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Contents

Editorial introduction	4
-------------------------------------	---

Original articles

Form-focused instruction: An interview with Nina Spada <i>Nina Spada, Yecid Ortega and Darío Luis Banegas</i>	6
--	---

Analysis of abstracts in English: A study of abstracts written by EFL writers in Argentina <i>María Soledad Loutayf</i>	15
--	----

ESP teaching practices: Fostering cultural bonding <i>Gabriela Nelly Tavella and Silvia Carina Fernández</i>	37
---	----

Teacher learning: dialogues between concepts and practices <i>Guillermina Amrein, Flavia Bonadeo, Gisela Carrión and Ivana Piccoli</i>	47
---	----

Book review

The Career Trajectories of English Language Teachers <i>Edited by P. Haworth and C. Craig</i>	60
--	----

Guidelines to authors	63
------------------------------------	----

Editorial introduction

At AJAL we are convinced that one of the most enduring ways of sharing our interests, explorations, and practices is through writing. Colleagues may write for a bulletin, a magazine, a blog, or a professional journal. This new issue is the result of concerted efforts to contribute to knowledge generation from different contexts.

In 2016 we incorporated a new type of article: interviews. The aim of the interviews is to allow readers to engage with authors through a dialogue mediated by colleagues. In Vol. 4(2) we included an interview with Charles Bazerman on the topic of academic writing. On that occasion, Diana Mónica Waigandt (Universidad Nacional de Entre Ríos) offered to carry out the interview and provide the conversation with a framework. In this issue, we have the honour of including an interview with Prof. Nina Spada, who was interviewed by Yecid Ortega (University of Toronto). The aim was to discuss with Prof. Spada her research interests around form-focused instruction through questions which emerged from her publications and critical views on the current literature. With the help of Ortega, we are planning other interviews for our November 2017 issue and those to appear in 2018.

Our second article is written by Soledad Loutayf. In her contribution, she examines abstracts written by academics and doctoral students at Universidad Nacional de Salta. The article includes a helpful summary of abstract writing and Swale's CARS model together with other combinatory models that are commonly used in academic writing and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses.

From an ESP perspective, the third article is co-authored by Gabriela Tavella and Carina Fernández. They problematise the presence of cultural bonding in an English course for tourism and reflect on the influences exercised by CLIL (Content and language integrated learning) and post-method pedagogy to elaborate context-responsive practices and materials which act as vehicles of meaningful cultural practices for the authors' students.

The fourth article is a contribution stemming from our call for articles co-authored by teacher educators and student-teachers. In this case, Guillermina Amrein, Gisela Carrión, Ivana Piccoli (student-teachers) and Flavia Bonadeo (teacher educator) from ISP N° 8 "Alte. G. Brown" (Santa Fe) engage in fruitful and informed reflections around the practicum experience. The tensions that surface through the authors' paragraphs should remind us of the concept of praxis discussed by Freire from a critical pedagogy stance. Breunig (2005, p.

111) conceptualises praxis as follows:

Freire (1970) maintains that praxis involves both action and reflection. From Freire's perspective, there is no final act of knowing. Knowledge has historicity; it is always in the process of being. If absolute knowledge could be attained, the possibility of knowing would disappear for there would no longer be any questions to ask or problems to solve. Praxis, therefore, starts with an abstract idea (theory) or an experience, and incorporates reflection upon that idea or experience and then translates it into purposeful action. Praxis is reflective, active, creative, contextual, purposeful, and socially constructed.

We close this issue with a review of *The career trajectories of English language teachers*, edited by Penny Haworth and Cheryl Craig. Chapter author Nora Basurto-Santos and Symposium Books kindly sent us a complimentary copy of the volume, which we were delighted to review.

Finally, we would like to thank the following reviewers for their invaluable help in 2016:

Silvana Barboni	Carmen Lee
Ann Borsinger	Pedro Martín Martín
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Darío Luis Banegas and Raquel Lothringer

Reference

Breunig, M. (2005). Turning experiential education and critical pedagogy theory into praxis. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 28(2), 106-122.

Form-focused instruction: An interview with Nina Spada

Nina Spada, OISE University of Toronto*
Yecid Ortega, OISE University of Toronto
Darío Luis Banegas, University of Warwick

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ABSTRACT

In this interview, form-focused instruction, research methods, and future research questions in SLA are discussed with Professor Nina Spada. The interview took place in December 2016 with the help of Yecid Ortega. Together with form-focused instruction, Spada reflects on the following topics: teacher research, replication studies as instances of creative research, amount of instruction with young learners, and issues in content and language integrated learning among other crucial topics in language learning.

Keywords: form-focused instruction; vocabulary; research; amount of instruction; translanguaging.

RESUMEN

En la presente entrevista, la Profesora Nina Spada se refiere a la enseñanza focalizada en la forma gramatical, métodos de investigación y futuras preguntas de investigación en el campo de la Adquisición del Lenguaje. La entrevista se llevó a cabo en diciembre de 2016 con la colaboración de Yecid Ortega. Junto al tema central de la entrevista, Spada reflexiona sobre los siguientes temas: la investigación docente, los estudios de réplica como formas de investigación creativa, el tiempo de instrucción en niños, y cuestiones relaciones con el aprendizaje integrados de contenidos y lenguas, entre otros temas cruciales.

Palabras clave: enseñanza en la forma; vocabulario; investigación; tiempo de enseñanza; translingüismo.

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PROFESSOR NINA SPADA is known worldwide through her co-authored book *How languages are learned* (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). In Argentina, and certainly elsewhere, teachers read this book in their undergraduate courses as an introduction to second language acquisition and ELT teaching approaches. Readers will find Spada's most influential publications following [this link](#).

In December 2016, AJAL Editor Darío Luis Banegas approached colleague Yecid Ortega, based in Toronto, and discussed with him the possibility of interviewing Professor Spada. She accepted the invitation and Yecid was forwarded a set of guiding questions to structure the interview. In early 2017, Yecid sent AJAL the audiorecording of the interview, which was transcribed with the assistance of Llewelyn Hopwood, a British Council language assistant from Wales working in Esquel, southern Argentina.

Readers will find that form-focused instruction is the trigger in this interview. In 2008, Spada and Lightbown opened their influential article saying that “[t]here is increasing consensus that form-focused instruction helps learners in communicative or content-based instruction to learn features of the target language that they may not acquire without guidance” (p. 181). The authors move on to say that

When learners produce language under conditions of time pressure or competing demands on attention, they may reveal that the underlying internal grammar of their interlanguage has not been substantially affected. Even if this is the case, however, learners’ ability to use language with greater accuracy and fluency—at least in some circumstances—can contribute to language acquisition in several ways (Spada & Lightbown, 2008, p. 183)

In the article cited above, the authors conclude that lessons which focus on form and also integrate a focus on meaning and communication enhance learners’ language development. Professor Spada returns to this idea in the conversation which follows and from there she reflects on the contributions made by studies on form-focused instruction not only in second language acquisition (SLA) but also in teacher education, and ways in which teachers’ practices can be transformed by attention to both form and meaning in classroom settings. As she explains her views, she refers to language awareness research (see Leow, 1997, 2000) and how it relates to focusing on form and meaning.

The interview then moves on to other areas, particularly how teachers can contribute to a better understanding of language learning and language teaching through ecological research, i.e., research which occurs within the dynamics of regular teaching and learning practices in context. In this regard, ecological research is materialised through classroom and action research where small-scale studies are based on particular contexts and in-depth analysis of instructional conditions and development (see Burns, 2010; Dikilitaş & Griffiths, 2017). Together with teacher research, Spada puts forward insightful comments on mixed methods (see Brown, 2014) as a holistic research framework to capture the richness of

language learning and teaching in different contexts.

Last, Professor Spada shares her views about concepts such as translanguaging (see García & Kley, 2016; Wei & García, 2013) and issues around the distribution and concentration of instructional time in language learning, particularly with young learners (see Collins & White, 2011; Serrano, 2011).

It is hoped that this interview helps AJAL readers approach language learning and research from a closer perspective as we bring Professor Spada's voice through a friendly and inspiring conversation.

Yecid Ortega: You have done research in the area of focus on form. How can we conceptualise form-focused instruction?

Nina Spada: Well, when I originally defined form-focused instruction (FFI), that would have been 1997, in an article in *Language Teaching Research*, I defined it as being any attempt to draw the learner's attention to form, either pre-emptively or spontaneously, within an overall context of meaningful communicative interaction. So, my definition of form-focused instruction was always one about embedding a focus on language within a communicative context. Not everybody's definition is the same and, unfortunately, sometimes the same term is used differently. So, for example, Rod Ellis's definition of form-focused instruction is broader than mine; it includes attention to form within communicative practice as well as in more traditional structure-based approaches to language teaching that focused exclusively on form. But my definition was how to draw learners' attention to form within communicative instruction.

YO: Now, based on your experiences and those of other colleagues of yours in the field, what have been the major contributions that focus-on-form studies have made to second language acquisition, that is SLA?

NS: I think the major contribution that focus-on-form studies have made to SLA, particularly to instructed SLA research, is that a focus on both meaning and form is essential. That's the short answer to the question! For a long time, as you know, in the field of second and foreign language instruction, there was an exclusive emphasis on forms, on grammar, and that was represented in teaching methodologies such as grammar translation and the audio-lingual method. If the focus was not exclusively on language forms it was primarily focused on language forms. Then we had a shift in language teaching - a shift toward primarily meaning-based instruction, communicative instruction, and sometimes the pendulum swung really far. For example, in the strong version of communicative language teaching it was argued there was no need for a focus on form or error correction as evidenced in the writings of Stephen Krashen. So, the pendulum swing was extreme in some

cases- from an exclusive focus on forms to an exclusive focus on meaning. The research investigating FFI has indicated that neither an exclusive focus on form nor an exclusive focus on meaning is best – it's the combination that is most effective. That leads to the question as to what the best balance is between a focus on form and a focus on meaning? The general consensus in the literature based on over thirty years of research is that there should be a primary focus on meaning with form embedded within it but questions remain about the timing, and the way to focus on language within meaning-based instruction.

YO: To what extent have studies focused on isolated and integrated form-focused instruction contributed to language teacher education and teaching practices? Do you think that such studies are helping to revisit the knowledge co-constructed in language teacher education programmes?

NS: The question about isolated and integrated form-focused instruction has to do with whether there are different times in the pedagogical sequence that might be more helpful to learners than others. And this I think resonates with teachers and is relevant to their concerns because it is fundamentally quite practical in nature - should I separate language focus from communicative practice in my lessons or integrate the two? Interestingly, teachers have been talking about this for a long time and there are several arguments that have been made in support of isolation and integration. Some teachers argue that it is necessary to focus on them separately because learners need to understand language and then be able to figure out how to use it. There are also psycholinguistic arguments to support this which have to do with the fact that separating form and meaning is helpful because sometimes learners, particularly low-proficiency learners, have difficulty focusing on both at the same time - the cognitive demands are too great for low proficient learners who always go for meaning first. But there are also arguments for combining form and meaning-based instruction. For example, one argument is that learners can benefit most from language-focused instruction at precisely the time they need it, that is, when they are trying to communicate their meaning. The claim is that if they receive language-focused instruction at that time they will be able to make form/meaning connections more easily.

So, there are arguments for both isolated and integrated form-focused instruction. However, there is only a handful of studies that have investigated the effects of these two approaches on second/foreign (L2) learning and this includes some of my own research. These studies have looked at the acquisition of grammar as well as the acquisition of vocabulary, and of the few studies that exist, what they have all found is that both isolated and integrated FFI are beneficial. I consider this to be “good news” because when Patsy Lightbown and I conceptualised the constructs of isolated and integrated FFI in 2010, we weren't thinking that one was better than the other and that you had needed to make a choice between the two. On the contrary, in conversations and surveys carried out with teachers and

learners it is evident that both isolated and integrated FFI are valued and it is believed that there are different times in a lesson and pedagogical contexts when one is preferred over the other. This view is consistent with our own understanding of the two constructs and the results from existing research on the effects of isolated and integrated FFI on L2 learning confirm that both are beneficial. Nonetheless interesting questions remain such as, are there better times to isolate a focus on language and are there optimal times to integrate it with meaning-based instruction/practice? So, for example, one might argue that isolated FFI is particularly helpful when the students share the same first language (L1) background; say they're all Spanish speakers learning English as a foreign language and they're all making the same mistakes with possessive determiners, (i.e. his/her). In cases like this with learners who make persistent errors that are clearly related to their L1, that may be an appropriate time for isolated FFI. On the other hand, there are other language features, for example articles in English, that are quite complicated and the rules for their use is not straightforward. In cases like this perhaps the best approach is to embed articles within communicative practice. The assumption is that through language use, through seeing the form used in a variety of meaning-based contexts, learners will figure it out for themselves.

