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___Jose Alexander Arcila Valencia_____, con C.C. No. ___4518803_____,

_____, con C.C. No. _____,

_____, con C.C. No. _____,

Autor(es) de la tesis y/o trabajo de grado o _____

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AUTOR O AUTORES:

Primero y Segundo Apellido	Primero y Segundo Nombre
Periñan Morales	Abel Andrés
Arcila Valencia	Jose Alexander

DIRECTOR Y CODIRECTOR TESIS:

Primero y Segundo Apellido	Primero y Segundo Nombre
Viáfara Gonzales	John Jairo

ASESOR (ES):

Primero y Segundo Apellido	Primero y Segundo Nombre
Viáfara Gonzales	John Jairo

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Este estudio de caso cualitativo se realizó dentro de un programa de enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera en una universidad pública de Colombia. Su objetivo fue explorar las experiencias de cinco profesores en formación en su práctica docente para comprender el papel de esta práctica en las creencias de los participantes sobre la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés. Los maestros en formación fueron entrevistados en tres momentos diferentes durante el estudio y se les pidió que escribieran reflexiones semanales y una reflexión final al final de su práctica docente. Los hallazgos indican que las relaciones entre los profesores practicantes y su asesor de práctica docente, los maestros cooperantes y sus contextos de enseñanza, hacen parte de las experiencias de enseñanza de los maestros practicantes e influyen en sus creencias. El estudio concluye que la práctica docente sirve como un catalizador para la manifestación de creencias antes y durante el proceso de enseñanza, donde se producen tensiones entre las creencias de los profesores

practicantes y la realidad de la enseñanza. La práctica docente también desempeña un papel importante en el refuerzo y la transformación de las creencias debido a factores tales como las particularidades del contexto de la enseñanza, el rol del profesor cooperante y el asesor de la práctica docente.

ABSTRACT: (Máximo 250 palabras)

Beliefs about teaching and learning have a significant influence in every teacher's teaching pedagogy. This qualitative case study took place within an English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching program in a public university in Colombia. It aims at exploring the experiences of five pre-service teachers undergoing their teaching practicum to understand its role in the participants' beliefs about teaching and learning. Exploring beliefs has become relevant since they affect teachers' practices and decisions in their classrooms. Therefore, as teaching practicum advisors in this EFL teaching program, we see in this experience a tremendous potential for personal and institutional pedagogical growth. The pre-service teachers were interviewed at three different moments during the study and were asked to write weekly reflections and a final reflection at the end of their teaching practice. The findings indicate that the relationships between pre-service teachers and their teaching practicum advisor, cooperating teachers, and their teaching contexts, take part in the pre-service teachers' teaching experiences, and influence their beliefs. The study concludes that the teaching practicum serves as a catalyst for beliefs manifestation before and during the teaching process, where tensions between the pre-service teachers' beliefs and the teaching reality take place. The teaching practicum also plays and important role in reinforcing and transforming beliefs due to factors such as the teaching context particularities, the role of the cooperating teacher, and the role teaching practicum advisor.

APROBACION DE LA TESIS

Nombre Presidente Jurado: CARMEN TULIA ZULUAGA CORRALES

Firma:

Nombre Jurado: JAIRO ENRIQUE CASTAÑEDA TRUJILLO

Firma: Jairo Castañeda

Nombre Jurado: JHON JAIRO LOSADA RIVAS

Exploring the Role of the Teaching Practicum on Pre-service Teachers' Beliefs

Jose Alexander Arcila Valencia

Abel Andrés Periñan Morales

Master thesis presented as a partial requirement to obtain the degree of Magister in English Didactics

Thesis Director

John Jairo Viáfara Gonzáles. PhD.

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Approved

Note of acceptance

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Dedication

To the memory of my loving mother Edelmira Morales Marrugo, to whom I owe everything I am, and I will ever be and to my strong and loving dad Abel Periñan Ortiz, who has given his life for the family. Without their love and care, I would not be the man I am.

Abel Andrés Periñán Morales

To my whole family, who love me and have supported me in all ways possible, and whom I will make extremely proud.

Jose Alexander Arcila Valencia

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Abstract

Beliefs about teaching and learning have a significant influence in every teacher's teaching pedagogy. This qualitative case study took place within an English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching program in a public university in Colombia. It aims at exploring the experiences of five pre-service teachers undergoing their teaching practicum to understand its role in the participants' beliefs about teaching and learning. Exploring beliefs has become relevant since they affect teachers' practices and decisions in their classrooms. Therefore, as teaching practicum advisors in this EFL teaching program, we see in this experience a tremendous potential for personal and institutional pedagogical growth.The pre-service teachers were interviewed at three different moments during the study and were asked to write weekly reflections and a final reflection at the end of their teaching practice. The findings indicate that the relationships between pre-service teachers and their teaching practicum advisor, cooperating teachers, and their teaching contexts, take part in the pre-service teachers' teaching experiences, and influence their beliefs. The study concludes that the teaching practicum serves as a catalyst for beliefs manifestation before and during the teaching process, where tensions between the pre-service teachers' beliefs and the teaching reality take place. The teaching practicum also plays and important role in reinforcing and transforming beliefs due to factors such as the teaching context particularities, the role of the cooperating teacher, and the role teaching practicum advisor.

Keywords: *Beliefs, teaching practicum, pre-service teachers, EFL teaching and learning, teaching education program*

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Introduction

Language Teacher education programs (hereafter LTEP) have the big responsibility of educating teachers which might not be an easy endeavor considering that the teaching profession entails great complexity. As Danielewics (2001) explains, the act of teaching "demands that teachers analyze the situation, consider the variables of students, texts, knowledge, abilities, and goals to formulate an approach to teaching, and then to carry it out… within the ever-shifting context of the classroom (p. 9). It is then the role of LTEPs to prepare their students to deal with these challenges and many others that the social, political, and cultural particularities of local contexts may bring (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). A significant component of this preparation process is the teaching practicum (Zeichner, 2010; Tang, 2003). This experience is of great value for both the LTEPs, which can reflect on the professional quality of their prospective teachers (Zeichner 2010), and pre-service teachers (hereafter PST), who have the opportunity to "acquire the practical skills and knowledge needed to function as... effective language teacher[s]" (Richards & Crookes, 1988, p. 9).

According to Johnson (1999), most teachers guide their actions and decisions by a set of organized personal beliefs which often affect teachers' performance consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, it is important to note that student teachers enter teacher education carrying these beliefs, which accompany them along their preparation process, and can be influential since their initial teaching experiences, such as the teaching practicum (Pajares, 1992).

