a sociocultural construct in second language education. In K. Cadman & K. O'Regan (Eds.), *TESOL in Context* [Special Issue], 22-33.

Norton, B. (2010). Language and Identity. In N. Hornberger and S. McCay (Eds.). *Sociolinguistics and Language education*, 349-369. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Norton, B. & Toohey, K. (2011a). Identity, language learning, and social change. *Language Teaching*, 44, 4, 412-446. (State-of-the-Art Article).

Norton, B. & Early, M. (2011b). Researcher identity, narrative inquiry, and language teaching research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45, 3, 415-439.

- Norton, B. & Morgan, B. (2013a). Poststructuralism. In C. Chapelle (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Norton, B. (2013b). *Identity and Language learning: Extending the conversation*. (2nd. Ed.) Ontario: Multilingual Matters.
- Norton, B. (2014) Identity and Poststructuralist Theory in SLA. In S. Mercer & M. Williams (Eds). *Multiple perspectives on the self in SLA*, 59-74. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Norton Peirce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1), 9-31.
- Ochs, E., & Capps, L. (2001). *Living Narrative: Creating Lives in Everyday Storytelling*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- O'Donoghue (2015). Sorry: El aprendizaje del inglés en México. *Organización Mexicanos Primero*. Retrieved in March, 2017 from <http://www.mexicanosprimero.org/index.php/educacion-en-mexico/como-esta-la-educacion/estado-de-la-educacion-en-mexico/sorry-2015>.
- Olsen, B. (2008). How reasons for entry into the profession illuminate teacher identity development. *Teacher education quarterly*, 35(3), 23-40.
- Park, J.S.-Y. (2013). Metadiscursive regimes of diversity in a multinational corporation. *Language in Society*, 42(5), 557-577.
- Pavlenko, A., & Norton, B. (2007). Imagined communities, identity, and English language learning. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International handbook of English language teaching*, 669-680. New York: Springer.

Patiño-Santos, A. (2018). Introduction. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, Special Issue: Storytelling globalized spaces: a linguistic ethnographic perspective*, 250, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2017-0052>.

Patiño-Santos, Adriana (2016) Trapped in a moral order: Moral identity, positioning and reflexivity in stories of confrontation among Latin American teenage school girls in Madrid. *AILA Review* 29 (1), 83-113

Patiño-Santos, Adriana (2019) Reflexivity. *The Routledge handbook of linguistic ethnography*, 213-228

Polkinghorne, D.E. (1995). Narrative configuration in Qualitative Analysis. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8 (1), 5-23.

Priestly, M. Biesta, J.J. & Robinson, S. (2015). *Teacher Agency: An Ecological Approach*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster

QS Top Universities (2016). QS University Rankings: Latin America, Mexico. Retrieved in April, 2016 from: <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/latin-american-university-rankings/2016>.

Ramírez, O. (13th of May 2023). El plan de la 4t, el neoliberalismo y la desaceleración económica. *UPRESS*. <https://historioupres.upaep.mx/index.php/opinion/editoriales/desarrollo-humano-y-social/4654-el-plan-de-la-4t-el->

neoliberalismo-y-la- desaceleracion-economica.

Ramírez-Romero, J.L. & Sayer, P. (2016). The Teaching of English in Public Primary Schools in Mexico: More Heat than Light? *Education Policy analysis Archives*, 24(84), 2-25.

Randi, J. & Zeichner, K.M. (2004). New Visions of Teacher Professional Development. *In Yearbook of the National The English Department for the Study of Education*, vol. 103, no. 1. 180-227.

Reeves, J. (2009). Teacher Investment in learner Identity. *Learning and Teacher education*. Faculty publications: Department of Teaching. Paper 106.

Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative Inquiry in TESOL*. Birmingham: Palgrave Macmillan. Richards, J.C. (2010). Competence and Performance in Language Teaching. *RELC Journal* 41(2), 101-122.