YO: Now, let's move on to your article in 2011 that you published entitled "Beyond form-focused instruction: Reflections on past, present and future research." In the conclusion, you seem to suggest that a research question worth exploring was "What do we know about learner's awareness of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback?" Since 2011, have you noticed any interest in research towards this area?

NS: My recollection is that the question I asked in that article was about the capacities that the L2 learner might (or might not) have for form-focused instruction. For example, we know that learners approach learning languages in very different ways. Some learners have a more analytical orientation they love grammar rules and analysing language and figuring out how the grammar works. Learners with more of an analytic orientation - and this is an element of overall aptitude for language-learning - might actually benefit more from FFI because they are oriented towards wanting to know how language works and so are more likely to pick up on language-focused instruction (and corrective feedback) even when embedded in communicative practice. So, in that sense, there can be an interaction between type of instruction and type of learner. This moves us into a discussion about more specialised domains of research where, for example, some researchers are investigating learner aptitude in relation to different types of instruction and corrective feedback. There's another angle to this question which has to do with learners' awareness, probing questions such as what do learners notice when they are engaged in form-focused instruction or receiving corrective feedback? One researcher who has done quite a bit of research on awareness and learner noticing is Ronald Leow. He's done some interesting studies in which

he observes learners in the process of language learning and uses ‘think-alouds’ and ‘talk-alouds’ to get an understanding of what they’re noticing while they receive different types of instructional input.

YO: Right, now, as regards classroom research in applied linguistics, how can teachers contribute to research and their own everyday practices through more ecological research designs?

NS: This is a difficult question because most teachers don’t usually have the time, the support, or the resources to do research – at least formal research. But when one thinks about teachers who are reflective in their practice and who are engaged deeply in their practice, it is evident that teachers are testing hypotheses in their classrooms all the time, and so in that sense they’re researchers, they’re doing informal research every day as they try things out with their students, as they see what works, what doesn’t work, how they might be able to perfect this, how they can change that. So, teachers on the ground are doing research that primarily informs themselves and perhaps some of their colleagues.

But when one thinks about teacher-researchers, that is, teachers who have the support, opportunity and resources to do research I think the answer to your question is that they be encouraged to pursue small-scale, action-based research in their own classrooms focusing on local issues, local questions, local challenges, and where detailed descriptions of students, teachers, learning, curricula are described in very specific ways. The more local studies that document teaching and learning in particular situations with specific learners with specific goals, the greater the chances one might be able to generalise to other contexts and if not, the research maintains its importance, relevance and applicability in that context.

YO: In terms of research methodology and SLA, have SLA studies been creative enough in your opinion? What kinds of research methods should be explored further?

NS: I think there’s a great deal of creative research methodology in the SLA literature. But what your question might be getting at is the dichotomy that exists between qualitative-quantitative approaches to conducting research, positivist-interpretivists dichotomies etc. Sadly, often what happens is that researchers working within their particular paradigm stay in their own camps and reinforce their own thinking. In my view, more creative methodologies would include approaches like mixed-methods, which help to break down barriers between methodological approaches and examine ways we can combine research methodologies as opposed to seeing them as incommensurable. I also think we also need more studies that are longitudinal in nature. So much of SLA research is cross-sectional. This is understandable because it’s time consuming and expensive to do longitudinal research but it is important to think creatively about how might be able to do more of this.

I'm going to say something that sounds like it's in complete contradiction to research creativity, and that has to do with replication research. Replication research doesn't sound creative at all - a repetition of what somebody else has already done. But I would argue that replication research can also be creative. First, there are different types of replication research: exact replication, virtual replication, and partial replication. And the truth is that doing an exact replication study is virtually impossible because SLA research uses human participants. Thus, it's always going to be creative in the sense that researchers are working with new populations of learners with their individual distinctive personalities, in new settings and contexts. Even though replication research does not allow for as much creativity as other research methodologies, it serves the very useful purpose of confirming or disconfirming what we have found in previous research.

YO: If you were to ask future generations of SLA researchers three questions you'd like them to investigate, which three questions would you ask them?

NS: Well, one which is obviously close to my own work is the question of how we can best combine a focus on language and meaning/content simultaneously. This is becoming increasingly important as many countries in the world are moving in the direction of providing English-medium instruction in schools - where the goal is to have more speakers of English the lingua franca. Parents are willing to invest significant time, effort and money so their children will learn English and increasing numbers are attending English-medium instruction earlier in their lives. Often what happens in these situations is that the children don't have enough knowledge of the second/foreign language to be able to cope with the subject matter instruction. This is a challenge that educators are facing throughout the world. In Canada we face this challenge with immigrant children who are integrated into English or French-medium schools and are submersed into a curriculum delivered in a language they have not yet learned. Often they do not receive the language support they need because their teachers are subject-matter teachers not language teachers. They want to make sure the children learn social studies and history and mathematics in order to succeed in school. But if they don't have the language support this will not happen. The question as to how to best combine a focus on language and a focus on content to ensure that learners are going to learn both is urgent. Think about the growing number of CLIL (Content and language integrated learning) programmes in the world, where in Europe, Latin America and in Asia, children, adolescents and young adults are being asked to learn subject matter in a language that is not their first often with teachers who do have an adequate command of the language themselves. So, in my view the need for continued research to investigate how to best combine language and meaning/content-based instruction is very important.

Another issue that is related to some of my earlier research has to do with the amount of time that it takes to learn a second or foreign language. We know it takes a lot of time and yet, learners are given very little time to do so in the school setting. Children spend thousands of hours learning their first language yet when we look at children in second/foreign language programmes in schools, they typically receive 30 minutes a day three or four days a week spread over many years. One of the ways to provide learners with more time is to develop immersion programmes or bilingual education programmes, but that's not always possible or desirable. Another decision that is increasingly made throughout the world is to start second/foreign language instruction earlier. The problem with this option is that in most cases, learners continue to receive small amounts of instruction which is not sufficient to successfully acquire the second or foreign language. In fact the bulk of research shows no support for an early start in schools when the amount of time is limited. Research has shown that instead of lowering the age at which children start learning an additional language in the school curriculum, it is better to wait until later and intensify the instruction. For example, some studies have shown that learners who receive an intensified period of instruction over six months do better than learners who receive the same amount of instruction spread over several years. There is research in Canada to support this as well as similar research investigating different concentrations of instructional time in Spain and the Netherlands but more studies are needed. It is important for me to say that while starting early may not bring significant linguistic gains when there is no substantial increase in time, there may be other advantages. Starting early can have advantages for sensitising learners to other languages and other cultures early in life. It may also motivate learners to want to learn about other languages and other cultures. More research is needed to investigate these questions as well.

The third area of research that I have recently been thinking about relates to the notion of translanguaging. While there are different definitions, interpretations and practices associated with translanguaging it is fundamentally about the benefits of using languages already known/available to the learner in the learning of an additional language. One example of this is the use of the learners' L1 in L2 learning. This has been shown to be very helpful with minority language learners immersed in majority language contexts (e.g. immigrant learners mainstreamed into English-medium schools in Canada). The benefits are evident in terms of acknowledging and accessing learners' cognitive and linguistic abilities already established in their L1 and valuing their cultural and linguistic identities. To my knowledge, less research has been done to systematically investigate how translanguaging is implemented in the classroom and how it contributes to learners' first and second language development. It is important to know for example, whether learners who are in classrooms where translanguaging is practised make further progress in their language development than learners who do not have that opportunity. I would like to see research focused on this and related questions.

YO: Professor Spada, thank you very much for your time and reflections.

NS: You're welcome.

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Analysis of abstracts in English: A study of abstracts written by EFL writers in Argentina

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ABSTRACT

English is the preferred language in the international world of scholarship and research, but some EFL (English as a foreign language) scientists find linguistic barriers to interact confidently in this dialogue. Since genre and corpus studies have greatly contributed to the understanding and production of texts, I analysed a corpus of abstracts written by EFL writers in Salta, Argentina, to inform target writers and ESP (English for specific purposes) teachers about this genre which requires special attention. The aim of this article is to report findings on rhetorical structures and communicative purposes of the abstracts in this corpus to compare them with existing models in English literature, and to show the structures available that may help EFL science writers effectively improve their abstract writing skills and communicative purposes.

Keywords: abstracts; rhetorical structures; genre studies; EAP; international language

RESUMEN

El inglés es la lengua de preferencia en el mundo internacional de la academia pero muchos científicos que usan inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE) encuentran barreras lingüísticas que les impiden comunicarse con seguridad. Dado que los estudios de géneros y de corpus han contribuido en gran medida a la comprensión y producción de textos, analicé un corpus de *abstracts* escritos en inglés por escritores ILE en Salta, Argentina, para informar a estos científicos y también a profesores de ESP sobre este género que requiere atención especial. El objetivo de este artículo es dar a conocer las estructuras retóricas y los propósitos comunicativos de los *abstracts* en este corpus, compararlos con los modelos que existen en la literatura en inglés y mostrar las estructuras disponibles que pueden contribuir a una producción más eficaz de este género escrito por científicos ILE.

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Palabras clave: resúmenes; estructuras retóricas; estudios de género; inglés con fines académicos; lengua internacional

ONE OF THE main commitments of researchers and scientists worldwide is to share their work and findings in international academic dialogues in their area of expertise. A great amount of this interaction heavily relies on written communication, as Cross (2006, p. 434) quoting Montgomery (1999, p. 32) states, “science would not exist if scientists were not writers”. Consequently, a high percentage of this international interaction is in written form and uses English as the preferred language of academia; as expressed by Swales (2004, p. 9), “English now occupies an overwhelmingly predominant role in the international world of scholarship and research”. Thus, it becomes apparent that researchers have the imperative need of developing reading and writing skills in English to interact with scientists around the globe. Researchers in Argentina are no exception. The problem appears to be that some scientists or researchers who use English as a Foreign Language (EFL) desire to be more active in their fields at international level, but they find some linguistic barriers to overcome.

Argentina is a monolingual country surrounded by Portuguese and Spanish speaking countries, where English is learned as a Foreign Language (FL) and used as a Lingua Franca (LF) to communicate internationally (Cook, 2003). Thus, Argentinean Spanish-speaking researchers, who work in either private or public institutions, need English skills, especially academic reading and writing skills, in order to participate in this international scientific dialogue effectively. One avenue open to them is to ask for advice from English teachers at their institutions. Another way is to attempt to self-teach using different sources of input such as textbooks, sample texts or transfers from their L1 (mother tongue). Consequently, most scientists learn this academic writing practice by doing it –self-taught– or by imitating structures, in either Spanish or English.

In view of this situation and to address a need of my EAP (English for academic purposes) students, I conducted research on abstracts written in English by a group of Spanish speaking researchers related to the Natural Sciences at Universidad Nacional de Salta (UNSa). There are several reasons for focusing specifically on abstracts. First, although writing papers in English may seem to be the most challenging difficulty for non-native speakers due to their length, abstracts present many challenges since they are the “opening gate” to the paper (Lorés, 2004, p.281) or presentation in academic meetings. For instance, writers need to summarise a great amount of information in a limited number of words as well as draw their target audience’s attention. Furthermore, the use of English as a lingua franca is a practice so widespread worldwide in science and technology that abstracts in international, national and local journals or proceedings are also required to be in English for indexing purposes, even when the entire research article (RA) is in Spanish. Finally, as stated by Cross (2006, pp. 435-436), “[by] focusing on the abstract as a type of genre, it [is] hoped that the formal structure, communicative purpose and forms of linguistic realization

of the abstract” would be revealed. Hence, it is expected that informing the target discourse community about this genre would contribute to improve understanding and production of abstracts in the international community. Thus, the aim of this article is to report findings on the rhetorical structures and communicative purposes of the abstracts in this corpus and to compare them with existing models in English literature using IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion), CARS (Create A Research Space), and the combinatory models suggested by Swales (1981, 1990), Cross (2005), Dos Santos (1996) and Lorés (2004), respectively. These findings aim at informing practitioners and teachers about the characteristics and importance of this genre, raising consciousness about the benefits of genre studies and providing a platform for future pedagogical actions since no similar study has been carried out in this context.

Literature Review

Since Swales’ seminal work (1981) on genre analysis, genre studies have been a salient topic in ESP, and a growing body of research and literature has been published in this field (Bahtia, 1993, 2002; Biber, 2006, 2009; Biber et al., 2009; Bruce, 2011; Dudely Evans, 1998; Hyland, 2002, 2007; Holmes, 1997; Hyon, 1996; Johns, 2008; Lorés, 2004; Marín, 2016; Nwogu, 1997; Paltridge, 1997, 2001, 2012, 2013; Prestinoni de Bellora & Girotti, 2005; Salager-Meyer, 1990; Samraj, 2005; Swales, 1981, 1990, 2004, 2009).