Our study is an exploration of the role that he teaching practicum has in pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning. It took place within an English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching program in a public university in Colombia, and was carried out with a

group of five PSTs undergoing their teaching practicum. As teaching practicum advisors for the teaching practicum in this institution, we see in this experience a tremendous potential for personal and institutional pedagogical growth. Not only may the understanding of this phenomenon inform our pedagogical practices within our LTEP, but also other LTEPs' in Colombia as well. In our study, we looked at the beliefs PSTs held about English teaching and learning, the sources of those beliefs, and the role that the teaching practicum played in PSTs' belief system. To do so, and following qualitative case study design, we interviewed the PSTs at three different moments during their teaching practicum, a twelve-week teaching practice with high school students in public schools in Florencia, Caquetá, Colombia. We also observed the PSTs' lessons and reviewed weekly and final reflections they made about their teaching practicum experience. We conducted a qualitative data analysis process by means of the computer software for qualitative research, Atlas ti.

In the following sections, you will find five chapters composing this research report. The first chapter presents the statement of the problem, along with the research questions and objectives guiding our study. You will also find the characterization of the context and the rationale of the study. The second chapter discusses literature review underpinning our inquiry, which includes the notions of beliefs, pre-service teachers' beliefs, and the teaching practicum. It also discusses relevant literature and related studies to locate our study within this field. In the third chapter, we explain the research design and the instruments and procedures for data collection. In chapter four, we explain how we developed the data analysis and present the findings from this analysis. Lastly, the fifth chapter will show the conclusions and the pedagogical implications of our research, closing with future research avenues that arose from them.

Chapter I

Research Problem

Statement of the Problem

Numerous scholars have argued that student teachers begin their teacher education holding beliefs about teaching and learning generally originated from previous learning experiences (Johnson, 1994; Pajares, 1992; Pajares 1993; Zeichner, 1995). These perceptions, assumptions, attitudes and understandings (beliefs) are especially important in teacher education because they strongly influence pre-service teachers' lessons of experience in the practicum (Zeichner, 1995) and also have a significant effect in what pre-service and in-service teachers do in their teaching opportunities (Borg, 2001; Borg 2003; Goodman, 1988; Johnson, 1991; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Zeichner, 1995; Xu, 2012).

These beliefs may involve emotional dimensions and are highly resistant to change, (Nespor, 1988), being some beliefs more central and interconnected to others, making them more difficult to alter (Pajares, 1992). This is especially problematic when considering the vast nature of beliefs, which may involve positive or negative educational perceptions and practices held to be true and appropriate. Calderhead and Robson (1991) argue that what student teachers learned in their teacher training is mediated by the student understandings of teaching prior to entering their teacher education programs. Based on Lortie's (1975) considerations, Pajares (1993) also warned that the positive school experiences PSTs had in school are brought to teacher education and identify their teaching, leading to the repetition of old, conventional practices. He further reasoned that what PSTs believe they have to do is not necessarily what their educational system needs, and that the preservation of ineffective practices may remain unaffected by higher education.

It is also necessary to mention that unless beliefs are identified, there is no way they can be changed. Clearly, “people are unable to change beliefs they are unaware they possess, and they are unwilling to change those they are aware of unless they see good reason to do so” (Pajares, 1993, p. 47). Pajares (1992), referring to Nisbett and Ross (1980), recalled that there is little literature showing that “ individuals pursue, even in minor ways, strategies that aid in the alteration or rejection of unreasonable or inaccurate beliefs” (p 317), implying the duty of teacher preparation programs in taking ownership of the identification, exploration, confrontation, and evolution in their PSTs’ problematic beliefs. In this regard, Borg (2003), Holt Reynolds (1992), and Suarez and Basto (2017) have highlighted that teacher education and the teaching experiences associated to it can have an influence on PSTs’ cognition and beliefs.

As teaching advisors for pre-service teachers at the Universidad de la Amazonia in Florencia Caquetá, during teaching practicum courses in previous years we have observed, accompanied, and supported PSTs in their path to become teachers. This practice has revealed the various ways PSTs respond to the needs and the challenges they face in every school every semester, relying on the way they understand teaching. Based on the analysis of our field notes, and also pre-service teachers’ written reflections, we have identified a discrepancy between what the students stated in their lesson plans and the way they performed in their lessons. What pre-service teachers reflected upon and what we observed in their lessons revealed how the pre-service teachers’ ideas regarding how to manage the class, learning activities to carry out, or how to make use of the language in their lesson plans differed from what they did when teaching. These mismatch between their ideas and their actual behavior occurred often unconsciously throughout their teaching practicum. Thus, understanding and exploring PSTs’ beliefs, and their

relation with the teaching practicum, became a matter of special interest for us as researchers, which is the core of this research study.

Research Questions

Studies in the field of teachers' cognition, especially on beliefs, have gained interest in Colombia in the last decade. This study aimed at exploring the role of the teaching practicum in the PST's beliefs about teaching and learning. Researching on those beliefs represents for teacher education programs an opportunity to reflect on the impact of the different preparation processes within them (Kocaman and Cansız, 2012).

This research seeks to answer the main question "what is the role of the teaching practicum in the PST's beliefs about EFL teaching and learning at the language teaching program at the Universidad de la Amazonia?, and the following sub-questions: a) what are the PST's beliefs about EFL teaching and learning?, b) what are the sources of the PST's beliefs?, c) what are the tensions between the PSTs' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning and the reality of the teaching practicum?, and d) How do the PSTs' beliefs evolve throughout the teaching practicum?

Research Objectives

The general objective of this research study is to explore the role of the teaching practicum in the PSTs' beliefs about language learning and teaching during their practicum at the ELT program at UDLA. To achieve this goal, we have established four specific objectives; (1) to identify and describe the PSTs' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning, (2) to determine the sources of the PSTs' belief about EFL teaching and learning, (3) to analyze the tensions between PSTs' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning and the reality of the teaching practicum, and (4) to analyze the evolution of the PSTs' beliefs throughout their teaching practicum.

Setting and Rationale

The present study took place in Florencia- Caquetá, Colombia at the Language Teacher education program at the Universidad de la Amazonia. This LTEP has around 487 students enrolled and 429 alumni. This teacher education program offers day and night shift, and it is planned to be completed in nine semesters. This project was carried out with pre-service teachers of the eighth semester of the major who were taking the teaching practicum course. At the beginning of the project, there were seven participants. However, we decided to reduce the number of participants to five to be able to do a more in-depth exploration and analysis of the data collected based on the quality of information gathered from each participant.