Richards, J. C. (2017). Teacher identity in second language teacher education. In G. Barkhuizen (Ed.), *Reflections on language teacher identity research* (pp. 139-144). New York: Routledge

Riessman, C. K., & Quinney, L. (2005). Narrative in Social Work: A Critical Review. *Qualitative Social Work*, 4, 391-412.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1473325005058643>

Riordan E. & Farr, F. (2015). *Identity construction through narratives: an analysis of student teacher discourse*. In Yin Ling Cheung, Selim Ben Said and Kwanghyun Park. (Eds.). *Advances and Current Trends in Language Teacher Identity Research*. Oxon: Routledge.

Rock, F. (2005). *"I've picked up some from a colleague": language sharing and*

communities of practice in an institutional setting. In David Barton and Karin Tusting. (Eds). *Beyond Communities of Practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge.

Rodrik, D. (14th of November 2017). The fatal flaw of neoliberalism: it's bad economics. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/nov/14/the-fatal-flaw-of-neoliberalism-its-bad-economics>

Romero Sotelo, M.E. (2016) *Los orígenes del neoliberalismo en México: La Escuela Austriaca*. Ciudad de México: FCE.

Ruíz, A. (1st. of May, 2023). ¿Qué cambios vienen con la nueva ley de ciencia? *Pie de página*. <https://piedepagina.mx/que-cambios-vienen-con-la-nueva-ley-de-ciencia/#:~:text=En%20conclusi%C3%B3n%20dice%20Anaya%20esta,servicio%20de%20los%20intereses%20nacionales.>

Ruohotie-Lyhty, M. (2013). Struggling for a professional identity: Two newly qualified language teachers' identity narratives during the first years at work. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 30 (1), 120-129.

Saltman, K.J. (2009). Corporatization and the control of schools. In M.W. Apple, W. Au, and L.A. Gandin (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Education*, (pp.51-63), New York: Routledge.

Sayer, P. (2015). "More & Earlier". Neoliberalism and Primary Education in Mexican Public Schools. *L2 Journal*, 7(3), 40-56.

Sayer, P. (2018) Does English really open doors? Social class and English teaching

in public primary schools in Mexico. *System*, (73), 58-70.

Seban, D. (2015). Development of preservice identities: learning from a multigrade classroom practicum context. *Journal of Education for Teaching*. Vol 41, Issue 1, 19-36.

Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*. Columbia: Teachers College Press.

SEP (2019) Subsecretaría de Educación Media Superior. La nueva escuela mexicana: principios y orientaciones pedagógicas. 2019. Retrieved from:
<https://dfa.edomex.gob.mx/sites/dfa.edomex.gob.mx/files/files/NE M%20principios%20y%20orientacio%C3%ADn%20pedago%C3%ADgica.pdf>

Sfard, A. & Prusak, A. (2005). Telling identities: In search of an analytical tool for investigating learning as a culturally shaped activity. *Educational Researcher*. DOI: 10.3102/0013189X034004014

Simpson, J. (2011) Telling tales: Discursive space and narratives in ESOL classrooms. *Linguistics and Education*, 22 (2011),10-22.

Song, J. (2016). Emotions and Language Teacher Identity: Conflicts, Vulnerability, and Transformation. *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 50, Issue 3, September 2016.

Soto, F. & Pérez-Milans, M. (2018) Language, neoliberalism, and the commodification of pedagogy, *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 18:5, 490-506.

