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GRADUADES ORGANIZADES EN LENGUAS MODERNAS

[PÁGINA INTENCIONALMENTE EN BLANCO]

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[PÁGINA INTENCIONALMENTE EN BLANCO]

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¿PODEMOS PENSAR Y HABLAR "LXS DE INGLÉS"?

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SOBRE PENSAR, HABLAR Y OTRAS YERBAS

Históricamente, lxs de inglés, hemos sido consideradxs técnicxs, expertxs, lingüistxs, mediadores interculturales antes que educadores, antes que agentes comprometidxs con la educación y su arco de complejidades. Parece que "lxs de inglés" tenemos que demostrar que podemos "pensar y hablar" -que tenemos "algo para decir". Parece que cabe la pregunta (y en tal caso preguntarnos por qué cabe) respecto de si podemos **pensar** (como se pregunta Dabashi acerca de los no-europeos); y si podemos **hablar** (como se pregunta Spivak acerca del subalterno).

Pero ¿Por qué invitar a la conversación a Spivak y a Dabashi? ¿Cuál es el sentido de este extraño mestizaje o maridaje entre **lugares** aparentemente **distantes** de enunciación? Pues deberíamos ver qué "lugares" y "distancias" (que no son ni espaciales ni temporales), o mejor, a qué **geocorpopolítica** aluden, porque aquello que nos atraviesa y nos hace síntoma de Spivak como intelectual Hindú en su "¿Puede hablar el subalterno?" de 1988 y de Dabashi como pensador Iraní en su "¿Podemos pensar los no-europeos?" de 2013 -entiendo- es lo mismo. Y es lo mismo que me / nos pregunto retóricamente en el título de este escrito en relación a "lxs de inglés" (profesores, estudiantes, formadores, investigadores, etc.): ¿Podemos pensar y hablar?

Porque para Spivak, el subalterno no puede hablar porque ese lugar de enunciación ha sido negado en tanto tal, ese lugar ha sido excluido del diálogo de pensamientos, ha sido racializado y construido como inferioridad y exterioridad del *Self*. Como una clase de alteridad. Esa alteridad cuando se enroca con la hegemonía y la dominación es **subalternidad**: es esa relación y condición que expone la política como proceso de subjetivación; allí donde se **interioriza** la dominación porque se articulan los dispositivos coloniales.

Cruzamos campos y vemos que ahí (aquí) donde el colonialismo europeo del siglo xv produjo "identidades" negativas por dermis, por lengua, por episteme, por fenotipia: es decir, por **NO** ser (ya sabemos qué o quién - pero básicamente Moderno: blanco, hombre, hétero, católico-secular, burgués, etc.), el colonialismo inglés y francés (siglos xvii, xviii y xix)

produjo otras ausencias, borramientos, y blanqueamientos (los de los "condenados" de 1961 y los de las "máscaras blancas" de 1973, de Frantz Fanon).

Para Dabashi son los no europeos quienes no han gozado de la atribución natural, directa y espontánea que deviene del "pensar" es decir (al decir cartesiano) "el existir, el ser". O sea, no son. Los no europeos no tienen filosofía, sino etnofilosofía; no tienen cultura sino etnocultura; no tienen música sino etnomúsica, etc. Son eso que los europeos estudian. Eso que los europeos nombran, existen, y taxidérmicamente clasifican. Los otros **de** Europa, la alteridad no europea que es pensada, que es dicha, sobre la cual y sobre todo **POR** (en nombre de) la cual los europeos hablan. Dabashi nos alerta sobre esta exotización que es parte de la trampa colonial, la que **adjetiva** (y desiguala) lo no europeo solo por el hecho de (no) serlo.

OTRAS YERBAS QUE INVITAN A CON/VERSAR(NOS)

¿Entonces, nosotros, lxs de inglés, podemos pensar y hablar? Esta pregunta no pretende mucho más que **intimar** (en su doble acepción de introducirse en el afecto de alguien y activar una vía de conocimiento) y **conversar**, es decir, "dar vueltas juntos", movernos alrededor de algo, intentando entender. Conversar, dice Rita Segato, es la mejor forma de pensar. Hablar y pensar para no ser pensados ni hablados por quienes se arrogan dicho derecho y poder.

Estas ideas, de hecho, son parte de conversaciones con compañerxs, colegas, estudiantes; y parten de algunas observaciones y apreciaciones en y de la experiencia vital, académica, áulica, biográfica. Por eso es que no es una pregunta casual. Porque tributa a una tradición montada sobre **silencios** (justamente hablando de hablar y de pensar) y **ausencias** de lo propio, del suelo, del arraigo (Kusch 1976).

En este punto, creo, necesitamos re-conocernos (no otra vez sino de un modo otro): oír, percibir y sentir los silenciamientos del hablar situado, del decir lo nuestro en nuestras conversaciones. Humberto Maturana (2001) observa:

> [L]as palabras son nodos en redes de coordinación de acciones, no representantes abstractos de una realidad independiente de nuestro quehacer. Es por esto que las palabras no son inocuas y no da lo mismo que usemos una u otra en una situación determinada. Las palabras que usamos no sólo revelan nuestro pensar sino que proyectan el curso de nuestro quehacer."
>
> (Maturana 2001:44).

Para el autor chileno, "[L]os seres humanos **somos lo que conversamos**, es así como la cultura y la historia se encarnan en nuestro presente." (…) "De hecho, nuestra única posibilidad de vivir el mundo que queremos vivir es sumergirnos en las conversaciones que lo constituyen como una práctica social cotidiana en una continua conspiración ontológica que lo trae al presente." (44) Y añade: "Nada nos ocurre, nada hacemos que no esté definido por una emoción que hace posible la acción." (45) "Y tal emoción es el amor." (…) "La emoción fundamental que **hace posible la historia de la hominización** es el amor." (11)

En esta trama maturaniana de emocionar, lenguajear y conversar, vuelvo a preguntarnos, ¿por qué, si somos los que conversamos, no conversar lo nuestro (no necesariamente **sobre** lo nuestro, sino según nuestras propias reglas de juego), desde las emociones que lo fundan y que como comunidad nos interpelan? Pero ¿sabemos qué es "lo nuestro" en nuestro quehacer en el aula, en la docencia, en la investigación en inglés? ¿O es que solo hemos aprendido a ser epistémicamente obedientes?

¿Necesitamos que nos "paternen" en la tarea de "**estar siendo" ese** algo o alguien? (porque en ese paternar se instancia el clasificar, el subalternizar, y se gesta la subordinación **internalizada** que es clave para el funcionamiento del dispositivo modernidad/colonialidad).

Me pregunto ¿Dónde opera nuestro deseo, la emoción que nos moviliza? ¿En la demanda de ser o parecer el *Self* no ya moderno ilustrado (posindependentista) sino moderno hiperglobalizado e hipermediado? El *self* que se cree "libre" porque no se "ve" cooptado (porque no se ve) por las industrias de producción de "inteligencia" cuyas políticas de subjetivación son políticas de sujeción de la humanidad a los mandatos de los *Amos* del mundo. (No hay una falacia determinista, hay agentes, epistemología, instituciones, lengua).

CUANDO LA "SOLUCIÓN" (moderna) ES EL PROBLEMA (colonial)

Esa inteligencia es la que Jauretche, nuestro pensador ya en 1967 (en su ensayo "La colonización pedagógica") calificaba en nuestro contexto como "Intelligentzia" y decía:
"Señalaré por qué es "Intelligentzia", y no inteligencia, la constituida por gran parte de los nativos que a sí mismos se califican como intelectuales, y cómo han conformado su mentalidad, cómo se comportan, y sobre todo cómo está constituido el aparato 'cultural' que la dirige y difunde para evitar la creación de un pensamiento propio de los argentinos" (41). Para Jauretche, en nuestro país, muchos intelectuales se encuentran deslumbrados por la civilización europea, por aquello que consideran "cultura europea". Y dice: "lo preexistente, la cultura que tenía en la raíz, fue incultura en cuanto no coincidía con lo nuevo" (45)

Jauretche considera que la *Intelligentzia* es el fruto de la **colonización pedagógica** por cumplir la función de transpolar los valores falsamente universales (valores de la Europa del Norte, del Atlántico Norte –OTAN-) en valores nacionales, invisibilizando la dominación colonial.

Jauretche toma de Abelardo Ramos de su libro Crisis y Resurrección de la literatura argentina (1954) un extenso extracto dentro del cual encontramos estas líneas:

> Pero en las semi-colonias, que gozan de un status político independiente decorado de ficción jurídica, aquella "colonización pedagógica" se revela esencial, pues no dispone de otra fuerza para asegurar la perpetuación del dominio imperialista, y ya es sabido que las ideas, en cierto grado de evolución, se truecan de fuerza material. (…)
>
> (Ramos, A. en Jauretche [1967] 1992: 42-43)

Así, Jauretche nos ayuda a empezar a pensar y a hablar de y desde nuestra argentinidad, nuestra latinoamericanidad, nuestro domicilio existencial (Kusch 1976).

La **colonización** pedagógica es retomada por Giuliano (2019a, 2019b, 2020, 2022) en tanto que **colonialidad** pedagógica, dado que los procesos históricos posteriores al colonialismo y colonización se continúan en lo que Quijano (1992, 2000) dio en llamar **colonialidad**, y que describió y desarrolló en su obra a partir del dispositivo del patrón colonial del poder, retomado, releído y recreado por Mignolo (1999, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2019, 2020) en la matriz colonial del poder.

En ese contexto, la colonialidad es la cara oscura de la modernidad y su **retórica**, dado que bajo el velo de la gran narrativa moderna de progreso, salvación y desarrollo, se esconde la inferiorización, dominación, explotación y despojo de los pueblos originarios, de los subalternos, de las minorías racializadas, etc. Se funda sobre la **categoría mental** de **raza** como principio estructurante para **clasificar** a las poblaciones en términos de inferioridad y superioridad ontoepistémica. No *es* "algo" ahí afuera. *Hace* "algo" ahí afuera (racialización lingüística [Veronelli 1995] y racismo lingüístico [Dovchin 2020]).

Vamos virando el rumbo hacia la colonialidad y la pedagogía, sin dejar de formularnos la pregunta inicial ¿nosotrxs, lxs de inglés, podemos pensar y hablar? ¿Qué pactos traicionamos si pensamos y hablamos como nosotros? ¿Qué guiños enunciativos perdemos? ¿Qué privilegios cedemos? ¿Qué complicidades (des)articulamos con quien nos "da" la palabra?

Ya algo nos han dicho Jauretche y Ramos en la amplia esfera cultural dado que la **pedagogía** opera en todos los dominios de la vida, entrenando y normalizando (y por qué no domesticando) modos de ser, decir, pensar, sentir y hacer.

LA (DES)COLONIALIDAD PEDAGÓGICA

La apuesta y propuesta pedagógica decolonial es macro y micropolítica. En este caso particular en términos macro es ver (en) la colonialidad pedagógica (Giuliano 2020, 2022) en la modernidad, en todos los ámbitos de la MCP, por dentro y por fuera de la educación formal y sus instituciones. Ver y de-velar la colonialidad pedagógica oculta(da) por la retórica moderna; detectar y visibilizar la colonialidad pedagógica en tanto que vector que atraviesa nuestras vidas, cuerpos, subjetividades como pueblo americano desde 1492. Ver y develar eso que la colonialidad pedagógica **proforma y performa** a partir de lenguas, significados y categorías ajenas aunque ubicuas (y no inocuas).

Las escuelas, las instituciones educativas en general, sus aulas, son también -y sobre todo, micropolíticamente- esa política de domesticación y docilización de los cuerpos; son **dispositivos** modernos/coloniales cuya racionalidad es homogeneizadora y punitiva en nombre de una literacidad productivista cuya constante es el examen, la evaluación, el juicio, como garantes de aprendizajes.

Hacemos aquí un paréntesis para recordarnos la etimología de la palabra escuela: *scholé*, del griego, "ocio, tiempo libre". Tiempo de libertad, aprendizaje, contemplación y juego por fuera del trabajo. Ese espacio y, sobre todo, tiempo hoy se ha vuelto hiperproductivo, tiempo en y con el que compulsivamente hay que *hacer algo*, llenarlo, que no quede hueco; que no haya de-mora (la mora que desvela al actual docente gerencial). Giuliano y Skliar (2019) proponen descolonizar y liberar la *scholé* del lastre del tiempo utilitario/productivo. Y se preguntan:

> ¿Acaso no estamos frente a cierta destitución pedagógica cuando la educación de las nuevas generaciones se reduce a una mera mediación técnica en pos de los fines que define el mercado y la dignidad de un sujeto radica en la mejor evaluación que el mismo pueda conseguir durante su formación? ¿Dónde queda el tiempo libre de la escuela o la originaria *scholé* si este se reduce a meras formaciones en cronologías pre-determinadas que desembocan en competencias, desarrollo de capacidades para el trabajo o habilidades para la vida empresarial? ¿Qué libertad supone un tiempo libre que hace de la singularidad una cifra evaluativa más o menos competitiva?
>
> (Giuliano y Skliar n2019a: 9)

Violeta Núñez, en una entrevista que le realizara Hernández Flores en 2011, dice que hoy todo se vuelve *intervención*, hacer planificado según un objetivo, para obtener un resultado Es **fabricación**: *poiesis* (del griego: producción). Todo se vuelve medición,

baremo, comparación, y aceptación por parte del sujeto de lo que fue pensado PARA él. Por fuera queda la **acción**, la cual está abierta al **ACONTECIMIENTO**, a lo que emerge, y "**lo que emerge en la acción educativa es el propio sujeto**" (193).

PLURIVERSANDO CRÍTICAMENTE

Puede que algo de esta historización e intertexto nos permita situarnos en Abya Yala y los *cidios* que le son constitutivos, para sí -entonces- intentar conversar sobre "el" inglés, su enseñanza, su aprendizaje, sus aulas, en la Argentina.

Más allá de las líneas y bajadas estatales/institucionales que suelen responder a la gestión del poder interestatal, y que implica la aproximación *top-down* de las esferas de la vida, la opción decolonial se propone un enfoque *bottom up*, desde las bases que pueden insurgir, agrietar, transformar las estructuras de la hegemonía totalizante y reconstituir modos de buen vivir destituidos por la modernidad.

De antemano, creo que actualmente hay al menos tres líneas en el espectro de la docencia:

1. Globalista. Consiste en ejercer la enseñanza de "el" inglés en la creencia de que es una herramienta para funcionar globalmente, internacionalmente, que responde a las necesidades instrumentales del mercado (ocupabilidad, empleabilidad, laboral, académico, científico) y garantiza bienestar, promoción y movilidad social (que esto sea real es parte del problema, no de la solución). Tal posicionamiento implica también ignorar los pasados coloniales y sus terribles consecuencias que han constituido a las 6 lenguas modernas (español, portugués, italiano, inglés, francés y alemán) como "las" lenguas de poder/saber. Es decir, dejar incontestadas las inexcusables destituciones operadas históricamente por el diferencial de poder (imperial y colonial) y aceptar la continuidad de tal colonialidad lingüística y pedagógica que se traduce en violencia epistémica (etnocidio, lingüicidio, epistemicidio, etc.).

Recurrir a libros de texto de editoriales extranjeras (o nacionales funcionales) que no nos permiten pensar ni hablar porque no retoman nuestra condición, ni hurgan en nuestra historia no moderna, no desestabilizan sistemas de ideas y creencias importados y naturalizados, porque persiguen y consiguen hablar a través nuestro (ventrílocuamente), volviéndonos replicadores de ideas ajenas. Es otra forma de extractivismo ontoepistémico que adopta la colonialidad del ser y del saber.

Así pasamos a **despensarnos** americanos (en vez de saqueados de categorías filosóficas y autoconvocarnos a reconstituirlas); a **desatender** la condición americana (en

vez de abocarnos a atenderla); a **negar** la perentoriedad de la repolitización de los discursos y la artesanalidad de las prácticas (en vez de suspender una distribución de poder que solo nos vuelve cada vez más desiguales); a **dejarnos evaluar** y penalizar por "autoridades" extranjeras (en vez de cuestionar tanto los contenidos como los términos de dichas instancias). Ese es el plan del norte global. No es teoría conspiratoria ni conspiranoide, ese también es un artilugio del "orden global" para desactivar el conflicto, debilitar la resistencia y las contra pedagogías del y desde el sur.

Los abordajes que se emplean en esta línea Globalista son **didácticos (o pedagógicos en un sentido colonial)**, despliegan recursos multi semióticos, emplean estrategias motivacionales seductivas y se respaldan en ciertas ciencias para avanzar y asegurar enseñabilidad y aprendibilidad. Son kits de herramientas, recurseros, consumibles, o terminan siéndolo merced a la comercialización y consumo **masivo** de "el" inglés. Esto no se cuestiona, no se problematiza, solo se busca "mejorar" la enseñanza en un gesto "norteado" (Mamani) que nos disciplina dentro de la caja de las ciencias sociales (que buscamos in-disciplinar). En la medida que no se **pedagogiza** (educativamente hablando, más como *educare* que como *educere*), no se subvierte nada de lo que **subyace** a la expansión, dominación, y mecanismos destitutivos de las lenguas de la modernidad. En términos de la geopolítica de las lenguas, se refuerza el lugar de poder global de la lengua inglesa (de "el" inglés) y se naturalizan y reproducen la diferencia colonial y la colonialidad pedagógica. Pedagogizar (vs didactizar, que tiene rasgos comunes con la colonialidad pedagógica) la enseñanza nos convoca a repensar la educación como antidestino (Núñez 2007), y a los educadores como "pasadores". Dice Núñez:

> Por ejemplo, un pasador de las fronteras es el que está dispuesto a hacer la travesía con las personas que temporalmente están a su cargo, desplazarse y arriesgarse en la acción de intentar cruzar la frontera. A mí me parece casi una metáfora del campo educativo en el sentido de la acción: cuando uno está dispuesto a una acción educativa asume el riesgo de estar con alguien por algún tiempo para ayudarle, para guiarlo en el cruce de una frontera, con todos sus riesgos y todos sus aconteceres; uno intentará cruzarla pero uno no sabe siquiera para qué la cruza el otro, qué va a significar el cruce para él. Para el otro se abre un mundo nuevo donde ya no nos toca acompañarlo. Ésa es la acción increíble, la aventura de la educación.
>
> (Núñez en Hernández Flores 2011:193)

Frente a una pedagogía lugarizada, en las posturas globalistas abrevan muchas de las teorías interculturales que promueven formas de ciudadanía intercultural en el aula de inglés.

La **interculturalidad** es terreno fértil para mediaciones democráticas, colaborativas, cooperativas, *joint ventures*. Sin embargo, a mi entender, la cuestión no puede quedarse en ese nivel de análisis, porque es justamente el límite conveniente a los intereses del norte. Por un lado, tal statuquoismo relacional es garante de la mismidad del sistema (de la matriz) cuya lengua hegemónica totalizante es el inglés y por ende es la que controla los significados. Así, la propuesta dentro de estas posturas suele ser la elaboración de proyectos educativos inter-nacionales, inter-universitarios, inter-culturales, en inglés, co-ideados, co-dirigidos, co-financiados, pero uni-direccionados en el sentido de los resultados (**o** las lenguas culturas/educación hermanan/igualan/unen a los pueblos **o** la desigualdad de los pueblos puede superarse mediante el respeto/la igualdad/la educación de sus lenguas/culturas/gentes) **No** hay una indagación en las **CAUSAS** de la asimetría, de la desigualdad, de las condiciones de indignidad en las que vive gran parte del mundo. La interculturalidad así entendida no mira el esquema de fuerzas, el diferencial de poder, usa una lente moderna, colonial, eurocéntrica y anglófila. Es relacional, y resulta funcional, por tanto no es crítica (no parte del problema estructural colonial racial), en los términos de Walsh (2009). Lo mismo apunta la pregunta de Aman que titula su artículo de 2014: "Why interculturalidad is not interculturality?"

2. Crítica. Subsume una diversidad de posturas respecto de la lengua, la enseñanza y el aprendizaje, por fuera de los libros de texto "comerciales". Proponen diseños ad hoc, suelen responder a localización y personalización. Mirada reductiva. Se inscriben en el lexema "crítico/a" pero no hay una exploración en la genealogía de tal criticidad, sus orígenes, su reapropiación en Latinoamérica (en clave por ejemplo freireana). Tal léxico se vuelve mandatario (mantrificación) pero pareciera que también se lexicaliza o se des-semantiza porque no retoma sus referentes históricos en relación a la lucha contra las estructuras de poder hegemónicas, en relación a la crítica a la opresión y a las condiciones de dominación. Lo que se lee como crítico parece disolverse o asumir rasgos declarativos, frente a la falta o ausencia de contenidos que efectivamente sorteen la fuerte bajada de línea de las problemáticas globales (*global issues*), la agenda 2030 de la ONU, y la retórica de los DDHH de los organismos supranacionales, entre otros. La introducción de todas estas temáticas se enmarca en el ámbito de la corrección política dado que no promueven una crítica anti hegemónica profunda, porque plantean un *estado de cosas* anonimizando a los verdaderos responsables de los eco*cidios, biocidios, etnocidios* pasados y presentes.

En otras instancias vemos un esfuerzo por integrar contenidos locales, menciones, hitos culturales, efemérides, etc. que denominamos "tematización de lo americano" (Baum

2021, 2022), es decir, la topicalización de fenómenos, artefactos, rasgos, que no transitan el derrotero de su existencia subalterna, racializada, inferiorizada. Una verdadera discusión desde la crítica nos devolvería una imagen poco agradable de los relatos que hemos venido alojando en el imaginario y en el sentido común que se construye en las aulas.

3. Decolonial. Es la alternativa en la que nos inscribimos. Es la que hace emerger somáticamente la incomodidad de la pregunta que titula esta charla y tantas otras preguntas. Porque si efectivamente podemos pensar y hablar como lo que somos será en los términos de Kusch (1976) de "perder el miedo a ser nosotros mismos y pensar lo propio". Qué (no) hay ahí, en las dualidades que Kusch vio como constitutivas de lo americano: en la barbarie (vs. la civilización), en el hedor (vs. la pulcritud); en la américa profunda (vs. la de superficie), en la periferia (vs. el centro); en la unidad (vs. la fragmentación); en las religiosidades (vs la teología), etc. qué hay que nos expulsa, qué hay que nos hermana, qué hay si no nuestras historias que no son LA Historia, nuestras lenguas, nuestras categorías de pensamiento desafiliadas.

"El" inglés ocupa el lugar central en la matriz colonial del poder en el corazón mismo de la enunciación. Este no es un dato menor porque Mignolo ha dicho que "el control de los significados y el control del dinero son procesos paralelos" (s/f). La lengua no es algo que poseemos sino algo que somos. Los significados, los sentidos, las palabras, existen el mundo. Y el mundo que no se dice por más real que sea no existe. Evidentemente el mundo se cifra en una medida casi absoluta en inglés, en una plusvalía anglocéntrica, y eso demanda dar lugar a enseñar la **DIFERENCIA** así sea en inglés, a hallar y / o provocar intersticios que permitan visibilizar, desnormalizar, reconstituir lo que la modernidad sobre-escribió.

La diferencia concebida como desigualdad hizo del otro un desposeído, un racializado, un esclavizado, un marginalizado. Hizo de la alteridad que nos altera (porque nos modifica en nuestra naturaleza individual y social) un proceso a veces a desear, otras a evitar y descalificar. Esto pone en cuestión y en tensión la pregunta ¿Qué vidas valen? Se pregunta Walsh (2013): ¿qué vidas merecen ser vividas?

En el aula de inglés, puede haber solo eso, un aula donde se enseña inglés, la lengua *commodity*, fetichizada (Bein 2000, 2012), objeto de aspiración y deseo (que nos amarra a una geocorpopolítica ajena y ajenizante) **o** puede haber un encuentro (de emocionar, lenguajear y conversar) entre y con quienes pensamos y hablamos desde acá, en una lengua otra, en cuya modernidad/colonialidad emerge la frontera como lugar de enunciación otro,

desde un nosotros, una cosmología nosótrica, relacional, del pensamiento Tojolabal (Vázquez 2017) frente a la individualidad, la "yoidad" del sujeto moderno.

Allí, entonces, puede haber un aula de inglés con menos "**estándar**" y más "**estar**" (el estar de Kusch vs el ser que es siempre llegar a tener para llegar a ser); puede haber un aula de inglés con menos **racionalidad evaluadora** y más **irracionalidad creadora.** Puede haber un aula de inglés donde nos permitamos **darNOS** las palabras para entender los sentidos geopolíticos, denunciar lo que creamos necesario, importante o urgente e intentar transformarlo. Un aula de inglés donde la imitación, el pastiche, la impostación nativista no sea la **norma ni la horma**, porque caber a costa de sufrimiento (que es dejar de pensar y hablar lo propio) reitera la lógica colonial tras la retórica moderna.

La descolonialidad pedagógica es un horizonte que nos señala el camino, es una baliza que sigue encendida a medida que vamos entendiendo (intentando desarmar además de comprender) la colonialidad pedagógica que nos habita e invita seductivamente.

La racialización lingüística (Veronelli 2015) reedita en este sentido la matriz colonial del poder en relación a las lenguas modernas y a "el" inglés que, en la docencia en particular, nos pone de cara a ese otrx que no aprende la lengua (léxico, gramática, fonética, sintaxis) tal, como y cuando se la enseñamos; ese otrx que espanglishea; ese otrx cuyos sonidos no suenan, cuyas entonaciones no expresan, cuyas palabras no son, cuyos cuerpos nos están… **¿será esta la clave? ¿Qué cuerpos sí están?**

(IN)CONCLUYENDO

Creo que solo desde la conciencia crítica de la colonialidad pedagógica, puede emerger un desacople de la modernidad/colonialidad, un aula fronteriza y un lenguajear en inglés lengua otra (que no es **otra** lengua, ni extranjera, ni franca, ni internacional, ni meta, ni inter, ni ingleses del mundo), es lengua otra que acontece y hace de la herida colonial un lugar de enunciación propio (de emocionar y conversar), ideológicamente saturado (Bakhtin 1981), bilenguajeante, **bi, di o alter** sonante, donde se juega nuestro ser la lengua y estar en ella de modos otros.

La pedagogía y la educación en inglés como lengua otra asume la ubicuidad de la colonialidad pedagógica y, en ese asumir, construye una (red de) conversación(es) pluriversas cuyos **contenidos** rehistorizados y repolitizados y cuyos **términos** respecto del reparto de lo legítimo nos alojan en procesos de **desaprendizaje y reaprendizaje** donde finalmente lxs de inglés podamos pensar y hablar.

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[PÁGINA INTENCIONALMENTE EN BLANCO]

Eje 1: Investigaciones en Lingüística y Lingüística Aplicada

Balancing simplicity and accuracy: a proposal for a grammar for ETEP students

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1. Introduction

Language is one of the features (perhaps the most important one) that distinguish man from the rest of the animals. One of its key properties is its productivity: human beings can produce and understand a potentially infinite number of different utterances. Even though language is linear (elements at all levels come one after the other), it is not true that the words in a sentence are all at the same level (figure 1). There is evidence that the words in a sentence form intermediate units, which combine with other units to form more complex structures (figure 2). In this paper we will discuss two approaches that are used at the English Teacher Education Program (ETEP) at the UNMdP, and we will propose an alternative that, we believe, has some advantages over these two.

2. Structuralism

Different approaches can be used to describe the structure of language. The traditional structuralist approach (Quirk et.al. 1989, Quirk & Greenbaum 1973, Leech & Svartvik 1994) has been particularly useful at the ETEP at the UNMdP, as students are usually familiar with structuralist notions and terminology from high-school. One such notion is that a VP is a sequence of words that has a lexical verb as head and optional auxiliary verbs preceding (figure 2). However, syntactic tests seem to suggest that the lexical verb forms a closer unit with its complements than it does with the auxiliary verbs: movement, for example, shows that the fronting of a lexical verb plus its auxiliaries results in ungrammaticality (1a) while the fronting of a lexical verb and its complements does not (1b). Other tests, such as substitution (2) and insertion (3), point in the same direction.

1) Movement (fronting)

1a) **The student promised to answer all the questions, and* [*will answer*]$_i$ *he* ___$_i$ *all the questions*.

1b) *The student promised to answer all the questions, and* [*answer all the questions*]$_i$ *he will* ___$_i$.

2) Substitution

—Will anybody answer all the questions?

2a) *****—*The student* ***<u>does so</u>*** *all the questions tomorrow*. [*does so=will answer*]

2b) —*The student will* ***<u>do so</u>*** *tomorrow*. [*do so=answer all the questions*]

3) Insertion

a) *The student* [*will*] [*certainly*] [*answer all the questions*].

3. One alternative: Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999)

Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999) constitutes one alternative to the traditional structuralist approach. It takes into account much of the evidence provided by grammatical tests but, as it is based in an early generativist model (the "Standard Theory", Chomsky 1965), it is complex and it requires extensive training in the mastery of its subtleties. We must remember that the aim of generativism is to account for the (subconscious) knowledge that a native speaker has of his language and how he comes to possess it. These models were never intended as pedagogical instruments.

Because Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999) closely resembles Chomsky (1965), diagrams are not just representations of the internal structure of sentences, but a hypothesis of how those sentences are generated in the mind of a speaker. This generation has two parts: the first one is the application of a series of phrase structure rules which results in a structure (figure 3) to which some transformational rules (TRs) are applied. Each TR changes the chain of words into a different one (4a-c). This approach has some assumptions of its own. Notice that in the case of restrictive relative clauses, for example, Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999) assumes that the relative clause must have a NP which is identical to a NP in the main clause (*all the questions*, in our example), and that the NP in the relative clause later undergoes a series of TRs which first substitute the repeated NP with a pronoun (4b) and then front the relative pronoun (4c).

4) Transformational rules

4a) output:

The student will answer [*all the questions* [*we may ask* [*all the questions*]$_{NP}$]$_{Rel.Cl}$]$_{NP}$

4b) substitution:

The student will answer [*all the questions* [*we may ask* [*that*]$_{NP}$]$_{Rel.Cl}$]$_{NP}$

4c) fronting:

The student will answer [*all the questions* [[*that*$_i$]$_{NP}$ *we may ask* …$_i$]$_{Rel.Cl}$]$_{NP}$

4. Objections to TRs

Later versions of the generativist approach have got rid of most of the TRs. The reason for this is partly theoretical: the number of TRs necessary to account for the generation of all of the possible sentences in a natural language is so huge that it is impossible for the model to constitute a good explanation of how a child acquires a language in such a short period of time.

There are also empirical reasons to reject the substitution TR. Pronouns are not substitute words which are used instead of NPs; they are deictic words which may refer to the same notions that NPs refer to. In (5a), for example, we see that the pronoun *she* is not replacing the NP *Allison*, because if it did (5b) we would obtain a sentence in which the two NPs *Allison* refer to different notions (i.e., different people named *Allison*). Besides, in (6) we can see that the pronoun *I* is not replacing any NP: there is no NP that could possibly be used in that context with the same reference.

5a) *Allison*$_i$ *said she*$_i$ *was tired*.

5b) *Allison*$_i$ *said Allison*$_j$ *was tired*.

6) *I am the person for this post*.

We also have reasons to reject the notion of movement. Generativism believes that it is possible for a syntactic element to be generated in a position (for example, complement of a verb, as in 7a) and then, if it satisfies some requirements (such as being a *wh*-word), to move to initial position in a sentence, leaving a "gap" behind (7b).

7a) I said *what*

7b) *What*$_i$ I said ___$_i$

In this case, the element which moves is said to occupy simultaneously two positions: the one in which it is generated (the gap, where it gets its syntactic function) and the one in which it "lands". It would be impossible for another element to fill any of these two positions, as two syntactic units cannot have the same function in a sentence. However, there

are plenty of examples in natural languages in which the position in which we would expect a gap is filled with another syntactic unit (8a-c).

8a) *ALDOSIVI: SOS UNA DROGA* [*QUE*$_i$ *NO TE*$_i$ *PUEDO DEJAR*] (Graffiti on a wall)

8b) *This is the girl* [*that*$_i$ *I don't know what she*$_i$ *said*]

8c) *But if this ever changing world* [[*in which*]$_i$ *we live* [*in* ___]$_i$] */ makes you give in and cry / say live and let die* (https://www.mi6-hq.com/news/index.php?itemid=7839)

It may be objected that several of the examples in (8) are "ungrammatical". In this respect, we agree with Chomsky that grammars are individual (each speaker has his own grammar) and that a theory of language should account for all the sentences generated by a native speaker: those which conform to the rules of the "standard" language, and those which do not.

5. Our proposal

We propose an alternative grammar which, like Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999) describes more accurately the internal structure of the sentence than the traditional structuralist approach. However, unlike Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999), our grammar excludes many of the complexities introduced by generativism, because our aim is to produce a pedagogical instrument to be used in discussing and explaining the syntactic relations among the elements in a sentence. The grammar that we propose (appendix 1) consists of a reduced number of rules which allow the generation of all the possible sentences in a language, and it does not make use of notions such as transformations and movement. As figure 4 shows, our grammar generates pronouns as such, not as replacements of NPs, and all the syntactic units are generated in the positions in which they eventually appear in a sentence (they do not move), even though some of them (such as *wh*-words) may establish relations with positions in which an element may be perceived to be missing (a gap), where they obtain their syntactic function.

6. Conclusions

The approach proposed by Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman (1999) provides a much more accurate description of the internal structure of the sentence than the structuralist approach. However, as it is based on an earlier version of generativism, it requires extensive training to be used by non-specialists.

Our proposal agrees with Celce-Murcia and Larsen Freeman (1999) as regards the structure of the VP, but it differs in its treatment of substitution and movement. We believe that elements are generated where we see them and establish relations with positions in which they are interpreted. Because of this, we believe that our proposal is more suitable for students at the ETEP, as it does not require extensive study on their part to familiarize with it.

7. References

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Appendix 1

S → Subj Pred

S → sm S

Subj → NP

NP → (D) (D) (AP) N (PP) (S)

NP → pro

AP → (intens) A (PP)

Pred → Aux VP (Advl)

Aux → {T/M} (perf) (prog) (pass)

VP → V (NP) (NP/AP)

Figures

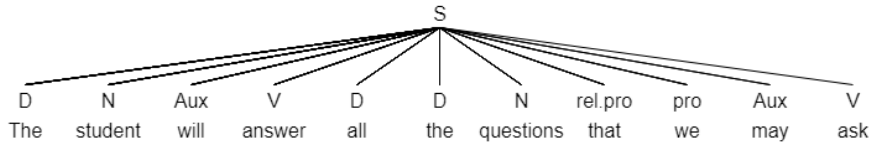

Figure 1: Incorrect analysis of *The student will answer all the questions that we may ask*.

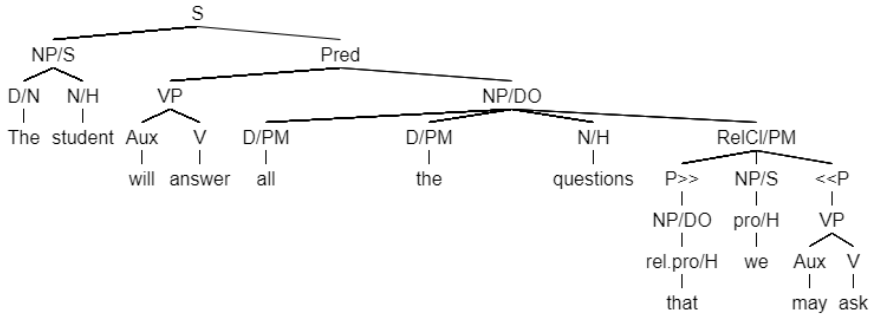

Figure 2: Structuralist analysis of the sentence *The student will answer all the questions that we may ask*.

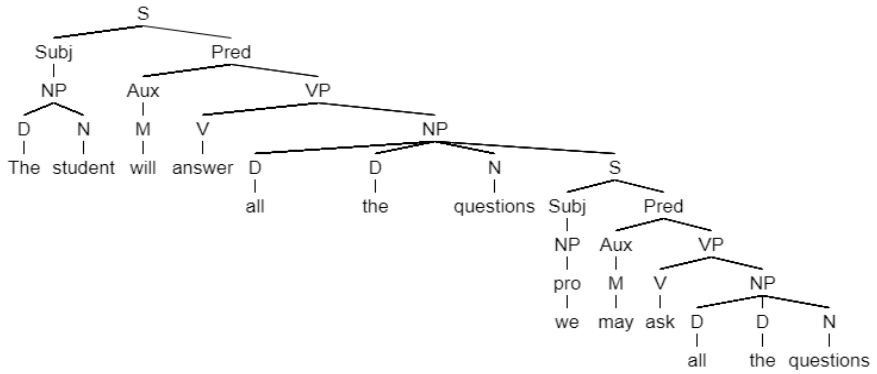

Figure 3: Structure proposed by Celce-Murcia, M. & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999) for the sentence *The student will answer all the questions that we may ask*.

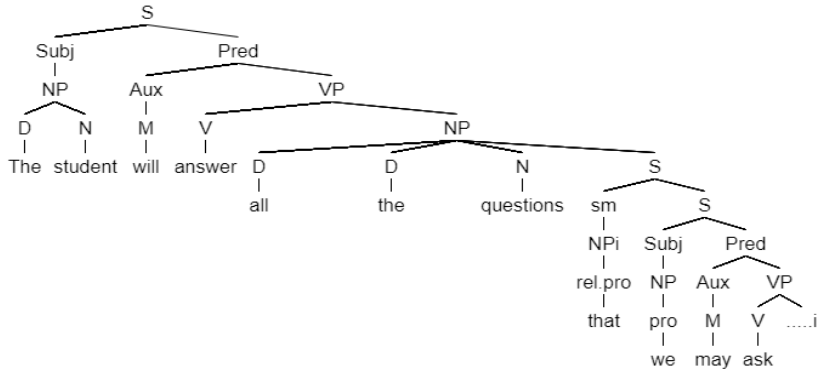

Figure 4: Our analysis for the sentence *The student will answer all the questions that we may ask*

Critical reading and academic literacy in the classrooms of the Teacher Education Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, a proposal from Discursos Escritos

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Historically, the field of English Language Teaching, hereinafter referred to as ELT, has been shaped by modern/colonial logics (Lander, 2001) that tended to depoliticize the language and its teaching (Baum, 2019). English has been conceptualized from an apparent neutrality, as a "means to an end," a simple tool, or even a mark of prestige within the academic community. This has translated into habituations (Ahmed, 2019) focused on developing the four macro-skills: reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing, and speaking, as well as the teaching of grammar and vocabulary (Richards, 2014). However, in recent years, efforts have been made to rethink language teaching from other perspectives, more aware of the political implications of its teaching, emphasizing situated practices and intercultural learning (Kramsch, 2014; Baum, 2021). Nevertheless, most approaches, both in research and teaching, lack a critical and intercultural perspective.

The current curriculum of the English Teacher Education Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata is not exempt from this issue; on the contrary, it reflects the tensions and diverse perspectives within the discipline. This is evidenced by its division into four areas: Language Skills, Teacher Education, Linguistic Foundations, and Cultural Foundations, each with different class hours and importance within the curriculum. Specifically, the Language Skills area, which focuses on the development of the aforementioned macro-skills in English, is the most quantitatively prevalent, accounting for 32.14% of the total course load, surpassing the others (Bergonzi Martínez and Goñi, 2023). The subjects within this area are spread over the 5 years of the program and play a key role in entry into the program. Due to the increased access to university in recent decades, institutions began receiving students with very diverse pedagogical backgrounds (Litwin, 2006). This, combined with the repeal of restrictions on university admissions, led to the search for new ways to address the needs of the student body. In this case, the English

Teacher Education Program has faced difficulties regarding the language proficiency levels implicitly required for entry into the program. As Claudia De Laurentis (2012) explains, although admission is unrestricted, there is an unwritten norm that assumes those entering the program have a language proficiency level equivalent to B2 according to the European Reference Framework. To address this issue, two new preparatory courses were created to provide support: Intermediate English and Advanced English (INI and INA, respectively). Students can enter through three different schemes: by taking both courses and, upon passing them, accessing the remaining courses of the first year; by passing INI in the final exam and taking INA; or by accrediting both through the final exam and then starting the rest of the first-year courses. It is expected that those entering through this scheme will take Discursos Escritos course (IDE) during their first semester at the university. Given the prominence of language proficiency development in the context of the English Teacher Training Program and the discipline in general, it is not surprising that the three subjects structuring entry into the program belong to this area.