Paltridge (2013, p.349) reflects that “genre analysis has moved beyond the structural and linguistic examinations of texts and aims at understanding social and contextual features of genres”; that is, genres and their surrounding contexts of production and reception, how texts are produced or produce specific goals focusing the analysis on specific setting and genre. Thus, analysing a corpus in a specific context would show “how language is used in the context” of particular genres (Paltridge, 2013, p.351).

In order to analyse a genre within a specific community or setting, the use of corpora is highly beneficial. Corpora, corpus-analytic tools and corpus evidence have been increasingly used in genre research in the last two decades (Bahtia, 2004, 2009; Belcher, 2011; Coxhead, 2000; Hewings, 2012; Hyland, 2006; Nesi, 2013; Paltridge, 2012; Swales, 2004). As Sinclair (1991, p.4) points out, “human intuition about language is highly specific, and not at all a good guide to what actually happens when the same people actually use language”. Thus, corpus studies are useful to inform language users and to aid ESP practitioners about the use of English in specific domains (Nesi, 2013, p.407). Furthermore, corpus studies provide a context that deepens the interpretation of results, which is a crucial aid in intercultural communication and studies.

Genre studies in intercultural communication aim at explaining how intercultural rhetoric influences first, second or foreign languages and cultures in text production (Connor & Rozycki, 2013, p.427). Since it is the communicative function of the genre which shapes it in terms of structure, style, content, and intended audience, any study of genre must be

culture-sensitive “[even] where genres themselves are shared between cultures, the ways in which each genre is constructed may vary” (Liddicoat, 2009, p.121). These variations may affect the understanding and construction of texts; consequently, genre analysis proves to be helpful by providing “a communication system for the use of writers and writing, and readers and critics in reading and interpreting” (Swales, 1990, p.42). This understanding is what supports and highlights the importance of this study. Hence, identifying and understanding the context of text production plays an important role to unveil meanings and communication purposes. Martin-Martin (2005, p. 220) adds to this idea by referring to the influence of English in EFL writers since scientific discourse is highly internationalised “as a result of the great influence that the discourse conventions of the international English-speaking academic community exert on scientific communication worldwide”. Consequently, analysis of the writing of abstracts as a genre shared by an international scientific-academic discourse community proves to be useful to inform teachers and participants about interactions across cultures, which in turn aims at improving communication since intercultural communication is one of the main aims in academia.

The origins of abstracts aiming at condensing scientific information date back to the 1830s publication of *Pharmazeutische Zentralblatt*. It was not until the 1960s that RA abstracts were introduced in medical journals (Silva Hernández, 2010). RA abstracts are currently considered to be of utmost importance in academia because readers decide to read a paper, buy an article, or read a conference proceedings based on the abstract (Marín, 2016; Moisander et. al., 2006). Abstracts are studied as a genre since they are communicative events that consist of written texts with specific features such as stability and name recognition and fulfil a social function in a specific community of practice (Swales, 2004). That is, abstracts are recognised as a genre addressed to a specialised audience with its own formal requirements, such as title, author, text format. These specific features may be explicitly stated in the guide for authors of a journal, for example, or, in some cases, taken for granted. In general, abstracts tend to be written in a single paragraph without indentation and limited in length -between 100 and 250 words- (Cortés, 2013; Degelman, 2014; Marín, 2016; Prestinoni de Bellora et al., 2005; Swales, 2009); they should stand on their own, state what the RA or presentation is about, and attract readers to read the article (Björk, 1997; Glasman-Deal, 2010; Wallwork, 2011). Furthermore, preciseness, conciseness, uncriticality, coherence and legibility are among the characteristics mentioned by Degelman (2014) in the *APA style guide*.

RA abstracts are often classified according to their functional aims into informative, indicative, results-driven or summary driven. As expressed by Lorés (2004), there seems to be general agreement in grouping abstracts into: indicative (or descriptive) and informative. Indicative abstracts indicate the research findings without making judgements about the work or providing results or conclusions. They outline the general idea of the content of the text and the relevance of the study. By contrast, informative abstracts tend to be longer

because they provide an informative summary of the research –and the text they precede– by presenting key findings, explaining important results, and evaluating the work. Hence, abstracts of the first type are typically found in the social sciences and humanities and the second, in the hard sciences. Moisander et al. (2006) and Dueñas et al. (2012) agree that both indicative/descriptive and informative abstracts can be further divided into summary-driven and results-driven. That is, while results-driven abstracts highlight and put emphasis on key results, conclusions and contributions to attract readers' attention, summary-driven abstracts are more balanced and report an objective summary of the structure of the text they precede, represent or stand for.

Since Swales (1981), several linguists have referred to and described the structures of abstracts. Among the best-known frames in the Anglophone community, the IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion), the CARS (Create A Research Space) (Swales 1981, 1990, 2004; Cross, 2005 and Santos, 1996 respectively), and a combinatory structure of IMRaD and CARS (Lorés, 2004) can be mentioned. Before moving on to the analysis of these structures in this genre, the concept of *moves* should be introduced. In agreement with Cross et al. (2013, p.436), “[the] ‘move’ is closely related to the concept of ‘macrostructures’ as defined by Van Dijk (1980)”. Van Dijk’s (1977) concepts of text linguistics are key to understand the structure of this text type. He states that frames are structures of conventional knowledge about events that constitute the macro-structure. In the same vein, “moves represent the main themes of the text and aid the reader in selecting and understanding different meaning units contained therein” (Cross et al., 2013, p.436 quoting Endres-Niggermeyer, 1998, p.59). As a result, each proposition in a text should be interpreted in relation to the other macro-propositions and the macro-structure of the text (Kintsch, 1978, p. 70). Later, Swales (1981), Hopkins and Dudley-Evans (1988), Salager-Meyer (1990), among others, used van Dijk’s concepts as a starting point to describe the rhetorical structure or pattern of content organisation of abstracts by dividing the text into functional parts that contribute to the communicative purpose of the genre. Consequently, the rhetorical models described represent a general text structure that can be divided into moves and each move is the result of the combination of different sub-moves or *steps*, so the combination of what Swales calls *step* realise a move. Swales (1981) coined the term *move* to refer to these parts in his seminal work describing the four moves characteristic of RA introductions. Later, he himself in 1990 and others such as Bahtia (1993), Ventola (1994), Dos Santos (1996), Nwogu (1997), Martin-Martin (2002, 2005), Flowerdew (2002), Lorés (2004), Cross (2005), Samraj (2005), Kanoksilapatham (2007), Hyland (2007), Pho (2008), and Cortés (2013) adapted and adopted it to refer to the rhetorical structure and communicative purpose of other groups of texts, including abstracts. Since Swales does not provide a definition of move, Kanoksilapatham (2007, p.23) defines it as “a section of a text that performs a specific communicative function”. Thus, a move is a unit of analysis with specific language features that describes a sequential pattern of organisation of content in an

abstract. As Martin-Martin states,

[the] generic purpose of RA abstracts is to provide a summary of the content of the accompanying article; and the rhetorical goal which derives from this is to draw the reader to read the article, the writer needs to present it in a conventionalized form, by using a series of rhetorical strategies or moves. (Martin-Martin, 2005, p.60)

Nwogu (1997, p.122) and Swales (2004, p.20) agree that moves are text segments that can be realised by any linguistic structure such as a clause or by several sentences because a move is a functional unit -not a structural one- that signals the content of the text. Thus, this functional division of the structure of an abstract into moves contributes to the fulfilment of the overall communicative purpose of the genre, and each move has its own communicative purpose (Dos Santos, 1996, p.495; Cortés, 2015, p.35).

CARS Model

Swales, in 1981, presented four moves characteristic of RA introductions that, recognising some similarities between RA introductions and RA abstracts, he later revisited in 1990 and in 2004 to describe the moves present in a RA abstract:

- 1- Establishing a territory (field of study)
- 2- Establishing a niche (gap, problem, or hypothesis in previous research)
- 3- Occupying the niche (introducing the research and its relevance)

This set of moves realises the CARS model. In 1996, Dos Santos added some moves to Swales' model to complete his CARS framework for abstract analysis. Although, some authors argue that Dos Santos' model (Table 1) bears resemblance with the moves in the IMRaD model, the fact that it focuses on establishing a territory and a niche makes this structure to be categorised within this model.

Table 1. Explanation of Dos Santos's (1996) model for analysing abstracts.

Moves Function/Description
<i>Establishing the territory</i>
Move 1:
Situating the research
Setting the scene for the current research
Previous research (topic generalization) known about the field/topic of research
<STR> Setting the research
<i>Establishing the niche</i>

Move 2:

Presenting the research

Stating the purpose of the study.

What is the study Research question and/or hypothesis about?

<PTR> Presenting the research

Occupying the niche

Move 3:

Describing the materials, subjects, variables, procedures, methodology.

<DTM> Describing the methodology

Move 4:

Summarizing and reporting the main findings of the research.

<STF> Summarizing the findings

Move 5:

Discussing the research

Interpreting the results/findings

Mentioning possible recommendations, implications or applications.

<DTR> Discussing the research

IMRaD or IMRD Model

This model summarises the kinds of moves mentioned by Bahtia (1993), Flowerdew (2002), Swales and Feak (2004), Samraj (2005), and Hyland (2007). Although different authors named the moves differently, the general agreed structure of the IMRaD model includes the following moves: Introduction (also called background, aim or purpose), Methods, Results (or product) and Discussion (or conclusion). This model resembles the structure of scientific research papers representing a ‘summary’ of the article. As Cross et al. (2006, p.443) suggest, an abstract “must mirror the macrostructure of the parent document.” Thus, the essential function of abstracts within this model is to represent the main document in a condensed way. Cross et al.’s (2005, p.444) study describes this model (Table 2) with a five-move pattern:

Table 2. Explanation of Cross et al.'s (2005) model.

Move 1: *(relation to other research)*

It situates the research within the scientific community. **(Introduction)**

Move 2: *(purpose)*

It introduces the research by either describing the main features of the research or presenting its purpose. **(Introduction)**

Move 3: *(methodology and materials)*

It describes the methodology. **(Methods)**

Move 4: *(summarizing the results)*

It states the results. **(Results)**

Move 5: *(discussing the research)*

It draws conclusions or suggests practical applications. **(Discussion)**

Combinatory Structure

Lorés (2004), in her analysis, identifies that some abstracts use a 'combinatory structure' of the above models described. This model follows the general structure of the IMRaD model, but the Introduction has some of the moves (sub-moves in this model) characteristic of the CARS model. This is what some authors call move-embedding (Pho, 2008, p.238). Lorés (2004, p. 286) coins the term 'combinatory structure' and suggests the following move-structure for this model (Table 3).

Table 3: Description of Lore's (2004) model.

Move 1: *Introduction*

- 1.1. Establishing a territory
- 1.2. Establishing a niche
- 1.3. Occupying a niche

Move 2: *Methods***Move 3:** *Results***Move 4:** *Conclusion*

In order to understand the reason behind the choice of one model or the other, Lorés (2004, p.284) and Dueñas *et al.* (2012) observed that the choice of different structures seemed to correspond to certain functional aims in abstracts. Therefore, they went one-step further and analysed the close relationships between rhetorical structures and functional aims of abstracts. Their analyses highlight that indicative abstracts tend to follow the CARS structure whereas informative abstracts display the IMRaD structure. In view of this study, Lorés (2004, p. 282) settles that the combinatory structure corresponds to the mixed type of informative–indicative abstracts.

In this study, I used these models, which are quite widespread in the Anglophone community, to analyse the abstracts written by a group of Spanish-speaking Argentinean researchers at UNSa who use EFL. This analysis aims at identifying their preferred structure, moves selected and functional aims. In addition, some insights into the reasons behind their choices and how context (or L1) affects production will also be also addressed.

Methodology

Participants

The research participants (RP) were a group of Spanish-speaking researchers or PhD students at UNSa who voluntarily agreed to participate in this study taking into account the research focus. They were contacted because they had participated in an EFL science writing course (intermediate level). They are Spanish-speaking scientists who write in English and have, in general, an intermediate writing level (tested in the science writing course entry diagnostic test). Although their levels in the different macro skills vary due to their different personal experiences and exposure to the target language, it is a fact that most of them are highly skilled readers in English since most universities in Latin America offer reading comprehension modules in English in undergraduate degrees. This situation is in agreement with Philipson's (1992, p.24) description: "In EFL countries [periphery countries], English is not a medium of instruction or government, but is learnt [...] for reading texts in the language". Due to the fact that they were researchers or PhD students, most participants have participated either in direct or indirect ways in publications in English and they aim at publishing in international journals in English. After explaining the purpose of this request and assuring them confidentiality, I asked them for abstracts that they had published or submitted in the last three years. All the participants voluntarily agreed to participate in this study, provided abstracts at their discretion following, and agreed with confidentiality issues.