Research on PSTs' beliefs systems have gained relevance in the teaching education field during the last two decades (Manuel & Brindley, 2003). The interest towards understanding PSTs' experiences in the teaching practicum, their beliefs, and the role of those beliefs in EFL teaching and learning in the Colombian context has grown exponentially (see Castañeda-Trujillo & Aguirre-Hernandez, 2018; Durán, Lastra, & Morales, 2013; Fajardo, 2013; Gutiérrez, 2015; Lucero & Roncancio-Castellanos 2019 & Morales, 2016). These research experiences have contributed to building situated knowledge about PSTs EFL teaching experiences in our context, emerging from the teaching practicum process (Castellanos, 2013). The studies mentioned above have mostly explored PSTs' beliefs about EFL language teaching, and how those beliefs affect the PSTs' practice or changes in this process. They also dealt with the role of the teaching practicum on PSTs' knowledge, skills and attitudes toward the teaching profession. Although some research studies in Colombia have worked on PTSs' beliefs, only a couple have explored beliefs in relation to the teaching practicum experience (Durán, Lastra & Morales, 2017; Suarez

& Basto, 2017). For this reason, this study might contribute to understanding PSTs' beliefs in their first approach to the teaching in the real context.

Regarding the previous thoughts, Castellanos (2013) stresses the relevance and need "to continue working towards the establishment of a large body of local knowledge in the area of pre-service teaching in Colombia" (p. 203). Castellanos also suggests further research based on exploring how PSTs' beliefs systems match or mismatch their actions, what factors influence the belief systems as they gain experience in the classroom, and how the PSTs' beliefs change when they are confronted with the constraints of the reality. These inquiries closely relate to both ou-r main and specific questions, and will give a deep understanding of the teaching practicum role in the PSTs' process of becoming teachers.

This qualitative case study aimed to explore the role of the teaching practicum in the PSTs' beliefs about teaching and learning. As a first objective to study the PSTs beliefs we adopt Kocaman & Cansiz' (2012) and Pajares (1992) claims, where they elaborate on the idea that teachers' beliefs have become an essential focus of scholarly inquiry that requires explicit conceptualization, careful examination, and consistent understanding in search of concrete meaning. In this regard, exploring beliefs is also crucial since they affect teachers' practices and instructional decisions in the classroom (Xu, 2012). Knowing that beliefs influence teachers' ways of acting toward the classes, beliefs tend to be difficult and resistant to change (Williams & Burden, 1997). Pajares (1992) states that "the earlier a belief is incorporated into the belief structure, the more difficult it is to alter" (p. 317). Therefore, beliefs represent a challenge in teachers' practices especially when teachers are not aware of the beliefs they possess. Thus, beliefs may be left unattended without any reflection, affecting teachers' practices in positive or negative ways (Brookhart & Freeman 1992; Pajares, 1993).

In this same vein, Xu, (2012) claims that "teachers who fail to examine their beliefs may bring about unanticipated consequences in the classroom, set aside valuable curriculum, overlook or marginalize students who need them, misinterpret students' motives or behavior and limit their potential as professionals" (p. 1401). This lack of reflectivity might prevent teachers from improving their pedagogical practices. Hence, based on what has already been argued, studying, understanding and exploring pre-service teachers' beliefs is the starting point towards the reflection and construction of a sociocultural environment in and outside of the classroom where teachers become aware of they way they think, know, behave and do, based on their particular contexts (Borg, 2001; Endacott & Sturtz, 2015; Xu, 2012).

As a second objective, we intend to explore the reflective nature of the teaching practicum and how its reflective nature might contribute to PSTs cognition during their teaching practicum. According to the Colombian Ministry of Education (2017) and the mission of the LTEP at Universidad de la Amazonia (2018), teachers are expected to base their professionalism guided by systematic reflection on their teaching experiences that addresses the particular needs of contexts. In this same line of thought, Pajares (1992) states that "teaching preparation programs can ill afford to ignore the entering beliefs of preservice teachers" (p. 322). On this regard, Zeichner (1996) highlights that"many of the ideas that student teachers bring to the practicum ...are problematic (Calderhead & Robson, 1991), and unless re-examined, will interfere with teachers learning things during the practicum that will contribute to the accomplishment of the central purposes of schooling" (p. 124). Zeichner (1996) also asserts that understanding and improving one's teaching practicum comes from reflecting upon one's own experience. Hence, It is, therefore, "important for teacher educators to elicit and understand the epistemological beliefs that pre-service teachers bring to their learning in teacher education courses in order to assist

them to develop as critically reflective professionals" (Ng, Nicholas & Williams, 2010, p. 279). we expect that teacher preparation programs, aware of the challenges at hand, will bring changes through reason and informed scholarship (Pajares, 1993). Through this study, we intend to position the teaching practicum as a key academic space for research on PSTs' cognition informed by reflective teaching practices. We expect to contribute to the pedagogical practices and teaching practicum orientations in teacher preparation programs at local and national level through the insights and reflections made to rethink the attention PSTs' beliefs is given and the role of the teaching practicum in those beliefs. Last but not least, developing this research study will contribute to positioning as research-driven teacher educators in our local and national context.

Chapter II

Conceptual Framework

This chapter explores the main constructs of the study. The first section develops the concept of beliefs as an umbrella term, which includes: types of beliefs, beliefs from the perspective of pre-service teachers, sources of beliefs, how they evolve, what influences them as well as the role teacher education programs play in the PSTs' beliefs system. The second section addresses the teaching practicum as the second umbrella term. Here we conceptualize the teaching practicum based on the actors immersed in the teaching practicum, elaborate on the role of the teaching practicum in teacher education and development, and the possible nature of these experiences.

Beliefs and Teacher Education

Beliefs have become an essential focus of educational inquiry that requires explicit definitions, careful examination, and consistent understanding in search of concrete meaning (Kocaman & Cansiz, 2012; Pajares, 1992). Belief systems affect teachers' practices and instructional decisions in the classroom (Xu, 2012). They tend to be culturally bound, formed early in life and resistant to change (Williams & Burden, 1997). Because of this, understanding the nature of belief systems will help understand how teachers internalize and practice what they learnt in their years of education (Pajares, 1992).

Towards an understanding of the concept of beliefs. Different views on beliefs have been conceptualized by several scholars during the last 50 years (Barcelos, 2003; Barcelos & Kalaja, 2003; Borg, 2001; Dufva, 2003; Pajares, 1992; Rokeach, 1968). In this breath, Pajares (1992) defines beliefs as "attitudes, values, judgments… opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions…personal theories, internal

mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, [and] repertories of understanding" (p. 309). A belief is also defined as a "proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, that is evaluative because it is accepted as true by the individual, it has emotive commitment, it guides thought and behavior" (Borg, 2001, p. 186). These subjective views of the reality are significant to understand humans' cognition from a more holistic perspective, and for this study, understanding the different views of beliefs helps in our exploration of the role of the pre-service teachers' beliefs in their teaching practicum.