As these are courses taken by incoming students, one of the focuses of INI, INA, and IDE lies in incorporating strategies and competencies related to academic literacy. This, understood as "the teaching process that may (or may not) be activated to facilitate students' access to the different written cultures of the disciplines" (Carlino, 2013, p. 370), aims to develop various literacy skills that facilitate students' integration into university life. Although the curriculum does not include a specific course for this purpose, Discursos Escritos often serves this role, as evidenced by some of its main objectives, such as encouraging students to "incorporate concepts and skills that serve as a foundation for other subjects in the curriculum" and, at the same time, "develop their own learning techniques and different types of intellectual processing while reading for different purposes" (Green, 2023, p. 2). However, following the trend in the disciplinary field, the focus is on students' cognitive processes rather than on a critical stance regarding their role as subjects with rights within a public institution.

As members of IDE teaching staff, we recognize the need to adopt a critical stance in the processes of literacy and institutional affiliation. In the words of Henry Giroux (2020), it is crucial to form transformative intellectuals who read texts through questioning and inquiry, rather than from a passive and conformist place. Therefore, in this context, we were interested in investigating the teaching of reading and its role in academic literacy in Discursos Escritos course to propose the deepening of a critical perspective in a transversal manner.

Our intervention proposal is situated within the vast field of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), particularly in ethical-onto-epistemic positions that ascribe qualities of the performative and pedagogical turns (Denzin, 2018). It is also conceived from an (auto)biographical-narrative (Porta, 2020) and autoethnographic (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005) perspective. In order to recognize the habituations (Ahmed, 2019) regarding reading that manifest in the official documents, materials, and curricular content, as well as the everyday practices of the Discursos Escritos in the English Teacher Education Program at UNMDP, the first phase of fieldwork involved documentary analysis of curricula, teaching plans (PTD), and course materials. In the second phase, to investigate the minor narratives and emerging and dissenting stories, biographical and auto-biographical accounts (Porta, 2020) were produced through in-depth interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2015) with the course teaching team, professors, assistants, and adjuncts. Finally, based on the information collected in the previous stages, we designed an intervention proposal that adheres in a transversal manner to a critical perspective on reading. It is anticipated that this proposal will foster critical academic literacy in incoming students of the English Teacher Education Program. The entire process was accompanied by autobiographical records from both myself and my supervisor, who are part of the course teaching team. This process will allow us to recognize our own biases, engage them in dialogue with the experiences of the rest of the team, and enrich the final proposal (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005).

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From theory to practice: first steps into academic writing

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The main goal of the presentation is to overview one example of a plan design that might trigger ideas on how to bridge a theoretical lesson on SFL to a practical lesson that fosters writing academic productions. The proposed tasks in the class we will examine promote the use of general and linguistic-discursive prior knowledge, as well as experiences that students bring to the class, fostering an environment of interaction, diversity, and dialogue. The proposal also encourages a context in which students, guided by the teacher, can analyse the English language in use and motivate decision-making as speakers, placing students in an active and critical role as future professionals of the language.

Regarding the topic selected for this sequence and following the theoretical classes' guidelines and approaches, we should not think of register merely as a tone variation particularly between formal and informal discourse. As Alyousef and Alyahya (2018) state in *The Conceptualization of Genre in Systemic Functional Linguistics*, all linguistic choices speakers make are influenced by their social purposes as speakers and/or writers. Therefore, authors working from the applied systemic-functional perspective view language as a social semiotic (2018, p. 3). Here lies one of Halliday's (1978) contributions when defining the three elements he considers key to shaping these types of languages: tenor, field, and mode (Ghadessy, 1994). Regardless of the research perspective from which authors like Halliday, Hymes (1974), Brown & Fraser (1979), Biber (1994), or Biber & Conrad (2009) investigate, they all agree that "these models provide the basis for making systematic and explicit connections between linguistic structures and the context of use" (Goulart et al., 2020, p. 7.2). For this reason, the notions of tenor, field, and mode play a fundamental role in the class proposal designed.

Likewise, the terms genre and register have been used synonymously over the years. However, in designing this lesson plan, we decided to follow Biber & Conrad (2005) and choose the line of analysis they propose, focusing entirely on register. The authors differentiate the register approach from the genre approach by arguing that a genre approach

prioritises conventional structures to build a complete text within the same genre. For example, to write a (business) letter, one would work on how to start and close it (Biber & Conrad, 2005, p. 176). With practical classes of two hours per week, we would be limiting the tools that promote autonomous work by students and also limiting the capacity for creativity and writing within the academic genre. In contrast, thinking about the class from a register approach allows us, firstly, to provide students with a clear scaffolding base regarding "the functional relationships between linguistic usage patterns and the situational characteristics of the register" (Goulart et al., 2020, p. 7.3) and secondly, to effectively apply the notions developed in theoretical classes to the field of analysis and writing practice.

To summarise the type of work carried out in this sequence, it is anchored in a comparative perspective between registers that demonstrate patterns of variation. According to Douglas Biber and Susan Conrad (2005, p. 176), "a comparative register perspective provides the necessary foundations for understanding the linguistic characteristics of any individual register. By describing the expected one in contrast to others, we can accurately identify the linguistic characteristics that are indeed notably common in that register." For this reason, the didactic sequence selected different writings that exemplify register variations on the same topic, specifically privileging the work with reviews as they are analytically richer instances since, although they belong to the same genre, the register is not the same. From the above, it is evident that to identify the genre, we need to consider the three linguistic elements of discourse: mode, tenor, and field (Halliday, 1978) as a whole.

To achieve this objective, this class was designed as part of the initial step in a sustained development of academic discourses in English. Recognizing that students already bring knowledge and writing practices from other genres, this class proposal emerges as a necessary preliminary stage of writing to support those other subjects in the Modern Language courses of studies, like this one, whose final productions are papers. The sequence thread addresses, on the one hand, the knowledge that students have or remember about the concept of "register" from both the subject's own theoretical classes and previous subjects in Spanish and/or English, and then moves on to Halliday's three concepts (1978). Once that knowledge is refreshed, the comparative work on registers begins, highlighting key linguistic differences.

It is important to note that the selection of the three texts forming part of the sequence was not random as it specifically sought genres that are transversal to the writing practice areas of the three courses of studies: teaching, translation, and researching. Therefore, the chosen texts are a blog review, an academic review, and an abstract/summary

of a paper. Additionally, the same topic (part of the corpus of the subject English Language: *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, 1985) was chosen so that students can analyse, distinguish, and classify the linguistic variables within the same topic depending on the register used and how the concepts of mode, field, and tenor are crucial for these choices. This thematic selection was also based on choosing a common thread that crosses the programs, in this case, literature, and a novel that does not imply additional reading load but is already part of the mandatory reading corpus. With the objective of a forthcoming written production of an academic text, it is necessary for students and future graduates specialising in English to identify the appropriate register as a preliminary step to writing. Additionally, putting theoretical content into practice that promotes writing also allows students to develop or improve their own editing skills in their own writings as well as others'.

Regarding the organisation of the sequence, tasks were designed to be developed in small groups, motivating peer dialogue and interaction between peers and the teacher. As advanced students, this collaborative work already plays a fundamental role in their academic lives. However, and similarly, these collaborative tasks are chosen for their clear benefits in class development. Following Muro, Suárez, and Zamora (2008) cited by Nélida Lamelas Castellanos (p. 77), we can think of them as follows:

- They promote communication channels between students, fostering a sense of belonging.
- They allow working in a supportive and stimulating environment to overcome arising problems and difficulties.
- They reduce the individual workload, and with diverse viewpoints, they promote dialogue and more elaborate responses towards the same goal.
- Additionally, they foster the development and formulation of clear pre-writing ideas.

After completing the tasks under the title "register identification," students are instructed to carry out more focused and individual work, also on identification but this time of the lexical-grammatical aspects that differentiate the texts and contribute to their texture (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 191). This shift in focus, from an analysis of macrostructure that includes aspects such as power relations between participants, the context in which the action takes place, social group, among others (Van Dijk, 2015) as well as the topics, also defined as semantic macrostructures of discourse (Van Dijk, 1980, p.192), to the microstructure of the text (Van Dijk, 2015), will allow us to advance in the analysis of students' own productions by understanding what factors and lexical-grammatical choices modify a text's register. At the end of the task, students will have a chart that includes

characteristics of lexical choices on one side and grammatical choices on the other. We speak of choices because students will have to analyze and weigh different alternatives when writing academically, editing their work, and others' work as undergraduate students. Moreover, as translators, teachers, and researchers, it is crucial to have the confidence to select within the same paradigm which words and/or structures are more or less appropriate depending on the context of use.

From a general viewpoint, the tasks will be framed in collaborative and dialogical work, where within the interaction instances, students signify and re-signify their analysis and writing practices in a process-oriented learning thanks to the constant and progressive scaffolding proposed by the teacher, both in the class design and development plan and in their in-situ interventions. The didactic material contains contextually and academically relevant inputs and is divided into different tasks, considering language acquisition as "learning by doing" and emphasising the active role of students. The task-based theoretical framework is proposed by Ellis (2003) as a

> work plan that requires the student to pragmatically process the language to achieve an objective (outcome) that will be evaluated in terms of whether the message was conveyed adequately and correctly [...] (the student must) primarily focus on meaning and use the linguistic resources at their disposal, although the task design may predispose them to use one form or another in particular. (p. 16)

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Lexical stress awareness in native Spanish adolescent speakers

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Research shows that prosodic awareness, which involves the ability to perceive and produce variations in pitch, rhythm, and stress patterns in speech, is closely linked to reading fluency and comprehension in primary school children. Prosody, or the rhythm and intonation of speech, is crucial for segmenting speech, identifying syntactic structures, and conveying meaning. Despite the known connection between prosodic awareness and literacy skills in young children, there is a scarcity of studies on prosodic awareness in secondary school adolescents. This is significant because prosodic skills continue to develop through adolescence and are essential for advanced language processing and academic success both in highschool and higher education.

Stress is one of the main prosodic features. In stress-timed languages, such as English, stress is also the rhythmic unit. In syllable-timed languages, such as Spanish, the rhythmic unit is the syllable. Unlike English, Spanish has an orthographic mark that indicates lexical stress, so it offers a great opportunity to assess the role of lexical stress awareness (Defior et al., 2009).

This pilot study aims to explore how Spanish adolescent listeners identify lexical stress in Spanish. Lexical stress refers to the emphasis on a specific syllable within a word, which can change the word's meaning and function. In Spanish, lexical stress can occur on any of the last three syllables of a word, and incorrect stress placement can cause misunderstandings. Perceiving and producing lexical stress are key aspects of prosodic awareness, and difficulties in these areas can hinder communication and literacy

development. We hypothesize that teenagers will struggle with lexical stress perception due to the complexity of Spanish stress patterns and the potential lack of orthographic cues.

To investigate this hypothesis, we conducted a perceptual identification task with ten 1st-year female students aged 12-13. This age group represents early secondary school adolescents, a demographic not extensively studied for prosodic awareness. The task assessed the participants' ability to detect the stressed syllable in three-syllable pseudowords read by three different adult native Spanish speakers (two female and one male). Pseudowords, which follow the phonological rules of a language but are not real words, ensured that participants relied solely on their prosodic skills rather than on prior lexical knowledge.

Participants identified the word they heard from sets of three orthographically identical words that differed in stress placement. These words were presented in written form, with stress on the first, second, or third syllable (e.g., 'sémapa', 'semapa', 'semapá'). This design allowed us to isolate lexical stress and examine its perception independently of other linguistic factors. Before carrying out the identification task, participants had a trial session to familiarize with the task and clear out possible doubts before starting with the actual task.

Our study found that adolescents had significant difficulties identifying stress on the second syllable ('semapa'). Stress was predominantly perceived on the first syllable ('sémapa'), and to a lesser extent on the third syllable ('semapá'). This suggests that participants defaulted to the first syllable when uncertain. This tendency, despite the native stress pattern favoring the second syllable, indicates potential confusion or lack of confidence in their prosodic judgment when orthographic cues are absent.

We hypothesize that the absence of an orthographic mark on words stressed on the second syllable may have contributed to this confusion. In Spanish, stress is marked orthographically with an accent mark if it does not follow the default penultimate syllable rule. Therefore, words like 'sémapa' and 'semapá' have clear orthographic indicators of stress, whereas 'semapa' does not. The lack of a visual cue may have made it more challenging for participants to accurately identify stress placement, leading them to incorrectly perceive stress on the first or third syllable.

These findings have important implications for understanding prosodic skill development in adolescents. While research has focused on primary school children, our results indicate that secondary school students also face challenges that could affect their language and reading abilities. The difficulties in stress perception suggest that prosodic

skills continue to develop during adolescence and that specific interventions could enhance these skills.

One intervention could be incorporating prosodic training into the language curriculum for secondary school students. Activities focusing on identifying and producing correct stress patterns could improve prosodic awareness and, consequently, reading fluency and comprehension. Educators could implement auditory discrimination exercises, where students listen to words with different stress patterns and identify the stressed syllable, to reinforce prosodic skills.

Technology can also play a crucial role in enhancing prosodic awareness. Interactive software and mobile applications that provide immediate feedback on stress patterns could be beneficial tools for students. These technological aids can offer engaging and personalized practice, helping students develop their prosodic skills more effectively.

The broader implications of prosodic awareness extend beyond language learning. Prosody is essential for effective communication, influencing how we understand spoken language and convey meaning and emotion. Adolescents with strong prosodic skills are likely to be better communicators, positively impacting their social interactions and academic performance. Therefore, fostering prosodic awareness should be considered an integral part of comprehensive language education.

The role of orthographic representation in lexical stress perception should also be considered. Our findings suggest that the absence of visual cues, such as accent marks, significantly impacts stress perception. It seems that visual aids help students make more accurate judgments about stress placement.

In conclusion, our pilot study highlights the prosodic awareness of secondary school adolescents, specifically their ability to identify lexical stress in Spanish. The findings reveal difficulties in perceiving stress on the second syllable of pseudowords, likely due to the lack of orthographic cues. These results underscore the importance of continuing to develop prosodic skills beyond primary school and suggest that targeted interventions could support adolescents in improving their language and reading abilities. Further research is needed to explore the factors influencing prosodic awareness in this age group and develop effective educational strategies for enhancing these crucial language skills. By addressing the challenges identified in this study, educators can promote the development of other forms of metalinguistic awareness such as stress awareness to improve the acquisition of written language (Gutiérrez-Palma et al., 2016).

Future studies could also expand the sample size and include both male and female participants to examine potential gender differences in prosodic skills. Investigating various factors, such as linguistic background, cognitive abilities, and exposure to different languages, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how prosodic awareness develops during adolescence.

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Picturebooks as multimodal ensembles: *The Invisible* by Tom Percival, a practical analysis

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This presentation is based on the final task of a postgraduate course, "Discourse Analysis", from the Master's Program in Literary Studies offered by Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, which I am currently attending. Given the importance of the visual mode in today's world and the complex and constant interaction with the written mode, adopting a multimodal approach in our teaching practices is crucial. Thus, we will prove through our analysis that the meaning potential that a multimodally constructed text can offer to readers is worth exploring.

Following Serafini (2014), we are convinced that our students need to understand the determining influence visual images, together with design elements and written language, have on our own perceptions and that it is our role as educators to provide them with clear strategies to decode multimodal texts. By multimodal ensembles, he understands "a multimodal entity that occurs in both print and digital environments, utilising a variety of cultural and semiotic resources to articulate, render, represent, and communicate an array of concepts and information." (p.13).

The purpose of this brief investigation is to explore a picturebook using Serafini's tripartite framework of analysis. He distinguishes three different dimensions that are:

- perceptual analytical, the perception and identification of the elements included in the picturebook in our case,
- structural analytical, the analysis of the conventions and structures that rule visual images and multimodal texts,
- and ideological analytical, the relation to sociocultural contexts and practices.

Serafini clearly states that these three levels interact and interrelate in the actual interpretation of any multimodal ensemble but the distinction helps both teacher and then students to approach the texts being analysed in a more comprehensive way.

The main objective of this case study is to provide a practical example of interpretation to encourage EFL teachers to adopt (and also adapt) this methodology to any multimodal texts they may study. The picturebook we will analyse, *The Invisible*, is written

and illustrated by Tom Percival and it was published in 2021 by Simon and Schuster UK. *The Invisible* tells the story of a young girl, Isabel, that due to family economic issues has to move to a different part of the city and how this situation affects her perception of herself and also others.

We will centre our analysis on how the use of colour can be interpreted as reinforcing the narrative sequence. As the picturebook is not paginated, we will refer to openings. We have identified a possible division of openings considering the different moments of the narrative: rising actions, openings 1 to 6; climax, 7 to 9; falling action: 10 to 12; resolution: 13 and 14. Due to the scope of this short analysis, we have chosen to reduce our analysis to the opening 9 (see Appendix 1). In this opening, Isabel and her family have just moved houses and they are living in "the far side of the city". She feels sad and lonely because she has become invisible to people passing by. However, this new situation that is first presented as a drawback allows her to notice the presence of many other invisible people around her "that she hadn't seen before". She highlights the presence of an old lady planting flowers in empty pots. As the lady is invisible, she is painted grey and very subtly while the flowers she holds are brightly colourful. Considering the three dimensions previously presented, we can assert that there is a clear transition in the opening we are analysing:

- the impersonal and grey city gives way to one single lady with the flowers: perceptual level.
- the monotonous and greyish (maybe sad) atmosphere is interrupted by two contrasting planes; we can see the old lady, still greyish and blurred, versus the bright and clearly defined flowers and pots: structural level.
- Isabel is no longer accompanied only by her dog, but she is part of a new group of people that she only discovers by being one of them. She first recognises the group to later focus on the old lady: ideological level.

We can identify a possible connection between colours being present again in the story in opening 9 (climax) with the beginning of the resolution of the story.

The illustrations of the book are colourful until opening 5 (rising actions) and they become mainly greyish and blueish when Isabel starts fading away. The fact that in opening 9 only the flowers are brightly coloured can be expressing the idea that only the objects or animals that invisible people relate to become visible, so in turn they will be visible to everyone through the good actions they make.

This analysis would rely more on the ideological analytical dimension but we are totally aware that this reading is only possible by paying attention to the other two

dimensions, especially the structural analytical dimension since cultural conventions about how colours are used is of fundamental importance.

Nodelman (1988) states that certain colours evoke certain feelings or attitudes and so they can help create specific moods in the story: "A nonnarrative effect thus develops profound narrative implications." (p. 53). Analysing *Intercity,* he points out that the contrast from monochromous to colourful pictures supports the main theme in the story. He also asserts that illustrators usually change the colour that predominates in different pictures of the same story to accompany the changing mood of the plot (p.55). We can clearly say the same for *The Invisible*: Isabel appreciates the richness of the world that was before invisible to her because she becomes herself part of it. She needs to belong to be able to see it.

The example analysed helps us state that each opening of a picturebook presented to a class sometimes with a different final purpose associated to the curriculum (storytelling, for example) should be explored as well from a multimodal perspective in order to fully allow deeper understanding and foster critical readings that enhance multimodal literacy in the readership. Serafini (2015) in "Multimodal Literacy: From Theories to Practices" includes a figure that can be narrowed down to some key questions to be asked to texts to explore the different levels of analysis:

- Perceptual perspective: as we consider the text as a visual object we can ask,
  What elements are important in the story?
  Which colour predominates?
  Does the cover work as a summary of the story? Why/Why not?
- Structural perspective: here we understand the text as a multimodal event, so we can ask,
  How is Isabel (or any main character) presented in different openings of the book? And her family?
  Are there pages without text?
  Are pictures framed?
- Ideological perspective: in this level the text is considered a sociocultural artefact, so we can ask,
  How are female or male roles represented?
  Does Isabel (or any main character) have the power to change her situation? Why?
  Who are invisible in the story?

The analysis proposed is just a small example of how modes expand and generate more comprehensive meaning potentials. Serafini worries about written language being still

privileged socially and educationally and he urges us to embrace a multimodal approach in our classrooms. He states that the world offers us different communicative forms (visual images, design elements and written language) that influence our identities and that it is necessary for our students "to learn how to read between the borders of visual images as much as how to read between the lines of written text" (p.4). Picturebooks can offer us a great first step towards this challenging goal.

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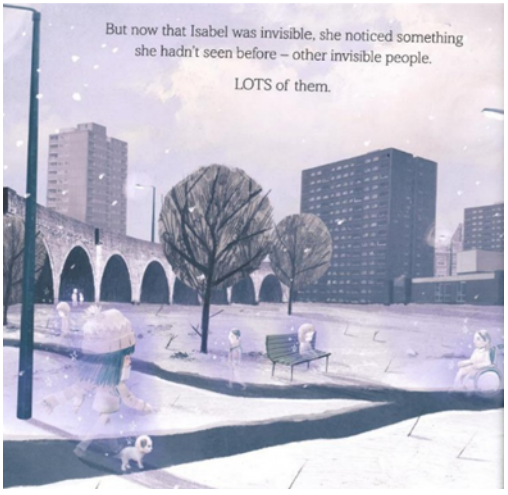
Appendix 1



[PÁGINA INTENCIONALMENTE EN BLANCO]

Eje 2: Identidad, Cultura e Interculturalidad

Queer: A Graphic History (2016): notes towards translating a theory

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Some of the many ways in which words *are accompanied*, or *complemented by* images, or the ways words themselves *become* images, constitute the overall departure points of this paper. The epistemological, or pedagogical potentialities of such principle of translatability, from one system of communication to the other, or from one medium to another, is what I seek to reflect upon as it recurs in the co-authored book *Queer: A Graphic History* (2016). Of course, the title of the volume is already pointing to *a kind of* translation, "queer" will be given a "graphic history" as opposed to the many theorizations, more or less historicized, which have been so far offered around the question of "queer" as a body of knowledge. The complementary duality between word and image is also signaled in the joint effort of the book's two authors, one being a writer, the other an illustrator. I will specifically underscore in this presentation a notion of translation this book illustrates and that results from such complementarity, word and image, word and diagram. I'd invoke here the category of "intersemiosis" put forward by Estonian semiotician Peeter Torop (2000), who, following Russian linguist Roman Jakobson, augments, or, productively complicates the question of intersemiotic translation, that is, the translation from one medium, linguistic, for example, to another, like in this case, the grammar of another sign system, or graphic conventions. And it is precisely this "process of intersemiosis in which texts in different sign systems coexist as different texts and at the same time represent a certain text, against the background of which shifts and digressions in the plane of content and the plane of expression are interpreted" (75). In other words, Torop points at a certain condition of possibility that the very intersemiotic nature of the word translated to image, to a graph, for instance, enables, what he calls "shifts and digressions in the plane of content and the plane of expression." What I am proposing to revise with you in this presentation would be just one example of what results from the intersemiotic aspect of such translation: word into image.

"Seeing comes before words", as John Berger observed, when thinking of the actual interaction of both realms. I seek to complement his terms with those of Professor of English

and Art History W. J. T. Mitchell in *Picture Theory*, his 1994 study of the cultural weight of the image at the turn of the previous century:

> the interaction of pictures and texts is constitutive of representation as such: all media are mixed media, and all representations are heterogeneous; there are no "purely" visual or verbal arts, though the impulse to purify media is one of the central utopian gestures of modernism. (5)

This continuous "interaction" that Mitchell points out and that visual culture attests to provides an initial focus that sustains my presentation, which seeks to cast light both on the convergence and productivity of these two realms, the pictorial, and the verbal, in the already mentioned *Queer: A Graphic History* (2016). The persistent, or rather, "constitutive" interaction has in the long run proved such "impulse to purify media" a failure owing to a growing diversity of stimuli and cultural artifacts, which has come to be known as "multimodality," and which Professor of Translation Studies Klaus Kaindl (2013) reflects on as follows:

> multimodal texts are not only those texts – written or oral – that combine visual (images and graphics), acoustic (sounds and music) and linguistic elements, but also all those texts that are **ostensibly purely linguistic as they have multimodal elements like typography and layout**. (257)

Let me share with you the very introduction to the volume as the book's authors have proposed to make images and words "interact" or "combine", to be closer to Kaindl's terms, which will eventually allow me to briefly reflect on the potentialities – semiotic, epistemological, pedagogical – of such interaction or combination.

The initial section has been self-consciously titled "How to introduce queer theory" (3). Six speech bubbles contain six introductory facts about "queer," the sixth one, manifestly intertextual, contains the significant ideas put forward in 2003 by Nikki Sullivan in her *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory*: "It is a discipline that refuses to be disciplined." An early manifestation of a twofold significance of translation can be unpacked here. On the one hand, the passage from word to image. On the other one, the complex cultural translation of queer as a slur, as an insult, as a term of indictment, that would become a term of pride and that, gathering energy from that reversibility, would eventually turn into an identity, and, most significantly, an academic discipline, a study, a theory, and also a method, that, paradoxically, as said a minute ago, "refuses to be disciplined," that is, to be corseted in fixed definitions, or conventions, or expectations. These ideas are framed as the thoughts that come from the representation of the two authors, on the left, typing on a

laptop, Meg-John Barker, British activist, psychologist and essayist, and on the right, drawing on a digital screen, Jules Scheele, the Scottish illustrator, who has provided the images for this book.

Of course, this introductory note is sustained for several succeeding pages, from which I would like to draw your attention briefly in what follows. "Who are You?" is the second move after pondering about how to introduce queer theory. The drawing of four people is introduced with the following observation: "When we were putting this book together, we imagined it being helpful to these kinds of people," (4) and so I'm interested in the fact that two of them are thinking, the others are reading and because they read, they think. From the identificatory doubts ("Am I queer?"), the apprehension at the "long words," and the letters, to the rejection of erotic representations of sex ("this doesn't work for me at all"), this volume seems to cater to all of them. The following image is that of a road (not the queerest of images, though) with a list of objectives to fulfill ideally with its reading and, I'd add here, discussion. We're invited to read this image from bottom to top, starting with Meg-John Barker addressing readership by first pointing out that "the idea is to invite you into queer theory and to encourage you to try thinking queerly" (5). In four successive "road signs," the quite urgent questions of simplicity and usefulness when it comes to communicating ideas, complex ones, are raised. "Key queer theory ideas and thinkers…as well as some of the tensions within queer theory" will be part of this volume, in which the need to "explain how queer theory became necessary as a way of questioning popular – problematic – assumptions about sex, gender, and identity" is also foregrounded (5).

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Uncovering pedagogies of cruelty: *The Handmaid's Tale* as a mirror of societal brutality

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Margaret Atwood, author of *The Handmaid's Tale*, assures "the rule that I made for the book was that nothing went into it that had not happened in real life, somewhere, at some time" ("Speculative Fiction Case Study *The Handmaid's Tale,*" 2022, 6:51). The events depicted in the novel closely parallel many aspects of real-life societies worldwide, characterized by pervasive violence, a central theme throughout the novel. It is primarily perpetrated by patriarchal systems Selden, Widdowson, and Brooker refer to Kate Millett's concept of patriarchy as a system that "subordinates the female to the male or treats the female as an inferior male, and this power is exerted, directly or indirectly, in civil and domestic life to constrain women" (123). In other words, a patriarchal system considers males to be superior figures who control and limit women.

In *Counter-pedagogies of Cruelty*, Segato coins "pedagogies of cruelty" as violent acts and behaviours that people teach in a patriarchal system. The repetition of these normalises a landscape of cruelty, promoting low thresholds of empathy towards people. With the assumption that *The Handmaid's Tale* is a representation of "pedagogies of cruelty," this paper aims to analyze how violence is portrayed in this dystopia through the conception of women as tutored bodies, the expropriation of identity, and the masculinity mandate.

Segato's concept of "women as tutored bodies" suggests that sexual assault harms not only the woman but also her male "tutor" (father, husband, or brother) responsible for her honor. In *The Handmaid's Tale*, this idea is reflected when the new government strips women of financial independence, transferring control to their husbands. The protagonist feels objectified, realizing, "we are not each other's anymore. Instead, I am his" (182). Women in Gilead are further dehumanized as they are indoctrinated to become handmaids, valued solely for their fertility. The Commander sexually assaults the handmaid with the Wife present, symbolizing the disrespect to her original "tutor." Segato argues that in patriarchal systems like Gilead, women are not seen as full persons but as objects fulfilling societal roles. Handmaids are thus objectified, their worth tied only to their ability to bear children.

Segato's description of sexual aggressors aligns with the portrayal of Commanders. She explains that “rape” and “rapine” share the same root, and both involve a predatory, consumptive act: “rape, rapine, and consummation are part of the same universe of sense” (75). Sexual aggressors engage in a “predatory business” (11) where their motivation is not sexual but political, aimed at demonstrating power by controlling a body. This dynamic is evident in the Commander-handmaid relationship, where the Commander's sexual assault of the handmaid reinforces his power and the importance of his societal role as a male figure.

Additionally, women have also tutored bodies in the sense that the system decides which role is given to them and where. Segato affirms “Everything that cannot be processed, digested, and translated in some way by the universal [men] sieve will become the rest, the waste, the anomaly of the citizen mass (…) everything that cannot be approved by the Men filter, subject of politics, will be transformed into an anomaly, expelled as waste… ” (my trans.; 97). Thus, those who cannot adapt to the system, become useless. In Gilead, they become the waste of society: homosexuals, labeled as “gender traitors” (248), are often condemned to be hanged as a public warning. Those guilty of lesser sins might be sent to the "Colonies," toxic wastelands where they are given minimal food and no protective gear, and expected to die soon. In the Colonies, predominantly inhabited by women, these individuals are dehumanized and labeled “unwomen,” reflecting their perceived lack of value to Gilead's society. Both groups are treated as expendable "waste" that does not contribute to the system.

Additionally, Segato refers to the expropriation of lives and identities. She asserts that a patriarchal system usually creates a vocabulary that subordinates women to men, considering gender an important tool when it comes to dominating: “(…) creating a vocabulary that allows naming the differences with which the patriarchy acts. They are all crimes of patriarchy, but they are different crimes in the format, in the manner of their production. They are all crimes that put us women in a subordinate place that threatens our lives without a doubt” (p.72). In *The Handmaid’s Tale*, Gilead’s government strips women of their identities and autonomy. Women are banned from reading, writing, and various personal freedoms such as wearing pre-Gilead clothes or engaging in relationships outside their assigned Commanders. Handmaids and Marthas lose their real names, with handmaids adopting names derived from their Commanders, such as "Offred," which signifies possession. Handmaids are forced to wear specific attire symbolizing their role in childbirth. Maids, referred to as "Marthas," are similarly stripped of their identities and treated as property. This hierarchical system enforces strict roles based on gender, aligning with

Segato's concept of “symbolic violence” as “a way of classifying value; it is a way of attributing differential value to people according to their gender” (p.13:36). According to her, assigning certain features to people because of their gender is a type of violence. Gilead exercises this by attributing citizens new identities and new names according to what the leaders in this system believe is more appropriate to each gender.

Lastly, another pedagogy of cruelty is “the masculinity mandate” (p.40) that constantly tests men based on showing their manliness in front of others to belong to the man status: “the masculinity mandate demands men to prove they are men all the time; because masculinity, different from femininity, is a status, a hierarchy of prestige, it is acquired as a degree and its validity must be renewed and verified currently” (p.40). Commanders run Gilead in the novel, controlling politics, war, and the economy. They use handmaids for reproduction, considering it a duty. Segato defines a sexual aggressor not as an anomaly but as someone who operates with societal complicity, a notion reflected in the Commanders' collective agreement on using handmaids. Other agents, such as Aunts, Eyes, and Wives, support this system. Aunts indoctrinate handmaids to believe their role is divinely ordained, Eyes monitor and enforce rules, and Wives participate in sexual abuse. Segato argues that patriarchy relies on mythical narratives for justification: “the patriarchy (…) is historical because it needs the mythical narrative to justify and legitimize itself. If the patriarchy were of natural order, it would not need to narrate its foundations” (p.45). In Gilead, the Bible is frequently used to legitimize actions, such as the Commanders citing Leah's story before the Ceremony to justify using handmaids. Additionally, the founding of Gilead stems partly from the Commanders' emotional repression. Segato notes that patriarchal systems force men to suppress their emotions, masking their suffering and preventing them from addressing it, unlike women who can form supportive bonds without concerns about honor.

Following Segato’s studies, it is easier for women to analyze how they feel, externalize it, and form bonds to share their feelings. In the novel, handmaids and Marthas manage to send secret messages and form alliances to escape. Nonetheless, a Commander confesses: “the problem wasn’t only with the women, he says. The main problem was with the men. There was nothing for them anymore (…) you know what they were complaining about the most? Inability to feel” (210). He explains that Commanders’ demotivation and emptiness in need to be filled inspired the takeover of the government. Segato suggests men are trained to “…show and demonstrate that they have a thick, hardened, desensitized skin (…), that they can abolish inside them the vulnerability that we call “compassion” and that

they can commit cruel acts with a very low sensitivity as a consequence" (p.45) and Gileadean Commanders reflect this. They have built a republic in which they fulfill their roles of violence without compassion, accomplishing the masculinity mandate.

The Handmaid's Tale reflects Segato's pedagogies of cruelty, highlighting the objectification and dehumanization of women, the expropriation of identity, and the masculinity mandate taught and naturalized by most Gileadeans. This dystopia mirrors real-life events that inspired Atwood's fiction. To prevent these occurrences, it is crucial to consider the protagonist's role in these pedagogies of cruelty. Segato describes the situation as "a warlike scene, a type of war that lacks a name, but expands as a scourge capturing the most vulnerable lives, the lives of unprotected people due to inhabiting social and geographic spaces where the state's light does not light up" (51). To counteract these pedagogies, Segato suggests creating "a counter-pedagogy of cruelty [that] works on the consciousness [and] that only a linked and communal world determines the limits on the objectification of life" (16). This involves questioning and analyzing the mechanisms of patriarchy, recognizing and discussing collective suffering, and fostering a sense of community over individualism. By doing so, society can heal, restore sensitivity, and build new values that promote global welfare.

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Meaning Construction and Metalinguistic Reflection in the History Classroom

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The present theoretical reflection stems from a literature review and our own experiences while addressing the topic of revolution in the context of the course History of England and the US. After devoting a class to the discussion of the term revolution, we discussed the relevance of rereading, contextualizing and resignifying the metalinguistic processes the students engaged in to grasp a better understanding on how to foster cooperative constructions of meaning in our lessons. During the third year of the English Teacher Training Program (ETTP) at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (UNMDP) students are expected to take History of England and the US. This course is intended as a sequel to History of England, which works as a starting point into the development of historical literacy skills. During this first course, students are introduced to fundamental terms which will enable them to grasp a deeper understanding of history as a tool to study and understand, mainly, English-speaking societies and cultures. Moreover, students taking History of England are introduced to the study of diverse discipline-specific terms and categories of analysis such as cause and consequence, ethical dimension, multicausation, change and continuity, revolt and revolution, to name a few. Towards the end of this course and throughout History of England and the US, students are expected to conduct research on their own, and analyze historical events and processes in light of certain categories.

A deep understanding of both historical terms and categories of analysis is key to successfully developing historical literacy. Although it may be argued that the boundaries of the notion of historical literacy are still blurry, we may be able to define it in opposition to a teaching of history which involves a mechanical and meaningless memorization of facts. In line with this, Matthew T. Downey and Kelly A. Long (2016) contend that historical literacy is closely connected with the ability to "read history texts, critically, to write thoughtfully, and to engage in meaningful discussions" (p. 13). We consider that one way of developing this skill is through revisiting discipline-specific terms and fostering a process of metalinguistic awareness upon them, namely, engaging in a conscientious reflection on language through language itself. Metalinguistic awareness also involves the ability to unveil and understand new meanings from new contexts (Edwards & Kirkpatrick, 1999) while reflecting upon the nature and properties of language (Van Kleeck, 1982). All these

intellectual processes compose a special type of language performance that makes relatively high cognitive demands with the objective of grasping a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the terms in question. Ultimately, the development of metalinguistic awareness will be functional to the purposes of the students' historical analysis.

This proposal takes a social constructivist approach which entails an interpersonal and collaborative construction of knowledge (McKinley, 2015). Thus, we understand that the aforementioned pedagogic activities and cognitive processes take place within a community in which there is interaction between texts and people. This is decisive to the sharing of ideas which shapes students' learning processes. We also take into consideration Jean Paulhan's (1928) notion of sense developed by Lev Vygotsky in his book Thought and Language (1986). The Russian psychologist states that there is a dichotomy between the sense of a word and its meaning. Sense plays a more preponderant role than word meaning and is defined as "the sum of all the psychological events aroused in a person's consciousness by the word" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 146). The sense of a word is fluid and susceptible/liable to changes according to the context and can be divided into different stable zones. Meaning, on the other hand, is "only one of the zones of sense, the most stable and precise zone" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 146). Thus, we consider that meaning works as a vehicle to transmit thoughts or senses in a way that is understandable to others. Concerning our proposal, the students' senses and meanings of the term revolution were addressed and problematized in one specific class.

As explained before, along the course History of England and the US, several key terms are addressed to further students' historical literacy skills. For the purposes of this presentation, we have decided to focus on the concept of revolution. In order to do this, we selected Hannah Arendt's conception of revolution developed in her book On Revolution (1963). According to the philosopher, one can speak of revolution "Only where [the] pathos of novelty is present and where novelty is connected with the idea of freedom" (p.34). Interestingly, Arendt does not prescribe a series of elements necessary for the existence of revolution. Instead, she aims at shedding light on some kind of deeper meaning of the revolutionary process that could be understood bearing in mind Vygotsky's idea of sense.

Due to the opaqueness of Arendt's definition of revolution, when students were invited to extract it from the text, they came across some difficulties as regards pinpointing the meaning of the term. Thus, we proposed to carry on with a conversation which brought into dialogue students' diverse meanings of revolution and their understandings of the definition proposed by the German philosopher. This would function as an opportunity for

the students to incorporate such meanings and, consequently, expand their sense of the word. In accordance with the idea of discovering meanings from new contexts, students were able to make reference to some of the historical processes covered in History of England and the US, such as the American, French and Industrial revolutions. Then, the conversation expanded so as to incorporate some of the contents of the prequel course and determine whether previous historical events could be classified as revolutions in the sense suggested by Arendt. As a result, the interaction between students' background knowledge, and insights of the prequel course and the revolutionary processes they had been studying along the term enabled them to carry out an informed reading which would deepen their understanding of the term revolution. The development of their historical literacy skills will hopefully allow them to further discuss other historical processes by means of written productions and oral presentations. We understand the value of developing metalinguistic awareness in courses such as History of England and History of England and the US in the sense that it allows students to engage in discussions which challenge them to acknowledge, question and reframe their understanding of different ideas. This reframing empowers them into creating their own definitions by making associations among prior knowledge, reading and questioning bibliography and collaborating to come up with useful categories or terms which they might decide to use in different contexts. As educators, we understand that a deep comprehension and ability to develop this type of literacy is paramount to be able to undertake the task of understanding the society in which our students and ourselves live in.

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Internationalization: towards a working definition

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Introduction

The aim of this text is to analyze the various definitions of the concept of internationalization, so as to arrive at a working definition to be used in ensuing analyses of educational policies, focusing especially on Latin American institutions.