Corpus Collection and Selection

In general, guidelines for authors in journals give broad details about length, language usage, and format issues of unstructured abstracts, so the writer has freedom to choose the type, the rhetorical structure and the style. However, when structured or extended abstracts are

required, these guidelines provide clear and complete instructions. This is the underlying reason why I selected 17 unstructured abstracts out of the 25 abstracts of different types that I received in order to create the corpus to study. The abstracts selected are in agreement with the following criteria: They are single paragraph abstracts preceding the RA -published in either national or international journals or in conference proceedings; they were accepted for publication or recently submitted. The abstracts collected belong to the field of Natural Sciences and similar fields: Chemistry (3), Biology (2), Natural Sciences (4), Geology (7), and Agriculture (1). Of the 17 abstracts, 12 were published at international level, 3 were published at national level and 2 abstracts were provided without stating where they were submitted. Bearing in mind that communication among scientists is communication among experts, the data collected constitute a corpus of authentic academic discourse.

In order to analyse the rhetorical structure of the texts in this corpus, I used the IMRaD, CARS (Swales 1981, 1990, 2004; Cross, 2005 and Dos Santos, 1996, respectively), and combinatorial structure (Lorés, 2004) for several reasons. First, most guidelines for authors suggest a structure similar to the IMRaD one. For example, the webpage of Elsevier (2016) recommends “[the] abstract should state briefly the purpose of the research, the principal results and major conclusions.” Thus, it is likely that abstract writers follow these guidelines. Second, Argentinean researchers usually publish in Spanish in local journals before they publish in international ones. Although some context-dependent variations specific of this genre occur, literature about the writing of abstracts in Spanish in Argentina such as Prestinoni de Bellora et al. (2005) or Marín (2016) also depicts similar structures to the above described. Since a structure equivalent to the IMRaD seems to be the most popular when writing in Spanish, it may become apparent that these writers emulate or transfer this structure when writing in English, as it is supported by Martin-Martin (2005) who reports that IMRaD is the model preferred by Spanish writers. As for the writing of abstracts in English in the target context, Pocovi et al. (2002) published a book to guide researchers at UNSa into the understanding of the linguistic features characteristic of abstracts in English. Since this book was published at UNSa, many of the target writers might be familiar with this book, which is divided into five chapters (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Conclusion) and contains sample abstracts in English. The structure of the book is a clear reference to the model preferred although the introductory chapter highlights the importance of creating a research space to state the research relevance, which bears similarity with the structure suggested for abstracts in Spanish and the combinatorial structure. Consequently, it might be hypothesised that this group of science writers might be prone to use either of these models (IMRaD – CARS) or a combination of both (‘combinatorial model’).

Analysis Methodology

As for the research methods, I systematically and objectively analysed the corpus identifying the model used in each text. Since I relied on a random sampling and data labelled to fit in

predetermined categories, the results provide statistical data that allowed me to go deeper into the analysis from the theory to the data. Thus, the aim is to report, summarise, compare and generalise results to be able to fill in the gap in the literature and plan future action.

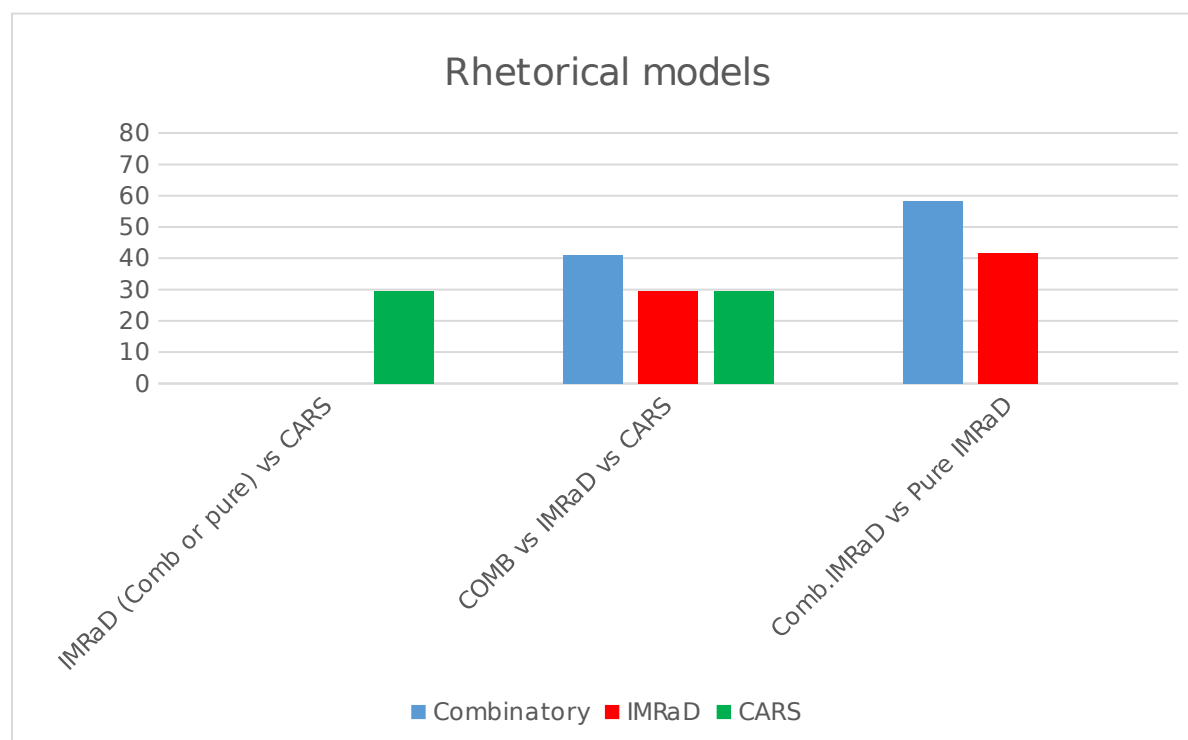
I analysed the data using deductive methods to confirm hypothesis or report discoveries (Allen, 2014). As for the steps I followed, first, I identified and coded the different stretches of text that indicate or depict the different moves using a systematic approach classification process of coding to represent meanings (Hsieh, 2005; Mayring, 2002). I marked their indicative expressions, the style markers and functional aim of every move present in each text. Then, I analysed the general structure of the texts and compared them with the models described above (IMRD, CARS, combinatory model), categorised each abstract, and identified the style used in each text. See Appendix A for a sample analysis of each of the models.

Results and Discussion

Rhetorical Structure Analysis

Corpus analysis yielded that 29.5% of the abstracts analysed follow the IMRaD model (which I call pure); equally, 29.5% display the CARS model, and 41% have a combinatory structure (IMRaD + CARS). See sample abstracts analysed in Appendix A. Thus, it is evident from these results that the writers of this corpus have a clear preference for a combinatory model. However, when comparing IMRaD and CARS models, the percentages are identical. Since the combinatory model is, in fact, the IMRaD model with some moves of the CARS structure -as sub-moves- in the introduction, I grouped the combinatory structure and the IMRaD model together to contrast it with the CARS model to go further in my analysis. The first group (pure IMRaD model and combinatory structure) represent 58% of the corpus, while 42% of the corpus follows the CARS model. Thus, it could be argued that there is a general preference for the IMRaD model, either pure or combinatory, as opposed to the CARS model. See table 4 below for a graphic description of the models analysed in this corpus.

Table 4. Rhetorical models.



These results bear some similarities with Lorés' (2004) research since there seems to be a general preference for the IMRaD model in her corpus. She analysed abstracts published in *Applied Linguistics* considering both the IMRaD and the CARS models and found that 61% of the abstracts followed the IMRaD model and 30.5%, the CARS structure. This corpus of texts from EFL writers in the Natural Sciences further supports Lorés' findings. However, she only found that 8% of the abstracts followed a combination of the two models, which she described as a 'combinatory' structure. In my corpus analysis, I found there is a striking preference for the combinatory structure, which seems to be a transfer from the writers' mother tongue since as Martin-Martin (2003) research expounds, this seems to be the preferred and most widespread structure in Spanish.

Following this analysis, I went deeper into the combinatory structure and found that each of the IMRaD moves had some sub-moves that seemed to fulfil a functional aim. It needs to be considered that these moves were realised by either a sentence, a series of sentences, a clause or even a phrase. For example,

"... aiming to produce an alternative medication for to treat **T. cruzi** infection." [Aim of the research] This move is realised by a non-finite clause.

"The aim of this work was to explore the sand flies presence from five localities of the north of Salta." [Aim of the research] This move is realised by a sentence.

"{DNA extractions were made} by a lysis buffer" [Materials]. This move (the introduction of materials used) is realised by a prepositional phrase.

As Cross et al. (2006, p.238) suggest, this realisation of the moves obeys to the compact nature of the abstract. Finally, the choice of moves and sub-moves in this structure seems to be optional, and different abstracts display sundry combinatory patterns. These findings also show some correlation with Martin-Martin's work (2003). He analysed RA abstracts in English and in Spanish in experimental social sciences and compared their rhetorical variation. Martin-Martin (2003, p.25) states that there is a general preference for the IMRaD model in Spanish abstracts stating that

the Spanish abstracts in this field largely follow the international conventions based on the norms established by English-speaking international academic community, as they present the four basic structural units (Introduction, Methods, Results, Conclusion) which constitute the different sections of the underlying research article. (Martin-Martin, 2003, p. 25)

These findings are useful to understand the apparent reasons why these Argentinean Spanish-speakers who write in English have a preference for the IMRaD model. Furthermore, Martin-Martin (2003) found that the introductions in the Spanish abstracts have more sub-moves that justify the scientists' work in their research field 'as a way of creating a niche', which is a move characteristic of the CARS model for introductions. This argument also brings light to the preference for a combinatory structure in my corpus. In general, the abstracts that display a combinatory structure tend to use the IMRaD model as the general abstract structure, but the CARS model is used in the introductory move to set the scene, establish the territory, create and occupy a niche.

Table 5 is a list of all the possible sub-moves identified in a combinatory model either in the corpus or in the literature. This list might be useful for pedagogical purposes or for science writers to be acquainted with the possibilities at their disposal when choosing the moves to include in their abstracts.

Table 5. Sub-moves in a combinatory model.

LIST OF SUB-MOVES FOUND IN A COMBINATORY MODEL

The following list of sub-moves results from the ones identified either in the literature available in the field (*) and in the corpus analysed (x).

1. INTRODUCTION * x

1.1. SETTING THE SCENE *

1.1.1. CONTEXT *

1.1.2. BACKGROUD INFORMATION * x

1.1.3. PREVIOUS RESEARCH * x

1.2. ESTABLISHING A NICHE * x

1.2.1. AIMS / PURPOSE / GOALS * x

- 1.2.2. PROBLEM ADDRESSED * x
- 1.3. CREATING A NICHE HYPOTHESIS / RESEARCH QUESTION / GAP OF KNOWLEDGE * x
 - 1.3.1. STATING RELEVANCE OR NOVELTY OF THE PROBLEM ADDRESSED * x
- 2. METHODS * X
 - 2.1. MATERIALS * x
 - 2.2. SUBJECTS * x
 - 2.3. MATERIALS * x
 - 2.4. METHODOLOGY / ADAPTATION OF METHODS * x
 - 2.5. PROCEDURES x
 - 2.6. VARIABLES x
- 3. RESULTS * x
 - 3.1. FINDINGS * x
 - 3.2. ACTUAL RESULTS / PARTIAL RESULTS / EXPECTED RESULTS * x
 - 3.3. SOLUTION / RESPONSE TO RESEARCH QUESTION / HYPOTHESIS PROVED / GAP FILLED IN * x
- 4. DISCUSSION * x
 - 4.1. INTERPRETING RESULTS x
 - 4.2. IMPLICATIONS x
 - 4.3. APPLICATIONS * x
 - 4.4. LIMITATIONS * x
 - 4.5. RECOMMENDATIONS *
 - 4.6. CONCLUSIONS * x
 - 4.7. FUTURE WORK x

Style and Identity in Abstracts

“A text, whether written or spoken, is a performance of communication” (Liddicoat, 2009, p.124), which is a social construct developed in society. This construction implies the existence of a frame of expectations, values and assumptions that may be unveiled in the structure and linguistic choice in a text. Thus, the choices made by individuals as regards linguistic expressions or patterns of organisation are meaningful since they provide information not only about the text but also about the person who produced it. As Hyland (2012, p.18) states, discourse is central in constructing identities because “a voice associated with a particular field of study involves aligning oneself with its knowledge-making practices: the topics it believes are worth talking about and how it talks about them.” The preference for the combinatory structure reflects that this group of researchers’ functional aim is informative-descriptive when choosing how to ‘present’ their work. In the light of this finding, I also analysed in this study how the choice of style –personal or impersonal–