Thus, for this study, beliefs will be understood as attitudes, judgments, perceptions, dispositions, practical principles… (Pajares, 1992) consciously and unconsciously held, which inform behavior as they are accepted to be true (Borg, 2001; Castellanos, 2013). Also, although beliefs are not static, they are very difficult to alter and might be influenced and modified through the process of construction and deconstruction by means of constant social-cultural reflection (Duran et al., 2017; Pajares, 1992).

Inventory of beliefs. In his comprehensive review of literature on beliefs, one of Pajares' (1992) conclusions is that Individuals' beliefs have a strong influence in the way they perceive reality, and also "affect their behavior (p. 326). So, understanding this phenomenon has driven considerable research interest in the field of education. Horwitz (1985) explains that one of the first attempts to determine students' beliefs about teaching is found in De Garcia, Reynolds, and Savignon (1976). They developed a likert scale addressing "a variety of issues in language teaching ranging from the best way to teach grammar to the importance of teaching culture" (p. 334). Regarding beliefs about learning, Hortwitz (1981) herself developed the "Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) to assess teachers' opinions on a variety of issues and controversies related to language learning" (p. 333). Since then, multiple studies

have drawn on this issue (Anderson & HoltReynolds, 1995; Kalaja, Mendez & Barcelos, 2008; Cota & Ruiz-Esparza's, 2013). Recently, Suarez and Basto (2017) adapted Horwitz' (1988) "Beliefs about language learning inventory" (BALLI) aiming to identify pre-service teachers' beliefs about EFL teaching. In their study, they argue they "became interested in studying pre-service teachers' beliefs predicting that they would influence the teaching practicum, and would be valuable for informing teacher educators and shaping teacher preparation programs" (p. 168). Their endeavour closely related to our study, however our intention was not merely to identify the participants' beliefs, but to analyze the intricate relations between the role the teaching practicum in the PSTs' beliefs. Although we identified some of the beliefs the participants held through elicitation techniques, this data was a means for the discussion we wanted to develop.

Sources of beliefs about teaching and learning. It has been argued that one (if not the most) significant origin of beliefs about teaching and learning is the teachers' previous experiences as learners and the images they held of their previous teaching situations (Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Borg, 2003). In this respect, Robson (1991) claims:

Pre-service teachers held vivid images of teaching from their experiences as students, images that influenced interpretations of particular courses and classroom practices and played a powerful role in determining how they translated and utilized the knowledge they possessed and how they determined the practices they would later undertake as teachers (p. 310, as cited in Pajares, 1992).

With this idea in mind, student teachers do not start their initial teacher education without having their own judgements (Furlong, 2013). Their previous experiences as students have shaped their beliefs and the way they conceive teaching and learning. Here, Pajares affirms that the "importance of critical episodes and images helps explain how teachers develop their educational belief structure as children, a matter of considerable importance to teacher preparation" (p. 310).

Despite bringing no teaching experience to their initial teacher education programs, they all possess experiences as learners that - mistaken on not - guide their actions. Observations of their teachers over the years and their educational biographies as students have an impact on the formation of student teachers' identities and attitudes which successively affect their beliefs and practices (Beauchamp, & Thomas, 2009; Calderhead & Robson 1991; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds 1991). Once students start in teacher education programs, they filter new theories on the basis of their pre-formed conceptions (Eick & Reed, 2002). Therefore, investigating previous learning experiences that contribute to their professional development and the extent to which they are combined through their underlying conceptualizations and experiences is essential for teacher development.

Evolution of beliefs. In the previous comments we discussed how different authors have agreed on teaching images from past learning experiences as a major source of beliefs about teaching and learning. On this matter, Pajares (1992) warn that beliefs from early experiences are highly resistant to change, adding that "the earlier a belief is incorporated into the belief structure, the more difficult it is to alter, for these beliefs subsequently affect perception and strongly influence the processing of new information." (p. 317). This understanding is particularly interesting when drawing on teacher preparation programs and their educational goals for student teachers.

Suarez and Basto (2017) interestingly explored the potential changes in the participant's beliefs during their practicum, an area of special concern in our research. According to the authors, scholars such as Gutiérrez (2015) and Peacock (2001) argue that the teaching practice hardly influences the beliefs pre-service teachers hold before they embark in the practicum. However, it is necessary to remark that the nature of the teaching practicum may vary from

program to program, in special regards to the role of the different stakeholders participating in the practicum and the factors involved. Cabaroglu and Roberts (2000), for instance, advocate against this inflexibility view arguing "pre-service programmes as variables in belief development… group-level studies mask belief change in individuals…,[and What they call] an ambiguous construction of inflexibility (p. 389). The debate over this issue is still on the table, and the interest in researching the development of beliefs is prevailing in the academic community. Castellanos (2013) stresses the importance of strengthening educators and researchers' academic communities through collected and concerted actions to establish a common vision in the teaching development field. In this same vein, Cota and Ruiz-Esparza (2012), in their longitudinal study about pre-service teachers' beliefs about language teaching and learning, draw conclusions on the importance of helping learners "reshape their beliefs by mediating between theory and practice through reflection and the awareness of learners' own beliefs" (p. 92). The researchers claim that " more research needs to be done because what pre-service teachers say and what actually happens in the classroom have not been observed" (p. 92); so that pre-service teachers can have a deeper comprehension of the complexities involved in the teaching-learning process.

Role of teacher education programs in beliefs about EFL teaching and learning. Teacher education programs can influence students' cognition about teaching and learning informed by their experiences as learners (Holt Reynolds, 1992). In this sense, Lortie (1975) asserts that teachers learn a lot about teaching and learning from their vast experiences as language learners. To support this claim, Freeman (as cited in Borg, 2003), states that " the memories of instruction gained through their 'apprenticeship of observation' function as de facto guides for teachers as they approach what they do in the classroom" (p. 88). In the same breath,

Calderhead and Robson (1991), as well as Johnson (1994), characterize teachers' practices asserting "preservice ESL teachers' beliefs may be based largely on images from their formal language learning experiences, and in all likelihood, will represent their dominant model of action during the practicum teaching experience" (p. 450). These scholars show how influential the lived experiences PSTs had as learners are in their beliefs systems emergence.

According to Yüksel and Kavanoz (2015), "extended prior experience causes student teachers to develop personal beliefs and knowledge about teaching" (p 777), mainly because of their observations as learners and the lectures they were given, which could influence the preservice teaching practices. This discussion shows the great power of learners' experiences during their teaching preparation process. Finally, Suarez and Basto (2017) support the previous studies stating that PSTs' beliefs might be influenced or changed by several factors in the teaching practicum such as the contact with the real classroom context, the confrontation with personal experiences, and changes of self-image.