The notion is far from being new, as internationalization has been an existing component in most European universities since the beginning of the fourteenth century. With the subsequent acquisition of overseas territories across the world, the colonizing European states established various universities around the globe. Those institutions were, of course, satellites strictly dependent on the metropolis. The colonial political and economic dependency then added an educational realm. The Latin American higher education system, for instance, originated as a subordinate part of a system with Europe in its centre. This subordination persists even after most of the continent cut their political dependence with their European colonists. That dependance causes academics from the former colonies to maintain, implicitly at least, a sense of submission to an eurocentric perspective, even well into the twenty-first century. And, albeit this fact surprises no one, it laid the foundation for our way of thinking about Higher Education in general, and Internationalization in particular, as if our universities were still dependent on a European institution.

Internationalization and globalization

In the last decades, the world has been witnessing an expansion of the processes of globalization of economy, financial markets and technology. Likewise, internationalization reinforced the existing inequalities in the higher education system. At this point, it becomes essential to highlight the role of internationalization of higher education within the processes of globalization. According to Altbach and Knight (2004), in the same way globalization has reinforced the tendency of concentration of wealth, knowledge and power in the hands of those who already had it, international mobility has favored educational systems and institutions already developed. In other words, internationalization has come to reinforce the already existing inequalities instead of reducing them, because most of the flow/influx is

North-South. For the purpose of clarification, the South is defined along de Sousa Santos, who conceptualized the South as a field of epistemic challenges, in an attempt to repair the damage caused by the historic colonial relations. (De Farias et al, 2021).

As a response to this phenomenon, the concept of counter hegemonic globalization has arisen. It can be defined as the result of both geopolitical strategic decisions made from a new political consciousness and of a given capacity to translate a sense of action to a language that vindicates another sense of globalization, one that is multicultural and that has the power to influence others (Auat, 2008).

Most of the authors who analyze the diverse aspects of internationalization focus on concepts such as prestige, competitiveness and mercantilization of education. This position, taken mostly by European and North American scholars, is well cemented by programs with seemingly endless funding, such as Erasmus, Fullbright or British Council. It is of the utmost importance to be (on the alert) from apparently "universal" definitions, as some of them may not be suitable for all contexts. With a growing sense of mercantilization of internationalization looming over higher education institutions, it is of utmost importance to find working definitions to this complex process (Zilberberg Oviedo, 2024).

Importance of definitions

Internationalization is rather elusive when it comes to definitions, especially when related to Higher Education. One of the reasons for this elusiveness lies in the origin of most Higher Education institutions in Latin America.

In terms of definitions, we can differentiate between two main positions. On the one hand, several authors claim that internationalization is an involuntary consequence of the globalization processes that have affected our world, driven by political, economic and social forces, and to which higher education institutions have been trying to adapt. Most of these authors either belong to the European/North American context or share some affinity with those ideals (Altbach & Knight, 2006; Evans, 2007, Knight, 1994; Knight, 2013; Zilberberg Oviedo, 2024).

On the other hand, some authors, most of them geographically hailing from regions associated with the somewhat outdated category of "Third World", and where internationalization in higher education is still considered a privilege, have a rather different definition. To most of them, internationalization is a response from the academic world in an attempt to take the positive aspects of globalization and use them both in the development of national and/or regional strategies and in the efforts towards the development of a

knowledge society (Abba, 2015; Becker et al, 2023; De Farias et al, 2021; Marquina & Reznik, 2022). One of the most useful definitions was provided by a group of Paraguayan researchers, who claimed that "internationalization in the university academic life is a strategy that allows to align the interests of different actors, the common factor being the drive to improve the services provided, as well as the quality of the Higher Education institutions at a global level" (Becker et al, 2023, p.111, own translation). The strategic component is vital to understand that the internationalization processes conducted in the Latin American context require meticulous planning and sustained deliberate efforts. The importance assigned to internationalization by an institution can be seen in the role the international office has within both the organizational structure of the institution and the strategic planning of the university.

Final comments

It is evident that the asymmetry of wealth and knowledge in favor of the global North greatly limits the scope of action for the Global South to compete with them. And while Becker asserts that each institution handles this process in their own way, according to their capabilities and possibilities, it is naive to believe that the educational systems that have the upper hand regarding internationalization would be willing to reduce their influence so as to allow the development of others that could eventually compete against them. At this point, the best alternative for Latin American institutions to reduce the gap between them and other parts of the globe would be to develop programs that reinforce the regional integration within Latin America, instead of looking for solutions elsewhere. There are a number of existing programs that would also require a more conscientious approach, so as to benefit from the academic quality that characterizes our institutions.

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[PÁGINA INTENCIONALMENTE EN BLANCO]

Eje 3: Investigaciones en Educación y Prácticas Educativas

Teaching English to Young Learners: Designing materials with stories and songs

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Introduction

In this presentation, we focus on the didactic units and tasks we have designed to work in our classes keeping in mind that children have a huge learning potential (Cameron, 2001). The purpose of this presentation is to share our personal and professional experience designing our materials to teach English to primary-level young learners at a public school. We consider that crafting engaging materials around songs and literature has proven effective to generate motivating and significant learning environments. Designing our materials has allowed us to cater for diverse students' needs and learning styles given the heterogeneous knowledge children bring to the classes resulting in the possibility of facilitating and promoting active participation and autonomy to learn a new language.

Our aim when creating and working with our own materials is to provide students with a safe and engaging environment where they can understand, analyse and put into use language. The selected songs and storybooks, as well as the tasks created to work with and around them, include the repetition of linguistic items – lexis and structures – for different reasons but mainly because repetition provides appropriate scaffolding and support for students to interact and work with language. What is more, we agree with the idea that language is a system of signs that are constantly interpreted and reinterpreted in each context (Atoofi, 2018). Repetition, in this sense, is not an exact copy, but a transformation that leads to learning through intuition and pattern perception because each time learners face the repeated linguistic form, the senses of learners can awaken, leading them to look for similarities in patterns, rather than in appearances, which leads to a deeper understanding of the underlying relationships.

Young learners aged 6-8 are characterised by their cognitive development as concrete thinkers who learn best through hands-on experiences and struggle with abstract concepts. They are beginning to understand cause and effect, although their reasoning is still

developing. With strong short-term memory, they easily absorb new information when presented in a fun and engaging manner. Their natural curiosity and eagerness for exploration drive their learning experiences. In terms of social and emotional development, they are learning to navigate complex social interactions, manage strong emotions, build self-esteem, and assert their growing desire for independence. They have short attention spans and thrive on varied, play-based activities, as they are visual learners who respond well to colourful visuals and demonstrations. Structure and routine provide them with a sense of security and predictability as they continue to navigate their world. For this reason, after years of working we decided to create a booklet since we have found it more practical and motivating for students to work on their own booklets. The design includes pictures, colouring activities to personalise their booklet, cut and paste activities, QR codes to continue listening to songs or stories at home, tasks to work on stories and songs, tasks to work on other specific content and a section of extra activities for fast finishers.

Context

We teach young learners, whose age-range is between 6 and 8 years old, attending 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade at EP 127, Normal 1, a primary school in La Plata, Buenos Aires. At Normal 1, students have a 40-minute English class, four times a week since the first grade, as part of a special project of some schools in the city .Consequently, students are exposed to and work on English for a total of 16 hours per week. This context, therefore, demands for materials that cater for a greater number of classes in comparison to having only 2 hours per week like most schools. Since the orientations for English classes in Buenos Aires province, provided by the provincial curriculum for primary education (*Diseño curricular para la educación primaria*), begin at 4th grade, we have had to develop a special curriculum for 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade:

- the main focus in 1st and 2nd grade is on oral production and interaction; copying and/or recognising words
- in 3rd grade, oral production remains a focus but students start working on reading and written productions (cf. copying and/or recognising words);
- the didactic units of 1st, 2nd and 3er grade are organised in relation to each other to cater for a coherent and cohesive way to scaffold language learning;
- Authentic children books are the backbone of the materials providing the content and context of our classes;

Working with stories

Kieran Egan defines stories as "one of the most powerful cognitive tools students have available for imaginatively engaging with knowledge" (2005:2) because stories perform a dual simultaneous task: "They are, first, very effective at communicating information in a memorable form and, second, they can orient the hearer's feelings about the information being communicated (Egan, 2005: 11). The purpose of using literature in the classroom, therefore, has to do with such dual quality since stories are not simply content, i.e. plots, characters, settings or linguistic items; but also they provide meaningful resources to emotionally engage.

We select a story because :

- It includes illustrations that are aesthetically appealing and aid the reading of the story
- It addresses familiar themes so students can relate and feel represented by the characters or the events in the story.
- It uses rich, expressive language but remains linguistically and cognitively accessible.
- It has repeated lexical items/chunks/formulaic expressions that enable children to predict, anticipate and, therefore, participate.
- It provides opportunities for involvement fostering critical thinking skills and creativity.
- It encourages children to start/keep on reading outside the class.
- It children's knowledge of the world.

The reading is interactive reading (Ghosn, 2002) with pre-, while- and after-reading stages. The first after reading task invites students to work on a *Book Review* to work on paratextual features and their appreciation of the story.

Then, various tasks work on identifying and noticing key words and formulaic language to make sense of the story and retell it. In 1st and 2nd grade, the tasks usually involve identifying words or chunks as well as sequencing information and/or pictures. In 3rd grade, students work on reading a simplified version of the stories that involves some information gap to notice and re-use some linguistic item – lexis or syntax. Students are asked to describe, compare and contrast characters and look for cause and effect relations.

Finally, the follow-up creative tasks usually involve creating a new part in the story, inventing a new character or object in the story, providing a new (re)solution and or some creative task that relates to their lives/local context. In 3rd grade in particular, a follow-up

task can also be to read the simplified version to some family member or friend, i.e. take the story outside the classroom.

Working with songs

Singing songs is a common activity for young children, they can usually create their own songs to go with their playing routine and many of their first encounters with music are through chants and lullabies. In the English language classes, singing songs can provide an engaging and motivating means for students to listen to and produce authentic oral discourse in a relaxed environment. Songs have proven to be a good resource for several reasons:

- They offer an optimum medium for recalling. Several studies have proven that singing or chanting favours recalling of, not only lexical items but also chunks, as well as phonetic and prosodic features and also "as the melody and rhythm of a song become more familiar, the structural information, including syllabic stress, line breaks and phrasing, becomes more available and predictable so as to provide more recall cues for the passage." (Good, Russo, Sullivan, 2015).
- They are engaging, especially when they involve movement. They provide a special moment for young learners to move around and singing connected to movement provide a positive and enriching experience
- They can be used to establish a routine that creates a relaxed atmosphere which facilitates learning. Young learners rely on routines to predict and anticipate linguistic input which in turn builds up their confidence and self esteem, allowing them to participate and interact fully in English. Selecting a greeting song, for example, fosters interaction between teacher and students but also among peers.
- Singing a song can be an effective way of introducing new linguistic items focusing on its pronunciation and prosodic features without dealing with its written form.

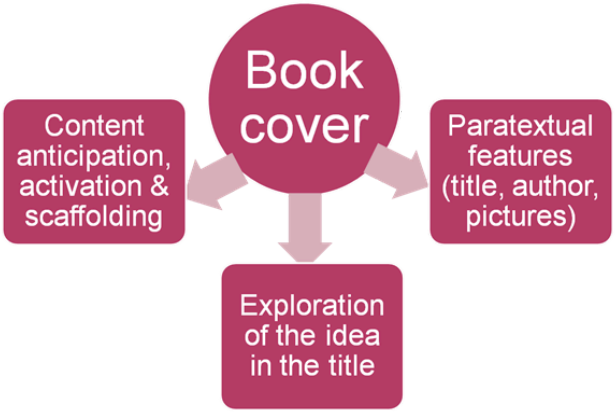
Conclusions

Selecting and creating our material has proven effective in multiple ways. Students engage in the classes and so engage in their learning process. Working with similar tasks in 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade provides children with a familiar environment that facilitates and scaffolds their language acquisition and development. We find that using songs and literature "may also help learners internalise the new language by providing access to a rich variety of linguistic items and a context for their communicative efforts." (Ghosn, 2002:174-175)**.** As Tomlinson stated, "materials for learners (...) must provide exposure to authentic use of

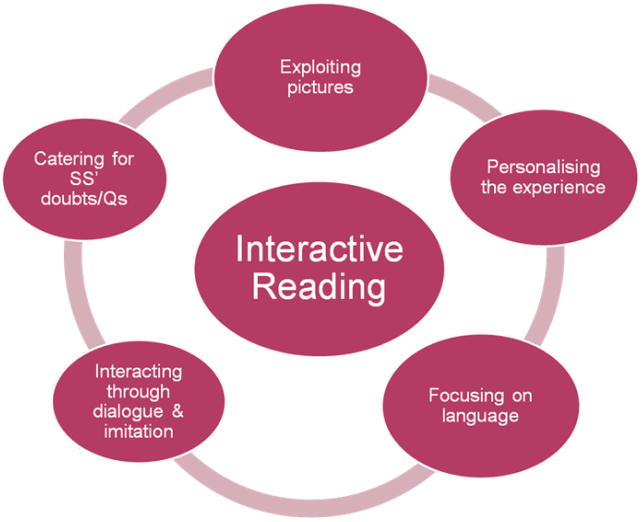
English through spoken and written texts with the potential to engage the learners cognitively and effectively" (2008:4)

Appendix

BEFORE READING (PRIMING/PREPARATION)



WHILE READING (2/3 SESSIONS)



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Enhancing narrative writing skills: sensory imagery and 'showing, not telling' strategies in an undergraduate class

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Introduction

Telling stories is an inherently human endeavour. Through stories we can represent events from our memory or our imagination, or we can create a wonderful amalgam of both. We can share our ideas and emotions; we can reflect upon past experiences and learn from them, perhaps seeing them from new perspectives; and we can develop our sense of self, while establishing bonds with others. Therefore, narratives can empower us to question assumptions and to express our creativity and uniqueness. The narratives we construct throughout our lives can serve different purposes and in so doing require us to develop new cognitive and linguistic abilities (Thornley, 1976; Bruner, 1990). For learners of a second language, narrative writing is a tool that goes beyond traditional language learning, and as such it poses a number of challenges but also plenty of opportunities for growth. In ESL/EFL courses at university level, writing stories can become a powerful means to enrich students' academic and communicative competences by fostering their creativity and encouraging critical thinking. What is more, if they are to become proficient storytellers, they also need to master more sophisticated devices to make their stories impactful and memorable.

'Showing, not telling' is fundamental in narrative writing, and novice writers are often advised to abide by it to appeal to readers. According to Melvin Mencher (2010), "telling (…) makes readers passive. Showing engages readers by making them visualize, draw conclusions, experience insights" (p. 144). Tankard and Hendrickson (1996), in their discussion on how to 'show, not tell', indicate that figures of speech and imagery, or language "that appeals to the senses" can render a narrative more vivid and substantial. Sadoski and Paivio (2001) affirm that "mental imagery has played a powerful role in literacy throughout history" (p. 40), underscoring the fact that creating sensory images that bring life to a story is integral to effective and compelling storytelling. However, previous research has shown that honing the ability of "showing, not telling" can prove challenging and even demotivating for non-experienced writers.

Based on these premises, the aims of this study are: firstly, to analyze the development of narrative writing skills in ESL/EFL students in higher education, focusing on sensory imagery; secondly, to identify the strategies students employ to enhance their writing and examine the effectiveness of instructional interventions; and finally, to assess the role of iterative drafting, revising and rewriting in narrative writing development.

Methodology

For the present research, a qualitative case study approach has been adopted in order to examine student writing samples. Over the course of the academic year, students were asked to produce several narrative compositions in response to a series of increasingly challenging tasks which included free-writing prompts (A pleasant / unpleasant experience, a romantic moment, a time I took a risk), writing scenes using literary excerpts or images as starting points, and writing an original short story. Writing sessions included planning and drafting periods, and were followed by instances of personalized feedback from the course instructors as well as in-class discussions with both teachers and peers. After this, students were encouraged to engage in revising and re-writing, stressing the importance of understanding writing as an on-going process. These self-reflection spaces allowed students to gain insight into their growth as writers. Throughout the process, students' productions were collected and examined to identify the strategies students used to create rich and vivid sensory images, and to track their progress over time. The analysis focused on the use of concrete and specific descriptive language and the variety and complexity of lexical choices.

Participants

The participants were twelve undergraduate students taking English Language IV, a course which belongs to the last year in the programs for both the English Teacher Training and the Bachelor of Arts Courses at Universidad Nacional de La Pampa (UNLPam). On average, these students have reached a C1-C2 level of English and have received extensive instruction on writing in English throughout their course of studies. However, the focus has been mostly on acquiring the skills to produce academic texts such as argumentative or interpretive essays. While some of the participants were apprehensive about creative writing, others expressed an interest in the area early on, and were eager to embark on the process of writing their own original story.

Data collection and analysis

Data were collected through a combination of writing samples, feedback sessions and instructional interventions. The writing samples were analyzed manually, and each case was coded for specific types of sensory imagery (visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory and gustatory). During the feedback sessions and class discussions, areas for improvement were identified and each student was provided with tailored coaching to address their specific challenges and to reinforce strategies that had proven successful.

Findings and Discussion

The analysis of the early student writing samples revealed a marked tendency towards 'telling' over 'showing': students' vocabulary range was limited, and word choice was vague, favouring wide denotation terms; characters' emotions were overtly stated rather than evoked; and while figures of speech were occasionally used, they lacked originality. However, as students engaged in iterative drafting and revising processes, their attempts to incorporate more vivid sensory details improved. This, together with an increase in the variety of lexical choices, resulted in their writing becoming more nuanced and evocative. Teaching interventions as well as peer collaboration through group discussion had a key role in providing students with exposure to narrative techniques and promoting collaborative learning environments, ultimately guiding students towards producing more sophisticated narrative constructions.

These findings underscore the importance of providing students with ample opportunities to experiment with the language and put their creativity to the test. Viewing writing as a work in progress and creating a supportive learning environment are essential when students are learning a skill that demands from them not only time and effort but also a certain willingness to let go of preconceptions and see 'failures' and mistakes as stepping stones towards improvement.

Conclusions

The present exploratory study has attempted to add to our understanding of how ESL students develop narrative competence through iterative writing processes and targeted instructional support. The findings suggest that iterative practice, personalized feedback and targeted instructional interventions can have a significant impact on students' development of narrative writing skills. Possible implications for ESL indicate that a focus on creativity

and a process-oriented approach to writing instruction can help foster linguistic proficiency and critical academic engagement among ESL students.

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The role of literature and films in ESL: developing Intercultural Communicative Competence through short stories and movies in higher education

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The implementation of short stories and films as integrated didactic resources in the ESL class has garnered support from educators over the years (Wang, 2009; Koutsompou, 2015). The themes portrayed in stories are highly motivating means to enhance language proficiency, as they appeal to students' background knowledge and social skills. Culture and language are inextricably linked. Learning a language entails learning about culture, and it endows us with useful abilities to participate in that culture. When learning a second language, we can encounter a new set of values, customs and symbols, which may conflict with our worldviews in multiple ways.

Well thought-out teaching practices have the potential to transform these cross-cultural interactions into valuable opportunities to challenge otherwise normalised assumptions. Exposure to other ways of interpreting meanings prompts us to rethink our behaviours, and become more accepting and more resilient. Fostering such values in our classrooms is a necessary step towards defending democracy and fairness, respecting human rights, and celebrating diversity (Yalcin, 2013).

The current paper seeks to examine the effectiveness of exploiting short stories and movies as a means of English language acquisition. It explores the impact those didactic resources have on the development of linguistic skills, Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), and critical thinking skills. The participants were students of English Language I, a subject in the Teacher Training and Bachelor of Arts Courses in English Language and Literature at Universidad Nacional de La Pampa (UNLPam). Qualitative data was gathered through the observation and analysis of students' productions.

Films

Films are integral to students' lives, and using them in the EFL class has been shown to boost linguistic development as well as engagement. Films provide a source of authentic and varied language input, and also enable learners to interpret linguistic aspects in a visual context. Facial expressions and body language support the verbal message aiding the development of communicative skills. Pedagogical interventions based around films can act as springboards for more interactive, communicative activities, prompting students to become more involved in the tasks at hand and more willing to use the language.

Films can also become platforms for extensive, constructive debate on social issues, which is particularly enriching for students in the humanities, as future agents of social change. However, Sanchez-Auñón et al. (2023) highlight that the "portrayal of non-trivial topics" is an aspect that has not received enough attention from scholars so far. Issues such as marginalization, bullying and harassment, gender violence, and mental health are rarely present in English textbooks, yet they are a reality our students are aware of. The themes depicted in the movies may be relatable to their own lived experiences or their communities. Watching characters cope with difficulties can help students reflect on their own behaviours and emotional responses from a fresh perspective. These "non trivial topics" are relevant and engaging because they appeal to what students care about, and give them cause to think critically.

In the English Language I syllabus, a set of carefully selected films are featured: "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close" (2011), "Invictus" (2009), "Wonder" (2017), "The King's speech" (2010), and "Slumdog Millionaire" (2008). Their topics align with the thematic units developed along the course, offering our students more opportunities to interact with the language in context. Lessons devoted to the in-depth analysis of films are distributed along the academic year, with students participating in discussion activities and teachers acting as facilitators. In preparation for these tasks, students are expected to watch the assigned film with embedded English subtitles, and take down notes on the key elements of fiction. Students are also instructed to pay close attention to the historical and cultural background portrayed, and to do research on any other aspects they consider pertinent.

In the following lesson the class is divided into groups that are assigned a specific aspect of the movie to discuss: plot, characters, setting (including socio-historical background), symbols, and themes. Students work collaboratively to produce a cohesive synthesis of their observations. Subsequently, a spokesperson from each group reports their insights to the class at large. At this point contributions from other classmates, or prompts

from the teachers, are frequently put forward. This dynamic favours the development of linguistic and discursive competences, as speakers have to negotiate meanings with others in a range of relational configurations. Furthermore, sharing their opinions and learning about others' necessarily exposes learners to challenge their assumptions and think critically while defending their arguments.

Literature

Literature exposes students to complex themes and novel uses of language. Hence, students may experience a real sense of achievement at tackling literary materials as they can present interesting and thought-provoking topics. Furthermore, if the materials are carefully chosen, students feel that classroom tasks are significant to their own lives. Short stories are particularly gripping as they involve students in the suspense of unraveling the plot while engaging them in complicated dilemmas.

Short stories offer many immediate and striking advantages in regard to enhancing language proficiency. Firstly, they encapsulate experience with a masterly economy of language and imagery, inviting us to see the universe in a grain of sand, and they can usually be read in one sitting. Secondly, they are less daunting for a foreign reader to tackle or to reread, which is a key element for the full appreciation of short stories. Finally, considering the broader socio-cultural contexts the narratives evoke, they encourage students to explore complex issues while fostering linguistic competence and literary awareness.

The selection of short stories in English Language I focuses mainly on social issues and culturally relevant topics to create more opportunities for learners to cognitively engage with literary pieces that are relevant to their lives. For this reason, our aim is to promote intellectually adventurous critical thinking activities that take place in an organized and supportive environment.

For students about to explore the unknown territory of a new literary piece, first impressions may well be crucial, as they can colour their feelings about the whole enterprise. First, it is imperative to draw the learners quickly into the analysis, so that they find it interesting and want to continue reading on their own. Next, students need to be convinced that even if there are difficult passages to negotiate, the task ahead can be completed successfully and with tangible rewards.

Literary works provide a wealth of interesting writing activities. Asking students to design a book's paperback cover is a way of crystallizing their overall response to the work of art they have read. This activity, which produces a strong visual impact, reflects a wish to

keep each student's own sense of the literary work alive, and aims to involve students in sharing views and reviews.

Students were asked to design a book cover comparing the female characters in the short stories *The Way Up to Heaven* (Dahl, 1960) and *The Road* (Sillitoe, 1968). These stories were selected because they are contemporary pieces written and published by bestselling authors in the US and the UK; they portray male-female relationships crossed by gender violence (psychological, verbal and physical); and plots revolve around well-rounded, dynamic main characters whose behaviours and emotions are complex and often controversial.

Students were responsible for planning a cover that would both represent the spirit of the book and be likely to appeal to potential readers. As students were asked to depict their own responses, the activity was carried out in pairs or small groups. Graphic design apps and resources were suggested to support students who felt self-conscious about their artistic ability.

The results of implementing these pedagogical interventions show that our learners benefitted from the exposure to authentic language, powerful narratives and diversely complex themes. Students were able to craft compelling arguments on topics that are often sensitive, and participated enthusiastically, expressing that working in groups had helped lower their anxiety regarding speaking up in class. As these instances went by, the students' growth and progress in terms of linguistic and intercultural abilities became evident. As regards the book cover design, students displayed their creativity and critical thinking skills, negotiating what graphic elements and what symbolic allusions to include in their visual representations. They felt very strongly about the topic of gender violence and their commitment was palpable.

Conclusion

The strategic incorporation of short stories and films as integral parts of the ESL/EFL curricula has a profound impact on students' learning experiences. Both types of resources enable students to approach language and complex cultural themes from a dynamic and highly engaging standpoint. In exploring short stories, students' attention is captured and their imagination is stimulated. They can become aware of the richness of language and the complexity of ideas that have been conveyed in such a condensed format, and can therefore grow to recognise and appreciate literary techniques. Films, on the other hand, offer an immersive learning experience, where audio-visual stimuli combine to support learners'

understanding of the language. Furthermore, designing and incorporating interactive activities, in which students learn from each other, prepare them to work creatively and collaboratively to tackle problems while negotiating differing opinions and diverse worldviews. In this context, the resources described along this paper provide opportunities for students to use the language meaningfully, and reflect on the contents and concerns of an academic subject.

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Lesson planning based on tasks

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In this presentation, I will focus on lesson planning based on tasks. I will refer to teaching practice and the problems student teachers usually encounter when organizing their ideas and writing the actual plans. In this case, I will describe my experience as a tutor and the students I worked with. I will deal with tasks as the springboard from which to start and will partly follow a model proposed by Casamassima (2017), making reference to both foreground and background narrative as well as the idea of planning backwards. I will present an adapted lesson plan template that has been implemented recently in Residencia Docente II at the Profesorado de Inglés, UNMdP. I will discuss difficulties learners encountered as well as possible ways to tackle them.

In her book *Planning as Narrative* (2017), Myriam Casamassima outlines a model for lesson planning during teaching practice. In the first place, she proposes starting off with a macro-question, the *foreground narrative* (representing the goal), which should be general and have educational value. This question can refer to culture, art, reflection and self-expression, among other areas. In addition, it should be portrayed as a task, final task or project. In the second place, she suggests narrowing the macro-question down into micro-questions, *the background narrative* (depicting the objectives), which should be more specific and should refer to linguistic knowledge and strategies (including the use of technology), therefore, grammar, functions, sub-skills, and other areas could be the focus, i.e. what is necessary to reach the goal or do the task. The following is an abridged example given by the author (pp. 87, 98 & 102):

Topic: My healthy universe

Macro-question/s: Why should we care about being healthy? etc.

Micro-question/s: What does healthy mean? etc.

Foreground narrative: Define health and related terms such as physical health, mental health, wellness, health care, etc.

Final task*:* Make a slide presentation to provide tips for a healthy life and useful information for people in need of help

Background narrative: How to find information on the web (strategic) - Vocabulary related to these categories (linguistic)

According to Ellis, R. (2019), the main features of a *task* are the following: it has a primary focus on meaning and usually a clear communicative outcome. In tasks there is a gap to create the need to share information and learners use their own linguistic resources. Apart from these essential characteristics, we chose to work with real-world tasks that have situational authenticity. In this case in particular, learners were asked to focus on social/community relevance and value.

Students in Residencia Docente II were asked to write an outline following this model as well as other requirements. They were given guidelines with questions, examples and tips on how to move from their preliminary ideas to the topic, to the macro and micro-questions and finally to the tasks (foreground narrative) and content (background narrative). This outline was read by the tutors and students were given advice on how to make improvements. A key issue was identifying tasks as deriving from their macro and micro-questions. Later, they wrote their first two lesson plans. At first, I designed a lesson plan template that was not so clear to my tutees. Little by little, based on their comments, I modified the model until I came up with the final version, which was still not so easy for them to understand. However, we stuck to it as I believed it clearly reflected the steps to follow (what the starting points were as well as deriving other aspects from them). I included guiding questions below headings along with examples in order to aid students in their planning process (see Appendix). However, this was not enough.

When reading the first versions of the lesson plans, I noticed the learners still encountered problems both with the understanding of the concept of task (its features and the difference with activity) and with deciding on the content they would need to teach/revise for their students to successfully do the task. Therefore, I emphasized the idea of *planning backwards* as a starting point, also suggested by Casamassima. I showed relevant figures from the book in a feedback meeting, and we worked with them. This session was a turning point. Firstly, we observed an example of a *final task*, from which smaller tasks followed, these would act as the *gradual steps* to finally achieve the final, most important task. I asked the students to identify the outcome, type of discourse, purpose and audience of these smaller tasks as well as whether they were real-life, oral or written. In this way, the learners became aware of the relevant features of a task so that they considered them in their own plans. Secondly, I drew their attention to the background, subsidiary narrative, i.e. the linguistic and/or strategic content the learners would need in order to do each of the tasks.

From both tasks (foreground) and content (background), the students would be able to write the necessary steps (stages/activities) in order to carry out each task. Having analysed these important issues, they proceeded to modify plans and write new ones. It is important to clarify here that in their outline, they had to come up with a final task (usually to be done in the last class) along with smaller tasks that were often carried out at the end of each class. The guiding questions in the template were constant reminders in sight for them to reflect on when they were actually writing their lessons. Therefore, I included the following essential questions:

To define content:

What do students need to KNOW (linguistic/strategic content) in order to do each task?

To write the steps for each task:

What do students need to DO in order to finally do each task?

It is relevant to emphasise the ongoing nature of learning to plan by posing a series of questions before, during and after the planning process, as Purgason (2014) suggests. In addition, planning is a recursive process that needs constant revision and rewriting. Consequently, as the planning process continued, we reinforced concepts and procedures together, with the help of their partners, through comments, questions and reflection activities both online and during feedback sessions. To sum up, collaborative guided work proved fruitful and enlightening and all the student teachers, together with the tutor, learned and profited from the experience by finding richer alternative options.

As a final reflection, it is also worth mentioning that both lesson planning and teaching are processes that overlap and constantly feed each other. In this respect, I would like to quote Mutton et al. (2011) when they say that "it is through planning that teachers are able to learn about teaching and through teaching that they are able to learn about planning" (p. 413).

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Appendix

LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE:

Trainee:	**CLASS #:**
Institution:	**Date:**
Course:	
Teacher:	**Coursebook:**
# students:	
Timetable:	**Unit:** (+ topic)

ILOs: *(You can use the categories in Bloom's Revised Taxonomy for the affective & cognitive domain, among others)*

MACRO-QUESTION:

MICRO-QUESTION/S:

TASK (foreground narrative):	**CONTENT** (background narrative):
*The task should have a **real-life outcome** (define purpose, if written/oral - discourse type/format - audience)* *(in narrative form, underline key words that are the springboard for ling./strategic CONTENT)*	*What do ss need to **KNOW** (linguistic/strategic content) in order to DO the task?* *(include headings for ling. areas & strategies in block capitals)*

STEPS FOR TASK:

*What do ss need to **DO** for the task?*
(write suitable headings in bold, number steps, include time & int. patterns clearly, insert photos or links of the material + source in the order they will be included)

They have the right to try: Teaching English to people with Down syndrome

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This presentation aims to share our view on including neurodiverse students into our typical classrooms. The right to learn cannot be only for neurotypical students. Designing *inclusive schooling* should be a sleep-depriving issue for teachers and in fact it is for many. If we reflect on our experience as teachers of *English* we reckon that lack of qualified staff, together with large classes are drawbacks for inclusion. How many of us can even doubt that people with developmental differences such as people with *Down syndrome* are more often than not, limited in their access to a second language formal learning? Some say it is for fear of a negative impact on their first language, at the same time assuming that these people will never reach a bilingual status. Another important reason which applies to Argentina where people do not interact with foreign language speakers on a daily basis, is the belief that it is useless for people with Down syndrome to learn English. Neuroscience states that second language acquisition is not only harmless but highly beneficial in creating new brain connections and also in slowing aging in all human beings, both typically developed and those with an extra chromosome.

Defining the condition

The neurodiversity movement emerged during the 1990s, aiming to foster inclusion and acceptance of all people in the community. Neurodiverse people are those with certain neurodevelopmental conditions among which intellectual disability is included.

In 1866 the English doctor John Landon Down, linked a population with distinct physical characteristics to decreased intellectual ability and called them “mongoloid” (because their facial features were similar to those of the Mongolian people). In 1959 Dr. Jerome Lejeune, a French physician discovered that being a “mongoloid” was the result of a chromosomal abnormality – Trisomy 21 (i.e. having a spare copy of chromosome 21). In 1965**,** Mongolia sent the World Health Organization a request to stop using the objectionable

terms of “Mongol” and “Mongoloids” to describe people with Trisomy 21 and from then on the condition is called Down syndrome.

Babies with Down syndrome are born with an extra chromosome that causes 85% of them to have a moderate to severe learning disability as well as an increased risk for other medical issues.

General benefits of learning a second language

It is highly known that the mere process of acquiring a new skill of any kind improves mental wellbeing, regardless of the level of proficiency the person may eventually achieve. According to Tworek,“neuroplasticity refers to the brain’s ability to absorb information and evolve to manage new changes”(Cleveland Clinic, 2023, 1m40s). Language learning has been shown to impact neuroplasticity by making new neural connections and thus boosting attention and memory.

Olulade et al. (2015), have established that bilingual people show a better short-term memory, problem-solving skills and attention management than monolinguals. They also found that they develop a greater mental flexibility and creativity and last, but not least, that bilingualism helps slow down dementia risk as aging. Additionally, Bialystok et al. (2007), have supported the theory that bilingualism can have a protective effect during age-associated cognitive decline, and may even delay the onset of the dementia process.

From segregation to inclusion

People with disabilities have come a long way. According to Toledo González, et al. (1981), at one time they were hidden and deprived of most human rights; left in asylums or special boarding houses (exclusion). Later they began to attend special needs institutions (segregation) until the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities signed a treaty in 2006 which established they had to be “accepted” into general education classes. Nevertheless, students were not easily enrolled in mainstream schools and when parents managed to get them a place, students were actually in the classroom but were not part of the active teaching and learning process. They were integrated with other students with developmental delays and allowed to take part only in some of the educational activities. School was not teaching but babysitting them.

Nowadays we advocate for inclusive schooling. But what is it? Inclusive education means all students learn together, in the same class, for the majority of the day. Students of all abilities are seen as having something diverse and valuable to add to the educational

environment. For inclusive schooling to work, all should receive appropriate support to their needs; not only the general curricula should be adapted but the activities and methods as well. Inclusive schooling pays attention to each student's learning style being either slower or academically more advanced than the average. As regards human general development, we have to consider Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), a movement which began in the 1960's and can help address various forms of inequity. It adheres to a "no one-size-fits-all" approach with the goal that students reach their fullest potential.

It is vital to remember that equality and equity are different concepts, while equality means each individual is given the same resources or opportunities, equity recognizes that each person is unique and allocates the resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Inclusive education is a human rights issue

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. It is the first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century and entered into force on 3 May 2008. Article 24 states the right of people with disability to study in general education schools while receiving the needed support.

In 2015 World Leaders agreed to 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development. These goals have the power to create a better world by 2030. Goal four is quality education to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"; within this goal, target 4.5 says "eliminate all discrimination in education".

Argentina was signatory of both documents. In 2016 el Consejo Federal de Educación adopted Resolution 311/16 which adheres and reaffirms the right of people with disability to attend mainstream schools at all levels. It also states that the government would provide the necessary support for these students.

Inclusive schooling and students with Down syndrome

Attitude is the most critical factor to the success of students and this is even more critical in the case of students with Down syndrome. Reached the point in which all parts agree on the right of every student to be allowed into the typical classroom, the question is: does learning a second language make sense for a child with cognitive, developmental and communication delays? Just like everyone else, students with Down syndrome have their

own strengths and weaknesses, their likes and dislikes. Their syndrome is just a part of who they are. We know that language has two main areas: the passive or recognition and the active or productive one, and all of us have a wider passive vocabulary even when using our mother tongue. The case with students with Down syndrome is similar, with the aggravating factor that their passive-active gap is greater. Sometimes their cognitive abilities can be underestimated because they have trouble speaking clearly and their pace is slow. According to Buckley (2002), children with Down syndrome need a lot of motivation and support to overcome the arising learning difficulties while learning more than one language. Lack of success with learning may be due to lack of provision of appropriate adjustments and not due to student's inability to learn.

Educating neurodiverse students in mainstream classrooms brings positive outcomes to the entire class though it is a major challenge that requires preparation, skills and patience on the part of the school community. Needless to say, the more we expect from our students, the more we get from them. However, we should have realistic expectations and also assume that we ourselves need support as well, for the "will" without the "skill" will not be enough. Most teacher training institutes focus mostly on content issues and on the psycho pedagogical approach to teaching typically developed students. Anyone above or below average would not reach their full potential if the designed activities are based on general needs.

Final thoughts

There is not much research done on teaching a foreign language to people with Down syndrome. In order to conclude on which proficiency level they may eventually gain, we should be considering their achievements in a subgroup of identical students, which clearly implies neglecting their singularity. Each student is a world in itself and should be helped to make the most of the learning experience at their own pace.

According to Donnellan (1984), "the least dangerous assumption is to presume competence" (p.9), thus we have to give students the best chance to develop new skills. While exploring formal education for neurodiverse students, it became evident that the secret to teach all students is: *Train ourselves and teach out of love and empathy.*

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Transmedia storytelling: a tool to engage students in multidirectional communication

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Introduction

Storytelling is an innate human activity and a core element of human communication and sense making, as stories and narratives represent expressive meaningful communicative events. Independent of the medium - books, web series, comic books, films or games, stories engage audience members in a narrative experience that becomes a unique enterprise that differs from individual to individual. According to Jenkins (2006), they also constitute digital events conveyed through virtual resources, and inserted in the convergence culture. He sees convergence as the "flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experiences they want" (2006, p. 2). Convergence represents a cultural shift as consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections among dispersed media content.

Convergence culture regards a non-linear world in which any story, narrative, sound, sign or image unfolds through a large number of media channels. Within this convergence culture and as a response to media expansion, there is transmedia. This phenomenon discriminates against diverse but related contents spread out through multiple media platforms allowing meaning to converge from one to another. However, although converging, the content conveyed is not dispersed; it makes sense on its own, not demanding consumers to go through several media channels to grasp the message, to get the whole information. This context supports the "transmedia storytelling", a term coined by the US researcher Henry Jenkins in an article published in 2003. It can be defined as a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience.

According to Jenkins (2006), communication in the convergence culture and transmedia storytelling contexts promotes a more open, multidirectional dialogue in a

situation of equality. Besides, it fosters the development of an articulation of different technological channels, participatory culture and the enhancement of collective intelligence. He also states that "the age of media convergence enables communal, rather than individualistic, modes of reception" (2006, p.36)

Jenkins (2006) states that we live "in a convergence culture where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways" (p. 2). Understanding this term implies exploiting the relationship between these three integrated constructs: media convergence, participatory culture, and collective intelligence.

The first concept regards the spreading of the same content (a story/narrative) through distinct media platforms, so that meaning converges from one to another. This process creates a cultural shift for consumers when looking for information. They make connections among dispersed media content. As regards Participatory culture, it involves the idea of producers and consumers as participants who interact with each other. Finally, collaboration associated with the exchange of resources and abilities become alternative sources of media power and a way of building collective intelligence, the third construct.