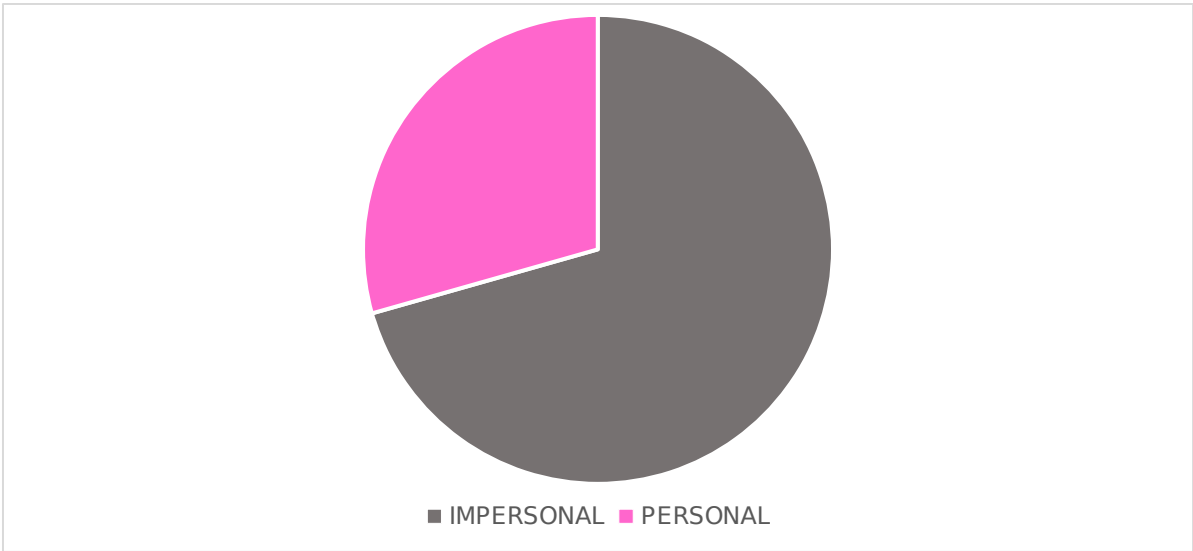
signals identity. It can be argued that a personal style introduces the writer as an agent and depicts the researcher as owner or producer of knowledge. By contrast, the impersonal style aims at highlighting objectivity, and, thus, the researcher adopts a secondary role. In order to analyse this corpus, I used Wallwork’s (2011, p.185) summary of styles (Table 6).

Table 6. Styles.

STYLE 1	I found that $x = y$.	➡ personal
STYLE 2	We found that $x = y$.	
STYLE 3	It was found that $x = y$.	➡ impersonal
STYLE 4	The authors found that $x = y$.	

The corpus shows that there is a clear preference for the impersonal style, irrespective of the model chosen. As many as 70.6% of the abstracts in the corpus use the impersonal style and only 29.4% of the corpus prefers the personal style. Figure 1 shows this graphic analysis. One of the reasons suggested for the choice of the impersonal style in this corpus can be related to cross-cultural issues. Although the preference of personal style in academic texts is a rhetorical strategy which is being increasingly used by the international English-speaking community to show a certain degree of self-confidence and authority, this emphasis on authorial voice might be perceived as a sign of arrogance or lack of humbleness among the Spanish-speaking community. Another reason behind this preference for the impersonal style in the abstracts analysed may be that this style is considered to be more objective among Spanish writers; consequently, many authors would regard the impersonal style as more ‘scientific’ and internationally accepted. This result is also in agreement with Cross et al. (2006), who state that Spanish-writers tend to follow international conventions more strictly.

Figure 1. Style.



Conclusion

This small-scale study shows that all the abstracts in this corpus follow the models proposed. A new finding is that there is a general preference for the combinatory structure identified by Lorés (2004), and this may be an effect of the writers' L1 Spanish background. This preference is supported when triangulating these findings with Cross et al.'s (2006) studies. Furthermore, sub-moves in the different moves of the IMRaD structure are listed in this study, which may be useful for science writers to understand the variety of choices at their disposal and for ESP practitioners to aid them in the understanding of the genre and planning of their classes. Another important finding worth mentioning is the preferred choice of style found in this corpus, which might be indicative of the position and the voice of the researchers in this area of study in this context. Both position and voice seem to be determined by conventions transferred from the writers' L1 and a disclosure of their own cultural identity.

Despite the value of these findings, there are of course limitations in this study to consider. First, this corpus consists of abstracts in only five areas of study. Thus, analysis of this genre in different areas should be carried out to have a broader perspective in this context. Second, further studies are necessary to determine the variables that affect the writers' choice of model. Finally, the corpus consists of a convenient sample of 17 abstracts, which is a limitation *per se* since results cannot be conclusive but orientating.

Despite these limitations, the findings are extremely relevant since it is an original study that has not been previously performed in this context. In addition, this analysis proves to be helpful to the understanding of abstract writing in the context analysed and it could set precedents for the writing of abstracts by scientists in Spanish-speaking countries. Furthermore, its most significant outcome is its pedagogical implication since genre instruction may greatly benefit non-native writers in English to improve their writing skills and communicative effectiveness, which is an area of research directly related to modern ESP pedagogy: the development of learners' genre awareness (Hünter et al., 2009, 2012; Forte, 2015). It is a fact that the lack of formal training in abstract writing increases poor writing, misunderstanding, and communication problems in scientific writing. In order to improve quality in the writing of abstracts in English by EFL learners, some training and genre awareness would be beneficial (Hyland, 2007). In addition, as Cortés (2013, p.35 quoting Dudley-Evans, 1995) and Pho (2008) suggest, genre instruction and rhetorical moves as part of a genre are useful to teach novice writers or EFL writers "to produce successful texts in that particular genre" and "to enter the discourse community of their discipline". Thus, academic writing workshops could be designed to share these findings and to present scientists who write in English all the rhetorical structures they have at their disposal to choose the ones that best fit their communicative purposes.

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Appendix A

1- IMRD MODEL SAMPLE

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM OF AGRICULTURAL CHEMISTRY

ABSTRACT: **[INTRODUCTION: setting or context. Aim of the paper]** Agricultural Engineering is taught in the Faculty of Natural Sciences, National University of Salta (UNSa). The curriculum includes the subject Agricultural Chemistry (QA), in this paper the results of the implementation of a virtual classroom in the academic performance of students in the first year of study are presented. **[METHODS: methods - materials - subjects. Also, the purpose for using this method is introduced with the 'to infinitive'.]** To evaluate the perception of the virtual learning environment Moodle student, a semi-structure survey was applied and the data were compared with the partial and final results of the course. **[RESULTS]** In general, active participation was correlated with academic success, but the final yield was not as good as expected considering the current advantages of information and communication in education. **[DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION: interpretation of results and limitations]** The main conclusion is that the virtual learning environment was used less than projected due to the lack of discipline of students and their lack of time management.

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Style: impersonal

2- CARS MODEL

Current drug therapy and pharmaceutical challenges for Chagas Disease

Abstract

[INTRODUCTION: It establishes the territory (field): It sets the scene and the context. Introduces the problem.] One of the most significant health problems in the American continent in terms of human health, and socioeconomic impact is Chagas disease, caused by the protozoan parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi*. Infection was originally transmitted by reduviid insects, congenitally from mother to fetus, and by oral ingestion in sylvatic/rural environments, but blood transfusions, organ transplants, laboratory accidents, and sharing of contaminated syringes also contribute to modern day transmission. Likewise, Chagas disease

used to be endemic from Northern Mexico to Argentina, but migrations have earned it global. The parasite has a complex life cycle, infecting different species, and invading a variety of cells - including muscle and nerve cells of the heart and gastrointestinal tract - in the mammalian host. Human infection outcome is a potentially fatal cardiomyopathy, and gastrointestinal tract lesions. In absence of a vaccine, vector control and treatment of patients are the only tools to control the disease. Unfortunately, the only drugs now available for Chagas' disease, Nifurtimox and Benznidazole, are relatively toxic for adult patients, and require prolonged administration. Benznidazole is the first choice for Chagas disease treatment due to its lower side effects than Nifurtimox. **[ESTABLISHING AND CREATING THE NICHE: Aim of the research. Some insight into the methods is provided. It introduces the research and what was done.]** However, different strategies are being sought to overcome Benznidazole's toxicity including shorter or intermittent administration schedules-either alone or in combination with other drugs. In addition, a long list of compounds has shown trypanocidal activity, ranging from natural products to specially designed molecules, re-purposing drugs commercialized to treat other maladies, and homeopathy. **[Aim of the paper and some insights into the results with its implications. It occupies the niche showing the relevance of the findings. (Its relevance has already been introduced in the first move).]** In the present review, **[we]** will briefly summarise the upturns of current treatment of Chagas disease, discuss the increment on research and scientific publications about this topic, and give an overview of the state-of-the-art research aiming to produce an alternative medication to treat *T. cruzi* infection.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.actatropica.2015.12.017>.

Style: personal

3- COMBINATORY MODEL SAMPLE

Sand flies captures and identification of *Leishmania* subgenus in Giemsa-Stained slides of patients from five localities of Salta, Argentina.

[INTRODUCTION: Background/Context. Setting the scene. Establishing the field.] Leishmaniasis is a disease which is endemic in 88 countries and in Argentina remains endemic in 9 provinces. It is caused by several species of flagellates parasites of the genus *Leishmania*. The wide spectrum of clinical manifestations depends on *Leishmania* spp and the host immunoresponse. **[Establishing a niche: Problem]** The parasite is transmitted by sand flies of Family Psychodidae, Subfamily Phlebotominae. In Argentina, many sand flies have been described, being the most important and suspected vector *Nyssomyia neivai* because it showed natural infection with *Leishmania* parasites. **[Background information**

about this topic and previous research carried out is mentioned to introduce the aim of the study and occupy a niche] In [our] country some Leishmania species were isolated Leishmania (Viania) braziliensis, Leishmania (Leishmania) amazonensis, L. (V.) guyanensis, L. (V.) panamensis associated to tegumentary leishmaniasis (TL); and L. (L.) infantum associated to visceral leishmaniasis. **[Aim of study: Occupying the niche]** The aim of this work was to explore the sand flies presence from five localities of the north of Salta.

[METHODS: subjects (people and insects), methodologies (with the justification for this choice) and procedures, materials] Besides, patient samples from these areas, were analyzed in order to identify the causal agent. Sand flies were collected during one or six nights with CDC light traps. Traps were placed a meter above the soil and left since 18 pm to 7 am. Species identification of all collected sand flies was made by morphology of spermatheca and cibarium or external genitalia. Leishmania subgenus determination was carried out by PCR-RFLP assay. Seventy-six giemsa-stained samples diagnosed for TL in 2002 at Instituto de Investigación de Enfermedades Tropicales located in Orán, Salta were used. DNA extractions were made by a lysis buffer. The PCR primers L5.8S 5' TGATACCACTTATCGCACTT3' and LITSRn 5' CTGGATCATTTTCCGATG3' were used. For RFLP, amplicons were digested with HaeIII enzyme.

[RESULTS/FINDINGS with details of percentages and locations] We captured 1352 phlebotomines, of which Ny. neivai represent the 76%, Migonemyia migonei 12%, Evandromyia cortelezzii complex 11% and Psathyromyia shannoni 1%. Ny. neivai was present in all localities studied. By PCR-RFLP, Viannia subgenus was the only identified. Regarding geographical cases distribution, 97% of them were from Orán,

[DISCUSSION: interpretation of results, implications, conclusion, recommendations, applications] being this area the site with more cases and highest sand flies amount. Three sandflies species found in this study are considered as potential cutaneous leishmaniasis vectors, particularly of Viannia subgenus parasites. We propose PCR-RFLP in order to enhance the traditional diagnostic just because knowing the leishmaniasis causal agents would improve the treatment assignation and we suggest sandflies surveillance in these localities.

ESP teaching practices: Fostering cultural bonding

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to reflect upon the importance of promoting teaching practices that foster cultural bonding through the development of communicative skills when working with future tour guides in an ESP context. Our reflection will be supported by the practice of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and the ideas developed by the postmethod pedagogy. We will analyse our role as ESP teachers in the 21st century in our own particular context, and how this role is constantly changing. We will also consider how the theoretical principles mentioned above influence our teaching practices. Our practice will be described, analysed and evaluated so that it might be replicated in other contexts.

Keywords: ESP teaching practices; CLIL; cultural bonding; postmethod

RESUMEN

Este artículo intenta reflexionar acerca de la importancia de promover prácticas docentes que ayuden a crear lazos interculturales a través del desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas con grupos de futuros guías de turismo en un contexto de IPE. Nuestra reflexión estará sustentada por el Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenido y Lenguas Extranjeras (AICLE) y los conceptos de la Pedagogía Posmétodo. Analizaremos nuestro rol como docentes de IPE en el siglo XXI considerando nuestro contexto en particular y cómo este rol se encuentra en constante cambio. También tendremos en cuenta de qué manera los principios teóricos antes mencionados influyen en nuestras prácticas docentes. Describiremos, analizaremos y evaluaremos nuestra práctica de modo que pueda ser replicada en otros contextos.