The Teaching Practicum

As part of their curriculum, teacher education programs generally have their pre-service teachers put the theoretical and pedagogical knowledge they have gained in the course of the program into practice in real settings (Williams, 2008). Also, as Richards and Crookes (1988) state, the teaching practicum " is the major opportunity for the student teacher to acquire the practical skills and knowledge needed to function as an effective language teacher" (p. 9). This practice of the teaching and learning foundations is generally referred to as practicum, teaching practice, teaching practicum or pedagogical practicum; for this study we will be using the term teaching practicum. Marais & Meier (2004) highlight that this process involves a range of experiences to which student teachers are exposed when they work in classrooms and schools,

and therefore it is of great importance for teacher preparation programs. Depending on their nature, the teaching practicum not only deals with the experiences of teaching in real settings, it also involves the role of actors other than the student teachers, namely the cooperating teacher and the practicum advisor. In Colombia, the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2017) (Colombian Ministry of Education, MEN hereafter), in its resolution 18583, defines the teaching practicum as the processes of appropriation of knowledge and practices that make up the professional exercise of the future teacher or pre-service teacher. The MEN (2017) also states that the teaching practicum is understood as the process of teacher preparation, conceptualization, observation, transposition, interaction or intervention, reflection, research, innovation in school scenarios where the future teacher appropriates and understands the formative sense of the public education scenarios of professional performance.

Thus, this study was developed within a teacher preparation program under the scrutiny of the MEN of Colombia, this is why they align with the educational policies issued by this government agency. In this respect, La Universidad de la Amazonia, where this research took place, has established the guidelines for the teaching practicum, defining the following main objectives for the teaching practicum: a) to generate spaces for reflection and pedagogical and didactic action through formative research strategies based on the theoretical-practical relationship built from the different disciplines of the curriculum, and b) to contribute to train teachers who understand the role they play in guiding the new generations to build a nation project (Accord 24 of 2011, Consejo Académico Universidad de la Amazonía).

The teaching practicum organization. As stated above, the teaching practicum is the major opportunity for PSTs to practice their theoretical knowledge acquired during their teaching preparation programs (Richards & Crookes, 1988). This process of learning how to teach, has

historically been seen under different paradigms (Wallace, 1991; Zeichner, 1996). These two scholars define the teaching practicum under three major conceptual approaches mainly. In the first one the source of the teaching expertise lies in knowledgeable mentors, whose role is to show the novice teachers what they need to do, so these can imitate and reproduce the given knowledge without criticism. Wallace, (1991) named this approach as the craft model whereas Zeichner (1996) called it the apprenticeship practicum. The second approach refers to the PST application of theories from educational research on teaching and learning. This approach is conceived as the applied science model (Wallace, 1991) or applied science practicum (Zeichner, 1996). In this approach, "the practicum becomes essentially a time to demonstrate things learned previously, rather than a time for new learning" (Zeichner, 1996, p. 129) leaving no room for knowledge-building. In Zeichner' (1983) words "the prospective teacher is viewed primarily as a passive recipient of this professional knowledge and plays little part in determining the substance and direction of his or her preparation program" (p.3). In these two approaches, the relationship between the teaching practicum advisor and the PSTs is a vertical one, where the PST is expected to follow the expert instruction and advice.

In the last approach, the reflective model or inquire-oriented practicum (Wallace, 1991; Zeichner, 1996) teaching is seen under the lenses of research and reflective practices. The main idea underlying this approach is "the belief that the process of understanding and improving one's teaching must start from reflection on one's own experience" (Zeichner, 1996, p. 130). In this view of the teaching practicum, "teacher educators emphasize helping the student teachers develop great understanding of their own practical theories and tacit knowledge of teaching and on learning" (Zeicher, 1996, p.131), through reflection in and on the teaching practicum (Schön, 1987). Finally through this approach, The "fundamental task of teacher education ...is to develop

prospective teachers' capacities for reflective action and to help them examine the moral, ethical and political issues, as well as the instrumental issues, that are embedded in their everyday thinking and practice" (Zeichner, 1983, p. 7).

This teaching process, requires time for the students to have a meaningful teaching and learning experience. Darling-Hammond (2010) expresses that teaching practicums "typically require at least a full academic year of student teaching under the direct supervision of one or more teachers who model expert practice with students who have a wide range of learning needs" (p. 40). Thus, during the length of the teaching practicum, we can consider three main actors. Richards and Crookes (1988) explain that typically student teachers begin the process by observing who will be later their cooperating teacher. Then, under the supervision of the cooperating teacher, student teachers gradually take over the responsibility of teaching. They are also supervised by their teacher education program supervisor, who regularly visits and observes them. This supervisor accompanies the student teachers' process by providing feedback on the student teachers' classroom performance, reports from the cooperating teacher, and peer feedback, through conferences with them.

They also highlight the relevance of supervised and unsupervised regular classroom teaching by the pre-service teacher. In supervised classes, they accent the value of observation, which must be occasionally led by any of the different stakeholders (the teacher advisor, the cooperating teacher or another pre-service teacher), regularly the teacher advisor. Additionally, posterior feedback is needed to raise pre-service teachers' awareness of personal teaching styles. This process of professional growth is mixed with the unsupervised classes where PSTs have to face reality independently.

In experiencing real teaching, Calderhead (1989) explains that this process allows students to become aware of their context, their social values, their professional growth, as well as to reflect on their role as teachers. The teaching practicum is then a contextualized teaching and learning experience for pre-service teachers to see the real face of the educative system of a particular context, where they reassess their views of the world through the interactions with their surroundings, their reflections, and the constant guidance of the teacher advisor.

The relevance of teaching practicums in prospective EFL teachers' education. As mentioned earlier, the teaching practicum is considered a key component of the teaching education process PSTs carry out in their undergraduate programs (Barton, Hartwig & Cain, 2015; Farrell, 2003; Morales, 2016). During the teaching practicum, student teachers are able to apply theoretical knowledge, and also acquire the practical skills and knowledge from real teaching experiences. In this vein, Zeichner (1996) argues that "some lessons will be learned by student teachers during the practicum. We must therefore view the practicum as an important occasion for teacher learning and not merely a time for the demonstration of things previously learned" (p. 124). The practicum experience may reveal valuable information for prospective teachers' and also teacher education programs when considering the pedagogical nature of the goals underpinning their essence. In this sense, pre-service teachers, who may be experiencing formal teaching and its challenges for their first time, begin to understand the complexity of teaching, and teacher education programs have the opportunity to evaluate their pre-service teachers' performance and reflect on their role in their teacher education process.