Transmedia Storytelling as endless communication

Convergence and transmedia share at least two fundamental features-expansion and multiple media connections- that become valuable references to provide essential boundaries to the transmedia storytelling comprehension.

Jenkins (2006) gives an inclusive definition explaining that transmedia storytelling is the outcome of a convergence process through which dispersed fictional elements are systematically conveyed through multiple media delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Each medium makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story.

Transmedia storytelling also has another characteristic, some of the receivers do not limit themselves to consuming cultural products, but take up the task of adding to the story new texts. For instance, the story begins in a comic, continues in a television cartoon series, it expands into a film and ends, if one can say it ends, by incorporating new interactive adventures in video games. Then, stories continue on social media. A brief survey of YouTube or Fanfictions.net will show how there are all kinds of stories for example superheroes that have been created by their fans, from parodies to crossover with other

characters. This way, each person can contribute something new to the construction of the 'diegesis' of a tale as people participate actively in the expansion

Scolari (2013) states that Transmedia storytelling proposes a common experience that encompasses various media devices, all united by a narrative link. Any text has the potential to become subject of transmedia storytelling. User participation in this expansion is such that it is impossible to say where the story ends.

Many researchers have concluded that transmedia storytelling constitutes a strategy that drives the transition from a unidirectional communication to a multidirectional one, as well as the scope it has to promote the configuration of an open, flexible education model. Storytelling is the art of language usage, communication, emotionality, vocalization, the psychology of movement (gestures, gesticulation and expression) and the abstract construction of elements and images of a particular story for a specific audience. In this sense, it is a powerful communication element used as a strategy to humanize learning, offering an opportunity to connect with people that share similar likes or characters and also allowing us to see the world from another perspective.

This technique builds a bond between the sender and the audience generating an emotional content conveyed by the use of multimodal hypertextual, hypermedia and transmedia narratives since they promote the integration of visual, sound and interactive languages. These narratives favor a type of communication that requires an active and participant audience. In this process of crafting stories across multiple media platforms, each piece interacts with others to deepen the whole- but is capable of standing on its own-giving the audience the choice as to how deep into the experience they want to go.

Transmedia storytelling promotes the ability to read, write and interact across a range of platforms, tools and media as they provide spaces for self-expression, interaction and participation within a shared culture disseminated in the story world. Consumers become active users and participants, prosumers, as they consume and produce content. They continuously reshape the story with the help of other people's feedback. In this way, the communication becomes multidirectional as audiences interchange information and construct meaning in a collective and co-created way.

Transmedia Storytelling in education

There is no longer a linear learning. Instead, multimodal experiences allow learners to seek, weigh and communicate answers. Transmedia storytelling is interactive, it uses words, different actions (voice, movement and gestures) to represent the story. All these

elements allow students to use their skills and knowledge, since whenever the story is told, listeners explore new worlds and settings while developing critical thinking skills to connect them to their own world. The emotional and the experiential context is of great interest to students since they connect them to their own experiences and stories.

The interactivity of digital media generates dynamism between senders and receivers and thanks to social media stories can become texts, stories with open endings, with ramifications, hyperlinked, with multimedia in unpredictable ways.

Transmedia storytelling may help students to organize ideas better, ask better questions, re-order thoughts, express ideas, contextualize, synthesize, decode messages and construct multidirectional discourse as audiences become prosumers. They interchange information, construct meaning in a collaborative and co-created way, building knowledge collaboratively, creating and at the same time consolidating digital literacy processes.

Transmedia storytelling is perceived as an opportunity to create a new learning scenario where innovative and student-centered educational practices occur and also the implementation of collaborative strategies that ultimately meet the twenty-first century student´s needs.

Conclusion

Transmedia storytelling has transformed the way in which teaching is carried out. The world of storytelling is a constantly evolving landscape and now technology is moving towards artificial intelligence. Mobile phones are becoming powerful tools inside and outside the classrooms. Striking the right balance between artificial intelligence and human activity will be essential to fostering a vibrant and innovative transmedia storytelling ecosystem.

In this convergence culture, where, as Jenkins (2006) says, new and old media collide, teachers face fear of the rhythm digital novelty reaches and the way it affects us positively or negatively trying to cope with the pulse it imposes. At the same time, teachers also face the challenge to discover how these digital worlds we inhabit can become opportunities of teaching and learning, and of unexpected dialogues.

Today more than ever, teachers need to embrace professional development to be always updated, as regards technology and willing to be open towards innovation. However, we have to bear in mind that technology should enhance education but not replace the human touch that makes teaching truly impactful.

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Sustainable energies unleashed: a multidisciplinary journey

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In an increasingly interconnected world, educating young learners about sustainability is crucial. This need is particularly pronounced in bilingual settings, where students not only acquire a second language but also develop a global perspective. In 2024, Year 6 students at a bilingual primary school in Buenos Aires undertook an interdisciplinary project that merged sustainability education with second language acquisition. This project, grounded in the transdisciplinary theme "How does the world work?" and centered on the idea that knowledge of nature's laws facilitates interaction with the environment, provided a unique opportunity to explore critical concepts in science, geography, and technology while simultaneously enhancing students' linguistic and cognitive skills.

Project Overview

The unit of inquiry, "How does the world work?", served as the foundation for this project. Students explored the nature and laws governing our world, focusing on the interaction between the physical and material world and human societies. They investigated how scientific principles are applied to understand and manipulate the environment, and how scientific and technological advances impact society and the environment.

The project was structured around three main lines of inquiry: the composition and behavior of matter, the transmission of energy in its various forms, and the differentiation between renewable and non-renewable energy sources. These inquiries were framed by key concepts such as form, cause, and change, with related concepts including transformation, energy sources, and properties. The skills developed through this project were comprehensive, encompassing critical thinking, research, communication, and social skills.

To assess their understanding, students participated in a summative assessment known as the "Containers Project". This task was inspired by the fictional NGO "Sustainable World," which challenged students to design a sustainable and environmentally friendly house using containers. Each group of students was assigned a different location from around the world—ranging from Isla Grande in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, to the Sahara

Desert in Egypt—and had to consider weather conditions, landforms, natural resources, and available energies in their designs. Using Tinkercad, a 3D design application, students crafted both the interior and exterior of their sustainable containers, applying their knowledge of the scientific principles explored during the unit.

Student Agency and Engagement

A hallmark of this project was the agency afforded to students, which significantly enhanced their engagement and motivation. As they delved into their research, students not only embraced the challenge of designing sustainable containers but also initiated additional creative projects. One group of students composed a rap that encapsulated their understanding of sustainability, while another student wrote a poem reflecting on the themes of the project. These artistic endeavors were entirely student-driven, showcasing their deep connection to the subject matter.

Furthermore, the students took charge of organizing an open class to present their research and designs to their parents. This event was not merely a presentation but a fully student-led experience, where they explained their findings, demonstrated their Tinkercad models, and even performed the rap and read the poem they had created. This level of autonomy in their learning journey exemplified the empowerment that the project fostered, as students became active participants in their education, rather than passive recipients of information.

A crucial aspect of the project was the collaborative creation of the assessment rubric. At the beginning of the project, students worked with their teacher to develop the criteria that would be used to evaluate their work. This process ensured that students had a clear understanding of the expectations and what would be assessed. It also provided them with the opportunity to reflect on their own learning through a metacognitive process. After completing the project, students filled out the rubric themselves, assessing their performance before receiving the teacher's final evaluation. This dual perspective allowed students to compare their self-assessments with the teacher’s feedback, fostering a deeper understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement.

Results

The outcomes of this project were multifaceted, impacting students academically, socially, and emotionally. Academically, students demonstrated a robust understanding of sustainability principles, which they successfully applied in a practical context through their

container designs. Their second language skills were also enhanced, as they navigated complex scientific vocabulary and concepts in English, all while collaborating with peers and presenting their work to an audience.

Socially, the project promoted collaboration, responsibility, and leadership. The students' initiative in creating supplementary materials such as the rap and poem, along with organizing the open class, highlighted their ability to work together and take responsibility for their learning. Emotionally, the project instilled a sense of pride and accomplishment, as students saw their ideas come to life in tangible forms and received positive feedback from their peers, teachers, and parents.

From a teacher's perspective, the project aligned well with educational goals, not only meeting curricular standards but also exceeding them by fostering creativity, critical thinking, and global citizenship. The process of creating the rubric with students and involving them in self-assessment added a layer of depth to the learning experience, encouraging students to take ownership of their progress and recognize the value of reflection.

Conclusion

This interdisciplinary project demonstrated the power of integrating sustainability education with second language acquisition in a bilingual setting. By engaging students in meaningful, real-world tasks, the project not only deepened their understanding of sustainability but also empowered them as active, responsible learners. The long-term impact of such projects is significant, as students carry the lessons of sustainability, collaboration, and self-reflection into their future academic and personal lives. For educators, this project serves as a model for how to design and implement interdisciplinary, student-centered learning experiences that resonate deeply with learners and prepare them to be thoughtful, engaged global citizens.

E-PORTFOLIO: a learning, teaching and assessment strategy

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What is an e-portfolio?

The term ePortfolio is a collection of work (evidence) presented in an electronic format, which demonstrates learning or skills. In this space, students can purposefully reflect on their learning and progress based on different digital items or evidence, and present these with particular contexts and audiences in mind. An ePortfolio typically engages students in a cycle of collecting or creating, reflecting, selecting and/or curating, and presenting and sharing. Some educators see ePortfolios primarily as a tool for generating new or deeper learning while others view them as an assessment tool too.

Why are ePortfolios useful?

- **Enhancing self-reflection and personal growth**

ePortfolios provide students with a possibility to reflect on their learning journey and personal growth. By documenting their achievements, experiences, and challenges, students can gain a deeper understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement. Through this self-reflection, students can set goals, track their progress, and develop a sense of self-awareness. This process of introspection and self-evaluation promotes personal growth and helps students become more proactive in their learning.

Portfolios also encourage students to think critically about their learning experiences and the knowledge they have acquired. They can analyze their work, identify patterns, and make connections between different concepts. This reflective practice not only enhances their understanding of the subject matter but also develops their critical thinking skills, which are valuable in both academic and professional settings.

- **Demonstrating skills and achievements**

ePortfolios serve as a powerful tool for students to showcase their skills, accomplishments, and experiences. Instead of relying solely on traditional resumes or transcripts, students can present a comprehensive overview of their abilities through their

ePortfolios. They can include evidence of their projects, assignments, presentations, and extracurricular activities, demonstrating their competency in various areas.

ePortfolios allow students to highlight their growth and progress over time. They can showcase their development in specific skills or areas of interest, such as leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, or creativity. This evidence-based demonstration of their abilities provides a more holistic view of their capabilities to potential employers, recruiters, or academic institutions.

- **Building confidence**

Student ePortfolios play a vital role in fostering confidence by encouraging reflective practice. As students document their achievements and personal growth, they gain a clearer understanding of their capabilities, leading to increased self-assurance. The process of curating an ePortfolio itself becomes a confidence-building exercise, requiring students to assess and present their best work, empowering them to take pride in their academic and personal accomplishments.

The interactive nature of ePortfolios further contributes to confidence-building. Sharing portfolios with peers, instructors, and potential mentors opens avenues for positive feedback and validation. Encouraging comments on their work and accomplishments creates a supportive environment, affirming students' abilities and boosting their confidence in navigating their educational journey and future pursuits with assurance.

- **Facilitating collaboration and feedback**

ePortfolios promote collaboration and feedback among students, peers, and teachers. Students can share their portfolios with others, allowing for collaborative projects, discussions, and knowledge sharing. This collaborative aspect fosters a sense of community and encourages students to learn from each other's experiences and perspectives.

Portfolios also enable instructors to provide personalized feedback and guidance to students. They can review students' work, leave comments, and engage in meaningful discussions about their progress. This feedback loop not only helps students improve their work but also promotes a deeper understanding of the subject matter through constructive conversations.

How to get started

- Establish clear expectations

Explain to your students what you expect them to do in their ePortfolios. At first, learners may have difficulty understanding the need for them to reflect on their work and the need for them to make connections between different courses and experiences.

- Provide examples created by students

Create a directory of student examples and direct students to them for inspiration and clarity on scope and purpose.

- Scaffold student learning

Help students start small: ask them to choose just one piece of work (such as an essay) and have them reflect on the challenges they had to address while writing. Or, have the student select a pair of assignments and have them reflect on how each helped them grow in the field.

- Model

Create an ePortfolio for yourself based on your teaching practice or research project and share it with your students. You'll better understand the challenges and benefits of maintaining an ePortfolio, and it will also convince students that it is a useful endeavour.

- Make it social

Integrate viewing and commenting on other students' ePortfolios as part of the assessment. For example, have a Padlet page with links to each student's ePortfolio, or a discussion forum where students can conduct a virtual gallery walk and make helpful and encouraging comments on one another's ePortfolios.The ePortfolios then become an integral part of the online learning community.

Assessment of ePortfolios

Since ePortfolios require a significant investment of time and energy from students, they must be assessed carefully. However, their assessment does present some challenges: how does one evaluate the quality of "reflections"? If students see their ePortfolio as "just another assignment," then they may not engage with it authentically. Rubrics may be the best way to overcome assessment challenges while still ensuring students benefit from their ePortfolio. Last but not least, consistent formative feedback from the teacher, as well as student peers, helps learners maintain motivation to keep on working on their ePortfolio.

These are just some of the ways electronic portfolios can be assessed. However, these are the more important assessment processes, because they support assessment for learning. It is important to ensure that the assessment process allows the students to revise their work based on the feedback they receive, whether it is a comment or a grade.

Conclusions

E-portfolios indeed require hard work and effort, both for teachers and students. However, the use of e-portfolios in education offers a valuable tool for improving teaching practices, processes of teaching and student learning and assessment. There is no doubt that they are suitable for any level of education, as long as they have clear goals and objectives.

We have a range of tools with different purposes and different functionalities suitable for different environments, both free and commercial software. In this sense, the teacher and students' possibilities are challenging since teachers could implement an e-portfolio and students could develop it during their lessons, improving their ability to reason their achievements, establishing communication, and obtaining the teachers' feedback from assessments.

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Building bridges in our ESP courses

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Academic literacy (sometimes referred to as academic literacies) is the term that relates to the knowledge and skills required for understanding and interacting in a higher education context (Basturkmen, 2017). It refers to how we read, write, and use texts to participate in an academic discourse community. That is why it is foundational for all students, particularly those engaged in specialized fields, international curricula, or extended learning environments. It ensures that students can engage effectively with course materials and communicate their ideas clearly. It is vital for the teachers in educational institutions to put into practice appropriate teaching-learning methods and instructional strategies to facilitate the acquisition of academic literacy.

To tackle this scenario, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) stands out as a relevant branch of English Language Teaching (ELT) that relies on practical aspects derived from needs analysis, genre and successful communication, with solid utilitarian purposes, with the aim of constructing specific abilities to use in real situations, in the students' future professions or understanding issues related to their area of specialization. As teachers of ESP, we become practitioners who facilitate learners' autonomy to lay the basis of a life-long engagement with language experiences. For this reason, we should do our best to ensure we can help students develop competences, knowledge, and attitudes to face challenges and make positive, ethical contributions in different professional and academic environments at global, national and local communities.

As highlighted by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) and Belcher (2009), ESP focuses on teaching English tailored to specific disciplines or professions, such as business, engineering, or humanities. It emphasizes the particular vocabulary, genres, and communicative practices of these fields. So, this concept, combined with academic literacy, allows us, as university teachers, to find ways to clear the way for the mastery of written language and develop critical thinking skills applied to specific reading and writing practices within our fields and disciplines as part of a larger sociocultural context.

This paper aims to highlight the importance of both academic literacy and ESP learning, technologically mediated and combined with a virtualization process, which is precisely the methodology implemented. Our presentation arises from the work carried out in the subjects: *I Nivel de Idioma Inglés* and *Inglés para Propósitos Específicos y Espacio Curricular Optativo Inglés Nivel II* which belong to the School of Human Sciences and School of Agronomy at the National University of La Pampa (UNLPam), respectively. The subjects belonging to different colleges are both quarterly and on-site, and they share the main objective: the development of reading comprehension skills for authentic outreach or academic texts in English.

In this article, we share an experience and describe how we have incorporated some of the numerous tools available on the Moodle platform to enrich our ESP classes and facilitate scaffolding to construct meaningful learning. The virtualization process and the use of the virtual classroom in Moodle allow teachers and students to extend the limits of the classroom turning teaching-learning processes into a ubiquitous situation where physical spaces and specific timings disappear. This expanded classroom helps us enhance our classes and open the door for the development of digital literacy, understood as the ability to access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate and create information safely and appropriately through digital technologies.

Therefore, we should reconsider our proposal and adopt transmedia didactics that, through innovative designs, promote the building of bridges in order to assist students construct knowledge and appropriate it. Kap (2022) urges us to make a didactic reflection to face the questions and challenges which cannot be gone through in a linear territory, but through innovative actions that break with traditional didactic assumptions. Our virtual classroom plays the role of complement to face-to-face classes. It enables us to share class materials, exchange messages, construct collaborative knowledge and promote self-organized learning.

Based on Area Moreira and Adell Segura (2009), there are four pedagogic dimensions to organize virtual classrooms: informative, practical, communicative and tutorial/evaluative. In our case, we offer a virtual classroom in continuous development and update following these sections. The informative dimension refers to the set of resources, materials or elements that present diverse information or content for autonomous study. In our Moodle classrooms, under the tab useful information, we include the syllabus, ebooks written by teachers, academic calendar, schedule, hidden QR to check attendance, online dictionaries and theoretical presentations. The practical section involves the set of actions,

tasks or activities planned by the teacher that the students have to do in the virtual classroom: interactive activities, cloze tests, extra practice with tutorials for submissions, games, videos and collaborative glossaries in constant construction and revision. As regards the communicative area, it is connected with the set of resources and actions of social interaction between students and the teacher and among students. This communication occurs through the telematic tools offered by the platform: forums, chats, internal messaging, email, video conference or audio conference. Last but not least, it is the tutorial and evaluative dimension which refers to the teaching functions or role that the teacher must perform within the framework of a virtual course. In this case, the teacher should act as a tutor and facilitator between the students and the learning contents (Area Moreira & Adell Segura, 2009).

Apart from all the points mentioned above, and considering the number of students who pass our subjects, we can determine that the groups establish excellent relationships with the materials and the activities proposed. Besides, it is possible to observe the great commitment assumed with the processes of teaching-learning that results in active participation, very low levels of absence and increased motivation. Apart from that, it is important to highlight the enriched working environment achieved.

To conclude, with this proposal, we aimed to extend the construction of knowledge and favour autonomous and active learning processes using digital resources. We intend to show how the Moodle platform has proved to be effective. It should be made clear that we do not attempt to replace neither in-person meetings nor conventional teaching materials, since our subjects are originally designed to be on-site. We simply look for a more appealing alternative to the traditional teaching model, as Díaz, & Freire (2012) has clarified over the consensus about the need to adapt education models to the transformations that our societies and higher institutions are going through. Therefore, as professionals with a critical and transforming view, we should face this pedagogical challenge to ensure that our students are able to learn more and better.

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In search of the method or prudence

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This presentation is inspired by the teaching and research experience for the M.A. final project '*Actualización de la enseñanza del inglés enmarcada en el Posmétodo y el aprendizaje blended en el taller de conversación del 6° año de la Asociacion Necochea de Cultura Inglesa*' along 2018 and 2019. For years this institution has provided the students in the final year of studies with an opportunity to enhance their oral skills, particularly through a specially designed weekly class focused on speaking. Concerns expressed by teachers about a perceived lack of interest from the students served as motivation to design and develop a teaching innovation project oriented to the use of new technologies in the classroom.

Two factors were observed which hindered the students' active participation in the classes. One of the factors was the prevalence of asymmetrical patterns of interaction through which most of the conversations developed, while the other was the lack of opportunities for students to engage and take ownership of their learning process. The aim of the innovation project described was to improve the teaching practice through the use of technology fostering new symmetrical patterns of interaction and leading students to take responsibility for their own opportunities to learn and communicate. To achieve this goal, different aspects of the curriculum were reviewed such as syllabi, previous didactic configurations, didactic materials sourced from specialized publishers and designed by teachers, the role of standardized assessment, teachers' expertise and professional development.

When looking for improvement or innovation in our teaching practices, we understand that statistics about exam results are not enough to make decisions on what or how to change. Critical evaluation of our teaching approaches and actions is a requirement to understand that there is always room for improvement. Giving further boost to our practice does not necessarily demand dramatic changes in our tasks; often simple yet profound adjustments in our teaching performances can be enough. Introducing a new methodological framework and innovative didactic strategies will have a significant impact

on the way our students learn because we strongly believe that teaching is the art of fostering opportunities to produce language and communicate.

For our innovation initiative, two theoretical frameworks served the purpose: the concept of 'cycles of improvement' (Porlán, 2017) and the principles outlined in the Postmethod pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 2001; 2003; 2006). We took the concept 'cycle of improvement' defined by the author as a number of strategies based on critical reflection of real teaching practices, followed by the design of new proposals, and the evaluation of both classes and student learning. According to Porlán (2017) these cycles are key, and pragmatic practices, achievable in a short period of time which fosters tangible short-term results. They are also intended to consider other broad dimensions, such as fostering awareness of existing beliefs and prior knowledge regarding fundamental aspects like teaching, learning, content, methodology and evaluation.

We adopted the Postmethod as a different line of thought and action, driven by innovative ways of performing professional teaching tasks rooted in authentic social, political and cultural contexts. The Postmethod also promotes the dialectical bond between the teaching theory and the teaching practice motivating social and academic autonomy for the participants of the teaching and learning processes (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 547).

Apart from the two lines previously and briefly described, it is worth mentioning that four other theoretical concepts informed our project: teaching innovation (Libedinski, 2001), methodological construction (Edelstein, 1996), didactic configuration (Litwin, 1997) and transformational education (Jackson, 1986). For Libedinski (2001) innovation is understood as breaking from pre-existing didactic practices. She also argues that the habitual order of the teaching practices must be altered towards new didactic ways of communicating and new forms of understanding and practising teaching. From this perspective, we support the notion that innovation is not achieved by the mere application of new technologies to traditional teaching practices. As Jackson (1986) explains, "the transformation in education aims at modifying students' psychological structure instead of merely adding more concepts and skills to their previous schemata" (p. 161). For this reason, we fostered students' autonomy and self-responsibility through the design of blended activities in which they had to produce their own material for the classes on a virtual platform and later use it to speak either in class or on the platform. The final virtual portfolio was also used to evaluate them in the final oral test.

These ideas of innovation and transformational education lead us to revise the method to generate teaching experiences focused on the creation of opportunities for situated learning. We understand a method as an action of thinking which traces different ways of understanding and knowing reality. It is not just a teaching formula to apply technically but an idiosyncratic construction. Edelstein (1996) explains that the 'methodological construction' derives from the conceptual structure (syntactic and semantic) of the discipline and the cognitive structure of the people situated to seize it and grab it. In this sense, we look for new ways to structure language teaching within the dynamic context of the workshop. Consequently, through the design of the blended classroom we created a new didactic configuration which Litwin (1997) defines as "peculiar ways displayed by the teacher to favor the construction of knowledge" (p. 97). Adopting a different perspective from previous categories was part of the transformative process to fulfill the aims of updating, improving and innovating the language teaching practice in the workshop.

The methodological investigation framework developed for the thesis and final innovation project utilized the theoretical premises and tools of the qualitative analysis within an ethnographic style. This approach allowed us to describe, make interpretations and analyze ideas, beliefs, knowledge and meanings inherent in specific practices in context (Hernandez Sampieri, Fernandez Collado & Baptista Lucio, 2014). Situated within the methodological framework of constructivist research, the ethnographic (qualitative) approach was considered the most organic and convenient method to analyze and interpret the reality of the workshop. The observation of classes along a semester, the review of materials, contents, objectives as well as the use of questionnaires and interviews allowed us to collect the necessary information that brought light to the investigation and inspired the development of a new blended format for the workshop.

After implementing new dialectical ways of communication and teaching in the blended classroom, we concluded that the improvement was more qualitative than quantitative in terms of the learning processes, with a particular emphasis on students' autonomy and meaningful engagement in this transformation. Interestingly, these conclusions have sparked new lines of analysis for further discussion.

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Online-friendly lessons (for students and teachers)

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Introduction

We cannot deny that we are living in a world where technology and everyday activities merge more and more, even to a point in which we might not think about our lives without technology.

In 2017 I started delivering online lessons through videoconferencing to adult students, especially in-company. and from the very beginning I had had in mind the idea that technology is a tool for us as well as for our students and that I wanted my students to be the centre of the lessons, not the apps we used.

Then the pandemic came and I was sure that the human side had to be more present in the lessons. The knowledge I gained from neuroeducation -although, bare in mind, I am not an expert- gave me a new tool to combine with technology and make video conference lessons more friendly for my students and for me, too. From then on, technology and neuroeducation have been my great allies to deliver my lessons in the best possible way.

Context

The possibility of learning online has brought numerous advantages, but at the same time, several disadvantages:

> La invención de Internet generó una de las grandes revoluciones de la historia de la civilización, ya que modificó de cuajo las prácticas de sociabilidad, comunicación y acceso a la información. La sociedad digital se extiende de manera vertiginosa y transforma aspectos fundamentales del ser humano. (Manes & Niro, 2014, p. 147)

When I started teaching through videoconferencing, many students as well as teachers were reluctant to join this new modality. However, many of them were so without really knowing what virtual lessons were about. It was not only a matter of using online applications, but also facing the challenge knowing that “to take advantage of the benefits available via the integration of educational technology, we must consider the purpose, context, and goals of our individual online classrooms” (Mandernach, 2018, p. 5).

Nowadays, online education has become common practice and many people embrace this new way of teaching and studying.

Although the pandemic gave rise to a boom in distance learning, not everybody was happy to continue using technology for education after it was over. What's more, many people were reluctant to integrate it into their daily practice.

In a study by Okabe-Miyamoto et al. (2021) based on workers' productivity during the pandemic, the authors state that:

> Workers who reported video conferencing feeling like a forced interaction also reported dramatic levels of low subjective productivity through increased feelings of video conferencing anxiety. Qualitative reports of why workers felt forced to video conference identified feeling pressured by employers to use video and meetings being used as surveillance. However, some workers reported positive experiences while video conferencing, which was related to greater subjective productivity. (p.1)

This information sets a background for one of the reasons why some students are still unwilling to take online lessons, at least, during the first meetings.

During the last years of my teaching practice I have been working hand in hand with my students to find the most effective way of teaching and learning. Some of the issues that I have been concerned about regarding the learning process were attention, interruption and memory. I do take into account that these issues have always been there in the teaching and learning process, but now we have a new context of interaction. For example, most of the interruptions are related to notifications from emails, WhatsApp messages, and any other type of communication from work that pops up as the students are on the other side of the screen.

As I see it, wellbeing is also essential to have an effective learning environment and, therefore, I have also considered that. Most of my investigation and conclusions, up to now, are based on informal talks with my students during our lessons and techniques or tools tried out as we worked. Therefore, our strategies are based on qualitative information.

Process

Since I wanted to modify an aspect of my teaching practice, I carried out action research. According to Lesha (2014), it is "a formative study of progress commonly practiced by teachers in schools. Basically an action research is a spiral process that includes problem investigation, taking action & fact-finding about the result of action. It enables a

teacher to adopt/craft the most appropriate strategy within its own teaching environment" (p. 1).

First, I realized that most of my students spent many hours sitting in front of a computer. When the pandemic came, family or personal life intertwined with work. Therefore, distractions were almost impossible to avoid, and students always attended the lessons with different concerns in their minds. Besides, with the workload business students usually have, it was not difficult for them to cancel a lesson to allocate that time for work. So I had the big challenge to really bring the students to the lesson.

I started the meetings asking students questions related to how they were feeling and how busy their day was. Their answers set the atmosphere for the rest of the lesson. Although the lessons were planned in advance, I had to be ready to make the necessary changes to adapt to my students' mood. I must admit in the beginning this was a bit tiring, I had to think on my feet and search in my mind what resources I had to modify the lesson but at the same time do something useful according to the plan and in favour of my student's progress. Once I had collected some information, I saw a pattern that was repeated: even though students were interested in taking the lessons, they always had something else to solve the moment they joined the meeting. This was a key point for my next steps since according to our intention, we decide where to focus our attention considering all the things that happen around us (Bachrach, 2017) and concentration and understanding are very much related.

Next, during the lessons and as we solved different activities, I took advantage of different topics to learn more about my students' preferences and interests, not only in learning, but also in different aspects that could be of use during the lessons.

Then, after a small talk about our days, we got into the lesson by reviewing topics from the previous meeting in an interactive way, with the aim of bringing back the knowledge they had previously gained. By doing this, they could acknowledge how important it had been to be present in the previous lesson because they had learnt. It is no surprise that there might have been points to review, but this was a new reason to focus on the lesson ahead, and if the student was aware (or made aware) of that, we had a new hook. For this step I usually used short activities created with online tools, making the student active from the very beginning. I also included different dynamics, mixed with some traditional activities. However, the online activities during the lesson usually required more concentration or a deeper analysis of the subject we were studying. Solving these activities

also involved engaging students in discussions about their decisions, analysing which points provided a challenge and why.

As we used these online tools, I focused on students' reactions and behavior to learn if they enjoyed the activity or took advantage of it. There was also a short chat to get their feedback. Not only did this help me to realise how useful it was to put certain apps into practice, but also to have better information about my students' preferences and act upon that.

Outcomes

I came to the conclusion that in order to create online-friendly lessons for my students and me, having a group of online tools I could easily use and rely on was essential so that my working time was optimised and students' engagement occurred. Considering all the information I had gathered, it was not just a matter of exploring and choosing online tools, they had to fulfill a learning purpose and suit my students needs and preferences since:

> When we utilize the right tool for the right job, it can revolutionize the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching and learning. But the key here is not the tool. What is most important is the alignment of the tool with a task to which it is uniquely suited. (Mandernach, 2018, p. 4)

Some of these tools are:

ORGANISING MATERIAL	ICE BREAKERS
symbaloo, lino, Google Drive	PUZZEL.ORG, Word Up!, ClassTools.net
ACTIVITIES	**WORKING TOGETHER**
educaplay, Wordwall, Baamboozle	Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Drawings

I still continue exploring and learning about the tools as much as about my students, and about teaching due to the constant changes in technology and human life. The purpose of sharing the process and results of this research with my colleagues is rooted in my willingness to provide an idea on how to create a virtual lesson that students and teachers enjoy and take advantage of despite everyday life or work concerns that might distract students from effective learning.

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Experiences in pedagogic practices: A dialogue to make visible the relationship between pre-service and cooperating teacher in pedagogic practices

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This presentation departs from our discussion and analysis of a series of recording instruments which we collected along our shared journey as pre-service and cooperating teachers during the second semester of 2023. Along the English Teacher Training Program (ETTP) at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (UNMDP), students experience several pedagogical practices which vary in length and objectives. In the case of Residencia Docente II (RDII), pre-service teachers are expected to conduct a series of 8 to 10 classes set in different contexts such as highschools or adult-oriented courses. Our experience was carried out at the Laboratorio de Idiomas belonging to UNMDP which offers foreign language courses aimed at the general adult public. In the course of these practices, pre-service teachers get under way with the observation stage which lasts around three weeks and gain insights on the groups, needs and topics they will be in charge of dealing with once they teach their own classes.

Along this stage we started to notice several coincidences in our logbook and class planning narratives. Some of them were connected with our perceptions of the groups' needs and wants regarding their learning objectives. For example, we started to see that some of the students were emphatic regarding their enthusiasm for using some specific sections of their books which they humorously referred to as "outdated as themselves" (Gabriel, logbook, p.2; Fiorela, class diary, part 7). Once we noticed this, we started to wonder how to yield to their demands because we knew they would be difficult to acquiesce in the context of RDII. One of the demands of the course is for pre-service teachers to use innovative and up to date planning and teaching strategies which would probably not include those sections of the book with grammatical explanations. At this point we wondered about how to come round this situation because in our past teaching practices we had witnessed what Lu (2013) refers to as "some pre-service teachers did not appreciate the cooperating teacher's classroom practices" (p. 23). Our interpretation of this view feels a bit different since we understood that Lu's research had included both pre-service teachers and their supervisors.

In our case, it was just the two of us and we attributed our perception as a consequence of our peer relationship which is probably more horizontal. We understand our roles as collaborators who try to cooperate with each other in order to reach similar objectives. So, in the light of this view, we decided to introduce our group to a variety of teaching techniques which we know are expected by RDII supervisors. In this sense, Lu (2013) contends that pre-service teachers are suggested to be flexible regardless of what they may prefer for classroom practices. We understand that this flexibility may not be favorable for them because it implies taking and adapting to the cooperating teacher's teaching practices which, as we shared before, may contradict pre-service teachers impressions.

Our alternative implies selecting cooperative teachers who have good classroom practices, understand the role of pre-service teachers and can establish effective communication. As Lu (2013) explains, a good selection process should favor pre-service teachers' needs while demonstrating effective planning, classroom teaching and reflectivity. This was implied by some of the supervisors who expressed being glad to see our partnership at work because they knew "our classes would reflect a decolonial perspective at work" (Fiorela, class diary, part 1). This perspective became actively implemented by the course last year, so in a way, none of us had had any formal training on how to decolonize our teaching practices. By decolonizing education we follow bell hooks' (2013, 2014) perspective which characterizes education as a means of resistance to a system which invites us to rethink and relearn different ways of being dominated that are vested in diverse institutions and our bodies (Bello Ramirez, 2022). This resistance can be manifested by engaging in activities which aim at transforming society. The proposal became an exciting challenge to learn together and set forth an interesting discussion of what we understood as decolonizing practices. However, we were hesitant as to the adequacy of our interpretations since, as we explained before, none of us had experienced any formal training on these practices. At this point, we felt we lacked the essential pedagogical knowledge and skills (Baluyos & Enerio, 2024). This led to a revisiting of our past classroom experiences and fostered an interesting exchange through which we noticed we could create a supportive environment in which we had the opportunity to review literature together in hopes of applying theoretical knowledge while developing our practical teaching skills (Baluyos & Enerio, 2024). The outcome of this discussion was a realization that both of us had, in a way, already decolonized our practices without having reflected upon it and this came as an opportunity to grow and improve in our areas of work.

All in all, as our shared classes unfolded we were able to see how this experience

developed fruitfully for all stakeholders. From the perspective of pre-service teachers, having a close and more symmetrical relationship with the cooperating teacher meant being able to introduce proposals, topics and reflections which pertain to the objectives of the course taken. In a way, this enables a more relaxed and confident stance when it comes to being observed by their supervisors since there are previous opportunities to ensure the group has worked with similar or, at least, familiar class dynamics and techniques. As regards cooperating teacher's perspectives, this proved to be an invaluable experience since we get to share new perspectives which we may or may not have taken the time to reflect upon. We understand that this experience proved to be unique because of our personal relationship but also we deem it relevant to assert that our insights are worth sharing since we were able to construct and understand these pedagogic practices from a unique perspective.

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Ecotourism in English Language I class

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The process of integrating language and culture and the activation of different modes of communication in the teaching of English is still a challenge. It is necessary to supplement the communicative approach with intellectually legitimate and humanistically oriented cultural content (Kramsch, 1993). This work is framed in the project *Diseño de materiales para la implementación del eje de la reflexión intercultural y su impacto en las prácticas de enseñanza y aprendizaje de inglés en diferentes niveles educativos* which belongs to the Human Sciences College at National University of La Pampa. Its central objective is to investigate the implementation of interculturality, as it represents a paradigm shift in the perspective of teaching foreign languages in our country, in the teaching of English at primary and secondary school levels in the jurisdiction of La Pampa as well as in language teaching at the higher level for Teacher Education Programmes.

The teaching of foreign languages (FL) in Argentina has undergone profound changes that are reflected in the national curriculum guidelines (*Núcleos de aprendizaje prioritario*, NAP) for foreign language education (Res. CFE 181/12) and the curricular materials for primary and secondary schools developed in our province. These guidelines and policies adopt an intercultural and plurilingual approach at all levels of education and embrace a social justice conceptualisation of education in all cases.

As regards FL, they are no longer considered only from their instrumental perspective; that is to say, a tool for the labor market or higher studies, but also from their formative value in preparing students for literacy practices that promote their insertion in new multicultural contexts and enable them to be part of global citizenship. In other words, FL teaching approaches combine objectives associated with the development of intercultural communicative competence that includes education for global citizenship.

According to Byram (2008, 2010) & Porto & Byram (2017), the term intercultural communicative competence poses the idea that the sociocultural dimension is central to the whole learning process and that the student's original culture is as significant as the target language to the class experience. This allows students to interact comprehensively with other cultures. Thus, the intercultural approach emphasises the mediating agents of these Language Cultures in the didactic context. This perspective, far from promoting students'

identification with the model of an ideal culture, encourages the discovery and approach to a different culture (Kramsch, 2015). Taking into account all this, spaces for reflection must be generated and didactic sequences must be focused only to promote intercultural exchanges and education for global citizenship.

This presentation, in particular, attempts to share a didactic proposal carried out with students attending English Language I in the 1st year of the Teaching Training and Bachelor of Arts Courses at the College previously mentioned. The selected topic was linked to Holidays and Tourism (Cotton et. al., 2014), Unit N° 5 of the syllabus, while the didactic sequence focussed on the concept of Ecotourism around the world, especially in *Argentina*.

Ecotourism is broadly defined as low-impact travel to endangered and often undisturbed locations. It is different from traditional tourism because it allows the traveller to become educated about the areas - both in terms of the physical landscape and cultural characteristics. It also provides funds for conservation and benefits the economic development of places. Ecotourism and other forms of sustainable travel have their origins in the environmental movement of the 1970s. However, it did not become widespread as a travel concept until the late 1980s. A trip can be considered an eco touristic experience when it minimises the human impact on the visited location; builds respect and awareness for the environment and cultural practices; ensures that tourism provides positive experiences for both the visitors and the hosts; provides financial aid, and other benefits for local peoples and raises travellers' awareness about cultural, ecological and political issues.
The main idea of this experience was to work in groups and in a collaborative way. After introducing the term ecotourism through a reading text, doing some comprehension activities and participating in a brief oral discussion about what ecotourism is and its main characteristics, the students were asked to work in groups of three and choose a geographic region of Argentina. Then, they have to select an important place, historical site, or building from that region and design an eco-project that could be applied to that place. They should also prepare an infographic (using PowerPoint, Google Presentation, Genially, Canva, Powtoon, etc.) explaining what the eco-project would consist of, the benefits the place and/or people may have. These visual presentations were socialised in class and each group received feedback in return. Besides, all the productions were shared and uploaded on the Moodle platform in order to have input for future written works. As regards the methodology implemented, this didactic intervention was based on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (Mehisto, Marsh & Frigols, 2008), Task-Based Learning (TBL) (Ellis, 2003), and the presentations were aided by different ICT tools.

To conclude, this experience allowed us to exercise concrete actions, create a space for reflection and participation, recognise our cultural identity and teach English from it (Barboni, 2011). We also aimed to demonstrate growth in self/cultural awareness, criticality, and social responsibility as well as consolidate the linguistic competence of students to achieve a better communicative performance. In short, we are convinced that activities like this empower students by giving them opportunities to acquire meaningful knowledge that will undoubtedly benefit the construction of their identities, and empower teachers as well, by giving us opportunities to address topics differently and redefine the contents in the foreign language class.

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Transmedia evaluation in the era of the GenAI

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This proposal is part of my thesis for the PHD Studies in Human Sciences at the School of Humanities of UNSAM, national university of San Martin, Argentina. Its central axis is twofold: it aims to conceptualize what I call a *transmedia evaluation*, and it wants to analyze a corpus of transmedia narrative (TN) projects in Spanish and foreign languages, which reveal the experiences of English and other language teachers.