Palabras claves: Prácticas docentes de IPE; AICLE; lazos interculturales; posmétodo

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THIS ARTICLE AIMS to reflect upon the importance of promoting teaching practices that foster cultural bonding through the development of oral communicative skills when working with potential future tour guides in an ESP context. If we agree that encouraging the development of intercultural communicative abilities and promoting intercultural awareness is of the utmost importance in university students in the 21st century, we can say that the role of the ESP teacher has been broadened and enriched. In the present paper, we will analyse how our ideas about what a good teaching practice implies have changed in the light of the postmethod pedagogy extensively developed by Kumaravadivelu (2012), and how our practice as ESP teachers has been influenced by Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Although Kumaravadivelu (2006, 2012) does not refer to ESP practices specifically or to the role of the ESP practitioner in particular, we have found that his tripartite model (particularity, possibility and practicality), together with his five-module model (Knowing, Analysing, Recognising, Doing and Seeing) reflect both the reality of ESP lessons and the changing role of the ESP practitioner in the 21st century.

With regards to our own ESP teaching practice, we have attempted to make it more relevant to students' interests by including more discipline-oriented content. In doing so, we have adopted certain CLIL concepts, mainly those connected to cultural aspects.

As a result, in trying to develop more efficient teaching practices we benefit from both the ideas and concepts present in the postmethod pedagogy and in the CLIL approach.

Teaching Practices in Our Context

As we intend to analyse and refer to our own context with its *particularities* and *possibilities* (Kumaravadivelu, 2006), we should first briefly describe why this course of studies was designed to suit local needs. Until 1991, the National Parks Administration offered courses which trained locals to guide within the area of the National Parks. At that time, San Martín de los Andes had already begun to grow as an international tourist centre, and foreign tourists had started to visit our town, making use of the regular flights coming from Buenos Aires to our local airport. In 1991, Comahue National University decided to introduce a course of studies to meet the demands of the community as there was a need for professional tour guides. From the very start, English as a foreign language was included in the curricula.

The particularities of our town are worth mentioning. As has been described in Tavella and Fernández (2013), San Martín de los Andes is a melting pot of cultures and nationalities. This includes descendants of European immigrants who moved to Patagonia in the early 20th century - the so called NyCs (*nacidos y criados*/ born and raised in the area), people from other regions of Argentina who settled in the town during or after the 1970s - called VyQs (*venidos y quedados*/ those who came and stayed), and the descendants of Mapuche communities. In other words, intercultural communication has always been a distinctive feature of this community.

Our classes have always reflected the local reality: the groups are usually composed

of students who come from Mapuche communities in Neuquén province, students who have been born and raised in our town (NyCs), and other students who come from around the country. Within this broad cultural context, it was essential to design a syllabus that promoted the development of diverse local identities through the foreign language.

Sometimes, as teachers and course designers, we tend to assume that students who take up the same course of studies come to university with common interests. However, this is not usually the case. Learners' aims are as varied as their cultural identities. Some students coming from Mapuche communities see this course of studies as a means to help their families provide better tourist services; other students who come from different social and cultural backgrounds love mountain sports and see themselves as future mountain guides, just to mention a few examples. Their attitudes towards the learning of the foreign language are also varied and, to a certain extent, their previous experiences with language learning contribute to their failure or success on the course. Sometimes, their prejudices towards the English language in particular, together with the lack of familiarity with the topics do not facilitate the learning process at all. We believe that teachers working in ESP contexts should be sensitive to these aspects, for they will shape the class identity and determine the success of their teaching practice.

Having worked with many groups of learners over the years who come from diverse cultural backgrounds, we have observed that most of them were more enthusiastic about learning the language through content which was close to their own realities and to their cultural identities. Some groups were even reluctant to spend their time learning about world famous tourist centres, monuments around the world, biographies of renowned personalities and they usually demanded regional topics. This brought about major changes in the syllabus, in the selection of materials and thus, in our daily teaching practices.

In many senses our town can be considered a *laboratory* of sorts for the training of future tour guides. San Martín de los Andes is a tourist centre in the Andes mountain range with its own ski resort, a beautiful lake and breath-taking scenery all around. It also offers activities for tourists such as skiing, trekking, hunting and sport fishing. At the same time, the town struggles to maintain some of its traditions, with festivals and celebrations that date back to the time of the settlement of the first European inhabitants, usually called *first settlers*. Nowadays, San Martín de los Andes also offers visits to well-maintained historic buildings and museums and a variety of cultural activities. Consequently, visiting our town is a must for many foreigners who come to Patagonia. In this context, learners encounter the need to speak English as soon as they come across a foreign tourist in the street. By analysing this reality, we have gradually increased the use of the local resources available to us in order to promote oral language development. If we wish to encourage a context-sensitive practice in which the learners' cultural identities play a key role, then we should make use of this *lab* as much as possible. Thus, nowadays, in many cases the natural and cultural resources in the area shape our daily practice. For instance, we have worked in class

on topics such as answering tourists' questions for many years. After meetings with the other teachers in our discipline, we started to implement interpretive walking tours. This shift in our practice brought about changes in the language learners, which were required by being in the actual place. At the *interpretive stop*¹, students can provide much more information than in the classroom; they try to sound polite and use their body language when unable to find the appropriate words. Not only have their linguistic needs changed, but also their willingness to provide information.

Students who attend our classes have some previous knowledge of the foreign language, generally around A1 level. The University offers 3 four-month terms of English classes in the whole course. In this very short period of time, learners have to develop intercultural competences and oral linguistic skills to tackle the discipline-specific content. All activities implemented are intended to foster intercultural awareness. Our work is facilitated by the core subjects, for students come to our classes having previously worked with specific concepts and content. We, as teachers, have to adapt these concepts and specific content to the linguistic competencies of the students.

Classroom activities intended to connect the L2 with other topics of the curricula include retelling local stories, describing natural processes in the region (glaciation and volcanoes), describing historic houses, talking about relevant locals, guiding in the local museums, describing winter activities in the ski resort and giving information about regional products and souvenirs. The constant interaction between the development of oral language skills and culture is a key aspect in the English classroom. Tasks are carefully planned and the necessary scaffolding is provided.

To take an example from one of our lessons, in the retelling of local stories, we carry out a variety of tasks. As a kind of introduction to the topic, we recount stories that usually belong to the oral literature of indigenous peoples of our region. Different support tasks to aid understanding are provided, such as the teacher talking, visuals, and the use of the L1 as suggested by Clegg (2016). Afterwards, students work in groups of their choice and write other local stories using the support tasks provided. In order to create their own versions, they are given writing frames, sentence starters, key words and phrases. Draft copies are corrected and finally, students prepare their own oral presentations. The format of these presentations can be roleplaying, puppet shows, video presentations or any other form suggested by the groups. The assessment of this last task is dually-focused on language and content. Assessment rubrics are designed to suit each oral presentation; they are clearly delineated and shared with students beforehand. We adhere to Llinares et al.'s (2012, p. 12) concept of "assessment *for* learning, that is, the ongoing actions by which teachers and students obtain feedback which can help them make adjustments to their learning or teaching".

The creation of intercultural bonds with other members of the wider community is also one of our objectives as members of a National University. We intend to fulfil this task

by promoting different activities: young learners from local schools are invited to go on guided tours to museums or historic buildings in town, and students from rural schools are visited by university students who give oral presentations on topics taken from the syllabus.

We believe that in sharing and learning from others we grow as human beings. In a foreign language class of future tour guides, the encouragement of cultural exchanges through the development of intercultural communicative competence is imperative. As Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2010, p. 10) state, intercultural communicative competence is the “ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and [the] ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality”.

In their future profession, our students will need to share aspects of their own culture in English with people from around the world who are not necessarily native speakers. Consequently, the development of intercultural awareness is as important as the development of linguistic skills. As Sudhoff (2010, p.32) states, “interculturally competent language learners are (more) aware of the cultural conventions underlying the wor(l)ds they encounter and use”.

In our experience, connecting the learning of the foreign language with content and interculturality has made language learning more relevant and motivating for our students, and thus has clearly promoted language development. Learners’ feedback throughout the years has confirmed our subjective impressions. Students state they enjoy working with others, learning from others and further developing their oral language skills.

To conclude, when teaching an L2 to future tour guides, we think of a learner as described in the Common European Framework of Reference (2001, p.43):

The learner does not simply acquire two distinct, unrelated ways of acting and communicating. The language learner becomes plurilingual and develops interculturality. The linguistic and cultural competences in respect of each language are modified by knowledge of the other and contribute to intercultural awareness, skills and know-how. They enable the individual to develop an enriched, more complex personality and an enhanced capacity for further language learning and greater openness to new cultural experiences.

Analysis of the Theoretical Framework: Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Postmethod Pedagogy

The CLIL approach and the postmethod pedagogy have shed light upon our ESP teaching practices. We have found adequate theoretical grounding for many of our teaching practices in both of them.

CLIL pedagogies place cultural awareness at the core of the language class. The cultural dimension developed in the CLIL Compendium (2010) considers understanding as well as the building of intercultural knowledge, the development of intercultural

communicative skills, learning about neighbouring regions and countries and as a result, the construction of a wider cultural context. In our experience, teaching practices that try to foster the value of our own culture and a respect for difference provide learners with new perspectives from which to approach diverse contexts and relate to peoples from around the world. We consider it essential to imbue future tour guides with these skills.

Coyle (2007) considers the interrelation between context, communication, cognition and culture in her 4 Cs framework, and though she does not make a distinction between language and content, she places culture at the core. However, she also highlights that culture is the least researched principle. According to Coyle, in a CLIL context, culture permeates the social construction of knowledge and the learning process. As Devos (2016, p.13) states, “cultural aspects ought to be considered in the choice of content and how to use culturally appropriate discourse and language”.

Furthermore, Sudhoff (2010) promotes a tripled-focussed approach in which the learners of an L2 combine the learning of the foreign language, the learning of content, and the development of interculturality. He states that through the implementation of CLIL pedagogies, students develop the skills to decentre. Understanding that cultural differences are not a barrier, and the resultant adoption of different cultural perspectives help us to interact empathically with others.

There is no doubt that our class is a case of CLIL as a language teaching approach, as we teach a foreign language by using discipline-specific content. Our challenge would be to develop CLIL as an educational approach, in what Cenoz (2013, p.391) defines as “an educational program that takes into account the whole curriculum and not only the learning of a foreign language”.

In the 21st century, when the concept of method is being questioned by postmethod ideas, CLIL with its “wide spectrum of methodological and practical possibilities”, as stated by Devos (2016, p.11), is very much in line with Kumaravadivelu’s (2006) views on *particular* teaching practices.

The postmethod pedagogy is ruled by three operating principles as developed by Kumaravadivelu (2012, pp. 11-15). The principle of particularity is related to the interpretation of *particular* situations and to the improvement of those conditions in order to construct meaningful teaching practices. The second operating principle is practicality, which refers to both the relationship between theory and practice and to the teacher’s ability to assess the effectiveness of their practice. The third principle, possibility, considers the learners’ cultural identities and their attitude towards the learning of a language in particular.

According to these three postmethod parameters (Kumaravadivelu, 2006): particularity, practicality and possibility; the *postmethod teacher* has a broader and more direct role. This teacher makes decisions in light of the particular group of students, their objectives and needs, the institution, and the socio-cultural background in which these learners are immersed. This teacher is context-sensitive and adopts a critical mindset

towards the local conditions (particularity), focussing on reflection and action according to their experience and intuition. This teacher bears in mind that they themselves as well as the learners enter the classroom with their own identities, beliefs, and prejudices, and that these aspects shape the success or failure of their teaching practice.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) states that teachers should try to develop their own theory of practice and to *practice what they theorize*. He rejects the blind adherence to a method, and we support his idea that methods in general are designed and thought-out with what he calls a “common clientele” (2012, p.10) in mind.

To conclude, we can state that our daily teaching practice is informed by the CLIL approach, and that many of our ideas about foreign language teaching are reinforced by the postmethod conditions.

The Role of the ESP Practitioner in the 21st Century

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) use the term ESP *practitioner* rather than teacher as they consider that “ESP work implies much more than teaching” (p.13). ESP practitioners fulfil five key roles: teacher, collaborator, course designer and materials provider, researcher and evaluator (pp.13-16). Anthony (1998) highlights that teachers must work with either a specialist in their field or with learners, as they will help them to gain further insights into the target discipline. Anthony (2007, p.3) also refers to the “teacher as student”, meaning that teachers are “students of the target field”. In an ESP class, students help teachers to better understand the concepts of the target field, while teachers act as language facilitators.