When regarding the practical experience provided by classroom practice, Richards and Crookes (1988) stress that aspects such as lesson planning, material development and getting

acquainted with different teaching methodologies are fundamental for the teaching practicum. Thus, the pre-service teachers' experiences in the practicum may inform their teacher preparation programs concerning the influence of various aspects of the curriculum in the student teachers' practical knowledge. For this process to take place, reflection is to play a primary role in the elicitation of beliefs, understandings, and the teaching experience perceptions as a whole. Earlier in this chapter, we had mentioned how pre-service teachers bring beliefs about teaching and learning to their preparation programs and later to their classrooms during the practicum. As found in Zeichner (1996), "many of the ideas that student teachers bring to the practicum ...are problematic (Calderhead, 1991), and unless re-examined, will interfere with teachers learning things during the practicum that will contribute to the accomplishment of the central purposes of schooling" (p. 124). The beliefs pre-service teachers hold may influence how they understand the circumstances they find themselves into and guide their choices and decision making regarding their teaching practice. This phenomenon raises concerns on the role of teacher preparation programs in those beliefs when considering the goals of each program. In this respect, Suarez and Basto (2017) found that from a reflective approach, the teaching practicum can have a big influence in the PSTs' beliefs, generating change and transformation in them. Thus, when practicing teaching, a central role is played by experience and reflective teaching, a process of teacher awareness and the confrontation of beliefs and actions in these socially-constructed interactions, where the stakeholders' cognition might shift based on the particularities, practicalities, and possibilities of the context. (Kumaravadively, 2001).

Reflection: a key factor in pre-service teachers' beliefs construction. The teaching practice experience pre-service teachers face is a guided and supervised process where weekly encounters are held between the pre-service teachers and the teacher advisor. This academic

meeting is the place where group reflection happens to raise awareness of the methodological decisions taken before, during and after the direct classes at a certain educational institution, as a way to improve the teaching practice process. Reflection is seen as “an active and deliberative cognitive process that involves sequences of interconnected ideas that take into account underlying beliefs and knowledge... Reflection is [also] considered as a thinking process, resulting in creating alternatives to teaching” (Dewey, as cited in Pedro, 2006, p. 130). As an intrinsic part of the teaching profession, reflective teaching sets the ground for self-inquiry on the efficacy and efficiency of teachers’ actions in light of the learning goals and their interpretation of the classroom reality. This understanding may be a one-sided view of reality, one version of the story, but serves as necessary self-evaluation of what occurs in the classroom. Whether the reflective exercise is carried out when actions are taking place, after, or both (Schön, 1987), it is a major responsibility for critical and responsible teachers. The reflective teacher is “the one who can look back on events, make judgments about them, and alter their teaching behaviors in light of craft, research, and ethical knowledge” (Valli, as cited in Sharifi & Abdolmanafi, 2014). In this regard, the teaching practicum is the propitious place to construct and deconstruct knowledge using constant socio-cultural reflection.

Regarding the teaching practicum, which, as Sharafi and Abdolmanafi (2014) point out, is an exceptional and at the same time limited opportunity for pre-service teachers to face the school environment, reflection plays a crucial role for both PSTs and the teacher education program they belong to. On the one hand, PSTs begin to explore and develop their reflective system. On the other hand, as suggested by Kocaman and Cansız (2012), “reflection on their student-teacher’ practices may allow teacher training institutions to take necessary steps to improve teacher practice” (p. 799). Thus, teacher education programs may confront their

students' attitudes, reactions and performance as a whole to the projected teacher in their vision. In short, reflective teaching is to give teacher education a main avenue for the exploration and understanding of beliefs as a fundamental influence in teachers' beliefs and behavior. In inquiring about beliefs, teachers have to be constantly critical of themselves aiming to transform their behavior as a result of reflection (Viafara, 2005a).

The concepts analyzed in this chapter helped us give our study a framework upon which we developed our discussion on the basis of the data we collected. In the following section, we detail the characteristics of our research that provided us the tools to explore the phenomenon addressed in this study.

Chapter III

Research Design

The focus of this qualitative research study was to explore the role of the teaching practicum in PSTs' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning to build a rich and detailed understanding of the phenomenon. To achieve this goal, this study follows a qualitative research approach. Hatch (2002) states that qualitative studies rely on natural settings to understand the way people make sense of their actions. In this regard, our study relies on the experiences five pre-service teachers lived in their teaching practicum II teaching teens. Hatch (2002) also points out the importance of understanding "the world from the perspectives of those living in it" (p. 7) and "the meaning individuals used to understand social circumstances" (p. 8). In this sense, the PSTs', the sources of them, the tensions between PST's beliefs about EFL teaching and learning and the reality of the teaching practicum, and the evolution of their beliefs throughout the teaching practicum are the core of the data collected in this study. As a third aspect, Hatch (2002) places the researchers as the main data-collectors. Therefore, the data collected for this study was carried out through interviews, observations, and in some cases, documents. Another aspect stated by Hatch is "extended Firsthand Engagement" (p. 7), which refers to confidence researchers and participants build so that they can obtain reliable information. In that respect, one of the researchers of the study was the participants' English and teaching practicum advisor for a year. This interaction allowed both the PST's and the teaching practicum advisor to develop a close rapport where affinity and empathy underpinned their interpersonal relationship. Consequently, our claims derive from Hatch´s (2002) characteristics of qualitative research such as wholeness and complexity, subjectivity, emergent design, and inductive analysis. Thus, we intended to comprehend the "world" of the teaching practicum in the lives of the participants to

continue reflecting and constructing rigorous knowledge and contribute to the EFL teaching and learning community.

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Type of Research

This study constitutes an exploratory case study. According to Yin (2003), "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (p. 18). By the same token, Merriam (2002) defines a case study as "an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution, or community" (p. 8). In the same breath, Kumar (2011) highlights the importance of treating the whole population as one entity. That said, the unit of analysis of this case study is the five pre-service teachers going through the journey of the teaching practicum II course. The course has a length of one semester within the EFL teaching program curriculum in a public university in Colombia. As we seek to explore the role of the teaching practicum in the participants' beliefs about English teaching and learning in local schools, a case study will help us provide a thick heuristic understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Setting

This study took place at Universidad de la Amazonía (hereafter UDLA), the only public higher education institution in the department of Caquetá, with around 9000 students. UDLA is one of the largest universities in the south of the country and admits students from all corners of the department and other surrounding departments as well. UDLA offers a wide variety of majors in 6 faculties, including the Faculty of Education, with seven teacher education programs. The participants belong to the English Language Teaching Program, a rather young program created in 2000. It currently has 487 students enrolled and 429 alumni, many of whom have filled

numerous teaching positions in the region since the program graduated its first cohort, solving a necessity many educational institutions have due to governmental bilingualism policies. This teacher education program offers both day and night shifts, and it is planned to be completed in 9 semesters. As part of the program's curriculum, there are three courses meant to provide the student-teachers with practical knowledge to prepare them for the teaching profession. The guiding document for these courses present the following main objectives of the teaching practicum: a) to generate spaces for reflection and pedagogical and didactic action through formative research strategies based on the theoretical-practical relationship built from the different disciplines of the curriculum, and b) to contribute to train teachers who understand the role they play in guiding the new generations to build a nation project (Accord 24 of 2011, Consejo Académico Universidad de la Amazonía).