We navigate in the era of the GenIA, where education is at an interesting crossroads. This new player challenges our traditional conceptions of teaching and learning. This innovative *OpenAI* tool is transforming the landscape of education, opening doors to new ways of interaction with information and knowledge. The relevance of the *GPT Chat* in education lies in its potential to personalize learning.

This presentation proposes a journey into the intersection between education and digital technologies in the post-media society. Along this line, I would like to put some concepts and theoretical perspectives into dialogue towards a *transmedia evaluation*, understood as a mediating practice, which fosters the idea of understanding, reflection and reconstruction of learning, without neglecting the challenges that platforms and the media present for life and particularly, for education.

Introduction: Problem and rationale for transmedia study

New forms of communication have been transforming educational scenarios and ways of teaching, learning and assessment. In this sense, the concept of transmedia (Scolari, 2013; Rampazzo, Gambarato & Freeman, 2018) has become the focus of attention for those who create and use media, but also for the educational community. Regarding assessment, we understand it as the moment in which students can put their knowledge into practice, make their achievements visible, and recognize their strengths and weaknesses. Anijovich and Cappelletti (2017) tell us that “a successful evaluation is one that constitutes another instance of teaching and learning” (p. 20). Thus, when making decisions about assessment, we can find relationships between teaching, learning and assessment.

Learning assessment always involves decisions and reflections on our practices, as it implicitly materializes conceptions about what and how to teach. Formative or process assessment (Perrenoud, 2008) is concerned with the development and self-regulation of students' learning. But it must also give rise to an evaluation that accounts for criteria and parameters when it comes to assessing creativity, interaction with others and the transmediality of educational projects. Moreover, if we are talking about transmedia educational projects in a foreign language, language usage cannot be overlooked. How can we evaluate these projects through a mediating evaluative practice that favours a perspective of understanding, reflection and reconstruction of learning? How can we emphasize a language in use evaluation that takes into account the performance of the participants? How can we assess the transmediality of the projects and their flow in different platforms?

In her master's degree thesis, Montoya (2022) proposes a path towards a *transmedia evaluation*. Thus, she suggests a type of evaluation that contemplates critical reception, expression and creation: "we could think of an evaluative practice that contains the ability to assess content across multiple platforms, taking into account different languages and creative experimentation" (Montoya, 2022, p. 108). At the same time, the author explains that "such a practice should entail an ethical attitude (in the words of Anijovich, 2017), a sensitive perception (in terms of Hoffmann, 2014) towards its own content and the content of others" (Montoya, 2022, p. 109).

Transmedia Narratives: education, transmedia educational projects and foreign language assessment

In a context in which institutions find themselves revolutionized by new practices and devices (Albarello et al., 2023), it is imperative to capitalize didactically this knowledge that is outside the educational institution, in order to transform teaching into a more meaningful task, not only for young people and children, but also for the teaching community. This is a broad, open and field under expansion, which is studied from an educational perspective.

Transmedia narratives not only consist of expanding stories through different media and platforms, but also, they make sure that each medium generates new content and experiences, thus giving rise to new experiential possibilities and new narratives. In this regard, Jackson (2005) describes the educational value of a narrative and its two functions; one of them is the epistemological function, i.e., the value of knowing and transmitting knowledge through a narrative: "stories not only contain knowledge, but they are themselves

the knowledge we want our students to possess" (p. 29). The other function alluded to by the author is the transformative function, in which the narrative helps to create new interests, to inspire, to modify us in some way that has nothing to do with the knowledge itself: "narratives can transform us, alter us as individuals" (Jackson, 2005, p. 33). Following Jackson (2005), we can think of transmedia narratives as a transformative educational resource, available to learners and educators to promote content and knowledge which can generate a better disposition in education.

In *Reinventar la clase en la universidad*, Maggio (2018) talks about the (possible) changes to be made in teaching practices so that they can become relevant in contemporary institutions. In this sense, we can think of transmedia narrative projects which can generate stories from elements scattered across different platforms and media. Thus, the incorporation of technologies and cultural consumption in education seems both a necessity and a challenge. Within the framework of this challenge, we should include transmedia narratives as a pedagogical proposal, given their production rationale and interactive construction. Their use across multiple media and their immersive nature can motivate students who are familiar with digital and multimedia environments, and thus serve as a motivational factor. Following this idea, we can consider a teacher as a learning facilitator, one who understands the contexts and the realities of the students, and their transmedia skills (Scolari, 2018). Transmedia educational projects are pedagogical proposals that grow from the transversality of media as well as the information and communication technologies (ICTs). These projects recover students' own productions and emphasize the role of the teacher as a facilitator.

The analysis of transmedia narrative projects leads us to think about new ideas regarding evaluation in connection with aspects that still need to be revised; however, and at the same time, they seem to promote other challenges as the field becomes more complex. Thus, the *transmedia evaluation* of these educational projects is of fundamental importance. Many transmedia educational projects focus on formative or process evaluation to attend to the development and self-regulation of each student's learning. But rarely is there room for an evaluation that takes into account some kind of criteria and parameters when it comes to assessing creativity, transmediality and student production understood as *fandom.*

This paper considers foreign language assessment as a social practice, a state of performance and usage of the target language. Generally, when we think about foreign language assessment, it is usually done from a cognitive perspective, and not from a social perspective (McNamara, 2000). For this paper, assessment is an attempt to reach a conclusion about how a person can perform in the target language. We follow the *Common*

European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEFR), which is a standard intended to measure the level of oral and written comprehension and expression in a language. Thus, performance assessment is understood as a proficiency test, designed to measure the proficiency of candidates in a given language according to these categories. On this basis, the Brazilian expert Matilde Scaramucci (2000) says that "instead of a single, absolute, monolithic proficiency, based on that of the ideal speaker, we could have several [proficiencies], depending on the specificity of the situation of the language usage" (p. 36). In other words, proficiency is understood as the general ability to use language in one, several or different social domains of the real world, in situations of language usage, with real interlocutors and for a given purpose or specific aim.

GPT Chat and GenAI in education: An opportunity?

We are witnessing the age of the GenAI, in which education seems to be at an interesting crossroads (Crawford, 2021). This new player challenges our traditional conceptions of teaching and learning, as transmedia narratives have done before. This innovative OpenAI tool is transforming the landscape of education, opening doors to new ways of interaction with information and knowledge. In my view, the relevance of the GPT Chat in education lies in its potential to personalize learning. In a traditional classroom, it can sometimes be difficult for a teacher to meet the individual needs of each student. This is where the GPT Chat can make a difference. With its ability to provide immediate feedback and tailor its responses to students' needs, it can help fill in the gaps and strengthen the learning processes.

In this context, we can ask ourselves: which school can be configured among algorithms? What does school education mean in this post-media society? The pandemic has fired discussions around the processes of virtualization and the conditions in which they occur, their limits, but also their power. A possible scenario that evidences a vertiginous process of digitalization of everyday experience (Costa, 2021). Every sphere of life has become the object of a set of platforms (Van Dijck, et al., 2018) ready to facilitate everything: the ways of travelling, shopping, among others.

Thus, only a transmedia approach (*transmedia didactics* for Kap, 2020), which could focus on collaborative and decentralized experiences, within and outside the educational system, can become the best environment to build teaching practices that allow for the expansion of knowledge. The author points out that such didactics implies breaking with traditions in which sensibility, the senses, juxtapositions and hybrid experiences are brought

into play. In this way, transmediality enables a type of knowledge that is created and *re*created among students, as well as with teachers. It is imperative to highlight that researchers and technology educators must work together and discuss how these evolving GenAI tools could be used safely and constructively to improve education and support teaching, learning and assessment.

Concluding remarks

Given this post-media society, and the capabilities of the ChatGPT and GenAI to perform complex tasks within the field of education, the current educational praxis has been reached. In the face of its rise, even in workspaces, integrating GenAI tools into the classroom and getting students familiar with how to use it constructively and safely can prepare them in a variety of settings and fields. Undoubtedly, the ChatGPT and other generative AI are already pushing educational boundaries and starting a significant paradigm shift.

Within this framework, we propose to continue a path towards a *transmedia evaluation*, understood as a mediating evaluative practice that favours a view of understanding, reflection and reconstruction of learning. On the one hand, the emphasis is placed on an evaluation of language usage which considers the linguistic performance of the participants. However, a transmedia assessment approach is both a challenge and an opportunity. It is a challenge if it is only thought of as an assessment that only measures knowledge, and does not focus on the learning generated, the exploration of the work carried out on different platforms and the identification of the students' progress. A transmedia assessment which involves the opportunity to value academic cooperation, joint work and the establishment of criteria and parameters agreed with the students is the type of assessment practice to which we aspire.

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Exploratory Action Research: classroom experiences and reflections

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At least to this author's knowledge, and on a personal note, many secondary school teachers in Argentina do not often seem to have time or energy for academic writing. Far from that, many of them feel that they do not qualify or that their work is not relevant enough to appear in published reports or stories of their classroom innovative ideas, practices and resources. It is true, additionally, that, according to the author's records and own experience as a teacher, secondary school teachers in Argentina rush from school to school in difficult working conditions and, obviously, badly paid for their work. All these factors contribute to invisibilizing teachers' much valuable work. As a classroom teacher for over thirty-five years, and after a journey into her development as a teacher researcher, the author is now at a point in her career where she feels empowered to give a voice to her colleagues from secondary school who feel that their work is still not worth sharing and still do not believe that they are the real experts in their own classes.

In line with the ideas expressed in the previous paragraph, this presentation has a two-fold intention: one, to share the speaker's acquired knowledge and practice related to Exploratory Action Research (EAR), and the other, to disseminate the above mentioned approach among the EFL community that will attend the Jornadas, by first presenting a short introduction to EAR and then sharing a novel, pilot experience that was carried out in a public secondary school in the City of Buenos Aires during 2022 and 2023.

To this end, there will be two sections: the first one will deal with knowledge that has been constructed during recent years and continues growing in the form of a community of teacher research mentors around the world in what has been called MenTRnet. The genesis of the community dates back to 2018, when after extensive experiential work with secondary school teachers in an official programme led by the Ministry of Education of Chile and the British Council called Champion Teachers, Dr. Richard Smith and Dr. Paula Rebolledo compiled a handbook that has become the beacon of every teacher researcher or any teacher who is interested in their own professional development and their students' educational and learning benefit. Later projects in Peru and Mexico led to the publication of complementary reports of the three, including the initial one in Chile.

Along these lines, Exploratory Action Research will be briefly introduced and compared to the well-known Action Research approach. Whereas action research is initiated from a topic that is of interest to academics, Exploratory Action Research originates in a classroom issue and is carried out by teachers themselves, and it is not only the teacher who learns and is able to solve the issue, but also the students' gain is a profitable result in all respects. Reference will be made to ways of collecting data (qualitative and quantitative), types of valuable sources of data for classroom-based research, and to the relevance and value of analyzing the data obtained in order to improve teaching and learning contexts.

With reference to the development of Exploratory Action Research, a brief account is presented here: an innovative approach to in-service teacher development, Exploratory Action Research was originally conceived during the British Council's Champion Teachers programme in Chile, in 2013. The approach was specifically designed to address the continuing professional development (CPD) needs of public school English teachers working in challenging situations, and has been taken up – and shown to be beneficial – in other Latin American countries and elsewhere in the Global South.

In its first year, as described in Smith & Rebolledo (2016), the Champion Teachers mentoring scheme saw the successful completion of 40 six-month Exploratory Action Research projects, which led to the scheme being repeatedly renewed and, gradually, being integrated by the Ministry of Education of Chile into its English Open Doors Programme CPD offer. According to the Ministry's own lesson observation-based evaluations: "[It] promoted [...] empowerment of teachers [and was] sustainable. [Champion Teachers] was the only programme that provided such strong evidence of classroom impact on teachers' practice. None of the other initiatives ha[ve] provided such clear evidence of that" (Smith & Rebolledo, 2022, p. 1).

Since 2013 the British Council and Ministry of Education Chile Champion Teachers programme has been helping secondary school teachers engage in exploratory action research projects. There is a collection of research stories arising from the programme. The book highlights the achievements gained in spite of teachers' difficult working conditions.

In turn, the second section of the presentation will be devoted to demonstrating how, without de-professionalizing research, and by demystifying it, classroom-based inquiry can, despite being originated in the teaching of English as a foreign language, contribute to improving teaching practices across the whole school curriculum. Based on limited and empirical evidence, this approach makes its appearance in general secondary school curricular scenarios. Teachers of subjects as varied as Natural and Social Sciences,

Mathematics and Spanish language have had their debut as teacher researchers in their own contexts and with their very own students. The speaker will share an account of how she led an exploratory action research workshop in her school and report on partial results of the pilot experience during 2022 and 2023: Once a week the teachers in the author's school have an eighty-minute CPD meeting that is compulsory. For some time, many of the teachers had been finding the traditional meeting improductive, so she felt that she could contribute and make things a little different for my colleagues. She submitted the workshop proposal to the school pedagogic counselor in February 2022, and it was accepted. She would then be able to start delivering the workshop during the second half of the school year. In early August she launched the invitation during the massive weekly meeting of about thirty teachers. A PowerPoint presentation was projected on the whiteboard and nearly twenty teachers showed interest. Finally, in October, the meetings began. A separate room was assigned to the group. The author, acting as mentor, and the teachers (mentees) met for about 60 minutes weekly during October and two Thursdays in November. The participants exchanged experiences and were introduced to Exploratory Action Research in a practical, hands-on style. They explored their classrooms with exploratory questions, according to what they felt were their issues. Following the model in Smith and Rebolledo's handbook (2018), they analyzed the data that they had gathered and implemented changes. Finally, they reflected on their experiences and contrasted their original expectations with the actual data. Most of them concluded that having done the exploratory journey was a valuable experience and it contributed greatly to their professional development. They specially valued that all the process was done during their workload and no extra time was required. They learned to use class time for the purpose of their research and took advantage of the tools they came to know during workshop time.

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Sharing online documents: an opportunity to give constructive feedback for narrative writing

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Introduction

Teaching during 2020-2021 has left various valuable lessons to educators who unexpectedly had to devise new ways to reach students in order to effectively teach the contents stated in their syllabuses and provide feedback to foster their learning process.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the experience of a remote writing workshop within a language course called *Introducción a la Lengua Inglesa (ILI),* which is addressed to first-year-students of the three courses offered by our English Teaching, Translating, and Bachelor's degree in Linguistics/Literature. Particularly, we are going to study the writing process of narratives at the stage when students are faced with the challenge of rewriting their own texts after receiving feedback from their teachers.

Before 2020, teachers would assess students' pieces leaving comments and questions on pen and paper and carrying out face-to-face exchanges in order to clarify any doubts. During the period when the course was taught online, this teaching moment had to be modified through the use of shared online documents which allowed written interaction

between teacher and students and aimed at helping them improve their texts. As part of our analysis, we are going to analyze some students' first and second versions of the same text.

Brief description of our student population

The students belong to different sociocultural and economic groups from different provinces in Argentina; most have had different learning experiences and, therefore, their level of proficiency in English is quite heterogeneous. For many of them, ILI might even be the first formal approach to studying the language. This means that students need to start developing some metalinguistic awareness to be able to understand their teacher's comments and provide the necessary changes - key in their learning process.

Feedback in the writing process

In our course, writing is conceived as a process where different stages can be identified (Flower, 1989; Flower and Hayes, 1981). As Hyland (2003) points out, "(e)verything we do in the classroom, the methods and materials we adopt, the teaching styles we assume, the tasks we assign, are guided by both practical and theoretical knowledge" (p. 1). We take informed decisions based on "our theories and beliefs about what writing is and how people learn to write." (p. 1). Teachers need to be explicit about how writing is to be dealt with in class, informing students of the goals of each different step in the process as well as to exemplify what they are expected to do. Once students have produced a first draft, their work is assessed by the teacher who needs to delay surface corrections until the final editing (Raimes, 1992) in order to focus on content. Feedback given by teachers influences the writing process directly as it helps writers to reflect upon different aspects of writing, while editing. It can also be claimed that feedback makes an impact on the whole process of language acquisition as it triggers metalinguistic analysis.

The teacher should make critical comments and questions about structure, organization, style, content, and presentation which invite the student to reflect upon how ideas have been expressed. Ultimately, the long-term goal of constructive feedback is to help students become better writers. According to Ellis (2009, p. 12), "acquisition occurs *in* rather than *as a result of* interaction". We strongly believe that learning is built upon dialogue and interaction with others.

Feedback through online comments

Sharing documents with students' narratives has allowed us to use different tools to help students improve their pieces of writing. Highlighting fragments and introducing comments foster reflection as they trigger an interactive asynchronous discussion that makes up for the face to face encounter that used to take place in the classroom. In order to correct students' work, clear assessment criteria are essential. In this course, assessment criteria look at both a macro level of coherence and range of structure, and a microlevel of cohesion and linguistic traits. Respecting the criteria, we use comments in the form of questions to help students analyse their mistakes at the different levels. In some cases, students reply to these comments explaining their idea or rephrasing the connection between events. As a result of these brief exchanges between students and teachers, rewriting turns into a collaborative process.

As regards the microlinguistic level, we call the students' attention towards specific linguistic areas. Although it is always easier and faster to provide the correct version, we try to avoid that because we wish to help students to become aware of the kind of mistake we are pointing out as well as the fact that we aim at developing learning strategies such as the use of monolingual dictionaries and encouraging the first stages of the metalinguistic awareness.

Comments have also allowed us to offer different learning tools that students may not have been used to applying before. To start with, not all students are used to the correction tools offered by online documents. Thus, we add comments that redirect the students' attention to an error that has already been pointed out by the application itself. Similarly, many students tend to resort to Spanish-English online applications that are not always reliable. Then, our role is to show them other sources they should start making use of as language students. To do this, we use comments that aim at highlighting certain microlinguistic aspects and we provide the student with the link to an online monolingual dictionary that explains the language area in question.

Comparison between first and second versions

It is worth reflecting on how our comments have influenced our students' performance. It is at the moment when students produce their second versions that we can check whether our comments have been truly grasped or not. As seen above, we aim at stimulating students' criticism of their own texts.

In order to determine the effects of our feedback, we have carried out a contrastive analysis of first and second versions of the narratives in the light of the assessment criteria

designed for the course. Broadly speaking, each statement in the criteria is based on Labov's analysis (1967) of the stages in the narrative macrostructure. Therefore, our analysis is guided by questions such as: Is there enough background information on the main character? Are events clearly sequenced? Is there an easily identifiable climax?

Based on the differences between our answers to the questions about first and second versions, we can state that our feedback in this course has proved to be truly useful for students since the second drafts of most narratives are noticeably better organized, especially where first versions were incoherent. In most cases included in our corpus, substantial improvement in coherence has been observed in second versions, which can be considered the result of fruitful asynchronous interaction between teacher and students. Our complete work will provide some of the instances that allow us to consider that this feedback fosters our students' writing skills.

Final reflection

Even if this time-consuming process of correcting and the lack of face-to-face interaction were huge drawbacks during the 2020-2021 period, we can satisfactorily conclude that online comments and questions did have a positive effect on students' second drafts, mainly about coherence. That is why, despite having come back to face to face interaction in the classroom, we often ask our students to share their online documents with us and start some fruitful asynchronous interaction with them. In second writing tasks, despite some scattered inaccuracies about language in use, students who worked consciously and attentively over their drafts managed to produce texts that complied with the generic characteristics of narratives.

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The Duality of Delight and Distress: An Exploratory Case Study on Transposing Argumentation Skills from a Linguist Skills Course to the Production of a Literary Research Paper

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This presentation investigates the effective application of argumentative skills learned in an advanced language development course, Advanced Communication II (a 4th-year course corresponding to the area of "Skills Development" courses) in a Teaching English as a Foreign Language program, to writing a literary research paper in a course titled Contemporary Literature of England and the United States in the same program. This case study involves a Spanish trainee from the Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, who used a self-development diary to document her experiences, challenges, and successes throughout the process of applying previous argumentative skills and resources she had learned to the writing of a literary research paper in a different course. This diary, being a life document, provided a tool to analyze key insights into the benefits of interdisciplinary learning and the transfer of skills from one university course to another. Along with the diary, a structured interview was conducted with the trainee to explore more in depth and cross-check the findings she obtained from her diary. By analyzing both the diary entries and interview responses, the research identifies specific strategies and practices that facilitated the successful transfer of argumentative skills to literary research that led her to a successful outcome.

The research highlights the importance of communicative competence, particularly written communicative competence, which includes both grammatical and sociolinguistic abilities, in facilitating this transfer (Hymes, 1972). Writing, as a form of communication, plays a critical role in shaping and expressing thoughts, thus enhancing academic performance (Yusupov et al., 2021). Despite many students' challenges in developing writing skills, the present case study highlights the fact that mastering the skills previously mentioned is crucial for creating cohesive and coherent texts (Alcón, 2021). Furthermore, building upon these authors' research works, the study underscores that successful academic writing in literary research involves not just understanding literature content but also effectively categorizing and analyzing its literary elements, constructing well-supported arguments, and having a strong thesis statement. By leveraging previous coursework in

advanced language development, students can better navigate the complexities of literary analysis and argumentation at the same time. The findings indicate that these skills are beneficial in more ways than one. They help students with the immediate task of writing a research paper, making the process smoother and more effective. Additionally, these skills have a lasting impact, contributing to students' overall academic growth and improving their abilities in a wide range of subjects over time. This suggests that learning and applying these skills can enhance students' proficiency not just in writing, but in various academic areas, supporting their long-term educational development.

The study argues that the integration of interdisciplinary content, particularly argumentative skills, can significantly improve a student's ability to perform well in different academic contexts (Belmonte & McCabe, 2024). According to Canale & Swain (2024), these skills enable students not only to construct well-reasoned arguments but also to effectively communicate their ideas in written form, essential for succeeding in tasks like writing a literary research paper. Additionally, the development and mastery of communicative competence, as described by Hymes (1972), play a crucial role in interdisciplinary learning. This competence encompasses grammatical and sociolinguistic abilities necessary for effective communication across disciplines.

Fletcher's concept of "expansive framing", a concept derived by Perkins and Salomon (2012), is discussed as a strategy to promote the transfer of learning by relating current knowledge to future and past experiences (Fletcher, 2018). By fostering these connections, students enhance their adaptability and interdisciplinary learning, as highlighted by the authors (Perkins & Salomon, 2024). Moreover, the enhancement of written communicative competence not only supports effective communication but also facilitates interdisciplinary learning by allowing students to apply argumentative skills across diverse subjects. This process both deepens their understanding of different disciplines and strengthens their ability to engage in critical analysis and synthesis within academic contexts.

When a student is able to transfer skills from one course to another, the concept of interdisciplinary learning naturally comes into play. According to Frank et al., (1992), interdisciplinary learning involves integrating diverse areas of knowledge that are “not organised as separate subjects” (p. 223). As the authors suggest, it goes beyond traditional subject boundaries to create a broader context of knowledge. This approach emphasizes mutual communication and cooperation among students with varying levels of specialization and socialization, fostering a communicative network that supports different directions of

specialization. This has been stated considering von Hentig's (1972) work, in which he states that the goal of interdisciplinary learning is not to unify knowledge into a single entity but to "make communication possible between the disparate parts or disciplines" (p. 66). Regarding this idea, Frank et al., (1992) affirm that the perspective encourages distinctions between disciplines while promoting cooperative learning environments that enhance understanding across fields. This interdisciplinary learning aims to reconcile complexity by seeking unity, integrating fragmented knowledge, and communicating meaning effectively, especially in contexts where traditional approaches may fall short. At its core, interdisciplinary learning provides students with opportunities to gain new perspectives and distance themselves from their previous experiences, fostering intellectual growth and adaptability.

In sum, the present case study emphasizes that developing strong writing and argumentative skills is vital for academic success and the effective transfer of knowledge across disciplines. This interdisciplinary approach not only fosters better academic performance but also prepares students for diverse and complex future challenges (Celce-Murcia et al., 2003). The integration of communicative competence, which encompasses both grammatical and sociolinguistic knowledge, plays a crucial role in this process. The ability to produce cohesive and coherent texts, as discussed by Halliday and Hassan (1978), further enhances students' writing capabilities, making their arguments more persuasive and their research papers more impactful. Moreover, the application of strategies such as expansive framing, which connects current knowledge with broader contexts, encourages a deeper and more adaptable learning experience. By mastering these skills, students are better equipped to handle the demands of academic writing and can effectively apply their learning to new and varied situations, such as the case of argumentative skills in literature courses, reaching successful results and demonstrating the true value of interdisciplinary education.

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Intercultural motivators: Cross-cultural strategies and gender perspective in an Argentine- Canadian University Exchange

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In 2019, Antonella Romiti, English Reading Comprehension II teacher at the Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento (UNGS), and Jessie Smith, coordinator of the Latin American Studies program at Langara College in Vancouver, Canada, planned a technology-mediated exchange project using the COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) program[1]. This program aims to have students from two institutions collaborate on online assignments, allowing them to practice intercultural competencies.

In this COIL project, first-year students from UNGS and Langara College worked together online on the gender perspective, using tools such as WhatsApp, Padlet and Google Meet. The project was carried out in two editions: one in March and April 2020, and one in March and April 2021. Students produced a Photo gallery in Padlet on a jointly chosen topic, accompanied by analysis, comments and opinions. The objectives of the project included: engaging students in social change from a gender perspective, providing an enriching intercultural experience mediated by technology, and developing language and digital skills.

Academic research on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) suggests that this approach improves motivation, foreign language learning, critical thinking skills and content learning (Coyle et al., 2010, Doiz et al., 2014). In this international online project, the Canadian teacher adopted a content-based approach, aiming to show how Latin Americans use art for social change. On the other hand, I adopted a language-based CLIL approach, since the subject was English and, at the same time, included the gender perspective in a cross-cutting manner, in compliance with the Micaela Law[2] in Argentina.

Although our mixed groups had a common task, as researcher-teachers we considered it important to be aware of the substantial differences within each group, considering the pandemic, the possibilities of connectivity and the socioeconomic conditions of each course. The COIL project between UNGS and Langara College functioned as a creative disruption tool within the UNGS English Reading Comprehension and the Latin American courses. In the 2020 and 2021 editions, the project brought participants together in a new context, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, where communication took new forms and provided opportunities to imagine and act in their worlds.

To get a first-person account of the lived experience by my L2 students, I carried out eleven interviews to former students from UNGS who participated in the COIL project. The questionnaire used in the interviews focused on two main areas: the dynamics and communication strategies between UNGS and Langara students, and the effect of the gender subject matter chosen for the project.

The central questions of this research were: How does a multimodal and translingual pedagogical approach based on CLIL change foreign language teaching? How does the gender perspective influence as a motivator in overcoming obstacles to second language learning in emergent bilingual students?

As suggested by translingual theory (Canagarajah, 2013; Garcia & Wei, 2017), the English spoken by multilingual speakers is not deficient, and English can be considered a contact language in which communicative success is not based on prescriptive norms of native speakers, but on the development of hybrid strategies to facilitate communication. This might explain why given that Canada receives thousands of immigrants from non-English or French-speaking countries every year, Langara students reminded UNGS students that in Canada everyone is used to communicating with multilingual speakers of different varieties of English on a daily basis, which could encourage Argentine students to speak English with less embarrassment. In the interviews, all the UNGS students said that the fact that there were non-native speakers in the Canadian institution made them feel at ease. At the same time, they used the automatic translator to look up the phrases they needed to prepare their projects or communicate with their Langara partners.

Asian Langara students encouraged some shy UNGS students to speak English; at some point several South Asian Langaran students (mainly from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) also used English as a second language, but were more experienced, and could offer motivating words as they had passed the level barrier whereby one must communicate with linguistic "perfection". Out of the eleven students interviewed, six students spontaneously stated that they felt more encouraged to speak in English because the South Asian students "were not so clear about the language either" (Mariana, UNGS), suggesting that Langara's multilingualism had a positive and at some point reassuring effect on the UNGS students.

The gender perspective emerged as a central and highly revealing focus of this research. Across all the interviews conducted, the UNGS students mentioned the gender perspective as a motivator for participating in the project, putting energy to communicate, and learning English. Interestingly, before getting to the specific question about the effect of

the gender issue on the exchange, the UNGS students had already indicated that overcoming communication difficulties was made possible by their interest in expressing their views, and debating on the gender issue in English. In this way, the students established a close connection between motivation, overcoming difficulties and the gender perspective, which favourably influenced their participation and performance. In this sense, Norton & Pavlenko (2004) discuss how an open teacher attitude on gender issues is beneficial for students who tend to feel respected and represented.

Moreover, the research found that UNGS students were able to overcome oral communication barriers through strategies such as asking for help from family or friends with greater proficiency in English, using automatic translators, asking fellow Langara students to repeat or write in the chatbox, and preparing the necessary vocabulary they needed to use in advance.

The incorporation of group video calls without teacher participation in the second edition of the project also contributed to autonomy and the ability to prepare before the conversations, resulting in more fluid exchanges. The gender perspective was key in generating motivation among UNGS students to communicate with their Langara peers and overcome linguistic and technological obstacles. For these unguided Meet meetings, the UNGS students prepared themselves by searching for the key words or phrases and discussed linguistic doubts with me before the synchronous virtual group meeting. Additionally, they reported that they tried to communicate in different and creative ways: talking, sharing screenshots of what they wanted to show, using arrows, or writing their contributions in the Meet chat rather than speaking. In order to account for their strategies and procedures of translingual communication, one student reported that in their group video calls: "We were people speaking in Spanish, speaking in English and then we would say some parts to some classmates in Spanish and in turn to others in English, until we got to understand each other. It was a Babel tower of communication." (Juliana, UNGS). In turn, another student expressed that: "The group video calls were made after the larger class, and I had already prepared what I wanted to say or give my opinion. My communication was more written than oral, I felt more comfortable writing." (Florencia, UNGS).

In summary, the COIL project demonstrated that:

- UNGS students succeeded in overcoming oral L2 communication barriers through various strategies.
- Autonomy and prior preparation improved with group video calls without teachers.
- Gender was a key motivator for participation and learning English.

At the same time, the virtual space of translingualism enabled by the teachers allowed participants to work across multiple languages and cultures, to take part in the creation of collective meanings, beyond English as a single codified system, towards a broader and pluralistic vision of communication processes. During group work, emerging bilingual or multilingual UNGS students drew on their knowledge of English and Spanish, integrating and appropriating new linguistic and cultural strategies to incorporate them into their own communicative repertoires.

In conclusion, the communicative strategies deployed by English L2 learners encourage us to reflect on the need to reorient L2 communication research away from prescriptive and punitive models. Adopting more holistic and dynamic methods that consider identity and the role of affect and motivation will contribute to the creation of meaning within the framework of translanguaging. This also reflects the actual forms of communication of multilingual learners in international contexts and common interests, such as feminism and gender debates. The interviews reflected how real people find creative ways to communicate, managing to go beyond the difficulties related to L2, cultural differences, and technological problems, highlighting that the ultimate goal of communication is to be understood in the endless cross-cultural dialogue in which all human beings participate.

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Notes

[1] The Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program was born at the State University of New York (SUNY) in 2006. Its goal was to create online courses with an international dimension as a tool to promote cooperation and internationalization of learning among post-secondary students and teachers from different countries around the world. Over time it has grown, and now COIL (or Virtual Exchange) programs are found in post-secondary institutions around the world. We felt that COIL provided us with both the theoretical and practical tools to carry out our plan for interaction among our students, as it fosters communication and creativity among all actors in their educational contexts.

[2]Law 27,499, known as "Ley Micaela", was sanctioned in Argentina in 2018 following the femicide of university student Micaela García, and consists of mandatory gender training for all persons in the three branches of government and state institutions. National universities, such as the National University of General Sarmiento (UNGS), have been pioneers in applying this law in their undergraduate careers, awarding academic credits to teachers and students for including the gender perspective in their courses. The Canadian professor Jessie Smith was positively surprised by this practice, considering it "something unthinkable" (Romiti & Smith, 2021) in the Canadian academic world. UNGS students who participated in the project received 2 training points from the university's Gender Policy Program (GPP). Unfortunately, the current government recently closed the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity and has made massive layoffs that amount to the dismantling of public gender policies of the National State. The programs affected are the 144 line, which assists women and LGBT people who go through situations of male violence, Ley Micaela among many other programs. (Government shutters what remained of Women, Genders, Diversity Ministry - Buenos Aires Herald)

The corporal dimension in English teacher education: a (my) personal theoretical and situated composition

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This PhD dissertation on the corporal dimension in English Teacher Education (ETE) is grounded on a narrative inquiry qualitative approach which hinges on oral narrative interviews and other research instruments and devices. This research stand aims at unfolding the voices of some English teachers who work on the borders of the classical English teaching agenda by developing a corporal component in their classes. The corporal dimension in an EIL (English as International Language) classroom is the embodied-ways of teaching English crossed by artistic activities which may combine oral skills and drama, singing and pronunciation, listening and lyrics/song analysis, script and poetry writing, among other possible blends. The fusion of English language teaching and art is generally born from knowledge-others collected along a teacher's shadow education. This consists of strategies, tools, abilities, feelings, talents merged in the class dynamics which knit the teacher's corporal dimension and his/her own teaching skills learned in non-curricular experiences throughout one's teacher education. This presentation points at sharing excerpts from a first-stage survey carried out among advanced English graduate teachers and advanced English students with teaching experience to inquire into their non-curricular education and their familiarity with instances of corporal dimension in their classrooms.

Getting started

This PhD dissertation on the corporal dimension in English Teacher Education (ETE) is grounded on a narrative inquiry approach which hinges on oral narrative interviews and other research instruments and devices. This study is intended at unfolding the voices of some English teachers who work at the borders of the classical English teaching agenda by developing a corporal component in their classes. The corporal dimension in an EIL (English as International Language) classroom is the embodied-ways of teaching English crossed by artistic activities which may combine oral skills and drama, singing and pronunciation, listening and lyrics/song analysis, script and poetry writing, among other possible blends. The fusion of English language teaching and art is generally born from knowledge-others

collected along a teacher's shadow education (Bray, 1999). This consists of strategies, tools, abilities, feelings, talents merged in the class dynamics which knit the teacher's corporal dimension and his/her own teaching skills learned in non-curricular experiences. This presentation points at sharing excerpts from a first-stage survey carried out among advanced English graduate teachers and advanced English students with teaching experience to inquire into their non-curricular education and their familiarity with corporal dimension in their classrooms.

Narrative Inquiry in Teacher Education

In narrative inquiry, human relationships are manifested among the people who weave personal and social interests, and desires based on historical and political traces derived from the contexts in which they are entailed as historical subjects (Souza, 2020). In that respect, narratives are built from the transformative nature of inquiry (Johnson & Golombek, 2011), as we can understand them as change and transformation agents. In essence, the revision of one's own education teaching journey involved through storytelling provides with the possibility of converting from valuing one's own experience, becoming more aware and creating meaning of those teaching/learning experiences (Barkhuizen & Benson, 2008 in Barkhuizen, 2011).

We consider that narrative dives into the configuration of teaching identity because it is characterized as fluid, diverse (Barkhuizen, 2016) and in permanent construction (De Laurentis, 2021). The narrative identity composition is unique and unrepeatable as it is defined by the deepest personal beliefs, even when the same story is told by two different people. The Rashomon effect of narrative (Kim, 2016) builds the story based on fictional memories which are representations of what the person credits has been his/her/their experience of reality. That authentic and singular worldview weaved with personal subjective metaphors, arguments and images which belong only to the teller (De Laurentis, 2020, 2021) yields the true originality of the story. Therefore, the autobiographical character of narrative is not only an expression of teacher's identity but also a functional part of its own configuration (De Laurentis, 2021) which sets ground on oneness-narrative knowledge and teacher becoming (Barkhuizen, 2011).

The natural history of *all* this becoming towards my own definition of corporal dimension as knowledge-other

Teaching English, sometimes, implies much more than a mere collection of pedagogical activities to encourage language-skill development, particularly, when teaching in vulnerable areas of Mar del Plata. Such experience became a complex chapter of my own past teaching history and professional biography in which I was definitely challenged to find out ways-others to teach and motivate my students. The road took me to a *corporal dimension* in the classroom which combines English teaching and embodied-ways of teaching the language in the shape of artistic projects which would de-dramatize the mandatoriness of learning English for my students. At the heart of my English class would lie pronunciation in English singing, oral skills in drama activities, lyrics/song/script writing, and other possible weaving which involves the corporal dimension of my students, and me (and other colleagues) in an phenomenic didactic architecture (Trueba, 2020).

That professional challenge of bringing art into the English class as a hook for my students would definitely *not* rest on what I learned at university, seeing that I needed to dive into my own personal baggage of experiences in drama and mime schools, dancing and artistics gymnastics lessons. Those learning instances, which I name *knowledge-others*, were developed throughout my shadow education (Bray, 1999), that is in non-curricular contexts throughout my life. I found in those skills, strategies and talents a box of rich tools which would help me succeed in my final goal: teaching English to a group of teens who disliked English and resisted listening/speaking the language.

Bringing life to this narrative inquiry: looking for participants to give them voice for first-person retelling at the border of the English (EIL) curriculum

When I started to carry out the first stage of this research, I needed to define the corpus of participants. In that way, after my PhD Directoress's suggestion, I would include graduate English teachers but also advanced students of ETE with current teaching experience. The first group of surveyees collected a total of fifteen people, from which, thirteen were selected as they accomplish two main aspects of this study: current teaching experience and some approximation of instances of corporal dimension in their class dynamics. This section intends to share some excerpts of those surveys which would aid us to choose our potential interviewees.

Most of the English teachers who were queried claimed to have between one and more than twenty years of teaching seniority. The largest group comprised 53.9% of teachers

who have been working for between one and ten years. A second group of (23.1 %) affirmed to have between eleven and fifteen years of teaching experience. A third group (23% of the participants) possess a sixteen to more than twenty year-career. These teachers would answer a four-question-survey which aims at narrating their past/present teaching experiences.

Question: Which activities do you most frequently use in your class? How effective is it?
Question: Which activities do you and your students enjoy the most?

Activities which involve our body during the learning process, especially with small kids, songs with gestures, action bingos, peer-surveys in which students need to move around. (D)

We learned a song (...) in the Past (...) we debated about toxic relationships and genre violence. From this interaction, a girl commented on a partner who was aggressive with her boyfriend. She (the aggressor) said that she did it as a joke, but the first girl accused her of leaving some black stains on him. To summarize, I always merge the linguistic topic with ESI. (Lu)

Me and my students enjoy making artistic projects a lot in which they can experience the second language (short films, photographic exhibits accompanied with poetry, theater plays, audiobooks, among others). (V)

Question: Have you ever had an extracurricular experience which you believe collaborate in your teaching practice? Which one?

I am finishing my third year at a Drama School (...) This has given me many corporal as well as mental strategies, which I realize are beneficial for teaching: improvisation, voice projection, corporal expression, etc. (N)

When I started teaching (I also experience that sometimes when I start a new job or similar), I remember feeling something similar to singing live: previous nervousness, but I enjoyed and felt satisfied during and after the class. (....) Music is part of me and my life, so I believe that, in one way or another, makes me the teacher I am. (M)

Question: Which other strategies/activities/practices would you consider important for your class design?