- Spring, J. (2008). Research on globalisation and education". *Review of Educational Research*, 78(2), 330-363.
- Suárez Zozaya, M.H. (2012). *Educación superior pública y privada en México: Desigualdades institucionales y opiniones de los estudiantes*. En María Lucero Jiménez Guzmán and Roxana Boso en *Juventud Precarizada: De la formación al trabajo, una transición riesgosa*. Centro de Investigaciones Multidisciplinarias. México, D.F.: UNAM.
- Schwartz, S. J., Luyckx, K., & Vignoles, V. L. (2011). *Handbook of identity theory and research*. Springer.
- Taylor, P. (2014). Mother tongue and identity in a Thai ESP communities-of-practice perspective. *Journal of Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, Vol. 7:1, 76-90.
- Temple, B. (2008). *Narrative analysis of written texts: reflexivity in cross language research*. *Qualitative Research*, 8(3), 335-365.
- Thi Kim Anh, D. (2013). Identity in activity: Examining teacher professional identity formation in the paired placement of student teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. Vol. 30. 47-59.
- Toohy, K. (1998). Breaking them up, taking them away: Constructing ESL students in grade one. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(1), 61-84.
- Toolan, M.J. (2001). *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction*. (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Torres, O. (1st of August, 2022). Recortan 41,000mdp a Salud y Educación y elevan Gasto en Turismo y Tren Maya.Expansión.

<https://expansion.mx/economia/2022/08/01/recortan-presupuesto-salud-educacion-elevan-para-tren-maya>.

Tsui, A.B.M. (Ed). (2003). *Understanding Expertise in Teaching: Case Studies of ESL Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge Applied Linguistics

Tsui, A.B.M. (2007). The Complexities of Identity Formation: A Narrative Inquiry of an EFL Teacher. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41(4), 657-80.

UAEMex (2014). *Estatuto Universitario*. Toluca, México: UAEMex.

UAEMex (2016). Tercer informe de labores. Retrieved in March, 2017 from <http://web.uaemex.mx/3informe1317/>.

UAEMex Internacional (2013). Secretaría de Cooperación Internacional. Retrieved in April, 2017 from <http://www.uaemex.mx/internacional/?view=page&id=32>.

Urciuoli, B. (2003). Excellence, Leadership, Skills, Diversity: Marketing Liberal Arts Education. *Language & Communication*. 23, 385-408.

Urciuoli, B.(2008). Skills and selves in the new workplace. *American Ethnologist*. Vol.35.No.2, 211-228.

Usier, E. (3rd of May, 2019) La reforma educativa de AMLO: Pobre, mal escrita, y con fallas imperdonables. *DW*. <https://www.dw.com/es/la-reforma-educativa-de-amlo-pobre-mal-escrita-y-con-fallas-imperdonables/a-48588021>

Vähäsantanen, K. & *Eteläpelto, A.* (2015) Professional agency, identity, and emotions. *Professions and Professionalism*. Vol 5. No. 3.

- Vähäsantanen, K., Paloniemi, S., Räikkönen, E., & Hökkä, P. (2020). Professional agency in a university context: Academic freedom and fetters. *Teaching and teacher education*, 89, 1-12
- Van Kahn, L. (2013). Native-English-Speaking Teachers' Construction of Professional Identity in an EFL Context: A Case of Vietnam. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, Vol.10, No. 1, 1-23.
- Van Lier, L. (1994). Forks and hope: Pursuing understanding in different ways. *Applied Linguistics*, 15, 328-347.
- Varghese, M. M. (2017). Language teacher educator identity and language teacher identity: Towards a social justice perspective. *In Reflections on language teacher identity research* (pp. 43-48). New York: Routledge.
- Virta, A. (2015). "In the middle of a pedagogical triangle" – Native-language support teachers constructing their identity in a new context. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. Vol. 46, 2015, Issue February.
- Weedon, C. (1997). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory*. London: Blackwell.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wenger, E. & Snyder, (2000a) *Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier*.
- Wenger, E. (2000b). Communities of practice and social learning systems: the career of a concept. *Resources for social learning*. Retrieved in April

2015, from <http://wenger-trayner.com/resources/>.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W.M. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

White, E. (2014). Being a teacher and a teacher educator – developing a new identity? *Professional Development in Education* 40, 3, 436-449.

Wrong, D. (2000). Adversarial identities and multiculturalism. *Society*, 37(2), 10-14

Yaili, D. (2015). *Tackling multiple identities in an EFL teaching context, Turkey*. In Yin Ling Cheung, Selim Ben Said and Kwanghyun Park. (Eds.). *Advances and Current Trends in Language Teacher Identity Research*. Oxon: Routledge.