Kumaravadivelu (2012) develops a five-module model for language teacher education, the KARDS model (Knowing, Analysing, Recognising, Doing and Seeing). This model constitutes a cyclical and holistic system which is based on the idea of questioning teaching practices instead of adhering to transmission models. We believe that each of these modules is relevant in the analysis of the role of the ESP teacher at university level. Briefly, as language teachers, we should *know* about our discipline, we should *know* how to manage our classroom and we should be aware of our identity as teachers. We should *analyse* our practice and *recognise* our values and beliefs, as they constitute our *teaching-self* and affect our practice. *Doing* implies *dialogising* with colleagues and with our *teaching-self*, while *seeing* involves looking at our practice with a critical eye by placing the learner in a central role.

Both teachers and students at university should be critical about their own values and beliefs, and thus be able to change and transform the teaching and learning contexts.

Although these concepts are derived from reflective teaching, they challenge teachers to go beyond the ideas of reflective teaching and to become “change agents” as stipulated by Kumaravadivelu (2003, p.16) and Zeichner and Liston (1996) in their analysis of the role of a reflective practitioner. According to these authors, a reflective practitioner

examines, frames, and attempts to solve the dilemmas of classroom practice; • is

aware of and questions the assumptions and values he or she brings to teaching; • is attentive to the institutional and cultural contexts in which he or she teaches; • takes part in curriculum development and is involved in school change efforts; and • takes responsibility for his or her own professional development (p. 1).

Moreover, critical pedagogies view teachers as

professionals who are able and willing to reflect upon the ideological principles that inform their practice, who connect pedagogical theory and practice to wider social issues, and who work together to share ideas, exercise power over the conditions of their labor, and embody in their teaching a vision of a better and more humane life (McLaren, 1998, xxiii).

As ESP practitioners in the postmethod era, we utterly adhere to the notion developed by Kramsch (2000) that “language is both culture and voice”. Consequently, placing learners at the core of the learning process implies listening to their *voices*, being aware of the fact that everybody learns in a different way, and looking at our practice with a critical eye. Bringing culture into the foreign language classroom implies major risks, as the teacher cannot plan and foresee every single language need. This can represent a considerable challenge for the ESP teacher who will not always be able to respond to students’ demands.

The ESP teacher’s role has also been challenged by information and communication technologies (ICTs). The World Wide Web has placed the teacher in a different position, they are no longer *the* content provider, *the* source of knowledge or *the* entity responsible for establishing cultural liaison. 21st century students have many opportunities to connect with people from around the world, and can access information about any culture by surfing the web. Introducing students to the differences and similarities between cultures is very important for the creation and development of intercultural bonds. It is essential to provide our students with the necessary tools to confront the challenges of the 21st century.

Conclusion

We are certain that foreign languages can be a valuable resource for our own culture, as well as providing a means to share it with others. As Byram (2011, p.11) states, when we recognize the cultural differences and similarities, we will be clearly promoting internationalism in the sense that “internationalism in education would promote the ‘bonding’ of groups across national and state frontiers”.

By providing them with intercultural communicative abilities, we empower students and allow them to share aspects of their own identity with others, thus allowing them to create links with groups of differing cultural identities. We support Cohen et al.’s idea that “in successful culture-tourism tour guides play an essential role because an effective guide can act as a ‘culture broker’ who interprets the given culture for tourism” (as cited in Ya-fen

& Chuen-maan, 2008, p.80). Consequently, in the context of potential future tour guides attending a foreign language class, it is vital to foster teaching practices that provide our students with the content, language and intercultural communicative abilities that will enable them to be effective tour guides.

Note

1. According to Gutierrez, Maragliano and Montecinos Ongini (chair of Professional Practice, AUSMA, FATU, Univ. Nacional del Comahue, Argentina), an interpretive stop can be a monument, building and/or a natural element with heritage value at the time it is selected, analysed and included within the tourist attractions of an area.

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Teacher learning: dialogues between concepts and practices

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ABSTRACT

This paper intends to examine the epistemological and methodological principles of the Practicum component in an initial teacher education programme and their practical realisation in the day-to-day decisions made by student-teachers. Our perspectives on language, learning, teaching and assessment are taken as a point of departure for the presentation of specific didactic projects, sequences and materials that seek to embody them. All the teaching experiences presented in the paper took place at urban state secondary schools.

Keywords: practicum account; language as social practice; learning as an intersubjective process; teaching as mediation; assessment as dialogue.

RESUMEN

El presente relato se propone comunicar los principios de corte epistemológico y metodológico que sustentan el espacio de Práctica en una propuesta de formación docente inicial y su materialización en las decisiones que cotidianamente toman las/los estudiantes practicantes. Las perspectivas acerca de la lengua, el aprendizaje, la enseñanza y la evaluación que compartimos son tomadas como punto de partida para la presentación de proyectos, secuencias y materiales didácticos que intentan otorgarles corporeidad. Las experiencias de enseñanza que se incluyen tuvieron lugar en escuelas secundarias públicas urbanas.

Palabras clave: relatos de práctica; lengua como práctica social; aprendizaje como proceso intersubjetivo; enseñanza como mediación; evaluación como diálogo.

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WHAT FOLLOWS IS a combination of three classroom reports that are part of a larger story, a fourth reports. The three student-teachers authoring this article share some of their first professional experiences within the context of Teaching Workshop IV - the Practicum component of their teacher education programme. Each of their narratives, didactic sequences and teaching materials are representative of both the theoretical underpinnings of this subject and the day-to-day choices made by student-teachers and their tutors. Even though most of these decisions are contextually bounded, they are shaped by the pedagogical, institutional and political needs of our region, the principles upon which they rest are probably common ground for most EFL teachers around the world.

We set out to characterise Teaching Workshop IV and then present the student-teachers' accounts by organising them in four different sections: language as social practice, learning as an intersubjective process, teaching as mediation and assessment as dialogue. In each of these sections the student-teachers' experiences are described alongside the principles which guide them.

Teaching Workshop IV

The Practicum has always been recognised as a vital part of teacher education; it has, however, adopted different formats, names (field experience, practice teaching, etc.) and purposes, depending mostly on socio-historical conditions and the prevailing view of teacher development (Gebhard, 2009). In our English Teacher Education Programme, the Practicum is conceived as a track extending from the first to the fourth year. This track is realised in the curriculum as four teaching workshops - one every year - and a teacher research seminar in the last year. The main purpose of this organisational scheme is to offer student-teachers a gradual approximation to schools and to the teaching profession. It can be argued that this scheme is coherent with a sociocultural perspective of teacher learning: "(...) teacher cognition originates in and is fundamentally shaped by the specific social activities in which teachers engage" (Johnson, 2009, p. 17).

In the framework of the Practicum track, Teaching Workshop IV represents the closest approach to schools and schooling student-teachers experience while still being part of initial teacher education. In our institution, this workshop encompasses tasks such as:

- observing a class and keeping narrative records,
- analysing the syllabus and materials the class teacher follows,
- developing a didactic project and planning the corresponding lessons to carry it out,
- designing compatible teaching materials,
- implementing those plans and materials,
- assessing students' comprehension and production practices,
- participating in self, peer and tutor assessment sessions.

The use of forums, wiki texts and glossaries - among other tools - in a Moodle virtual classroom compensates for time constraints, facilitates interaction between student-teachers

and tutors/peers and promotes collaboration among peers. The integration of technology in this workshop can be described as informal (Reinders, 2009) since it stems from the individual tutors' needs and interests and no explicit training is offered. It can be argued, however, that participation in the virtual classroom is likely to result in incidental learning about the educational uses of technology for the student-teachers. Similar endeavours in the national context, addressing the role of ICT tools in teacher education, have been explored by Braun (2012) and Banegas and Manzur Busleimán (2014).

The classes where the teaching projects are implemented belong all to urban state secondary schools. Secondary education is compulsory in Argentina as from 2006 and in our province, Santa Fe, it lasts five years; most secondary school students receive English instruction during that period of time. Even though institutional cultures, and thus English lessons, may vary a great deal, our teaching context shares several of the TESEP contexts features (Holliday, 1994; Wedell & Malderez, 2013): large classes, restricted access to resources and materials and students who do the subject because it is part of the curriculum.

The didactic choices made by the student-teachers when devising their teaching projects are underpinned by a set of principles that constitute the epistemological and methodological stance of Teaching Workshop IV. The following sections are devoted to the presentation of these principles and their actual implementation in the student-teachers' lessons.

Language as Social Practice

In close agreement with internationally recognised language teaching guidelines, such as the CEFR, and with the national and jurisdictional curricula, in Teaching Workshop IV language is conceived as social practice: "(...) meaning resides not in the grammar of the language, or in its vocabulary, or in the head of an individual, but in the everyday activities that individuals engage in." (Johnson, 2009, p. 44). According to Moon (2012), social activities are actually language events in which a written or oral text becomes central. These events do not start and progress unpredictably; they emerge from and are shaped by conventional social practices. This perspective reminds us of the inextricable connection between the practices and events that regulate language use, the individual meanings that are conveyed in the context of these events and the linguistic resources participants resort to so as to share their ideas and be part of the social activity in question.

When we teach a language, we are teaching students how to participate in social practices; thus, all of the student-teachers' teaching projects involve the accomplishment of task which implies producing an oral or written text in the context of a language event that pertains to certain social conventions.

Teaching Project 1: Picturing Daily Life

This project was carried out by a 3rd Year class in a state urban secondary school. The expected outcome was a photography exhibition showing everyday life moments through the students' own perceptions. To accomplish the final task, students engaged in reflection about the characteristics concerning the particular social event, the photography exhibition; they also discussed the generic features of photography exhibition captions: their purpose and form. This proposal was prompted by the analysis of Frida Kahlo's photographs and artwork.

Students had to take or choose a meaningful photograph showing people doing something, an everyday activity, and write an exhibition caption describing it. They thus had the opportunity to use the language in a meaningful way, by resorting to the linguistic content they had learned (present simple and progressive) and explore a variety of texts, the caption and the photograph itself. The teacher-designed materials approached writing as a process, requesting students to engage in drafting and editing tasks, in order to help them express not only what the photos showed, but also the personal message they wanted to share: what the picture meant to them (see Appendices A and B).

Teaching Project 2: Ingenious Inventions

This project was developed for a 5th Year class in a state urban secondary school. As a final task, students were asked to advertise something that they had invented to make their daily lives easier. Students were first presented with different samples of what they were supposed to do. Then, they were gradually guided into creating something that did not exist and describing this invention in terms of name, materials, purpose and instructions for use.

Once they had a good idea of what their innovative product was going to be, they transformed that description into an advertisement: they agreed on a price, selected relevant information to show, and chose pictures, sounds, font type, colour and size. In the last lesson, students presented their advertisements using posters or PowerPoint presentations and tried to sell their inventions to their peers. Each student voted for their favourite invention and the winner received a certificate of recognition (see Appendix C).

Teaching Project 3: The cinema: interesting facts about our favourite movies

This project was implemented in a 3rd Year class in a state urban secondary school. Students created an interactive quiz about their favourite films. In the interim stages, students explored different texts related to the film industry such as technical data sheets and synopses; they recognized their purposes as language events and used them as a resource to obtain information for their quizzes. Students turned the data they had gathered into questions and challenged the rest of the class to see how much they knew about those films. Consequently, they used the foreign language in the context of social practices that are common among them, playing games, watching films, browsing websites, and they learned the assigned grammatical content, the past simple, in an incidental way.

Learning a Foreign Language as an Intersubjective Process

Bordenave (in Barboni, 2012, p. 64) maintains that interaction is central to learning: “(...) more specifically, an engagement with other learners and teachers in joint activities that focus on matters of shared interest (...)”. This position is coherent with a sociocultural perspective of learning which emphasizes the role of supportive dialogue, or scaffolding, in the process of promoting self-regulation and autonomy in learners (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). In this respect, the teaching projects developed in Workshop IV aim at fostering collaborative dialogue in several ways:

- most of the proposed tasks involve group work, either during the whole process or at some of its stages,
- student-teachers are encouraged to become a member of those groups, or a supporting peer for the individual student, when they consider that their intervention might be necessary to keep the task going and thus promote language learning, and
- student-teachers are generally the authors of the teaching materials they use, which are tailored to the specific learning needs of their students - they are meant to operate within the learners’ Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978 in Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

Picturing Daily Life

In the spirit of this perspective, one of the interim tasks involved a whole group analysis of Frida Kahlo’s everyday life photographs and their captions. Not only could students learn about the artist but they were also able to identify the conventional characteristics of captions, and they did so in the context of supportive dialogue. A further step required students to work in pairs and write a photo caption for one of Kahlo’s controversial paintings; they later shared their ideas to enrich everyone’s interpretations.