The artistic and corporal practices I mentioned before are woven with my life as student, woman, mother, friend, teacher, researcher…I believe that all our living experience is put into the game of class-designing and teaching. (P)

In 2016, I started taking clown classes which I think gave me more perspective. I feel comfortable when improvising and I am on alert to what happens in my class to be more flexible to make changes. (...) (Mi)

I consider that any social experience, as well as any cultural consumption, can provide with resources to design, carry out and adapt (before, during or even after) our classes. (L)

(...) My instruction during my childhood and teenage years in non-formal drama workshops gave me the possibility to add an extra dimension to my English classes, since through drama games I could help my adult students with the self-imposed pressure to produce perfect language and instead help them enjoy using the language for interaction. (C)

Final Comments (…to be continued)

This autobiographical narrative inquiry has its root in the history of my own professional teaching life marked by difficult challenges and a strong teaching vocation. Remembering all that experience in this study not only brings me joy about the positive results of including a corporal dimension to my English class, but it also fosters a sequel work which strives for collaborating with some information about ETE in our Modern Language Department at the School of Humanities (UNMdP). We are not that ambitious to believe that this research work would make a revolution, but at least we point at reflecting about the breach which we sometimes (un)intentionally build between university education and real teaching spaces.

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ESP in a hybrid context

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In these turbulent times of changes, it is almost impossible to avoid technology in teaching. The traditional model of in-person teaching is being complemented by hybrid education, offering new avenues for learning, especially in remote and underserved regions. The program *La UNLPam en el Territorio* has been implemented since 2020 to promote access to higher education in all towns of the province of La Pampa that do not have university facilities and to expand cultural, scientific and outreach activities to the territory. In these extended abstract, we will develop the concepts of hybrid teaching, territory and ESP. Besides, we are going to share our experience in the subject *III Nivel de Idioma: Inglés* from the School of Human Sciences of the National University of La Pampa (UNLPam, for its acronym in Spanish).

Hybrid Teaching

Hybrid teaching and learning refers to an educational approach that combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning components (UNESCO, 2024). This model results very beneficial for offering accessibility to higher education in diverse geographical territories, thus enhancing inclusivity. Through digital technologies and online platforms, educators can deliver high-quality education to remote areas meeting with students in a different way. Though there is no face-to-face exchange, synchronous classes facilitate real-time interaction and engagement among students and instructors, fostering collaborative learning experiences.

Territory

In the case of *La UNLPam en el Territorio*, "territory" refers to the objective of extending educational services to areas or regions in La Pampa where the university does not have any facilities. Among all the challenges that these territories face is the limited access to higher education institutions, which can hinder socio-economic development and cultural enrichment. UNLPam addresses these challenges by setting up five satellite centers and making use of hybrid teaching methods, aiming to democratize access to education and

fostering academic, cultural, and scientific engagement. Through this expansive outreach, UNLPam strengthens the university's connection with local communities, acting as a catalyst to regional development and cultural enrichment.

ESP

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a specialized branch of English language teaching that delivers courses tailor-made to meet the language needs of students pursuing specific disciplines or professions, ensuring that language instruction is relevant and applicable to their future careers. In the context of globalization, English has emerged as a requirement for professional development and success. In this context, the School of Human Sciences at UNLPam mandates undergraduate students to take three levels of a foreign language course (English or French). In our institution, ESP courses are designed to meet the linguistic needs of students in various fields of study (Geography, History, Spanish Language and Literature, and Social Communication), ensuring that language instruction is catered to their academic and career objectives.

III Nivel de Idioma: Inglés

III Nivel de Idioma: Inglés is a quarterly on-site subject that has a four-hour class load per week. Students of the aforementioned areas can take this course at any time during their course of studies. It is not mandatory to pass the previous levels (Level I and Level II). Within ESP, we focus on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) due to the variety of disciplines. The main objective of this subject is for students to be able to read and understand four different types of genres: abstract, research article, literary review and biography. In this subject, we understand genre as proposed by the Systemic Functional Linguistics school: a process oriented to an end with a specific communicative function that follows a series of established steps recognized by a discourse community (Halliday, 1994).
In this experience we explore how hybrid teaching methodologies can be effectively applied to EAP, addressing both the pedagogical challenges and opportunities presented by online and face-to-face instruction modalities.

At the beginning of the course, we designed an eight-question survey asking students about their background in relation to the English language and academic history. The results showed that 63% of students have studied English before and that they did not take any of the previous levels of English. Although the majority informed that they are not given any material to read in English, most of them recognized that English is necessary for their

course of studies. As regards the necessary skills, reading comprehension was signaled as the most important one and almost all of them considered it a helpful tool for their careers.
Every class, we started our on-site lesson by connecting our devices to Zoom and our Moodle classroom. The classroom was equipped with WiFi connection, a TVset and a Poly Studio video bar. Only students from *La UNLPam en el territorio* were allowed to join online and they were required to attend in-person to mid-terms and practice papers dates. All the materials were available in the virtual classroom. Presentations and videos were shared simultaneously to all students, online and on-site. If the whiteboard was used, we would then send a picture to remote students. In the case of group work, remote students joined break-out rooms.

Towards the end of the course, we delivered an eleven-question survey in which students assessed the course. 93% of the students stated that what they learned in the subject is beneficial for them. 71.4% of students considered the topics and the activities interesting and they affirmed that they could read a paper of their areas without any guidance. 64.3% of them assessed the virtual classroom as very good. As regards the question related to the hybrid teaching-learning methodology, most of them emphasized that it was a good opportunity for students who do not live in Santa Rosa to have access to higher education, but they pointed as a drawback to the fact that they could not meet in-person.

Conclusion

By integrating hybrid teaching, territory and English for Specific Purposes, *III Nivel de Idioma: Inglés* at UNLPam intends to prepare graduates to navigate and thrive in a globally interconnected world. The adoption of hybrid teaching methods in ESP not only enhances flexibility and accessibility, but also optimizes learning outcomes by leveraging digital tools and resources. Finally, we leave the comment of one of the students who outlined that the integrative exam allowed him/her to clearly understand and integrate all the concepts dealt with in the course.

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[PÁGINA INTENCIONALMENTE EN BLANCO]

Eje 4: Nuevas dimensiones en la enseñanza del inglés

Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the English classroom: Masculinities

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Introduction

The National Law 26.150, passed in 2006 in Argentina, established the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) across all educational levels and institutions in the country. It articulates the biological, psychological, social, affective and ethical aspects of sexuality beyond a biologicist and moralizing perspective and is structured around different guiding principles such as recognizing the gender perspective, respecting diversity, valuing affectivity, exercising students' rights and promoting their well-being (Morgade, 2022). However, even though CSE is legislated, it is still not present in the curriculum of many institutions. In this context, a group of teachers and students of the English Teacher Education Program (ETEP) at the National University of Mar del Plata participated in an extension project called "ESI en la 79" at a state secondary school in the city. The project was originally presented by teachers who work in the Teacher Education Area of the ETEP and some in-service teachers and students collaborated in the implementation of it. In the case of this presentation, the aim is to socialize the experience of a didactic proposal focused on hegemonic masculinities that stemmed from that project.

Masculinities

Adopting a gender perspective implies, among many other things, reflecting upon the binary roles that have been established in society and reconceptualizing the patriarchal and heterosexist views imprinted in our bodies and identities. As for the category of gender, it is a broad and polysemic term which can be thought of as a form of organization of social practice (Connell, 1997) and so, it is paramount to address it, not as an isolated phenomenon, but as a part of a bigger structure. In this line of thought, our worlds, bodies, practices and identities have been shaped in relation to gender instilling into our value and belief system. Therefore, there have been different conceptions historically and culturally associated with

the constructions of masculinities and femininities. Some of the usual traits attached to cisgender men are related to the presumption of heterosexuality, the use of physical strength to show dominance, the hiding of feelings, among many others. This *one* and *only* way of being 'a man' that is learned through the process of socialization and reproduced in different life spheres exalts one model: the model of hegemonic masculinity that deeply affects their identity constructions, the activities they do, the way in which they forged relationships, just to mention a few (De Stéfano Barbero, 2017).

As regards this didactic proposal, we decided to work on this topic after our first intervention in the class given the anonymous messages that students had given us and our observation of the predominance of the model of hegemonic masculinity in the class.

Context

The first part of the project involved the same awareness-raising activities in all the secondary school courses with the aim of displaying the five axes of the CSE Program to learn about each group, their interests and needs in relation to their sexuality. The second part focused on a specific theme, which was determined by students' questions and our pedagogical criterion. One of the groups belonged to the first year and was formed by 14 students, among which only two were girls. The other group belonged to the third year and was formed by male students from different ages.

After analyzing our experience with the two groups we were assigned, we decided to carry out a workshop on the theme of Masculinities. We believed that we could invite these two groups of teenagers to reflect upon how their idea of 'being a man' is constructed and how we can challenge gender stereotypes and chauvinist values to inhabit our relations in a more diverse and respectful manner. With this objective in mind and the information that the teachers of each course provided as regards their level of proficiency, we designed a didactic sequence on Masculinities that we describe below.

Workshop on Masculinities

Our objective as teachers was to work with the students in identifying the representations of masculinity that affect us, with the aim of denaturalizing them and making way for the construction of healthier, more egalitarian and genuine bonds. In addition, we wanted to facilitate, in social groups and collectives, the knowledge or recognition of their social reality and their ways of acting and developing within it. As for what we expected the students to learn, we wanted them to distinguish hegemonic masculinity from

non-hegemonic masculinity; to reflect on how meanings about what it means to be a *man* in our society are transmitted and reproduced; to analyze an advertisement based on vocabulary related to ways of being and acting in the world and, finally, to create a poster showing phrases that hurt and phrases that heal in the construction of their subjectivities.

The sequence of activities

1st moment: "A boy is...?"

We first presented students with a poster on the board, which was the silhouette of a man inside a circle on which we will paste the adjectives that are usually used to describe boys. We gave each student a set of two slips of paper with adjectives in English to reflect on what they usually think a male is (strong, aggressive, competitive, heterosexual, tough, homophobic, sensitive, caring, delicate, tidy, helpful, shy, loud, respectful). If they thought the adjective described "males", they pasted it inside the circle on the poster, and if not, outside. They could use a translator/dictionary for those words that are not so transparent in Spanish.

After everyone had pasted the slips of paper, we asked them to circle the adjective or adjectives that identify them on a worksheet we prepared for this class (see Appendix 2). In the case of the students, which adjective(s) they considered characterized/defined their representations of men. Next, a space for discussion was proposed around the following questions:

> *Which words and phrases were repeated the most?*
> *Why do they think this happened?*
> *What aspects of male identity are most used to define masculinity?*
> *In what way, do you think, are these meanings about what it means to be male in our society transmitted and taught?*

2nd moment: a class survey

We asked students to answer some questions anonymously in a digital survey that was also offered in print for the ones who could not access from their phone or laptop devices. Once they finished, we read the results, wrote the statistics on the board and problematized the ideas that arose in relation to the expected and non-expected actions from 'a boy' (See Appendix 1).

3rd moment: listening and watching an advertisement

We carried out a series of pre-watching activities in order to ease students' comprehension of a Gillette advertisement that problematized masculinity stereotypes by showing violent scenes, bullies, discrimination and abuse. Then, we showed them the first part of the video and asked them to mention which adjectives used in Activity 1 they would use to describe the men and boys in the ad. After that, we asked students to order the events chronologically as shown in the video and discuss some questions connected to the role of men and women in the ad; what examples of masculinity seem most serious to them and how can these behaviors be modified as seen in Activity 3 of the worksheet. Before watching the second part of the ad, we proposed them to listen to the phrases that men said in order to take action and intervene in harmful or violent situations. They were expected to listen carefully and identify the phrases that actually appeared in the short film. Finally, we analyzed the advertisement from a discourse perspective and reflected upon its audience, purpose and impact.

Last (although unfinished) moment: a collective poster

We had planned to invite students to create a poster to communicate their ideas in relation to the topics discussed, by asking them to answer: *What words do you not want to hear? What words would you like to hear? What words heal your pain?* Unfortunately, we did not have enough time so we moved into the round-up activity in which students were asked to write anonymous messages telling us how they had felt during the meeting and any other idea they needed to share with us.

Conclusions

In sum, this proposal tried to foster the denaturalization and reflection of the hegemonic model of masculinity so as to enable a resignification of the concept that, in turn, may lead towards healthier and egalitarian bonds which value the multiplicity of masculinities. This enriching experience has highlighted the relevance of CSE in the classroom and it has triggered conversations and reflections among us.

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Appendix 1 - Survey

This is a survey. These are personal and private questions. Your answers will be ANONYMOUS.

1. Do you help at home?
Always
Sometimes
Never

2. Do you hit other boys?
Always
Sometimes
Never

3. Do you cry in front of other people?
Always
Sometimes
Never

4. Do you suffer verbal abuse?
Always
Sometimes
Never

5. Do you suffer physical abuse?
Always
Sometimes
Never

6. Do you reject gay people?
Always
Sometimes
Never

7. Do you express love to other people?
Always
Sometimes
Never

Appendix 2 - Worksheet for students

Escuela Secundaria Nº 79 + Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata

Actividad de extensión *ESI en la clase de inglés*

MASCULINITIES

1) **Circle the adjectives that you think best describe boys.**

STRONG AGGRESSIVE COMPETITIVE HETEROSEXUAL
TOUGH HOMOPHOBIC SENSITIVE CARING DELICATE
TIDY HELPFUL SHY LOUD RESPECTFUL

YO
U

2) **Survey**

3) **Watch Gillette's commercial called *'We believe: the best men can be'* (Part 1)**

a) ¿Qué adjetivos usados en la actividad 1 usarían para describir a estos hombres y niños?

b) ¿Reconocen alguna de las situaciones que vieron en la publicidad?

c) ¿Había mujeres? ¿Qué estaban haciendo? ¿Qué rol tenían?

3) Watch the commercial again and number the events in chronological order

- A line of men are repeating the mantra "boys will be boys".
- A man is touching a woman's butt on TV.
- A rapper is dancing with young women in bikinis.
- A mother is comforting her son who is called "a freak", "a sissy", and told "you're such a loser", "everybody hates you".
- A boss is underestimating a female worker.
- Two boys are fighting.
- Some boys are bullying another boy.

4) Watch Part 2 and TICK ☑ the phrases you hear.

- Come on!
- To say the right thing!
- Stop!
- Bro! Not cool. Not cool.
- Don't punch your friend.
- To act the right way!
- I'm strong.
- The boys bullying today will be the men of tomorrow.
- We are taking action.

Why should we focus on the awareness of socio-affective relationships in the teaching and learning of an other language?

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This work aims to account for a pedagogical proposal carried out in *Didáctica y Currículum*, a course from the English Teacher Education Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata. This subject is placed in the third year of the program, when the students are embarking on their journey as future teachers. Students are required to design and teach two lessons for primary school or private institutes, and, at this point of the program, they immerse more on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) by putting into practice what they have worked with in their own lessons. With the purpose of making prospective teachers aware of the importance of the CSE law, it is essential to work thoroughly on its components. This proposal was designed to focus on one of its axes called "value affectivity," which refers to feelings, emotions, and values and their importance in avoiding coercion and infringing upon a person's rights (Brun & Cossu, 2021). It is crucial to encourage the use of critical thinking when working with the awareness of emotions and socio-affective relationships during their first steps as pre-service teachers. Through the problematization of the Social and Emotional Learning Framework, students had the opportunity to participate in an enriching debate on the perception of feelings, emotions, and values, and on the identification of discrepancies of this method in the teaching and learning of *an other* language.

The lesson was composed of interconnected stages during which students were invited to reflect upon concepts, their own learning experiences and the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Framework. The class began with a group discussion of the word *affectivity*, where students had to think about elements, actions, emotions and/or activities that came to their minds when hearing this concept. They were then invited to write on a piece of paper about moments they remembered where they had felt affected in a class (it did not necessarily have to be a language class). They could include dynamics, materials, emotions, feelings, actions and/or elements that were present in that lesson.

After sharing some of their experiences, students dealt with the SEL framework. They began by working with the definition of Social-Emotional Learning. First, I showed

the name of the framework, so that they could analyze what it could consist of, based on the title, or share if they had already heard of it. Then, I shared the definition of SEL according to CASEL (2022). Once the topic was introduced, the SEL framework with its components were presented to them. First, they analyzed what each element of the framework might entail and then, they worked with each competency with its respective definitions. To do this, the students were asked to read each section which contained some underlined words to focus their attention on the messages conveyed by these concepts. The discussion led to an interesting debate about the efficientist perspective of the SEL framework, which seems to focus mainly on the importance of mental health for successful academic performance, rather than on the ways in which we can inhabit the classroom that truly value affectivity. Thus, it can be said that this framework is not in line with the integral perspective of sexuality. At the end of the discussion, I invited them to reflect on the reason why they had to work with the SEL framework in the first stages of the lesson. This was a powerful instance to work the decolonial perspective of teaching English as *lengua otra* (Baum, 2021) or an other language in the classroom, since students discovered how this framework was perpetuating a modern perspective on the way we, teachers and students, have to be functional to the system to keep consistent academic excellence as the main goal in the classroom, and disregard a genuine focus on affectivity. This allowed us to listen to different ideas regarding the conception of affectivity in the classroom and how it can be viewed by the teachers, institutions, students, and families.

Students were then invited to reflect on the presence of affectivity in the curriculum in Argentina. To do this, they were shown what *Ley Nacional* N° 26.150 establishes and they worked with Article 1 of the law. First, they were invited to read the article and then reflect on their previous ideas about what it consists of. Then, students worked with the dimensions present in Article 1, and, in groups, they read the title of each axis of the law and matched them with their corresponding definitions. After that, they shared their choices with the whole class. Taking into account that the focus of this lesson was affectivity, the following stages were focused on one of the axes of CSE, which is *Value affectivity*. To begin the discussion of it, I shared a quote from a text: “The socioemotional dimension of instruction and learning applies both to the types of experiences we provide for the students and to the classroom atmosphere we create” (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2016, p. 12). This text is part of the required bibliography of *Didáctica y Currículum*, and when I first came across this sentence I thought it would be interesting to practice critical reading. Even though these authors provide extremely useful guidelines and share valuable experiences that can help teachers

and pre-service teachers understand the importance of students' age in their learning experiences, they also seem to present some underlying ideas that are connected to SEL. The idea that "we [teachers] create" the atmosphere of the classroom was the focus of discussion, since this quote worked as a trigger to think about how we inhabit the classroom and what beliefs some theories tend to reproduce as regards our way of doing so. This debate was also intended to prepare students for the last part of the class.

During the final stage of the lesson, students were invited to work on the characteristics of the different groups in the micro-teaching experiences. To do this, they first completed a concept map with the characteristics of each group based on pages 19-26 of the text "The Learner: Setting the Stage for Language" (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2016). In groups, students focused on a specific age group and wrote down notes related to characteristics such as dynamics, emotions, interests, and other elements. Then, these were written on a concept map on the board so that everyone could read it. This mind map later served as a tool to compare what the authors shared as regards age groups and what pre-services teachers identified in their own groups throughout their micro-teaching experiences. The discussion that followed this task allowed students to discuss how prospective teachers and their students inhabit the classroom, with a focus on affectivity. In this lesson, by critically examining the SEL Framework and literature of the course, and reading the CSE law in-depth, students participated in a thorough discussion about how affectivity is present in all areas in the teaching and learning of an other language.

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Other teaching practices. De-colonial intimacy in the English Teaching Education Program

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We understand coloniality as a complex historical phenomenon that operates through hierarchies, whether racial, territorial, and/or epistemic, that allow for the reproduction of the dominant ideology. Thus, knowledge, experiences, and ways of life are interpreted in the light of naturalized subordination structures that are shaped by the voice of those who hold power in political, economic, or socio-cultural terms and on different scales, whether national, regional, or local. These hierarchies exert different degrees of domination, both potential and real, by influencing the actions of others. It is in this context that de-colonial pedagogies emerge as tools for liberation and transformation of realities. According to Cabaluz-Ducasse (2018), they are characterized by the intrinsically ethical, political, and ideological nature of education; the need to build popular education *with* and *from* marginalized people (Walsh, 2009); the understanding of education a process of raising awareness of dehumanizing factors in culture; genuine recognition of subalternized knowledge; the conviction that pedagogical praxis should develop and empower all human faculties; and recognition of the colonial matrix of power (Quijano, 2000) present in pedagogy.

For many years, the English Teaching Education Program at the National University of Mar del Plata (UNMdP) has exhibited specific characteristics that, in our understanding, originate from various factors, predominantly influenced by coloniality: the language itself, textbooks that mostly come from Europe, and the proliferation of scientific articles related to the teaching of English as a second language or foreign language, which in many cases came from research carried out in Europe or in the United States and/or Canada. As teachers of English, we have often felt uncomfortable with the textbooks that arrived in our country because we perceived them as distant from our reality as they described families, customs, and ways of life that were foreign to us and to our students. Many were the moments when,

in our classrooms, we created artificial and fictional scenarios simply because the textbook proposed them. However, despite the fact that in the English Teaching Program we continued to look north, faced with the epistemological discomfort that these practices presented to us, we began to re-think our didactic proposals from a more critical and situated place, conceived from the Global South or *Sur Global* (De Sousa Santos, 2006). We began to read texts related to de-colonial pedagogies and we realized that there was something that *did not convince us* with the contents proposed in the Teaching Plans, in the selected bibliography, and much less in the practices themselves. We perceived an epistemological violence that we were not willing to let persist in our classrooms.

We also started to notice that old traditions needed to be de-constructed in order to be re-constructed from a critical and transformative perspective. Thus, we began to immerse ourselves in the de-colonial turn (*Giro De-colonial*) that, in direct opposition to hegemonic Eurocentric models, allowed us to make visible and possible multiple interpretations of knowledge with diverse ways of being and inhabiting the world. In other words, de-colonial pedagogies allowed us to question ourselves in order to displace and subvert concepts and practices installed from colonial heritage.

Our experiences within *Residencia Docente II* of the English Teacher Education Program at UNMdP encouraged us not only to de-construct conceptual rituals and traditions to produce knowledge but also to re-think teacher professional development to foster transformative action. We have always been aware of the colonial nature of the English language and it is from this place that we share the idea of classrooms as bastions of resistance and the highly significant dimension of the political in the objectives and contents that we propose and that are certainly fields of forces where the struggle and restitution of what modernity has nullified are present. In this line, we have started a journey from point zero in which we decided to incorporate a de-colonial perspective into the teaching practices of the English Teacher Education Program at UNMdP. The group of students who took *Residencia Docente II* in 2023, the last subject in the Teacher Education area, had little information about de-colonial approaches to English language teaching. Thus, we ventured timidly, and, after presenting a theoretical corpus to support our decision, we asked the group of students to design their didactic sequences with a de-colonial and intercultural approach.

At first, we noticed that they were enthusiastic but also overwhelmed by the proposal. It took us several weeks to find a way for this approach to be present in English classrooms. After an intense process of accompaniment and collaborative work between the

students and the team of tutors, practitioners managed to design transformative and emancipatory didactic sequences. From there, we were deeply moved by the need to understand the pedagogical experiences and personal experiences of this group of residents of the English Teacher Education Program the Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata based on the development of didactic sequences with a de-colonial sense in their pre-professional practices.

Through qualitative inquiry, mainly consisting of an in-depth analysis of written narratives drawn from auto-ethnographic reflections and a focused interview, we began to comprehend the process of reflection and sensitivity practitioners go through when designing and implementing didactic sequences with a de-colonial perspective. During the recursive process of reading and analyzing the field texts, we managed to recover different dimensions that emerged: the de-construction of imperialism in teaching practices and the new challenges that emerge from the incorporation of de-colonial perspectives in English classes. As regards the first one, we delved into the initial feelings, perceptions, and sensations, as well as the hegemonic narratives in the teaching and learning of English. Considering the second dimension, we explored the transformative perspectives and approaches in English language teaching and the ways in which students navigate their education. The journey we have taken so far helps us to understand how de-colonial pedagogies make possible the transformation of the teaching-being knowledge (*saber-ser docente*) of those who carry out their practices, while also enabling an intimate connection with their personal experiences. Through the incorporation of more inclusive, situated, and meaningful approaches that allowed us to abandon an imperialist path, the group of participants has found challenges that promote new perspectives, purposes, and meanings in their educational work. We hope that the account of their pedagogical and personal experiences invite educators of all kinds to free themselves from colonial epistemes that still silence subjectivities of peoples, groups, and classes that have been ignored, oppressed, and excluded by eurocentric modernity.

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Resistances and *other* ways of *being* teachers in the English Teaching Education Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (UNMdP)

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This presentation is framed within the gestation of a doctoral thesis project part of the PhD Program of Social Sciences at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (UNMdP) which is centered around the dis-habituations of identity configurations on the English Teaching Education Program (ETEP) at UNMdP. The initial ideas of the project stem from my own dis-orientations (Ahmed, 2019a) and discomforts related to the stereotypes of *la teacher* (the English she-teacher)[1] Being *tagged* has always made me uncomfortable but, at the same time, it challenged me to see myself from a less essentialist perspective. However, in recent years, graduates of this program have been dis-habituated (Ahmed, 2019) from the traditional stereotypes of the English teacher. From this standpoint, some of the first questions that arose were: What are the origins of those stereotypes? Where does the tendency towards the feminization of the profession come from? What are the forces that operate behind those constructions? Where do the *resistances* to that stereotype come from? It is from this discomfort that we are interested in inquiring into the construction of the English teacher profile to identify the socially ingrained habituations (Ahmed, 2019b) of the profession to also understand how recent graduates have been distancing themselves from those preconceptions. In this light, this presentation aims at sharing some of the initial threads of the project and to briefly describe it.

The eurocentric and modern/colonial (Lander, 2001; Quijano, 2000) traditions in English Teacher Education added to the feminization of teaching in general (Davini, 1997) have been historically depositing intentions on what English teachers should know and how they should be. As for the feminization of the profession, Harding (1996) claims that our lives in society are *gendered,* having symbolic and real effects on people's lives. This means that our worlds, bodies, practices and identities have been shaped in relation to gender. It is paramount to reflect on how teaching has been historically feminized, or in Harding's words *gendered.* As far as Argentina is concerned, this process started with the conformation of the educational system in the country (Davini, 1997) and was initially thought of as an extension of the role that women played in the domestic sphere. Graciela Morgade (2019) also states

that teaching as a feminized job emerged as a place of personal and economic fulfillment**.** Just as teaching has been gendered (Harding, 1996), other programs have been through a similar process like the English Teacher Education Program which is a course of study that has been historically chosen by women[2]. Thus, gender stereotypes and the sexual division of labor set expectations on people linking certain professions to the representations of 'male' and 'female' and, in this way, certain social images have been constructed around different professions.

The traditions on English teacher education also have a say in the identity configurations of people who graduate. The field of English Language Teaching (ELT) has been traditionally influenced by a technicist view of the language tinged with a modern/colonial bias (Lander, 2001; Quijano, 2000) that depoliticized language. Within this field, these paradigms have been mostly technical, adopting a monolithic, static and neutral view on the language with a grammatical-descriptive anchoring (Baum, 2022). Moreover, the apparent *universality* of the language suggests certain neutrality presuming that its teaching can be standardized anywhere in the world. What this aspect reveals is that the teaching aspect of the language along with all the social, cultural, political senses around it has usually been forgotten or left aside (Siderac, 2021). All of these notions have had its resonances in the identity configurations of those who graduate from the ETEP. Not only the biases present in the field of ELT but also the curriculum and course programs, as *official narratives* (Yedaide, 2022), have been embedding intentions and shaping the profile of the graduates of the program (Castelazo Ochoa en Matus et al, 2023) by delineating certain practices that forge ways of *being*.

However, in recent years, several paradigmatic changes have been taking place not only in the field of ELT but in the students and graduates of the program who have been dis-habituated (Ahmed, 2019b) from the traditional image of the English teacher. When referring to habituations, Sara Ahmed goes back to Aristotle, Pierre Bordieu and Judith Butler to enlarge on this concept which refers to a "repeated doing of acts which have a similar or common quality (Smith 1998, ix in Ahmed, 2019b). With the echoes of this term, Ahmed introduces the notion of *orientations* to refer to the way in which we inhabit spaces, to whom and how we orientate. Hence, these orientations configure our attention to different objects, lifestyles, people, aspirations, among other things. It is intrinsically related to the notion of familiarity as it is what is given "and which in being given 'gives' the body the capacity to be orientated in this way or in that" (p.7). Following this line of thought, the moments of disorientation are crucial to recognize that we *are* oriented, otherwise we would

never realize that we are or that we have been oriented throughout our lives. Going back to the origins of the study, we are interested in understanding the processes of dis-orientations (Ahmed, 2019a) that have been taking place among graduates of the program based on the participants' own feelings and experiences from a qualitative and an auto-biographical narrative approach.

The project from which this presentation is derived is framed in a qualitative, auto-biographical narrative perspective, understanding it in its ethical, political, and aesthetic dimensions (Arfuch, 2008) to recover the human essence and conceive it as a way of constructing meaning in the world. As Daniel Suárez (2021) points out, narrative, experience, and identity are hermeneutically linked to make sense of our experiences and configure our sense of reality. The experiences we have, as they generate movement or affect us, are part of the *biographization* (Delory-Momberger, 2014) we constantly perform, not only to encounter our own lives but also to make ourselves recognized by others. Under these epistemic-political lenses, our own lives are affected and questioned by other lives, and our own vital condition mutates and dislocates (Porta, Aguirre, and Ramallo, 2023).

The experiences of discomforts and dis-orientations can have the ability to dislocate and to queerize the given spaces (Pastor García, 2023). Part of the spirit of this research study is to make room for the alternative and rebel narratives inside the English Teacher Education Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata which may, in turn, open up a breach to map out ways *others* of being teachers.

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Notes

[1]The female pronoun ‘she’ is used deliberately since one of the stereotypes of the profession is related to its feminization.

[2]We do acknowledge the problematic nature and the historical disputes around the term ‘women’.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the English classroom: respect for diversity

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Si el respeto viene del latín volver a mirar, te pido eso, que me vuelvas a mirar.
(Gudiño, 2021, p. 61).

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is an approach to education that contributes to social justice and equity by fostering critical thinking, empathy, and respect for diversity. This presentation purports to share a didactic proposal in the context of an extension project aimed at accompanying the implementation of CSE at a secondary school in Mar del Plata. This didactic sequence on diversity was designed after an introductory workshop aimed to establish rapport with the students in which a mailbox was implemented as a pedagogic device so that they could leave anonymous messages expressing their main concerns in relation to the five axes of CSE: acknowledge gender perspective, take care of the body, value affectivity, respect diversity, and exercise our rights. This laid the foundations for a second stage in which the extension team designed a pedagogic proposal that promoted the collective construction of knowledge based on the problematization of the students' own experiences.

The purpose of the pedagogic intervention was to work together with the students to identify and denaturalize the prejudices that affect us, with the aim of making the discrimination they generate visible and paving the way for the construction of healthier and genuine relationships weaving solidarity networks among peers. The extension team adapted materials from the proposals for the secondary school classroom published by the Ministry of Education of Argentina and made use of multimodal texts as triggers for discussion and reflection.

First moment: thinking about implicit bias. In order to get started, the students were asked to analyze a cartoon by artist Garry Trudeau titled Street Calculus. The cartoon depicts two men who are about to pass each other on a sidewalk in a residential neighbourhood in the evening. The thought bubbles show a list of risk factors and a list of mitigating factors both men mentally tick while assessing the risk of a possible interaction. The situation pictures a process we all go through when we act on the basis of a person's age, appearance, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, education, class, and so on, and evidences that we all have preconceived notions even when we are not aware of them. Second moment: as the reflection on implicit bias deepened, the students were presented with three crucial concepts for understanding the issues raised: stereotype (idea) , prejudice (feeling) and discrimination (action). After dealing with the definitions, further questions were posed in order to personalize the theme: the students were asked to provide examples, to talk about the ways in which discrimination is manifested and instances in which they had (been) discriminated against. Next, they watched the short film The labels we carry by Beecher Reuning and analyzed the video based on the three concepts they had worked on. From an intersectionality perspective, the short shows the impact of labels on a person's construction of identity and how the complexity and uniqueness of each individual is undermined by stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination. This emotionally powerful film was meant to be a turning point in the didactic sequence not only because the situations depicted are relatable but because the end discloses a hopeful message, a way out of the maze: Love can make negative labels fall off. In the same vein, embracing diversity requires a social endeavour in favour of respecting and valuing individual differences, and challenging stereotypes and bias in order to develop a nuanced understanding of different identities. Third moment: problematization. In groups of four, the students worked on different testimonies of adolescents/young people who had experienced situations of discrimination. The narratives were adapted from the materials designed by the Ministry of Education of Argentina and other testimonies were selected on the basis of the messages the students had left in the mailbox device during the first workshop. Among these testimonies, the emphasis was placed on real life stories the students could find in social media such as the one by David Gudiño, a Wichi-Guarani actor and playwright, who is Unicef ambassador for the campaign #AlHaterNiCabida aimed to eradicate discourses of hate.

The students analyzed the testimonies identifying prejudices and forms of discrimination at play.

Each group took notes on the following categories of analysis:

a. discrimination type (sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, etc.);

b. feelings (how the victims felt)

c. discriminatory attitudes

d. the intervention of peers, friends, family and teachers in situations of discrimination.

This led to a whole class discussion in which the students reflected on the need to identify and highlight all forms of discrimination in order to fight against them.

Fifth moment: the students created a poster with healing labels which provided sensitive, respectful and non-discriminatory messages.

Closure: the mailbox device was used for the students to answer a survey evaluating the didactic proposal.

On a final note, the extension activity successfully achieved its primary objectives. The materials and activities were designed to foster active participation which in turn empowered students to voice their opinions and feelings confidently. This environment of open expression was crucial in helping the students feel heard and valued.

Moreover, the exposure to diverse perspectives played a significant role in enhancing critical thinking. By analyzing various viewpoints, students were able to challenge and dismantle their own biases. This process contributed to the development of empathy and a deeper understanding of others's experiences and viewpoints.

However, while the benefits of implementing CSE in the classroom are evident, there are several points that need further clarification. Firstly, the urgency of integrating CSE across the entire curriculum could not be overstated. CSE should not be confined to isolated activities; rather, it should be consistently woven into the fabric of the overall pedagogic-didactic approach.

Lastly, the didactic sequence we presented is not intended to serve as a model for a pedagogic intervention. Instead, it aims to bring into consideration a concrete experience and reflect upon it.

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Why take Política Educativa during a Teacher Education Program?

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Students starting their courses during 2024 at the English Teachers' Education Program in *Facultad de Humanidades* at UNMDP will have the opportunity to choose optional courses not available until now. In this respect, this new course of studies presents a whole new epistemological perspective of the teaching of English and of teachers as professionals in Education (Granados Beltran, 2022). According to the new plan the site of teachers' practices is always contingent and problematic, embedded in a socio-historical context in permanent flux (*Facultad de Humanidades*, 2020). Therefore, the demand for reflexive professionals (Schön 1992, 1998) with a complex epistemic approach (Morin, 2023) capable of forging critical answers within a post-human and post-anthropocentric world (Baridotti, 2013). Moreover, the plan calls for delving on the *glocal* character (Rifkin, 2010; Ortiz Boza, 2014) of the institutions that these professionals will inhabit (Zembylas, 2023). In this context, educating future English Teachers for the Argentine Educational System, a Global South (*Facultad de Humanidades*, 2020), a post-colonial (Hall, 1996; Santos, 2020), and decolonial site (Lander, 1993; Ramallo, 2017) posits a new and exciting challenge for the whole faculty.

As part of the new design, one of those courses is Política Educativa which aims at exploring educational politics and policies in the local and international context. The subject belongs to the Department of Educational Sciences and it has been taken since 2018 by students of *Profesorado* and *Licenciatura en Ciencias de la Educación* and *Ciencia Política*. It is our intention to support the decision taken by the designers of the new program by briefly presenting the organization, contents and objectives of the course and the tools the discipline provides for the praxis of future teachers as well as to the overall understanding of English Language Teaching in our context.

The course plan is presented around four axes which are developed in a recursive way throughout the semester. The first axis is related to educational politics as a research field. The unit provides an introduction to epistemological and methodological approaches to the study of these public policies (Mainardes, 2015) that will articulate the analysis proposed by the subject. It is our intention to introduce a complex view of policy cycles or arenas (Ball, 2016), where regulations of the system are negotiated, and to present key categories such as interpretation, translation and policy enactment (Ball, 2016; Beech & Meo, 2016) which challenge the traditional top-down approach (Roth Deubel, 2021) prevalent in the field. This perspective places teachers as mediators (Latour, 2021; Meo, Heras, Chervin, 2023) and protagonists in these political arenas and delves in the microsocial dimensions of the field (Marchetti & Aguirre, 2020) which provides the state with a human face (Aguirre, 2022).

The second axis introduces the students in the complex entanglement of politics, education and state (Filmus, 1999; Tente Fanfani, 2001). It focuses on the role of the latter as the main responsible in providing opportunities for citizens' exercise of their right to education. From this point of view, several tensions are explored: equality of positions versus equality of opportunities (Dubet, 2017), equality versus equity (Lopez, 2007), inclusion versus quality (Rinesi, 2016), restriction versus extension of rights (Redondo, 2011) including the different perspectives on social justice (Tedesco, 2012). Some alternative views are introduced in order to illuminate the multidimensional character these processes of exclusion/inclusion take in the field of education (Gentili, 2011; Gluz, 2016) and its connections to democracy and citinzenship (Swift, 2016; Puiggros, 2019 y Tenti Fanfani 2021).

The third axis is dedicated to the historical and normative dimensions of the Argentine educational system in the light of the previous discussions, profiting from its pedagogical potential (Ramallo, 2019). The aim of our proposal is to challenge the hegemonic chronological and normative approach to this topic by offering the students possibilities of reflecting on the processes of decentralization of the institutions' governance and of the progressive extension of rights in education and its consequential tensions (Filmus, 1999; Rivas, 2007; Felfeber y Gluz, 2020). Within this analysis we also present the structure of the formal mandatory system (Nosiglia y Trippano, 2007; Giovine y Martignone, 2010; Pinkas y Montes, 2020), university policies (Suasnabar, 2011; Marquina, 2018; Menghini y Walker, 2020), curricular policies (Connell, 1997; Feeney y Feldman, 2016; De Alba, 2020) and teachers' education policies (Davini, 1995; Dussel, 2020, Porta,

Marchetti, Aguirre & Ramallo, 2020) permeated by the categories examined in the previous axis. Finally, the fourth axis weaves the previous topics and areas of inquiry with the performance of other actors within the educational system (Ball, 2011) such as NGO (Castellini, 2019), international organizations (Moyano y Rodrigo, 2020), the private sector (Feldfeber, 2011) and social movements (Torres Carrillo, 2016) among others. This curricular site also calls for a new examination of dimensions such as evaluation (Rodríguez, Vior, Mas Rocha, 2018), quality (Tiana, 2009; Monarca, 2018) and the current commodification trend in education (Rodríguez, 2016; Filmus 2017).

Last but not least, the team in charge of teaching the course counts on the pedagogical strength that a transdisciplinary approach to the subject provides for the development of complex thinking abilities of our students. We also make constant efforts to inhabit a *didáctica en vivo* (Maggio, 2018), bringing to the classroom current news and debates related to education that inform political decisions. Even though topics and bibliography, despite our efforts for a permanent update, are not completely renovated course after course, we carefully choose those texts we trust will shed light over the present and help students understand the most recent events. Activities and evaluation also follow this processual and contemporary approach. As a token of this purpose, we can mention the analysis of the political proposals of the different candidates to the presidency in 2023 as final midterm, activity which was highly appraised by the students.

In summary, we trust that, by the end of the course, students will have acquired an overall understanding of the complex entanglement of politics, state and society which makes education a site of disputes and tensions and which teachers will have to deal with in their future practice. We also trust that within the new curricular design for English teachers' education, this understanding might empower them in their role as translators and therefore, agents in the enactment of educational policies.