The program conceives the courses mentioned above as the teaching practicum, which students take in the 4th, 7th and 8th semester. The first course is called: "Contextualizacion Escolar" and sets the first contact of the student-teachers with an educational setting through observing the reality of the teaching profession in one public school in the urban area and one school in the rural area, where the students-teachers have to implement a teaching activity. The other two courses are called Teaching Practicum I and Teaching Practicum II. During the Teaching Practicum I, the students are placed in a public school to teach a class of elementary students for 12 weeks. In the same way, during the Teaching practicum II, which is the focus of this study, the students are placed in a public school again, but this time they have to teach a class of secondary students for the same 12 weeks (one of four terms in which the school year is divided into public education in Colombia). In both the teaching practicum I and II, the PSTs have an assigned cooperating teacher and a teaching practicum advisor. The cooperating teacher

is an official teacher at the public institution who allows the pre-service teacher to teach one of their classes and accompanies them in this process. On the other hand, the teaching practicum advisor's role is to guide the pre-service teachers in the whole process of the teaching practicum, including planning, teaching and reflecting (Accord 24 of 2011, Consejo Académico Universidad de la Amazonía). This study was carried out during the development of the Teaching Practicum II, the final teaching practice course.

Participants

The participants of this qualitative case study were initially seven pre-service teachers. After half of the data collection phase was completed, we reduced the participants to five pre-service teachers based on those who had provided all the data and had completed all the assignments being analysed. The participants were four women and one man. The participants were taking their eighth out of nine semesters in the English Language Teaching Program at Universidad de la Amazonia. Participant 1 is a woman. She was twenty-two. She is from a small town in a municipality called Isnos. She is already a mom with a seven-year-old child. She is a very passionate and strong pre-service teacher who showed responsibility, tenacity, caring, creativity and critical thinking through her teaching practicum process. Participant 2 was a twenty-five-year-old woman. She is from a small town in Caquetá called El Doncello. She is a loving, very creative, and determined pre-service teacher who cares for the well-being of her students as the first aspect of learning. Participants 3 is a woman. She is from El Curillo, a small town in Caqueta. She was twenty-two years old, and she is a very critical pre-service teacher, always willing to provide her students with meaningful learning experiences. Participant 4 is a man. He is from the same town as the first participant. He was twenty-four years old. He was a teacher concerned about his students' learning process and improving his teaching practicum. He

was always looking for better ways to conduct his classes, always seeing his process retrospectively. Finally, participant 5 was a twenty-two-year-old woman; she is from a small town in Caqueta called Puerto Rico. She is also a very caring and loving teacher, whose interests are cooperative and meaningful learning. One aspect to highlight is that all the participants come from out of Florencia, which is the City where the Universidad de la Amazonia is located.

Table 1 *Participants' main information*

Participant	**Age**	**Gender**	**Origin**	**School setting**	**Grade**
#1	22	Female	Isnos-Huila	Co-ed urban public school	9th
#2	25	Female	El Doncello-Caquetá	Co-ed urban public school	9th
#3	22	Female	Curillo-Caquetá	Co-ed urban public school	7th
#4	24	Male	Isnos-Huila	Co-ed urban public school	8th
#5	22	Female	Puerto Rico-Caquetá	Co-ed urban public school	9th

Source: Personal Creation

These participants were selected taking into account the philosophy of the study. Based on Kumar (2011), "the purpose of sampling in qualitative research is to draw inferences about the group from which you have selected the sample" (p. 176). We relied on purposive or judgmental sampling, which in Kumar's (2011) ideas, are those people "who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of your study" (p. 189). Kumar (2011) also states that "you only go to see those people who in your opinion are likely to have the required information and be willing to share it with you" (p. 189). The five participants differed in their teaching practicum

group. Three of them were in the Teaching Practicum group A, led by one of the researchers, who at the same time was their teaching practicum advisor. The remaining two were in the Teaching Practicum group B led by another teaching practicum advisor from the target Teacher Education program. P1 and P2 had the same cooperating teacher. This cooperating teacher was a woman who had around seven years of teaching experience. P3 had a female cooperating teacher who has more than twenty years of teaching experience in the public sector. P4's cooperating teacher was a man. He has four years of teaching experience. Finally, P5's cooperating teacher was a man with more than fifteen years of teaching experience. This last cooperating teacher is the only one whose Bachelor degree is not in EFL, although he has taken different EFL teaching courses and seminars through the years.

Two of the pre-service teachers in group A had the same cooperating teacher. The remaining participants had different cooperating teachers. Regarding the researchers, one of them is a full-time teacher at UDLA. He was the participants' English teacher and at the same time the Teaching Practicum A group advisor. The other researcher was a full-time teacher at the University in previous years, currently working at a local public school. They both prepared the data collection methods, collected the information, and analyzed it.

Ethics of Research

As a pillar of the Ethical responsibilities in qualitative research, the researchers informed the ELT program about their intentions in researching a phenomenon inside the teaching practicum courses. In addition, the researchers met with the participants and informed them about the significant role they would play in the study. For this aim, the participants signed a consent form (See Appendix A) to agree on their voluntary participation in this research study. The participants were informed about the name, purpose, procedures of the research, anonymity of

their identity, and their right to ask questions as well as to withdraw at any time without affecting their relationship with the English teacher or the teaching practicum advisor. We treated information adequately to maintain the privacy of the participants. By having clearly stated the ethical foundations of the study, the participants felt confident to provide trustworthy information, and in this way, the validity and reliability of the information increased.

Data Collection techniques and instruments

We collected the data by means of three different techniques, which where elicitation, observations, and documents. In regards to elicitation technique, we carried out two personal interviews with each participant, and a focus group interview with 4 out of the 5 participants. As to the observations, we made an average of two observations and documented them by means of field notes. Finally, the documents we analyzed were the PSTs' artifacts from their teaching practicum such as weekly reflections, lesson plans, and final written reports about the teaching practicum.