Ingenious Inventions

Multiple group decision making sequences were proposed to students in which each of them could give their opinion, present new ideas and find a way to improve their work; attentive listening, negotiation and respectful attitudes were critical in these sequences.

The first instance of group work students took part in was when they were expected to decide what to invent. They had to think of an object they could use often so as to make their lives a little easier. Each group made a list of several possible objects, which they gradually narrowed down to a single invention.

The cinema: Interesting Facts about our Favourite Movies

Students worked in pairs to accomplish the final task. The first step involved agreeing on a movie they both liked, which implied sharing personal experiences and preferences. In the

process, they had to commit themselves to gathering information about this movie and to try to turn that data into quiz questions. They were not alone in their attempts; they relied on one another, which made students less fearful of making mistakes.

Creating an interactive quiz got learners to think about an audience: they were writing questions to challenge their friends, not to please the teacher, and this made the task even more meaningful and rewarding. All along the process the student-teacher provided the necessary linguistic scaffolding so that learners could identify their mistakes, reflect upon language and improve their texts.

Teaching a Foreign Language: Mediating between Students and Culture

According to Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002, p. 7), in addition to linguistic knowledge, second and foreign language learners do need “the ability to use the language in socially and culturally appropriate ways”. Moon (2012) points out that the conventions that shape social practices, and thus language events, are affected by variables such as time, place and even the distribution of power among participants, which means that language use in the context of these practices is culturally-bounded and socio-historically constructed.

The assumption that EFL teachers, native or non-native, are familiar with the entire set of cultural conventions attached to the language they teach seems rather unrealistic. Instead, Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002) focus on certain knowledge, skills, attitudes and values teachers should develop and promote in their students in order to make them genuinely curious about other cultures, the relationships between these cultures and their own, and to foster the ability to “interact with speakers of other languages on equal terms and be aware of their own identities and those of their interlocutors” (2002, p. 7).

Picturing Daily Life

The photography exhibition project included carefully designed instances of intercultural reflection. They involved debates about social identities and how these are expressed through different cultural manifestations, such as art and clothes. Through the analysis of Frida Kahlo's life, students could explore her culture and see how she expressed her ideologies through her paintings and her dressing style. By adopting a critical stance, students reflected on their own preconceived ideas, and thus developed a positive attitude towards differences (see Appendix D).

The Cinema: Interesting facts about our Favourite Movies

In order to trigger discussion about the cinema, the student-teacher chose to show a short fiction film called *Hijab* (2005), by the Spanish director Xavi Sala. It is the story of a teenage girl whose head teacher forces her to take off her hijab, an Islamic veil, on her first day at a new school. After watching this film, students engaged in an oral debate about how that girl might have felt and what the hijab represents for the Islamic culture. It turned out to

be a moment of collective reflection that evidenced the incipient development of empathy and intercultural awareness. Students had the chance to see how identities are expressed through clothes and how people erroneously tend to perceive differences as something to be avoided, instead of valuing the richness of cultural diversity.

Assessment as a Dialogic Enterprise

The assessment component in the student-teachers' projects aims primarily at informing teaching and learning. The student-teachers engage in interaction, observation, record-keeping and interpretation practices that allow them to frame and reframe their didactic options in accordance with what is actually going on in the classroom.

Students' understanding and use of English are typically assessed in the context of the interim tasks proposed in the process of producing the final project. Frequent feedback to students, usually in the form of conversation, is an identifying feature of the stance towards assessment these teaching projects embrace. A stance that seems to be highly compatible with dynamic assessment described by Lantolf and Poehner (2014, p. 170) as

the dialectic integration of assessment with teaching through teacher-learner interactions during which mediation is negotiated for learners to optimally contribute to activities and for mediators to gain insights into learner abilities necessary to guide their efforts to move development forward.

Assessment in the Three Teaching Projects

Unlike what is usually the case with traditional testing, the three projects involved careful observation of what happened in the classrooms both in relation to the subject matter – the understanding and use of the specific linguistic content and to the students' reception, engagement and commitment to the tasks. All along the implementation of the projects student-teachers followed students' individual processes, analysed their teaching outcomes and made didactic decisions based on this data. Thorough records were kept, which allowed student-teachers to arrive at a summative appreciation of their own and their students' performance.

Conclusion

We have intended this article to be yet one more opportunity for student-teachers and tutors to engage in collaborative reflection. On the one hand, reflection aims at constructing pedagogical knowledge that is relevant to each particular classroom in our regional context. At the same time, it contributes to the more global aim of a model of teacher development that is grounded on teachers' experiences. Engagement in the activity of teaching should be necessarily intertwined with theorisation; teacher learning occurs when practices and academic concepts interact symbiotically.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

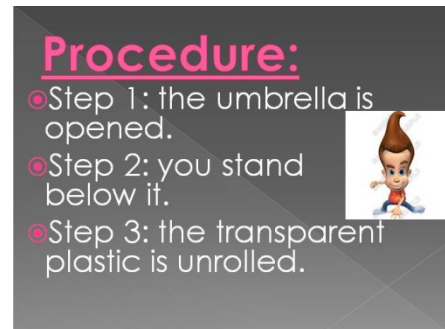
· BEACH SONG ·



In this photograph we can see a girl and a boy. He's playing with his guitar and she stopped her walk when she heard her name on the guy's song and sat down to listen.

CARRERASVERA

APPENDIX C



APPENDIX D

Task 3. Recognising and analysing the function of photo exhibition captions.

Think:

1) Where do you read photo exhibition captions?

Your Notes _____

2) Why do you think artists/ photographers include captions next to their photographs on display?

Your Notes _____

3) What information do they include in the captions?

Your Notes _____

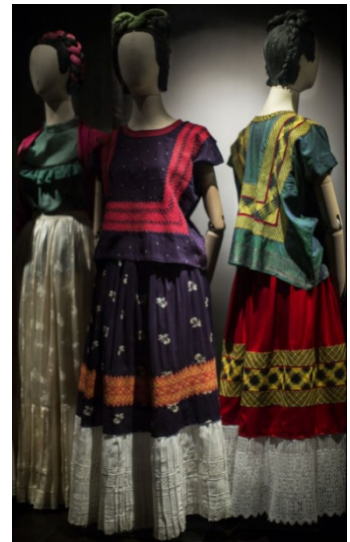
4) Identify words or phrases in the following caption that help you understand what the text is about.

Your Notes _____

**The collection on display: Frida's dresses. Casa Azul, Mexico.**

Colourful and apparently cheerful, the traditional Mexican clothes show an eclectic combination of textures that enables us to explore the artist personality and life just by examining her wardrobe. Garments on display turn into a way to read through the tragedies Kahlo suffered in her life.

A life in pain, a life in colour



Think: Do you think the clothes we wear help us build our identities?

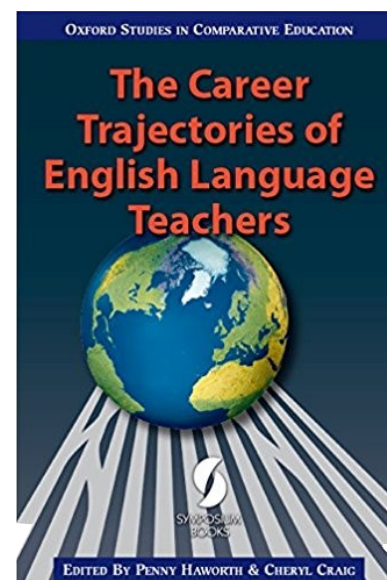
Source: “*Las Apariencias engañan: Los vestidos de Frida Kahlo*” Museo Frida Kahlo.
Retrieved May 3, 2015 <http://museofridakahlo.org.mx/>.

Book review

The Career Trajectories of English Language Teachers

Edited by P. Haworth & C. Craig, Didcot, Symposium Books, 2016, Pp. 246; ISBN: 978-1-873927-87-8, £42.00 (paperback)

Since language teacher education experienced a sociocultural turn, research programmes and publications have examined aspects which go beyond second language acquisition and linguistic investment and processes in language learning and teaching through teachers' eyes (Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015). In the teaching dimension, key concepts such as teacher cognition, identity, motivation, autonomy, and professional development among others are the focus of sustainable interest.



The title edited by Haworth and Craig is based on English language teaching as a career through the compelling thick descriptions and informed accounts of teachers and teacher educators around the world. A clear and well-framed qualitative research paradigm permeates through the chapters particularly in the form of narrative inquiry making links to sociocultural theory and other humanistic approaches in education. These features are elegantly crystallised in the use of I- and We- statements and a writing style which includes readers in the big picture. Readers will feel that the authors are talking to them in their situated practices and fluid realities.

This edited collection is divided into two sections, offering in total an introduction, 18 chapters, and a conclusion. The stories which constitute the backbone of this book come from Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Iceland, India, Greece, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Thailand, the UAE, the UK, the US, and Turkey. This amazing list of countries from all the continents illustrates the reach and influence of collaborative work, decentring views, and efforts to include a wide range of life histories and settings through readers can feel identified with.

Section 1, *Stories of English teachers' career paths*, comprises eight chapters. One major running theme across the chapter is that of change. Change is possible through several

interconnected dimensions:

- Sustained involvement (Chapter 1)
- Reflections on the tensions around theory, practice and policy (Chapter 2)
- Negotiation in informed decisions (Chapter 3)
- Interpellation of one's identity (Chapter 4)
- Engagement in dialogic constructions (Chapter 5)
- Awareness of policy and educational processes (Chapters 6 & 7)
- Analysis of motivation in less mainstream settings (Chapter 8)

Section 2, Socio-political contexts in teaching and teacher education, consists of eight chapters. Authors in the section articulate their trajectories through narrative accounts and research reports from a more encompassing angle by revisiting programmes and experiences in pre-service as well as in-service teacher education across educational levels and academic/teaching posts. I briefly summarise the settings of each chapter:

- Initial teacher education/course experiences with prospective teachers (Chapters 9, 11, 12, 17)
- Programmes with experiences but unqualified teachers (Chapter 10)
- Higher education and international research projects (Chapter 13)
- Status of EFL teaching in higher education (Chapter 14)
- Professionalism, self-determination, and identities across sectors and experiences (Chapters 15, 16, 18).

Readers must be warned. This section is not light reading where authors narrate change from A to B as if it were a straightforward road. It is a captivating collection of voices, voices which have been eloquently carved in the pages of this book. They are not parochial stories which do not bear connections with the multitude of experiences around us. They are complex stories carefully researched and referenced. They put forward research possibilities and affordances which invite teachers to embark on examining their own career paths, regardless of their length, placing themselves in a broader context to transform social practices from a social justice lens. As the editors put it in their concluding chapter:

[...] chapters provide an understanding of the identity of the good teacher of English, an awareness of the teacher's role as a curriculum maker rather than just a curriculum implementer, and a view of how the journey to find an English language teacher's best-loved self is often driven by a sense of social justice. (p. 237)

All in all, *The career trajectories of English language teachers* is an inspiring collection of autobiographies which capture the professional and personal tensions and symbiotic interactions that teachers navigate to become their best version possible to make changes in their context. In my identity as a teacher educator and curriculum planner, I highly recommend this book to teacher educators who have the tremendous responsibility of designing and implementing initial as well as continuous professional development

programmes and courses. Here, we are confronted with the inescapable truth that all our lived experiences leave a mark on our teaching configurations. Furthermore, they all exert and influence on our directed motivational current (Dörnyei, Muir & Ibrahim, 2014) to maintain and support our drive for teaching. In this regard, the volume acts as a catalyst of teachers' drives, concerns, and situated biographies, and as an invitation for others to reflect on their professional lives and continue moving forward.

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D. Coyle, P. Hood and D. Marsh

Cambridge

Cambridge University Press

2010

Pp. v + 173

ISBN 978-0-521-11298-7 (hbk): £54.50; US\$ 71.20

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Bruner, J. (2002). *Making stories: Law, literature and life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard

University Press.

- Gee, J.P. (2005). Semiotic social spaces and affinity spaces: from the Age of Mythology to today's schools. In D. Barton & K. Tusting (Eds.), *Beyond communities of practice* (pp.214-232). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lantolf, J. (Ed.). (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy 1: Definitions, issues and problems*. Dublin: Authentik.
- Meza Rueda, J.L. (2008). *Historia de maestros para maestros. Pedagogía narrativa expresada en relatos de vida*. Bogotá: Universidad de La Salle.
- Pérez-Cañado, M.L. (2012). CLIL research in Europe: Past, present, and future. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 15(3), 315-341.
- Prince, P. (2011). What's the story? Motivating e-learners with fiction. In D. Gardner (Ed.), *Fostering autonomy in language learning* (pp. 225-233). Gaziantep: Zirve University.
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- Ushioda, E. (2011). Motivating learners to speak as themselves. In G. Murray, G. Xuesong & T. Lamb (Eds.), *Identity, motivation and autonomy in language learning* (pp.11-24). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

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