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Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata extension project: Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the English classroom at EES N° 79

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Setting the context of the extension project

In the spirit of promoting an increasingly fair, egalitarian and inclusive society, the National Law 26,150 passed in 2006 establishes the right of all students in the national territory to receive comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) at all levels of education and modalities, either at state-run or private institutions. Undoubtedly, where the objectives of CSE are most clearly defined and guaranteed -at least at the legal/normative level- is in the Curricular Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education issued in 2018. This official document puts forth a mandatory common framework which defines the educational purposes, learning objectives, and teacher education strategies for the National CSE Program (CFE N° 340/18) in Argentina. It is based on five key dimensions: promoting health and well-being, valuing affectivity, ensuring gender equality, respecting diversity, and exercising our rights.

Despite the existing legislation and overt curricula, CSE faces limitations in its effective implementation: cultural resistance persists, especially in more conservative community segments, and access to didactic materials and proposals remains arduous. As a result, the application of the mentioned law is virtually absent from the curriculum in many educational institutions. In the case of teaching English as an other language, a major hindrance arises. Communicative language teaching has been based on efficiency

foundations, as if it were a neutral and objective technology that can be exported to different places in the world. From critical perspectives, Kumaravadivelu (2012) calls on professionals in the field to make an epistemic break to stop the dependence on Eurocentric knowledge production and thus intervene in contextual realities by being producers of socially constructed significant meanings within each community. The author refers mainly to the dependence on the native speaker proficiency as an ideal to achieve, on teaching methodologies, on the Center-based curriculum, and on the hegemonic textbook industry. Therefore, a decolonial perspective is required to enhance the critical encounter among cultures and the construction of knowledge from the needs and desires that arise from the agents in each specific context. This poses, even today, a significant challenge for continuing teacher education.

It is in this context of situation that a university extension project on CSE at a state-run secondary education school was conceived by teacher educators of the English Teacher Education Programme at the State University of Mar del Plata. The extension team was made up of teacher educators, pre-service teachers as well as in-service teachers who worked collaboratively at the implementation stage of the project. Moreover, one member of the extension team who teaches at the school fulfilled the key role of community agent.

La Escuela de Educación Secundaria N° 79 is located in an outlying area of Mar del Plata and counts on scarce resources. Classes are medium to small, there is a high degree of absenteeism and there are serious issues concerning discrimination due to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and disability; added to intra-family and peer violence inside and outside the school. With regard to the transversality of CSE established by law and present in the Institutional Project, it is still largely part of the null curriculum of the English area. In this sense, the extension project sought to promote spaces for the collective construction of knowledge founded on the problematization of the realities of the territory. We deem territory as an agent (Colet-Sabé, 2020), which stresses our commitment to work jointly in a space “full of concepts and languages that allow us to look, read, interpret, compare, recreate, systematize and synthesize reality, as well as transform it through minimal but powerful gestures1” (Carbonell, 2018, n.d.). Our perspective is positioned in the critical paradigm of the gender approach that enables paths towards awareness and open reflection on the dominant stereotypes and socio-historically constructed practices that have naturalized meanings, habits and ways of doing things. Hence, the ultimate goal is that the English class remains a powerful locus for dialogue, reflection, debate, and the deconstruction of stereotypes and prejudices.

The project

The intervention entailed four phases that were developed throughout the second semester of 2023.

Familiarisation with the educational community

The first approach to the school consisted in interviewing the principal and the English teachers in charge of each course in order to explain the project, learn about the educational community and gather information about the students. Additionally, data about the underlying grammar of schooling, the facilities and the resources available was collected.

Awareness-raising activities

The first encounter with the students was thought of as a ludic workshop which was replicated in all the courses: play allowed both the learners, the cooperating teachers and the extension team to establish rapport. Likewise, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and disruptive situations that the students were experiencing were made visible throughout the lessons. Subsequently, the axes of CSE were discussed and the mailbox device was implemented so that the students could anonymously ask questions and express their concerns and desires regarding the dimensions of sexuality. It is important to mention that this first interaction with the students was mediated in the mother tongue.

CSE from and for the educational community

With the information obtained from the mailboxes, added to the data collected through observation during the classroom interactions with the cooperating teachers and the students, different didactic sequences were developed addressing the major concerns of each course. The proposals were based on the CSE materials for secondary schools produced by the Ministry of Education of Argentina and were complemented with multimodal and multimedia materials adapted and/or created by the extension team. The didactic sequences were designed along three central themes, which were founded on the articulation of the five axes of the CSE mentioned above. Unlike the first encounter, the succeeding classes were taught in English, using comprehensible input and translanguaging as mediation strategies.

The theme “Masculinities” allowed for the distinction between hegemonic masculinity and the concept of plural masculinities to reflect on how the meanings about what it means to be male in our society are transmitted and reproduced. The aim was to question and challenge

rigid expectations about what it means to be “a real man” to enable a greater diversity of expressions and experiences of being and feeling male. Thus, in our search for social justice and equity, we designed materials that enhanced discussions on how the hegemonic model perpetuates unequal gender relations, gender violence, and discrimination against diverse ways of being and feeling in the world.

Departing from self-awareness activities as a trigger for discussion, the theme “Respect for Diversity” was built upon the concepts of stereotype, prejudice and discrimination. The learners reflected on the plethora of ways in which discrimination can be expressed, the feelings and attitudes associated with it, and the role of peers and adults in such situations. The emphasis was placed on the importance of the recognition and positive assessment of the multiple differences that all people have, namely: ethnic origin, nationality, beliefs, social condition, sexual orientation, and gender identity, among others.

Finally, one of the recurring topics in the suggestion box was “Mental Health”. The didactic proposal was aimed to understand how individuals can suffer from anxiety, low self-esteem and depression due to ideas and beliefs that are manifested in naturalized discourses and practices ubiquitous in everyday life. The dramatization of situations opened the discussion about emotions and feelings in a reflective and critical way to identify areas for improvement for the construction of responsible togetherness that strengthens collective bonds.

The itinerary of the pedagogic interventions was planned along four moments: presentation of the theme, problematization, sharing phase of conclusions through artistic expressions, and evaluation of the proposal by the students.

Final reflections

The project facilitated the opportunity for strengthening and promoting Comprehensive Sexuality Education by fostering a mutually beneficial dialogue between the extension team and the educational community at Escuela de Educación Secundaria N° 79. Understanding extension as transformative educational processes where learning and teaching occur simultaneously, the extension team promoted horizontal exchanges across different knowledge systems (Kaplún, 2015), valuing the cultural context and the lived experiences of the agents involved.

The classroom became a locus for self-expression. The decision to use the mother tongue and play in the first encounter reassured that each singular story was to be listened to and respected. This way, the mailbox was a powerful device for the students to open up and

share their experiences at school, in their families and in their community. In fact, this device revealed serious issues that were derived to the school guidance team; which led us to consider the importance of an interdisciplinary project in the future.

The extension activity had a formative nature for the pre-service and in-service teachers of English who participated. They were faced with concrete and complex situations that required problem-solving skills and they were able to gain first-hand experience in designing materials for the implementation of CSE. The cooperating teachers, who at first admitted their resistance to CSE, provided useful information about the context, participated in all the activities, and gained better understanding of the five dimensions of CSE.

Finally, as for the teacher educators who ran the project, the experience has been stimulating to review practices and rethink continuing teacher education as a collaborative process in the territory in pursuit of implementing comprehensive sexuality education as a pedagogic-political tool to guarantee human rights and social justice.

Note

1 Original quote in Spanish (Carbonell, 2018, s/d).

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A disciplinary field in decomposition: the case of the English Teacher Education Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata

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Over the years, teaching and learning English have become a tool for work and even indicators of prestige in certain communities. Although this has been understood from a place of neutrality (Baum, 2021), it is impossible to deny its colonial past—and present. As A.P.R. Howatt and H. Widdowson (2004) argue, despite some records of teaching English to speakers of other languages prior to the colonial period, it was the territorial expansion of the British Empire that began in the early 17th century that marked the first boom in English language teaching. With the arrival of English speakers in territories we now know as North America and the Caribbean, and later Asia, Africa, and Oceania, the Empire saw the need to begin formally instructing the inhabitants of those regions, as well as the thousands of victims of the slave trade who were transported year after year. At the same time, technological advances in transportation, which led to a boom in exchange and travel, coupled with the abandonment of classical languages in universities in favor of vernacular languages, sparked growing interest among the upper classes in learning languages, especially English. Ultimately, the beginning of the 20th century saw the foundation of what would eventually become the field of ELT.

By the mid-20th century, English was already being taught in numerous and varied contexts, both in schools in English-speaking countries for children from migrant families, as well as to travelers, merchants, and academics around the world. This was further compounded by the new post-World War II world order, which laid the foundations for the consolidation of English as the preferred language among speakers of other languages in international contexts and, consequently, the further establishment of the discipline (Kramsch & Hua, 2016). According to Graham Hall (2016), this cannot be understood in isolation but rather as a consequence of the social, cultural, and political changes that somehow explain why this language continues to be taught in the early 21st century.

In our country, foreign language teaching has a long tradition. Despite the monolingual framework that marked the origins of the educational system in Argentina (Di Tullio, 2003), languages such as French, Italian, or Portuguese have long competed for a

place in the curriculum. However, in recent decades, English has benefited from language policies and has definitively consolidated itself (Monserrat and Mórtola, 2018).

It is not surprising, then, that as early as the beginning of the last century, the need to create institutions to train teachers to teach foreign languages at the secondary level was recognized. The creation of the School of Modern Languages, aimed at training foreign language teachers under the national government, marked a progressive expansion of the teaching of European languages in our country (Giménez, 2021). Furthermore, a decree issued in 1942 that prohibited the teaching of more than one language at the same time consolidated the primacy of English in the educational system, since, as Monserrat and Mórtola argue, this "justified the primacy of English for reasons of continental solidarity with the United States, due to the growing cultural and commercial exchange, establishing a new understanding of the continental, over Latin Americanist projects" (2018, p.177). This language policy marked the beginning of a process that culminated in 2006 with the National Education Law 26.206, which stipulates the obligation of teaching a foreign language in primary and secondary education. Although this law does not mention any specific language, given the historical context, English consolidated itself as the standard in public schools across the country.

The growing expansion of foreign language teaching, coupled with public policies that ensured free university education in 1949 (Sanllorenti and Andriotti Romanin, 2008), on one hand, and the later Taquini Plan in 1968 (Buchbinder, 1999), on the other, encouraged the creation of many teacher education programs for English, especially ELTE (English Language Teacher Education) in both universities and tertiary institutions. In this scenario, and to meet the demand for English teachers in the region, the first English Teacher Education Program was created in 1968 in the city of Mar del Plata at the Municipal Institute of Higher Studies (IMES). However, the emerging Provincial University soon showed interest in the program, and in 1972 it was transferred to what would become Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (Branda, 2022).

Throughout its history, the aforementioned Teacher Training Program has undergone various curricular changes to adapt to contemporary needs. Currently, two curricula are in effect: one from 1999 (for students in their second year or beyond) and one from 2023 (for first-year students). The 1999 curriculum (OCS 1366/03) was developed in response to the need for a teacher education cycle for English teachers that would fit the new educational structure introduced by the National Education Law 24.195, and especially the changes

brought about by the new education levels (E.G.B and E.P 55). This curriculum certifies that its graduates possess:

a) A solid theoretical-practical command of the language they will teach.

b) The cultural foundations that support the English language and its comparison with the national culture.

c) The pedagogical resources necessary to carry out teaching practice in different educational levels and with various age groups.

d) A commitment to the continuous search for knowledge in both their specific field and related areas of second language teaching.

e) The ability to self-assess their professional performance. (OCS 1366/03, p.5)

To foster the development of these competencies, the commission responsible for designing the curriculum decided to implement several modifications. On one hand, they sought to provide more flexibility for students, so they implemented a quarterly system for all courses, which meant a duration of 16 weeks instead of 32. This, in turn, increased the weekly class hours (from 2 hours per week to 6 or 8) (Bergonzi Martínez and Goñi, 2023).

On the other hand, these changes were accompanied by the already mentioned division into curricular areas, which focus on:

1. Acquiring the English language with a high level of proficiency in the four linguistic skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—to serve as a model for imitation in the classroom. This also includes achieving fluency in oral and written communication in a variety of situations and contexts.

2. Theoretical knowledge of the phonological, grammatical, and morphological aspects of the language, as well as practical mastery, supported by linguistic theory.

3. Pedagogical training that includes: general education issues, developmental psychology, a strong special didactics that allows the analysis of approaches, designs, and procedures for language teaching appropriate to the educational context in which they are applied, and teaching practice.

4. Cultural training with reference to English-speaking countries, including aspects of their society, civilization, history, and literature, which provide the necessary framework for language acquisition and a broad spectrum of knowledge transfer and application. (OCS 1366/03, p.7)

This organization and emphasis on each aspect of the training of future English teachers reveals one of the field's most prominent debates: what kind of professional is expected of an English teacher. As Bergonzi Martínez and Goñi analyzed, this document

"shows perspectives that advocate for teachers whose main characteristic is their expertise in using the target language" (2023, p.56), which explains the quantitative and qualitative predominance of the development of the macro skills in the curriculum. This is evident in terms such as "high level of proficiency" and the expectation that teachers serve as "models for imitation in the classroom."

However, the curriculum also includes content and courses that reflect opposing perspectives. One such case is the inclusion of courses from the *Ciclo de Formación Docente* offered in parallel by *Departamento de Ciencias de la Educación, Problemática Educativa y Sistema Educativo y Currículum.* These subjects, especially the first, offer an approach to various readings that inevitably invite alternative ways of understanding education, such as critical, queer, and decolonial pedagogies. While the number of hours dedicated to these topics is limited, these spaces invite thinking about other possible futures in education—more welcoming and hospitable ones.

Despite the changes introduced by the National Education Law 26.206 in 2006, it was not until the end of the following decade that the need for an update to the curriculum was recognized. In 2018, a commission was formed by faculty members, graduates, and students from the Department of Modern Languages to create a new curriculum for the Teacher Education Program and to launch a degree in English (*Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa*).

In addition to structural modifications, such as the inclusion of new elective courses (from *Departamento de Letras y Ciencias de la Educación*, respectively), and a significant reduction in total class hours (from 3584 to 3104 hours), there is a marked shift in paradigm from the previous curriculum. The new document acknowledges a new geopolitical reality of the English language, with characteristics that account for the incorporation of transdisciplinary and intercultural perspectives "since definitions of knowledge are reconstructed locally, addressing the existence of diversity in disciplinary fields" (OCS 342/23, p.4). At the same time, it places emphasis on empowering English teachers "placing them in charge of their individual pedagogies, based on their sense of plausibility, that is, their personal practical knowledge within a macro, meso, and micro strategic framework" (Op cit). This shift in perspective is evident, for example, in moving away from the almost exclusive focus on the development of macro skills. In the new curriculum, the goal is to acquire "linguistic, communicative, intercultural, and critical competence in the use and teaching of the English language in various genres and communicative contexts" (p.5), as well as to develop "intercultural empathy co-constructed in the liminal spaces between

Spanish and English, and the socio-historical-cultural contexts of these two languages and their users" (p.6).

Finally, the new curriculum emphasizes the role of teachers as transformative intellectuals (Giroux, 2004) by promoting a critical stance towards their own initial teacher education and professional development, recognizing within these areas their ethical, ontological, and epistemological support; their historical, social, and cultural complexity; their state of the art, and possible future trends, always legitimized by research (p.7). It also aims for students to develop "an active disposition to generate original lines of critical and transformative thinking, to address complex issues from multiple approaches, and to propose action schemes that demonstrate their creative capacity to operate in their contexts of practice" (Op cit). Although the new document builds upon its predecessor, it is clear that the door has been opened to explore new possibilities within the field of English language teaching.

Beyond the paradigm shift evident in the new curriculum, the *Planes de Trabajo Docente* (PTDs) for several courses also reflect these changes. In many of them, other perspectives on the training of future English teachers emerge, inviting and encouraging the exploration of new practices and ways of understanding education.

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Accessibility workshop

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Instituto de Enseñanza Superior en Lenguas Vivas "*Juan Ramón Fernández*" is one of the oldest and most prestigious institutions for language learning and language teaching in the city of Buenos Aires. It has a 120-year-old tradition as a teacher-training college which provides future language teachers with high-quality and *avant-garde* education in order to teach language across all levels of education around the country.

Since 2014, the course of Inclusive Education in the foreign language class (*Educación inclusiva en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras)* is compulsory in the curricula for students of all language-teaching degrees (English, French, Portuguese and German). The integration of specific courses on inclusive education into the curricula for future language teachers began to be systematically included as innovative experiences only in the past 10 years.

The study of the regulatory and conceptual framework of inclusive education was, until recently, limited to the training of special education teachers, which makes this addition to the curriculum at Instituto de Enseñanza Superior en Lenguas Vivas "*Juan Ramón Fernández*" especially relevant in the context of training language teachers to face the challenges brought about by diversity in the English class.

Ten years after this curricular reform and eight years since the course was officially introduced, there is a clear need to advance both in professional training spaces that strengthen the perspective of inclusive education and accessibility in the English class and in research that accounts for what actually happens in language classes as regards diversity and

inclusion. This will allow for more specific actions and policies to be developed which are aimed at improving practices that ensure the participation and learning of all students at different levels of the education system.

The Inclusive Education and Foreign Languages (EILA) team is a self-convened group of educators from the Institution who are interested in the investigation and training within this field of study. Currently, the Team is working on a presentation and an expert panel on Inclusive Education at the V International Conference on Training and Research in Languages and Translation, to be held in August at our home institution. Additionally, the team has submitted a proposal for a postgraduate teacher training course to be developed as a continuing education space within the teacher-training system of the City of Buenos Aires. Inclusive education for language teacher-training remains a largely unexplored field of study in the area, and its development contributes to realizing the right to education for students of all ages.

Inclusive education means all individuals can learn under the appropriate pedagogical, didactic and institutional conditions. This approach entails designing activities that cater to all students right from the early planning stages, identifying barriers to learning and participation, and providing the appropriate support. These proposals stem from and are enriched by knowledge from the fields of Pedagogy and Didactics rather than from pathologizing views from healthcare disciplines. (Res. 3816/2022 - GCABA-MEDGC).

In the past few weeks, the Strategic Plan 2024-2027 *Buenos Aires Aprende* was presented in the City of Buenos Aires, highlighting inclusive education and a bilingual city as two of the priority policies for this administration. In its presentation, the program states that proficiency in the English language becomes fundamental for personal and professional development. English is more than just a language: it is the key to accessing a world of academic, professional, and cultural opportunities for individuals and also an opportunity for the development of the City of Buenos Aires. Therefore, this policy aims to advance towards a 'bilingual city' through the continuous transformation of English teaching methods at both compulsory and non-compulsory educational levels. Additionally, it defines inclusive education as a transversal axis across all educational areas, which implies ensuring an educational system that values all students and eliminates barriers to their participation and learning establishing equality in the right to education for all individuals (translated from the original documents in Spanish).

Inclusive education in foreign language teaching is an emerging field that helps to strengthen everyone's right to learn in school without exemptions or other forms of

exclusion. It also highlights that it is possible to provide accessible and diversified activities and material which caters to all students without the need for costly and sophisticated resources. Instead, it relies on the use of everyday objects and incorporates accessibility—e.g. image description and audio subtitles—as a key element of our teaching approach.

The workshop aims at sharing the framework and exploring some tools and resources to work with Inclusive Education in the English classroom. This workshop is organized in four stages. First, we will begin with an ice-breaking activity to get to know the audience and their previous experience with inclusive education in their professional field.

Second, as an introduction to the topic, we will define the key aspects of inclusive education; we will delve into the national and international regulations that guide our work with persons with disabilities in the class: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Res. 311/16 from the Federal Council of Education. In this stage, we will reflect upon the notion of teaching to overcome barriers and catering for the apparent diversity which is present in the English class.

As a third stage, participants will choose one of three stations with materials for different ages/levels of education: young children and preteens (Station 1), teenagers (Station 2), and adults (Station 3). In each station, participants will be invited to work collaboratively in reviewing resources for each age group and to consider diversifying the instructions, activities, materials and skills involved in the tasks. Furthermore, participants will be putting the resources to the test and will be able to bring the resources back to English class.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the English Classroom: Respect for Diversity in the Work World

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The roadmap to our experience

The purpose of this presentation is to socialise the experience of teacher educators and student-teachers as part of an extension activity aimed at collaborating with the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the 6th-year English class at Secondary School Nº 79 in Mar del Plata. This experience consisted of two stages, crystallized in two classes, respectively. The first class was envisioned as a workshop to get to know the students and teacher of the course while carrying out a needs analysis paying special attention to the CSE aspects that continued resonating by the end of the class. The class was aimed at dealing with the students' concerns and doubts in the light of CSE axes and with the spirit of promoting a fair, egalitarian and inclusive classroom. The intervention entailed two encounters that took place throughout the second semester of 2023.

The Encounters

Getting to know each other.

In our first meeting, we aimed to get to know each other and foster a friendly and comfortable atmosphere in the workshop. This first interaction with the students was mediated in the mother tongue to create a more approachable environment, where all the participants would feel willing to participate and share personal information. We proposed some initial activities that served as an invitation to put the bodies in motion by changing both the spatial and body organisation in the classroom and to listen to the group talking and interacting. First, we played "I have a letter for…", a game in which chairs were set up in a circle for the participants to sit on, except for one person who would always be standing in the middle of the circle. This person would say "I have a letter for those who [some

characteristic that could be shared by any person present]". The people who felt they were the recipients of the letter had to get up and sit on a chair other than the one immediately next to them. Whoever was left without a chair had to stand where the previous person was standing and things started again.

An awareness-raising activity: The four corners

The second activity we proposed, "The four corners", involved movement as well. We placed posters on each corner of the classroom that read: *always, never, sometimes and often* and rearranged the desks and chairs so that we could move freely from one corner to the other. We stood in the centre of the classroom while one of us read different statements that we could connect to our experiences and feelings. As a response to those statements, we moved to one corner. Our main aim was to reflect on our sexuality and recognise/identify ourselves in/with others. With our bodies moving and in the company of others we started introducing the contents of the 5 CSE axes.

The next step was for students to recognise the ideas and feelings that had previously made them move to one corner as aspects of their comprehensive sexuality. On the board, we wrote keywords representing the axes (*health & body, diversity, affectivity, rights,* and *gender perspective)* and briefly explained them. Then, we placed cards with the statements written on them facing down on the floor and asked students to choose one in pairs, read it and stick it next to the poster they thought it belonged to. Students put the same statements next to different axes. In this way, they learned that the axes overlap.

Finally, we introduced the mailbox device that helped us learn more about the students and their voices. We asked them to share their concerns, wishes, anecdotes and, of course, questions and doubts by writing them down on pieces of paper, anonymously or not, and putting them inside the mailbox. For the next meeting, we would think of an English class that addressed some of the questions.

CSE from and for the students of 6th year

Considering the students' concerns, we designed a didactic sequence for the English class along the CSE axis: "respect for diversity" for the second meeting. The teacher had also told us they would start working with CVs and job interviews so the theme of "Respect for diversity in the work world" was selected.

By using comprehensible input and translanguaging as mediation strategies, the didactic proposal invited the students both to review the stages a job applicant goes through and to become recruiters by analysing LinkedIn profiles and selecting the best candidate for a position. While students justified and discussed their choices, reflection and self-awareness

on how stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination may be expressed in the selection process were triggered. Interaction in class promoted active listening, respect for opinions, the visibility of different forms of discrimination and the need to eradicate them.

We divided the class into five moments. The focus of the first two moments was on briefly revising some concepts related to job hunting, trying to catch up on the content they have seen about CVs and interviews. As the idea of this encounter was working with job hunting, recruitment processes and diversity, we first focused on the type of information we provide in each job hunting stage. Next, emphasis was placed on the recruitment process, especially on how, on the one hand, people use the CV to tell recruiters who they are and what skills and experiences they have, and how, on the other hand, the recruiter decides whether to call the applicant for an interview based on the impressions caused by the CV. To start raising awareness of the complexity of the selection process, we asked the students what they thought recruiters looked at when analysing CVs. Next, we introduced a common phrase among interviewers, especially when many people are applying for the same job position: "It takes only 6 seconds for a recruiter to review your Resume" and asked students what recruiters could focus on in those 6 seconds.

In a third moment, we stuck three real and recent ads from Mar del Plata on the blackboard for the students to test their hypothesis: they would become recruiters. They had to look at three profiles in 45 seconds —15 seconds for each profile, trying to get close to the 6 seconds—, choose the most appropriate person for the job and state their reasons. Some of the students' decisions were influenced by stereotypes and prejudice related to the candidates' physical traits and chosen pronouns.

As we guided students to deepen their reflection, we presented three interconnected terms: *prejudice, stereotype and discrimination* which would help us understand and continue analysing the issues raised. We discussed how we could make people suffer if we did not stop to think about our preconceptions and their consequences. They ended up sharing job-hunting experiences and experiences in which they had been discriminated against and reflected on the reasons and how they felt about it.

Expectations vs reality

To finish the encounter, we wanted to promote a subjectivising space in which the group could resignify those negative experiences they had gone through. Inspired by recruiter Gail Tolstoi-Miller's TED Talk, we planned an activity called "So What?". According to Tolstoi-Miller, asking this question would reveal the prejudices, assumptions and hidden beliefs that underlie our judgment of other people, allowing us to become aware

of them and opening up the opportunity to challenge our perceptions. Students would complete some prompts about themselves such as “I'm/have/like/will…” and stick them on a poster with the sentence “So What?” in the middle. However, we could not carry out this activity. There were a few minutes left before finishing the class when students’ attention and engagement suddenly changed and when the bell rang, they immediately left the classroom. After having witnessed such meaningful participation and involvement during the class, we were surprised at their attitude. Later, we learned they were anxious and expectant because of the breakfast the institution would provide during the break.

Final reflections

The project gave us the opportunity to promote Comprehensive Sexuality Education at EES Nº 79 not only by encouraging an enriching dialogue between this educational community and the extension team but also by creating a stronger bond among the students of the 6th-year course and the members of this team. The promotion of horizontal exchanges and the value of the experiences of all the participants involved made this extension experience a transformative educational process.

Spill the tea! tiktok's vibe check in the EFL classroom

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We all know that social media has become a permanent fixture in our lives, evolving alongside generational cohorts and their preferred platforms. As educators, understanding the influence of these platforms on language use and learning is vital. This paper investigates the impact of TikTok on the vocabulary acquisition of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, contributing to the growing field of digital language learning by exploring the interaction between social media and EFL vocabulary acquisition.

Generational cohorts, such as Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, Gen Z, and Gen Alpha, experience similar events during their formative years (Lim & Parker, 2020). Our current students primarily belong to Gen Z, born between 1996 and 2010, and Gen Alpha, born from 2010 onwards (Dimok, 2019; Ziatdinov & Cilliers, 2021). Both cohorts are characterized by their extensive use of technology, which has fundamentally shaped their learning experiences and preferences. As educators, it is crucial to acknowledge these generational distinctions and the technological context in which these students have been immersed.

Vocabulary acquisition is fundamental to language learning. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002), vocabulary involves a group of lexemes which contain single words, compound words, and idioms. Richards (2002) emphasizes that vocabulary is the first stage in language learning and is essential for understanding meaning and context in communication. Folse (2004) further notes that while a lack of syntax may limit conversations, a lack of vocabulary can halt them entirely. This underscores the critical role vocabulary plays in enabling meaningful communication, highlighting the importance of effective vocabulary acquisition strategies in EFL education.

TikTok, a social media platform originating in China, gained international popularity in 2016. It allows users to create, discover, and share videos ranging from 15 seconds to 10 minutes. TikTok's powerful algorithm personalizes content for its 1.06 billion monthly

active users based on their viewing habits and engagement patterns. Its popularity surged during the COVID-19 pandemic as people sought entertainment during lockdowns. Today, TikTok is widely used for content related to activism, entertainment, marketing, and education, particularly among younger generations (LaFleur, n.d.). This rapid rise and widespread use of TikTok among Gen Z and Gen Alpha make it a pertinent subject of study in the context of language learning.

Preliminary findings indicate that TikTok's short-form videos present both opportunities and challenges for EFL learners. Several studies support this view. Tran (2023) investigated the impact of TikTok on vocabulary learning and attitudes among English major students at Thu Dau Mot University in Vietnam. Jornsson (2023) conducted an online survey of 500 social media users learning English. Roshdi and Rahmat (2023) used a quantitative survey to explore the relationship between motivation and vocabulary use among TikTok users in Malaysia. Thorvik (2023) conducted semi-structured interviews with 6th-grade English teachers. These studies agree on three major points: TikTok enhances language learning, aids memorization through repetition and meaningful context with visual stimuli, and raises concerns about the shift towards informal language and comprehension.

Tran's (2023) research at Thu Dau Mot University revealed that both students and teachers perceive TikTok as a valuable tool for learning vocabulary and developing other language abilities. The study highlighted that TikTok's engaging content and the frequent repetition of words in context help reinforce vocabulary acquisition. Similarly, Jornsson's (2023) survey of social media users found that many learners attribute improvements in their English vocabulary to their use of TikTok. Roshdi and Rahmat's (2023) study in Malaysia further confirmed that TikTok users are motivated to learn new vocabulary through the platform's engaging and context-rich content. However, Thorvik's (2023) interviews with teachers revealed concerns about students' increased use of informal language and the potential impact on their comprehension of more formal or academic English.

This research is grounded in the Sociocultural Learning Theory, which posits that language results from cultural symbols and tools. Individuals learn language through social events, scenarios, and processes, which facilitate language acquisition. TikTok can be viewed as a social scenario that connects people globally, primarily using the English language. The platform's engaging and visually driven content may enhance vocabulary retention through memorable and context-rich experiences. According to the Sociocultural Learning Theory, learners are impacted by their peers and social interactions, which is

highly relevant in the context of TikTok, where users engage with a diverse array of content creators and audiences worldwide.

Our research involved a closed survey administered to 25 undergraduate students in their 3rd and 4th years of the teaching program at the Universidad Nacional de San Juan. The survey assessed how frequently and in what ways participants used TikTok for language learning. Data collection was conducted via an online survey platform, and quantitative analysis of the responses revealed several key findings. Firstly, TikTok is the most widely used social media platform among these students, with participants spending over an hour daily on the app. Secondly, students believe TikTok significantly influences their language acquisition, particularly vocabulary, as well as other linguistic features like pronunciation and fluency. Many students reported that the repetitive and engaging nature of TikTok videos helps reinforce new vocabulary, making it easier to remember and use in different contexts. Additionally, the visual and auditory elements of TikTok videos provide multiple cues that aid in understanding and retaining new words and phrases.

In conclusion, TikTok is a valuable source of exposure that students frequently use, aiding in vocabulary expansion and influencing their EFL/ESL acquisition and proficiency. While it is a useful tool for the ESL/EFL classroom, the distinction between formal and informal speech must be considered. Teachers should guide students to maximize the benefits of TikTok and create opportunities for students to use the acquired vocabulary in practical contexts. Integrating TikTok into language learning curricula could involve designing activities that leverage the platform's strengths, such as creating short video assignments, encouraging students to follow educational accounts, and facilitating discussions about the content they encounter on TikTok.

Furthermore, educators should be mindful of the potential challenges associated with using TikTok for language learning. The informal nature of much of the content on TikTok may lead to an overemphasis on colloquial language at the expense of more formal, standard or academic language. Teachers can address this by providing explicit instruction on the differences between informal and formal language and encouraging students to apply their vocabulary knowledge in various contexts, including academic writing and presentations.

Overall, TikTok represents a dynamic and influential tool in the landscape of digital language learning. By understanding and harnessing its potential, educators can enhance vocabulary acquisition and overall language proficiency among EFL students, preparing them for effective communication in diverse contexts.

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Once upon a Time... Curricular Justice: Storytelling as a Compass for Comprehensive Sexual Education

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This presentation provides an overview of a workshop on Storytelling and CSE that I designed and facilitated as a graduate teacher assistant in *Didactica y Curriculum*, a third-year subject within the English Teaching Education Program (ETEP) at Mar del Plata National University. In general terms, this subject provides a theoretical framework for the teaching and learning processes of foreign languages, specifically in the Primary Classroom, and prepares students for their first teaching practicum. The workshop aimed at promoting the development of critical thinking, reflexivity, and creativity skills, as well as delving into the political dimension of language teaching.

The workshop consisted of two sessions. Prior to the workshop, students were asked to respond to one of the following prompts:

- **School Biographies:** Reflect on your personal experiences with Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) during your schooling. Discuss specific classes, teachers, and topics that were adequately or inadequately covered. Consider how you would incorporate or modify CSE in your future teaching practices.
- **Significant Influences:** Identify a person or experience that has significantly shaped your understanding of sexuality, affectivity, or gender. Discuss the lessons learned and their impact on your perspectives.
- **First Teaching Experiences:** If you have teaching experience, describe how you have integrated CSE into your classrooms. Share your feelings, challenges, and learnings from these experiences.
- **Projecting the Teaching Self:** Imagine your role as a teacher promoting CSE. Discuss the messages you would convey, strategies you would employ, and potential challenges.

These prompts aimed to gain insights into the students' prior experiences with teaching and CSE. As expected, their responses frequently expressed concerns related to a lack of experience, fear of unpreparedness or inability to uphold institutional expectations, and potential reactions from students and parents.

Based on what they had shared with me and taking into account the topics and objectives from the subject, I designed a workshop which proposed Storytelling as a compass for the inclusion of CSE in English lessons and emphasized the transformative power that picture books narrating and illustrating diversity can have. By doing so, the workshop sought to empower future educators to create more inclusive and equitable English language classrooms where their students feel represented and valued.

The workshop consisted of two classes. The first one revolved around Storytelling in the Primary Classroom. To initiate the workshop, students were divided into small groups and assigned prompts related to the role that stories had had in their childhood. For example, they were asked to share who they read stories with as well as their favourite titles and characters. They were also encouraged to express their ideas through writing or drawing. The resulting artwork provided valuable insights into the participants' perceptions and experiences.

Following this creative exercise, we delved into the theoretical underpinnings of *Storytelling*. Participants were presented with a series of emojis and challenged to collaboratively identify the benefits of using stories in the classroom. Next, we focused on the criteria for selecting appropriate stories for primary students. Students were asked to reflect on important considerations, such as age-appropriateness, thematic relevance, and cultural sensitivity. Their responses were then compared and contrasted with the checklist proposed by Brewster and Ellis (2014) in their comprehensive guide, *"Tell it Again! The Storytelling Handbook for Primary Teachers"*. This comparison allowed for a more in-depth discussion of best practices in storytelling.

To conclude the first session, I shared the inspiring picture book "What Do You Do with an Idea?" by Kobi Yamada with the class. This heartwarming story follows a child who grapples with a creative idea, overcoming self-doubt and external criticism to embrace its transformative power. I particularly choose this story because it proposes a powerful metaphor for the importance of nurturing and valuing ideas, no matter how unconventional or challenging. As an exit ticket, participants were asked to reflect on the following prompt: "What kind of society, what kind of world am I projecting through my teaching?" My aim here was to encourage them to consider the broader implications of their teaching practices

and the values they were conveying to their students.

By the end of this first class two things were clear: Storytelling was really helpful to teach English to primary students and that weaving narratives that resonate with diverse experiences has the potential to foster empathy and understanding.

To begin the second session, I elicited possible connections between Storytelling and CSE presented students with a BINGO board which they had to complete with 9 concepts that they thought would appear throughout the Storytelling session. On this occasion, I selected the following stories to share with the participants:

Neon Leon by Jon Reynolds (Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2018): a delightful and amusing story about a chameleon who struggles to fit in with his surroundings. Leon's unique appearance makes him feel out of place until he discovers a habitat where he truly belongs, celebrating individuality and the importance of finding one's place in the world.

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees (Orchard Books, 2001): a heartwarming and humorous tale about Gerald the giraffe, who dreams of becoming a dancer. Despite his awkward movements, Gerald perseveres, eventually discovering his own unique rhythm and celebrating his individuality.

The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch and Michael Martchenko (Annick Press, 1980): a classic tale of empowerment and challenging gender stereotypes. Princess Elizabeth sets out to rescue Prince Ronald from a dragon, wearing only a paper bag. She demonstrates that true strength and self-worth come from within, not from external appearances or societal expectations.

Heather Has Two Mummies by Lauren Newman and Caroline Thompson (Candlewick Press, 2015): a vibrant and inclusive story that celebrates diversity and the importance of love and acceptance. Heather's family, with two mothers, is just as special and complete as any other, showing that love comes in all forms.

After each story, students shared with the rest of the class which concepts on their BINGO board had been mentioned in the story and why they thought they were relevant. By reflecting on the connections between the stories and the concepts, they deepened their understanding of the themes and messages conveyed in the texts. This also helped them identify potential areas for further exploration and discussion in their future teaching practice.Finally, once the storytelling session had finished, participants were divided into four groups and assigned one of the stories. Each group was tasked with analyzing the story's suitability for different age groups, language levels, and teaching contexts. They were also asked to brainstorm potential pre-, during, and post-reading activities to maximize the

educational value of the story.

To conclude the workshop, I shared “A child of Books” by Oliver Jeffers with the students. The story follows a girl who lives in a world of books and letters. The girl invites a boy to join her on a journey through literature, exploring different genres, adventures, and worlds created by words. As they progress, they face challenges and discover the magic of stories. This story highlights the importance of imagination, creativity, and the love of reading. The illustrations incorporate texts from literary classics, adding layers of meaning to the story and emphasizing the transformative power of words and stories in children's lives. As a final task, participants were asked to share their ideas on how stories can shape the world. This facilitated a rich and meaningful discussion, leading to the following key conclusions.

Curricular justice refers to the equitable representation of diverse perspectives and experiences within educational content. Traditional curricula often reflect a narrow range of voices, predominantly those of dominant cultural groups. This lack of representation can marginalize students from minority backgrounds, leading to feelings of alienation and disengagement. Storytelling, when centered on marginalized voices, can serve as a powerful tool to disrupt dominant narratives and provide alternative perspectives. For example, books like "Heather Has Two Mummies" by Lesléa Newman offer representations of LGBTQ+ families, validating and empowering students from similar backgrounds while educating others about the diversity of family structures. Such stories challenge heteronormative biases that often permeate educational materials, promoting a more just and equitable curriculum.Through storytelling, students can cultivate a critical consciousness and recognize the power dynamics that shape their world. By engaging with diverse narratives, students can develop a deeper understanding of the historical, social, and cultural factors that influence their experiences and the experiences of others. This critical awareness empowers students to challenge systemic inequalities and advocate for a more just and inclusive society.

When students engage with stories, they are invited to step into the shoes of others, experiencing the world from diverse perspectives. This empathetic engagement is crucial for fostering respect, understanding, and a more inclusive school culture. By empathizing with characters, students can better appreciate the experiences and challenges faced by their peers, leading to a more compassionate and inclusive learning environment.

Storytelling also encourages critical thinking. As students analyze and interpret stories, they develop skills in critical analysis and reflection. They learn to question

assumptions, consider multiple viewpoints, and recognize biases. These skills are essential not only for academic success but also for navigating the complexities of the world beyond the classroom.

CSE invites us to build a society where affectivity, care, and the full exercise of human rights permeate every aspect of our lives. Ultimately, CSE provides us with reasons to dream of a fairer world for everyone. This includes training critical and reflective teachers who feel better prepared to address CSE in their future teaching practices at various levels of the education system.

Ultimately, the integration of storytelling and Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) in English language education has the potential to empower students to navigate the complexities of their own identities and relationships with confidence and understanding. By bringing diverse voices and experiences into the classroom, stories challenge biases, foster empathy, and cultivate critical thinking.

These inclusive narratives validate students' experiences, broaden their understanding of others, and create a more equitable and comprehensive learning environment. As educators strive to create just, inclusive, and empathetic educational spaces for all students, the transformative power of storytelling should be at the forefront of their efforts. Through the magic of stories, we can nurture more just, inclusive, and empathetic educational spaces for all students.

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Becoming visible: Activisms for marginalised minorities in a rights-based approach to literature teaching

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The curricular space Contemporary English Literature belongs to the literary training cycle contemplated in the degrees of English Language and Literature Teacher, National Public Translator in English Language, Bachelor's Degree in English (Linguistic Orientation) and Bachelor's Degree in English (Literary Orientation). According to the 2022-2023 records, enrolment in the course was 130-150 registrations, of which 65% corresponds to the Translation Degree, 28% to the Teaching Degree and 7% to the Bachelor Degree. According to its minimum core contents, the subjects of the cycle "aim to ensure that [students] achieve mastery of the techniques of literary text analysis seen as the interrelation of cultural, linguistic and extra-linguistic codes", emphasizing literary training through the analysis of relevant literary texts in Spanish and English and the models of literary study that provide the basis for such analysis.

As expressed in the current syllabus (Chiacchio, 2019), the literary training assigned for this specific course focuses on the poetics of relevance in the historical-cultural period from the mid-eighteenth century to the present day: Romanticism, Realism, Aestheticism, Naturalism, Modernism and Postmodernism (op. cit., p. 1). These poetics are presented within the comparative framework of a dialogue between literature and the arts, with an emphasis on the visual arts. There, and in line with Williams' (1961) theoretical framework that structures the academic-pedagogical proposal, art is defined as an aspect of culture in a socio-historical setting that observes literary and artistic works in their medium of emergence and their context of production (Chiacchio, 2019, p. 1). Particular importance is given to the polyphonies present in the canonical and non-canonical literary expressions of a centralizing and insular (post-)imperial socioculture and to the multiplicity of identities that make up this panorama, with particular attention to minority and marginalized identities, in a methodology that assigns the gender perspective a transversal role in the syllabus with the greatest relevance.

This paper proposes a reflection on dynamics of classroom work aiming to metonymize the objectives and transversal logics of curricular spaces related to literature in a foreign language in the didactic space of English Contemporary Literature, FaHCE UNLP, and at the same time to bring into the classroom the institutional conceptualizations of fluid and multiplying dialogues between theoretical-methodological frameworks and experiences of reading and analysis that are necessarily in interaction.

The starting point is a conception of artistic and literary activity as an action of political-creative will and expression, directly linked to human action within a cultural framework situated in a singular social and historical context. Thus, and in the conviction that all volitionally inspired human action is political action, this proposal points out after Rancière (2011) that political activity reconfigures the distribution of the sensible by staging the commonality of objects and new subjects. Thus, political activity makes visible what was invisible, and it makes audible as intelligible speech the sounds that used to be perceived as noise. In this making the invisible visible and audifying the inaudible, it is of interest to the present reflection to focus on the search for and vindication of identities marginalized in history-culture, spectral and silent victims of naturalized conjunctural and systematic oppressions, which take voice and strength emerging in works of creation as safe escape points.

Literary analysis through close reading and commentary with critical perspective is the driving force behind this aim; it is accompanied by the linguistic-discursive analysis of the textual material that enables work on a phenomenon of creation in its multiple levels of meaning. The objective is to establish cross-cutting conceptual and methodological links with previous or concurrent subjects, enriching the analysis with contributions from linguistics, discourse analysis and genre theory; at the same time, it is of the greatest relevance to create conditions for the competences developed on the contents to subsequently become strategies of analysis that diversify the resources of the academic toolbox that will take on maximum relevance in subsequent years in the areas of specific training in teaching, translation and research.

It is a general teaching aim of this proposal to situate the analysis of literary exponents in the socio-historical and cultural dimension of their contexts of production and original reception in order to illuminate their relevance with respect to the canon and the existing literary counter-canons, as well as the non-explicit meanings that operate in the reception of the texts. Another general aim is to make visible the protagonism of marginalized voices in poetics with different geo-chronological locations as a resource of literary analysis but

simultaneously as an unavoidable aspect of political-academic teaching in rights. Besides, we intend to support the positioning of literary-artistic analysis as an essential branch of academic training in the areas of teaching, translation and research, and at the same time as a strategic space for building the English language skills necessary for specific training. In addition, we seek to validate and welcome the spaces for creativity and individual expression, especially of the artistic-literary kind, during the teaching and learning processes as an unavoidable aspect of the activity in academic environments for all members of the university pedagogical action.

There are three specific teaching aims: to approach the study of the texts as outstanding exponents of Romantic and post-Romantic English literature as antonomastically representative instances of these poetics; to construct a conceptual space for reflection on differences and similarities between the original context of reception and the current context of reception, and the implications of these differences and similarities; and to enable an academic practice of dialogue between the critical bibliography and the compulsory literary readings that allows dialogue between the two and thus the flourishing of conceptions and theoretical frameworks from the successive and recursive experiences of centrifugal aesthetic, comprehensive and close reading from exponents of literary creation, favouring connections with theoretical frameworks present in the previous student history.

The general student aims are to establish a mutual dialogue of developments between the work carried out in the subject as a specific area of literary training and the work carried out in subjects of the language training area, so that this dialogue results in mutual support between the competences developed, and to advance in the development of literary and linguistic analysis skills that facilitate a critical approach to creative texts that goes beyond the merely comprehensive.

Two specific student aims guide the proposal: to trace and make visible the presence of marginalized subjectivities and identities in a situation of oppression in the aforementioned poems, in order to advance in the understanding of the multiple aesthetic-political tensions in action through their presence and absence, and to relate the romantic poetics that identify the creators in their different features in order to raise awareness of the blurred temporal limits that separate one aesthetic movement from the other and to question the chronological and successive models of analysis.

Although this is an initial experience in literary analysis in English, as a practical lesson we try to limit the teaching load in order to favour a multi-level work proposal with inductive strategies, discouraging the mere application of theoretical frameworks to literary

texts and validating the students' first-person experience with the texts themselves, This will accompany and guide the path of training in critical close reading skills initiated in the subjects of the literary area and further developed in specific subjects in the area. We propose the dynamic and integrated use of institutional digital resources as well as ICT in the work inside and outside the classroom, in line with the guidelines of the chair and our own theoretical and empirically founded conviction of their maximum benefit in the current educational contexts, which are in constant transformation.

The classwork dynamics are varied but with an emphasis on group work in different configurations that allow for the dialogical exchange of interpretations and readings, with the understanding that the methodology of the extended classroom allows for the multiplication of pedagogical spaces, many of which will be more conducive to critical and introspective reflection on the aesthetic and literary experience. We aspire to a denaturalization of the power differentials in the classroom from the physical and the flows of action, so that the teaching role can be, rather than static and centrifugal, instead constituted into an evenly formed subjectivity, which orients and facilitates the approach to the contents, validating the experience of literary contact and analysis as fully legitimate although incipient, and which collaborates in the provision of tools and resources necessary for the endeavour.

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An emotional classroom

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The days of just teaching children and teenagers their ABCs are long gone. Educators are now tasked with the seemingly impossible responsibility of preparing today's youth for life outside the classroom, as well as to help them to positively contribute to society. Regarding this, it seems to be essential to explore and clearly understand the meaning of *social-emotional learning*. Broadly speaking, social and emotional learning (SEL) refers to the process through which individuals learn and apply a set of social, emotional, and related skills, attitudes, behaviors, and values that help direct students. This includes thoughts, feelings, and actions in ways that enable them to succeed in school. It is a strengths-based, developmental process that begins at birth and evolves across the lifespan (Weissberg et al., 2015).

If we acknowledge emotions as part of everyday life, then classrooms are emotional settings. Students' emotional experiences can impact on their ability to learn and their engagement at school. Moreover, we know that some emotions provide a barrier to students' classroom engagement and test performance. This is because academic anxieties have wide-ranging effects: some students are able to minimize the negative impact of anxiety, whereas others show declines in their cognitive capacity. Thus, emotions such as enjoyment, anger, hope, pride and boredom, can each affect students and their learning processes in a variety of ways.

If emotional states are a result of classroom factors such as content difficulty, adapting learning contexts may be helpful to improve both learning and negative emotions. When external factors, such as social interactions or parent separation, are affecting a child or adolescent, they are at risk of falling behind. While schools are limited in their ability to change the students' emotional reaction in such circumstances, they may be able to minimize the educational impact. This does not suggest ignoring students' emotions, but rather to support students' learning. Helping students manage their emotions at school is an extremely important part of teaching.

When students get angry, worried or sad in the classroom, it may always be better to acknowledge the emotion and talk about it, showing empathy and interest rather than ignoring it. This is known as *emotional validation*, and it is all about recognizing, understanding and expressing acceptance for another person's feelings. It could only imply a short sentence naming the possible emotion, checking out whether this is true and saying that we care about their struggle. For example: *I can see you are feeling really frustrated/disappointed/ upset right now. Do you want to talk about it?* By doing this, you are creating a space for that person to experience those emotions, and process things without fear of judgement or rejection. Two essential messages are sent:

- You are cared about and noticed in this room.
- Emotions are not dangerous things - you can have them, we can speak about them - and you are still fine.

The Social Emotional Learning Theory

In the light of the above, the SEL (Social Emotional Learning) theory, based on the research carried out by authors like Goleman, Vygotsky, and others, suggests critical goals like developing students' self-awareness, self-management, decision-making, relationship building, and social awareness.

It is necessary for us to understand the scope of this theory and to address it in the classroom. This could be done through common, everyday situations and activities, to make it part of our realities. We educators should help and motivate learners to recognize their emotions, in a way that they could consequently learn to manage them. Sir Ken Robinson claimed: "The gardener does not make a plant grow. The job of a gardener is to create optimal conditions for growth". And continued: "Great gardeners and farmers know what the conditions are, bad ones do not…great teachers know what those conditions are, bad ones do not". In that way, he compares education with agriculture…our huge challenge is to know our students and to make them 'flourish'.

The Five Social Emotional Learning Competencies

The SEL involves five core competencies that can be applied in different contexts, such as the classroom, at home, or in the students' communities. These five competencies are:

Self-awareness: to acknowledge your emotions and the impact they have in your behavior, your strengths and weaknesses to become more confident in your abilities

Self-management: to take control of your thoughts, emotions, and actions in different situations, as well as setting goals and working toward them.

Social awareness: the ability to act with empathy and in an ethical manner within your home, school, and community.

Relationship skills: the ability to build and keep healthy relationships with people from a diverse range of backgrounds. This competency involves effective communication with others, peacefully resolving conflict, and knowing when to ask for or offer help.

Making responsible decisions: behaviors within ethics, safety, weighing consequences, and the well-being of others, lead to effectively choosing how to act or respond to different situations.

Practicing Social Emotional Learning in the classroom

As the SEL is not a conventional subject like math or geography, it can be spread throughout the school's curriculum. When we educators make our academic lessons more personal, students may feel encouraged to participate. By fostering a sense of empathy, self-awareness, and feelings of safety in the classroom, SEL can have a positive impact that lasts a lifetime.

There are many ways to incorporate SEL in the classroom. The general purpose is to provide an ongoing SEL influence throughout the day. So, here are some useful tips, simple actions which might help to create an encouraging and pleasant environment (toolkit):

- A good start could be to simply ask students how they are feeling. With younger students, an emoji chart or traffic lights, with different colours identifying feelings, could be used to make them express.
- Create opportunities for collaborative learning, that is to facilitate pair or group work.
- We can also invite them to role-play difficult situations, which is something that could help them to understand a problem, face it and solve it.
- Something really interesting is the use of motivational phrases, in order to support learners and their work, or for other different purposes, such as to encourage them to feel safe and secure in case they need to talk about a situation that is worrying them or making them feel stressed. As an example, there is a traditional and very well-known school in my hometown where you can see motivational signs along the corridors or in other common spaces. 'If I see somebody sad, I ask them what's wrong', or 'Saying what happens

is brave' are some of the phrases that can be read and which are meant to raise awareness about *bullying*.

- Encourage other ways of communication:
  - Reflective writing; some children and adolescents find verbal communication difficult, and writing may allow them to express themselves.
  - Art; some learners are better at communicating through different forms of art. For instance, they could be asked to draw objects that represent how they feel and images that make them happy.
- Incorporate break times into your schedule; they are an important part of a student's day. It is a time to refuel and refocus. Break times can be used as an opportunity for social-emotional learning. During this time, they may discuss emotions they are feeling as well as social issues that have been brought up in class.
- Mindfulness minute: set aside three to five minutes before class starts for students to take a moment of mindfulness. This is also beneficial to be used before tests. This activity allows students to develop their self-management skills as they learn to regulate their emotions and thoughts.

Conclusion

Social-emotional learning is an important part of education that not only helps students understand what they are learning but also be successful in the future. It is essential that teachers are equipped to teach this, which means having these skills themselves. The World is changing and evolving all the time, education should accompany this process. Our learners need to be prepared in other aspects. Teaching and studying traditional school subjects - using conventional methods- seems to be not enough nowadays. Problem-solving, group management, assertive communication, intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships management, are some of the aspects among the new social demands. It is our responsibility to facilitate learners a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom, building positive relationships, providing constructive feedback and reinforcement, encouraging collaboration…just be there for them.

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Mental health and mental disorders in teacher training courses. A descriptive and longitudinal analysis in English teacher education programs in Mar del Plata

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The aim of this paper is to analyze the English Teacher Education Programs' curriculum of three different institutions: ISFD 19, Instituto Superior IDRA and Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, focusing on the instruction received by future teachers about mental health and mental disorders.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the amount of people who have been diagnosed with various mental disorders, such as: ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorders), ADH (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorders), learning disorders, Down's syndrome, among others. In response to this issue, several public agencies have issued legislation with the purpose of including those students in the educational system. However, some graduate teachers may find it difficult to meet the demands presented by educational institutions and colleges, places where an abundant number of students with diverse diagnoses attend.

The objective of the current investigation is to analyze how former students from different English Teacher Education Programs have been instructed in matters of mental health and mental disorders.

Methodology

In order to execute and carry out this investigation, legislation that several public agencies have issued will be analyzed. Moreover, curricula from varied institutions will be examined. In addition, teachers will be interviewed so as to determine the level of preparation that those professionals have received regarding the aforementioned matters.

Analysis of syllabuses and curriculas

English Teacher Education Program's curriculum at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, passed in 2003, focuses on Educational research. What is more, the social and cultural context demands and requires English teachers to work in private and state contexts, focusing on specific language knowledge. Moreover, graduate teachers may be able to carry out research. What is more, future professionals might develop and implement this profession independently and outside the educational system, for instance foreign and public

relationships. The teaching training area includes the 30 percent of the total course. As regards pedagogical area, this focuses on social, mental and psychological aspects in each child, including specific terms related to psychology. Regarding the teaching practice, the curricula is based on diverse acquisition and learning theories in a foreign language, focuses on correcting mistakes and errors, structure of classes and developing an individual teaching style. Concepts and items related to mental health and mental disorders are not mentioned. The training is based on doing investigations and research and implementing structures and sequences in classes, focusing mainly on language skills.

English Teacher Education Programs' curriculum at ISFD 19 is divided into units: pedagogy, social and institutional problems, history and politics in Argentina education and teaching with technology. The curriculum includes a workshop called: *Prácticas inclusivas y prácticas de la enseñanza en la diversidad contextual*. Mental health and mental disorders are not especially mentioned but it is possible that those concepts are working during this workshop.

English Teacher Education Program's curriculum at Instituto Superior IDRA concentrates on new technologies in order to expand and enlarge teacher practice. Additionally, students are allowed to work as an intern in order to put into practice their skills and knowledge and obtain work experience. Concepts related to mental health and mental disorders are not mentioned along the curriculum.

Legal framework

Several public agencies have issued legislation with the purpose of including students who have been diagnosed with various mental disorders in the educational system. Some of the legislation are: Law 26206 states that one of the objectives of educational policy is to guarantee *inclusive education* through pedagogical strategies. Law 27306, passed in 2016, declares of national interest the interdisciplinary approach of people who have been diagnosed with diverse disabilities. This law establishes the right to education with children diagnosed with diverse disabilities. In 2016, other regulations have been passed and they state that it is vital to create favorable contexts to promote educational inclusion to children with diverse diagnosis.

Findings

Ten English teachers graduated from these three institutions have been interviewed: four teachers graduated from Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, four teachers

graduated from Instituto Superior IDRA and two teachers graduated from Instituto formación docente 19.

Four teachers graduated from Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata mention that they read information about some concepts related to mental health in a conference, meeting organized by the University. What is more, they express that they learn about Asperger and adjustment in instructional materials for hearing loss students. Another graduate from UNMDP replies that he is aware of a new curriculum in *Facultad de Humanidades*. The current plan has been developing and this incorporates some topics related to mental health and mental disorders and there will be a new teaching training programme, which will include topics and issues related to mental disorders and disabilities

Finally, another interviewee from UNMDP expresses that he is aware of mental health and mental disorders legal framework. An interviewee from ISFD 19 explains that he has been working with theories related to mental health and mental disorders but generally and not specifically. An interviewee from Instituto Superior IDRA communicates that she has learnt some theories about learning disabilities and learning disorders in Psychology class. Another graduate teacher describes that he had been encouraging for some teachers to learn how to adapt materials and activities, but also expresses that nobody taught how to do it. According to the legal framework, just an individual confirms his knowledge about the mentioned topic. A graduate teacher from IDRA comments that she read about a variety of contents related to mental disorders but on her own.

To conclude, the ten English teachers agree on the fact that it will be useful to receive training related to mental health and mental disorders. Moreover, they express that in some situations they find it difficult to execute their teacher's role in charge of classes with students with diverse diagnosis. In general, they ask for help from *acompañantes terapéuticos* and other teachers to guide and orient them to develop their role successfully.

Conclusion

The results of this investigation reveal that graduated teachers require more information and training about mental health and mental disorders. Some of them do not feel capable of dealing with classes where students with diverse diagnosis assist and attend and some others express their lack of experience and information about those issues.

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Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the English classroom: Mental Health

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The Comprehensive Sexuality Education Law passed in 2006, also known as the 26.150 Law, established the incorporation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the Argentinian Curriculum. It defines CSE as an integrated approach that includes the biological, psychological, social, affective and ethical dimensions, transcending the traditional moralizing and biomedical views on sexuality (Zemaitis, 2016; 2021; Morgade, 2021). As a cross-curriculum process of teaching and learning, CSE aims to develop skills and values that empower students to realize their health, well-being and dignity, consider the consequences of their acts, and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

Given the exponential increase in anxiety, depression and thoughts of death among children and adolescents in the aftermath of the pandemic, CSE provides a valuable framework for educators to navigate these sensitive topics related to mental health in the classroom. In this light, an extension group of teachers and students from the English Teaching Education Program at UNMdP taught an English class on mental health for 3rd and 4th grade students at a state secondary school in Mar del Plata. This topic was chosen after doing a CSE workshop across all six levels of the secondary school, aiming to bond with the students and identify the key aspects of CSE that needed to be addressed, with mental health being a significant concern.

Mental health care is part of the fifth CSE axis, “Body and Health Care,” which challenges traditional perspectives by incorporating the influence of the historical, cultural, and social contexts in which we live on our well-being. This shift has made both physical and mental health paramount, emphasizing the importance of managing stress and emotions, identifying violent and abusive situations, seeking professional help, and promoting healthy habits (Marina, 2014). It is essential to mention that the National Mental Health Law No. 26.657, enacted in 2010, emphasizes that the preservation and improvement of mental health rely on social efforts to fulfill each person’s human and social rights. Incorporating mental health care into schools is crucial, as education and mental health care are interconnected

and inseparable actions, with daily school activities inherently contributing to students' mental well-being.

One way to strengthen mental health care in educational institutions is to cater for significant pedagogical experiences that involve emotional well-being as a cort part of school coexistence. Guided by this perspective that considers the interconnectedness of family, community, social, economic and cultural factors, our proposal focused on the profound power of words in shaping self-perception. The words we hear and say to ourselves have a significant impact on our self-esteem, beliefs, and behaviors. Constant exposure to negative messages can lead to a limited and negative self-image whereas positive and supportive words can foster personal growth and well-being

Therefore, one aim of the class was that students could develop strategies and emotional tools to counteract harmful statements, cultivating a healthy self-image. As for linguistic objectives,students were expected to comprehend how individuals could experience anxiety, low self-esteem, and depression by analyzing ideas and beliefs expressed through language in a short video; to analyze the video's script focusing on vocabulary related to emotions, feelings, and adjectives (linguistic expressions), as well as the use of the present simple ("I am… / I am not", "you are / you aren't"); and to create an inspiring mural serving as a visual resource that included positive phrases and effective strategies for managing emotions.

The class was structured around three moments: "Acting out through the looking glass", "Overcomer", and "When I look at myself in the mirror I say ...". In the first part of the class "Acting out through the looking glass", we introduced the topic of mental health and aimed to attract students' attention through drama. As an icebreaker, a member of the extension group stood in front of a mirror, gazing into her own eyes, while other teachers took turns to make derogatory and tactless remarks like "You are ugly". This performance reflects Haught's (2005) perspective on drama-based language teaching, which aligns with Vygotsky's collaborative learning theory that emphasizes an environment where both teacher and students participate to foster meaningful learning experiences. This approach encourages students to identify hurtful language and reflect on their emotions, ultimately enhancing their understanding of the impact of words on self-perception.

The teachers used a hurtful tone and negative body language to talk to the standing teacher, intending to simulate the teacher speaking these words to herself. After each phrase was spoken, the teachers stuck it onto the mirror until the teacher in front of the mirror's reflection was completely covered. Including dramatic situations in education offers

opportunities for students to engage fully in the learning process by using their senses. These activities go beyond mental processes, including their previous experiences and beliefs in the learning process. Upon finishing, the teachers facilitated a dialogue with the students to examine their interpretations of the emotions experienced by the teacher hearing those self-critical statements, thereby encouraging a deeper exploration of the meanings conveyed through the phrases displayed on the mirror.

To further examine the connotation of these words and the negative expressions, students watched a short film called Overcomer by Hannah Grace on Youtube that illustrated the profound impact of other's remarks on self-perception and self-esteem. At the end of the video, the main character, who has been metaphorically chained up due to all the negative criticism received throughout her life, ultimately overcomes her fears and begins to embrace self-love. The video also underscores the significant role of social media in shaping self-confidence and highlights the detrimental effects that negative comments can have on adolescents' mental health. Thus, the after-watching activities not only were intended to examine the connotations of lexical items but also to encourage students to reflect on their self-perception influenced by others' opinions. Using adjectives from the film and their antonyms , students then assessed which words they would use to describe themselves. This self-assessment served as an initial step to analyze a poster that presented various strategies for managing emotions, prompting a class discussion on their relevance and application in their own lives and encouraging the development of Emotional Intelligence (EI). As defined by Mayer (1997), EI involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions, and by discussing the different strategies, we allowed students to understand emotional knowledge.

Finally, in the last part of the class "When I look at myself in the mirror I say…" students were invited to write down and post on a mural the trait they considered most significant when they see themselves in the mirror. In this activity, we observed a high level of student motivation and participation. Students not only were able to understand the target language but also use it effectively to voice their opinions on self-perception. The mural became a collective display of positive words, each reflecting the individuality of students who were willing to introspect and express their true selves. This final task also exceeded our expectations, highlighting the value of integrating CSE into the English class, which helped students become more aware of the importance of mental health. It is possible as well that we provided support to any student experiencing similar challenges or allowed others to feel heard and valued after the class.

In light of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) framework, this class exemplifies how language learning can intertwine with essential life skills, enabling students to assess critically the impact of words on their self-perception and mental well-being. Notably, with appropriate guidance from the teachers, students were also able to understand the scenarios presented in the warm-up performance and video, despite their lack of prior exposure to these materials, which facilitated an environment where students felt comfortable expressing themselves in the target language as well. For adolescents, recognizing mental health issues and understanding the impact of hurtful language can be challenging. However, through interactive and reflective activities, students not only enhanced their linguistic abilities but also developed emotional tools to foster a positive self-image. The mural left displayed in their classroom serves as a constant reminder of the carefully chosen words that express self-love, reinforcing the lessons learned and promoting a supportive atmosphere.

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Kids with Down Syndrome Learning a Second Language

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It has long been questioned whether people with Down Syndrome could learn a second language. Today we know that they are perfectly capable of doing so, but we have little experience in this area. When we learn how they process information, we can think about specific teaching strategies.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came into legal force in our country in 2008 through its approval by Law 26.378. It proposes the social model of disability, which explains that disability manifests itself when a person encounters barriers that prevent him/her from full participation in different areas. (CDPC, 2006)

We, as teachers, need to discover the barriers and try to eliminate them, so our students are able to exercise their rights. Article 24 of the CDPD (2006) declares the right to inclusive education. Knowing the difference between exclusion, integration, and inclusion will help us focus on the right path. (Palacios, 2008)

Down Syndrome is a visible disability. It means that it is easily noticeable because of their physical appearance, movements or expressions. Based on that, people tend to think that they “know” the person, or they know their characteristics. It's important to think about our students with Down Syndrome as very deeply rich people. They are “not only” people with a disability and they are not all the same. As an iceberg, the disability is only the noticeable part of them, but they have a whole world “underwater” that we need to dive into to teach them better. It's important to notice that there are few studies about kids with Down Syndrome learning a second language. Generally they don't even have the possibility.

There have been therapists, for example, who suggested to families that they should focus on their mother tongue (so they don't make a “mess” in their use of language). This may be a general belief that has no scientific evidence. Even in the few cases in which they have been exposed to another language, there is no evidence that this learning affected in any way their use of language in their mother tongue.

Bilingual families who happened to have a child with DS have accidentally been the few examples that. In fact, studies have shown that they have the same difficulties in the

acquisition of the grammar in both languages, but also the same ability in the wide vocabulary they can easily learn. (Aldhahri, 2016)

With his important aim in mind, let me introduce you to some of their characteristics, divided into three different categories: Physical characteristics (which affects learning processes), Cognitive characteristics and Psychological characteristics.

Physical Characteristics:

- **Small oral cavity and big tongue**

This may have a great impact in the way they pronounce or speak. It may be difficult for them to learn how to pronounce words in the second language. You need to wait some time until you ask them to repeat. Perhaps at the beginning, just ask them to point, match, do… And leave the oral production or repetition for a second moment.

- **Shape of hands** (small with short fingers)

Writing or drawing may be difficult for them. Try to give them time, or bigger space. Easier tasks such as matching, circling, crossing… Try to use thicker writing tools.

- **Hypotonia**

This is a low or weak muscle tone. This, combined with the size of the mouth, emphasizes the problem they may have in pronunciation. Most of the children attend speech therapy, but in the classroom, the clue is to make them repeat, slowly… Show them our mouth when we pronounce.

On the other hand, hypotonia combined with the shape of their hands, may emphasize their writing problems. Using markers or softer pencils can help. Bigger spaces, white papers, or small whiteboards may be useful. Ask them to write in capital letters, or just trace, join, circle, cross. Look for the best material. Probably a small copybook is not the best option. Now there are some copybooks with thicker lines and bigger spaces.

Cognitive characteristics:

- **Poor short-term memory**

It's really important to give them short and focused instructions. They won't be able to remember a whole sentence with more than one instruction in it. If you can, use visual support, speak slowly and repeat.

- **Poor auditory memory**

Visual aids are requested (pictures or gestures). They'll remember better (and understand better) what they see, rather than what they hear.

- **Deficit in auditory processing**
- **Difficulties in discriminating sounds**

This affects their phonological awareness. Speak slowly. Separate sounds or syllables if necessary. Sometimes they know exactly what they want to say, but the "sounds" that they produce are not the correct ones.

- **Difficulties in keeping the order of sounds in the short term memory**

They find it difficult to keep the order of sounds in their short term memory. Be patient if they try to pronounce but miss some sounds, or if they mix them.

- **Better visual memory**

Use lots of visual support. Prepare flashcards. Mime and gesture a lot. Point. Act out. You may show them cards with written words, depending on the age or level. Always remember they are visual learners. If you work with a flashcard with both picture and word several times, they´ll probably learn the "spelling" of that word without even noticing. (Don´t reduce them just to oral comprehension. When it's the time, they´ll be able to comprehend the written language too!)

- **More developed comprehensive area than productive area**

They understand much more than we can notice from their productions, so don't rely only on them to check their understanding. Of course this doesn't mean that we don't have to work on their "productive" area. It just means that it´ll probably take you much longer, many more repetitions, and even when they are ready to produce, you´ll find really short answers. Of course, this will be different from one student to another.

- **Strength in learning vocabulary, specially nouns (naming)**

This is something they can be good at, so give them the opportunity. Focus on teaching vocabulary. Use different activities and prepare as many resources as you can. Put your creativity in action and make them do a lot of repetitions in different ways. Use vocabulary games! They´ll probably love those, and they ´ll be able to interact with their peers.

- **Difficulties with syntax/grammar (even in their L1)**

It's really difficult for them to learn "rules" as regards grammar. Even in their L1 you´ll probably listen to them talking, and they will change the correct order of words, or miss some linkers, or use infinitive verbs instead of the correct time use. They´ll get some syntax rules through the use of the language. And generally they understand it, but they are not able to produce it as well. Try to ask yes/no questions or simple questions, and wait for

just one word as an answer. You need to give them more time to process. And if it's necessary, give them visual clues to help them with the answer.

Psychological Characteristics:

- **Strength in social abilities**

They know how to take a smile from you, even when you are angry. Their words are not so clear, but their actions are! If they want to communicate love, they will. If they want to communicate sorrow, they will. Even when they don´t know how to "say" the actual words.

- **Tendency to avoid some tasks**

They can "use" their social abilities to get out from the tasks that they don't want to perform. With a big smile, or some other strategy, they easily convince you to leave the activity. This can be nice or funny. But pay attention, and then, ask them to get back to work! Don't pity them.

- **Lack of initiative**

Some of them show poor inner impulse to do things. They probably won't come up with the idea, but they´ll probably "follow" you (or their friends) if they are invited to do sth.

Having high expectations results in high performance. Believe in all your students. Make them feel they can, and I promise you something: they will!

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Embracing functional diversity: exploring innovative foreign language teaching strategies for students with autism spectrum disorder

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This article offers a report on the first approximation of the author to the research derived from inclusive language classroom experiences. It intends to synthesize information from different sources and reflect on the practice of inclusive second language teaching. Said practice took place between March and July 2022 in a multigrade class[1] of first and second-graders at a state-run rural double-shift primary school. This rural school in the Southeast of the Province of Buenos Aires offers a double shift in which students attend classes from 8 am to 4 pm, and are offered English, IT, and Art classes starting in first-grade[2]. During the mentioned period it could be noticed that within the group of 13 students, some already handled reading and writing in their first language with autonomy, while others were just beginning. The students M.A., T.A., and F.M.M. showed difficulties in starting their literacy process and phono audiological difficulties as well. M.A. and T.A. did not produce a completely intelligible language in their first language, they often communicated by shouting, through immediate echolalia, or with words and phrases that were only understood by each other (they are twins); as for writing, they showed difficulties in representing alphanumeric symbols in written form (both in terms of accuracy in the use of the pencil and the space on the page, and in terms of motivation to write). They often did not answer when they were named or when others called their names. Finally, they showed challenging behaviors sometimes involving physical violence, in which they did not seem to recognize their names when they were talked to, and they ignored their behaviors and attributed them to their siblings. The neurodiverse characteristics shown by the students made it necessary to try special didactic approaches to reduce the barriers to access to learning a foreign language. The problem addressed was how to successfully include students showing characteristics compatible with Autism Spectrum Disorder and neurodiversity in this regular classroom, considering that in Argentina the right to education is based on the basic principles of universality and non-discrimination, and considering international conventions that guarantee the right to education (UN General Assembly, 1948,

1989 & 2006), as well as the national educational legislation, the province curriculum frameworks, and complementary documents intended to support inclusive education in the foreign language area in the first years of primary school (Ley 26.206, 2006; Ley 13.668, 2007; DGCYE, 2018a, DGCYE, 2018b).

The objective of this research is to retrieve intervention proposals that could become useful tools to approach foreign language teaching in the presence of neurodiversity and Autism Spectrum Disorder. The methodology to achieve the description of the interventions is the triangulation of sources (Ramzan, 2023; Marradí et al, 2007), by analyzing the autoethnographic records of the experiences documented in the teaching journal of the period between March and July 2022, the yearly planning for the course, curriculum frameworks, educational policies and inclusive education legislation and international conventions.

This study is done from the approaches of neurodiversity, and social and functional concepts of disability. Autism spectrum disorder is characterized in DSM-V by abnormal functioning of one or more of the areas of social interaction, communication, or restrictive, repetitive, and stereotypical patterns of behaviors, interests, and activities (Cadaveira & Waisburg, 2019; Talero et al., 2003; Coto Choto, 2007; Cabrera, 2007). The concepts of neurodiversity and neurodivergence also add elements to recognize and embrace all "atypical" neurological development as normal differences to be respected as any other human difference. The neurodiversity movement works for equal rights for all neurologic configurations, which implies getting access to adaptations and support to live gratifying lives. In this line, the social and functional concepts of disability add that disability is caused by social oppression and is present in society, equally affecting all of its members (Ortega, 2009; Cadaveira & Waisburg, 2019). By taking these approaches into account, the didactic interventions are analyzed from the barriers that society imposes on neurodiverse individuals and pursue the inclusion of all students into the language classroom.

Additionally, diverse works from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Brazil, and the United States have made descriptive approaches to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in education (Iacoboni & Moirano, 2018; Cadaveira & Waisburg, 2019; Kemp de Mattos & Nuernberg, 2011; Ferreira do Nascimento et al., 2016; Da Silva Costa et al., 2022; Whalon & Hanline, 2013), analyzing how neurodivergent children are systematically excluded from education and how inclusion could be addressed. Approaches to teaching and inclusion of children with autism have traditionally been classified as Behavioral or Developmental, with little to no integration between the two approaches (Cadaveira & Waisburg, 2019). This study

intends to address teaching, second language learning, and inclusion from a perspective that integrates both approaches.

The intervention proposals were formulated based on the prescriptive contents for the pedagogic unit 2020-2021, focusing on re-establishing student-student relationships, and their connection with the school, in the context of the return to presentiality after the pandemic. The curriculum framework of the Province of Buenos Aires prescribes working from a communicative approach, in which the teaching-learning proposals offer students possibilities of participating in socially meaningful exchanges in the second language, learning the language, and how to use it creatively through tasks and projects. The intention is to involve students in communicative interactions that require negotiation of meaning. The second language is used in a particular context between specific speakers, and with specific purposes, to foster the acquisition and appropriation of the language by participating in systematic, frequent, and sustained situations of linguistic exchanges (DGCYE, 2018a; DGCYE, 2018b). Thus, one of the most relevant teaching objectives was to create contexts that offered students opportunities to use the second language through different social practices, such as greeting, playing, following instructions, giving information, and describing them and others. When working towards the inclusion of neurodiverse students in the classroom, variety is key: it is important to offer students different means by which information is presented, as well as various options for them to work on tasks and express what they have learned (DGCYE, 2018b). The project was structured in a way that could offer students literature and musical contexts in meaningful situations. Music in the form of songs and rhythmic chants improved social communication, reduced challenging behaviors, and promoted self-regulation in the classroom, coinciding with contributions made by Jones (2018) and Uche (2024).

Additionally, all the classes intended to attain at least one of the situations considered fundamental to the process of teaching reading and writing: situations in which children read through the teacher, situations in which students write through the teacher, situations in which students read by themselves, and situations in which students write by themselves. This helped offer students a predictable class routine which was enhanced by the use of pictograms as alternative communication means, allowing them to know what was going to happen in each class. As a result, significant improvement was noticed in the interaction of the whole class, especially with students showing neurodiverse characteristics. As Kemp de Mattos & Nuernberg (2011) have also observed, alternative communication also improves the capacity of the group in accepting the differences. Additionally, these predictable

routines favored students' ability to anticipate, self-regulate, and self-monitor objectives, being useful at the same time to reduce meltdowns and challenging behaviors (Uche, 2024).

Although supporting and educating children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the paradigm of neurodiversity is a journey that requires teaching-learning designs tailored to each individual, strategies such as the use of music, consistent routines, and alternative or enhanced communication means were useful to facilitate inclusion in the second language classroom through the reduction of barriers of access, the benefits of anticipation, and self-regulation. In all, they led to the mitigation of the occurrence of challenging behaviors, enhancing communication and learning. It is also important to mention the affective benefits, as students' ability to engage in classroom proposals and their motivation is also determined by the trusting and respectful environment that is present in the foreign language classroom (DGCYE, 2018b). By learning in a peaceful and understanding atmosphere, all students in a diverse classroom are benefitted, consequently enhancing quality education.

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Notes

[1] *multigrade teaching* involves teaching classes of students of different abilities, ages, and grade levels.

[2] Usually a regular school would offer one-hour English classes twice a week from fourth grade onwards, while rural schools accommodate these classes from first grade.

[PÁGINA INTENCIONALMENTE EN BLANCO]

Mesa redonda: Estudiantes de Metodología de la Investigación Científica

Transforming higher education assessment: case study on the use of Ted Talks in the Oral Discourse I course at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata

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This study focuses on the integration of the TED Talk format as an alternative form of assessment in the Oral Discourse I course at the English Teaching Training Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (UNMDP). Inspired by the objective of the TED Talks of motivating the audience towards change, the course professors have adopted this format in 2015 to foster communication skills in students. It has been observed that this modality has had a significant impact on students' perceptions of their university studies, acting as a **turning point** in their academic development. This work, based on the tradition of qualitative research, specifically the case study method, seeks to **comprehend** the effects of using TED Talks as an assessment tool. The primary objective is to understand to what extent the TED Talk format as an alternative assessment has significance in the students' education. The findings of this study will provide a deeper understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with the implementation of this assessment strategy in the university context.

Key words: assessment, higher education assessment, alternative assessment, Ted Talks

Assessing for innovation: Students' perceptions as regards alternative assessment in the course "Didáctica y Currículum" during the first term in 2022 at the English Teaching Education Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (UNMdP)

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Evaluations have always been a conflicting topic for teachers and researchers. How to evaluate, or how to do it efficiently and accurately, is a huge conundrum to this day. In order to improve the way they assess students, some teachers have left behind traditional evaluations and have taken up alternative ones. In the case of Didáctica y Currículum, a course in the English Teacher Training Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (UNMdP) in 2022, the teaching staff decided to change their assessment instruments. This change sparked different reactions from the students. Through this project, we aim at recovering and understanding the experiences and perceptions of those students that took the aforementioned course in 2022 as regards alternative assessment.

Keywords: evaluations, teacher training, pedagogy, qualitative

Welcome back; (posibles) factores exógenos y endógenos detrás de las trayectorias interrumpidas de estudiantes avanzados que regresan al Profesorado de Inglés en la Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata

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Year after year, the English Teaching Program at Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata (UNMDP) witnesses a significant departure of advanced students. Some choose to discontinue their studies, often opting to complete their studies at other institutions. However, some decide to return and complete their education where they started. This situation raises pertinent questions: What factors influence these decisions? Moreover, what do these students learn during their time away from the program? It is noteworthy that rather than completely disengaging from their professional development, many continue teaching during this period, which suggests this experience may aid in obtaining their teaching degree. This raises questions about how they perceive the value of their academic training in relation to their practical teaching experience. This project aims to explore the motivations behind students leaving and returning to academia, and to evaluate the significance of experiential learning beyond traditional university settings. This research project will explore key concepts such as disengagement, reintegration, non-linear educational trajectories, and a distinction between endogenous and exogenous factors that could influence these decisions. Data will be collected through biographical-narrative approaches using semi-structured interviews and focus groups.

KEY WORDS: non-linear educational trajectories, endogenous and exogenous factors, personal and professional motivation, biographical-narrative approach.

[PÁGINA INTENCIONALMENTE EN BLANCO]

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