Interviews. We decided to use interviews based on the premise that this elicitation technique had the potential to help us collect firsthand information addressing our data interest to answer all of our research questions. An interview, as Cannel and Kahn (1994) define it, is "a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer with the specific purpose of obtaining information relevant to the research and focused by him on the content specified by the description and explanation objectives of the research" (p. 217). In this way, we guided our interviews with a design of open-ended questions on general aspects of EFL teaching and learning that were explored in more detail with follow-up inquiries as the interviews progressed. To collect the necessary data, we designed two semi-structured interviews one in the second week of the participants' teaching practicums, and a second one in the eighth week. In regards to

these types of interviews, Nunan (1992) points out that a semi-structured interview is the one where the interviewer has a general idea of the interview supported by general topics or issues to guide the conversation rather than a list of predetermined set of questions to control the conversation.

The interviews we conducted were the main source of data collection which helped us answer all the questions in this research study with the complementary help of the other two data collection techniques explained in this chapter. Our first interview included 21 base-questions (see appendix B). Its objective intended to identify and explore the participants' initial beliefs about EFL teaching and learning, and the sources of those beliefs. The two researchers participated in interviewing every participant. One researcher led the conversation while the other was taking notes of the different issues of interest that might have sparked his interest, and in this sense, ask more related questions. The encounters took place in the researcher/Teaching practice advisor's office at UDLA, and these interviews lasted 50 minutes in average. These interviews were recorded in both video and audio in three different devices for reliability purposes. In the second interview, the number of questions increased differently in each participants' case since new information drawn from the data analysis of the first interview, and also from the observations, was included in the design. With these second interviews, we wanted to understand if the participants' beliefs were still the same, if they had been reinforced or if they had changed. Hence, during these interviews, we began to explore the role of different factors in the teaching practicum, the possible tensions between the PSTs' beliefs about ELF teaching and learning and the reality of the teaching practicum, as well as the evolution beliefs had during the teaching practicum experience. These interviews lasted an approximate of 1 hour and 15 minutes on average and were audio recorded in three different devices again.

As mentioned above, we held a focus group interview once all the PSTs had finished their teaching practicum. This elicitation technique served as a third interview aimed at describing in more detail the development of thePSTs' belief systems and the possible tensions and evolution of beliefs experienced by them between their beliefs and the reality of their teaching practicum. Cohen and Manion (2000) explain that group interviews "are often quicker than individual interviews and hence are timesaving and involve minimal disruption. The group interview can also bring together people with varied opinions or as representatives of different collectivities" (p. 287). As mentioned in the participants' characterization, the 5 participants had two different teaching practicum advisors who gave them advice and guidance during the practicum. Also, they had different settings and different cooperating teachers at the local schools they were assigned to. This multiplicity of factors along with their personal traits filled them with experiences they brought to the discussion we stimulated in the group interview, and as Kumar (2011) warns, we had to be careful enough to avoid that the opinion of more active speakers dominated the others', and also that the discussions went off focus. This encounter lasted one hour and forty minutes, which was timesaving indeed. The meeting was held in one classroom of the university and took place one month after the students had finished their teaching practicum. This decision had to do with the fact that some participants had gone home for vacation right after finishing classes, and also that we were in the process of analyzing the data from the second interviews. This group interview was video and audio recorded in three different devices. Although both the researchers were present in the discussion, it is important to mention that only four of the five participants took part in the conversation. The fifth participant was unable to participate due to job responsibilities.

Direct Observation. Taking into account Yin's (2003) principle of data collection "multiple sources of evidence", and the need to gather information that facilitated contrast and triangulation, we decided to observe PSTs to have a valuable opportunity to know what they did in their lessons in relation to what they said they believed in regards to EFL teaching and learning. Hatch (2002) corroborates this notion by asserting that "the researcher may learn sensitive information from being in the setting that informants may be reluctant to discuss in interviews" (p. 72). By conducting direct observation we could identify some of the participants beliefs during the teaching practicum and how some of these beliefs were reinforced and how some others changed. To achieve this goal, we used field notes with guiding themes as the data collection instrument. We designed a format (see appendix C) to help the observer write descriptive comments under a related topic to EFL teaching and learning. The researcher/teaching practicum advisor observed each participant twice, excepting P4, who was observed only once, and video recorded the second time because the researcher had to observe other of this PSTs simultaneously. The observations took place based on a pre-established schedule the researcher/teaching practicum advisor had planned at the beginning of the teaching practicum course to be able to observe at least two times every pre-service teacher he had been assigned for the course (12 in total). This exercise was part of his pedagogical responsibility in the teacher education program. The length of every observation varied according to the length of every class, which in some cases was one hour and, in others, two; and other extracurricular situations affecting each educational institution.

Documents. Some scholars consider documents as another valuable source of information (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2003; Cohen & Manion, 2000). These documents expand the scope of the data collection as they may contain information about or from the participants that

can enrich the data analysis when contrasted with another type of data gathered. Creswell (2012) explains that these documents can be public or private, adding that private documents include personal journals, diaries, letters, and other similar pieces. Therefore, since one of the requirements for the PSTs in their practicum course was to write a reflection after each lesson they taught and a more detailed final reflection at the end of the course, we decided to use those student artifacts as another data collection instrument. Each participant wrote a total of twelve reflections during the teaching practicum journey, one per week, and a final written reflection at the end of the course. As established in the teacher preparation program where this study took place, the weekly reflections did not require the PSTs to follow specific guidelines; they had the freedom to write about the aspects of their teacher experience they decided. In contrast, the final report did require PSTs to guide their reflection on the basis of particular guidelines (See Appendix D). These documents were shared on a website platform called WIX (See Appendix E), to which the researchers had access.

Those reflections served to confront the data in both the interviews and observations and establish relations among the data for the triangulation process. Campbell and Fiske (1959), as cited in Cohen and Manion (2000), highlight that “triangulation is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research (p. 112).

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

Data Analysis Procedure

This chapter aims at exploring the role of the teaching practicum in pre-service teachers' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning. The data collection instruments implemented were interviews, observations, and documents. This section describes the process carried out in the analysis of the data collected through the instruments just mentioned. The information gathered provided data that allowed us to answer our main research question (what is the role of the teaching practicum in the PST's beliefs about EFL teaching and learning at the language teaching program at the Universidad de la Amazonia?) and the four sub-questions in this study (What are the PST's beliefs about EFL teaching and learning?, what are the sources of the PST's beliefs, what are the tensions between the PSTs' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning and the reality of the teaching practicum?, and How do the PSTs' beliefs evolve throughout the teaching practicum?). Thus, the participants' views we identified and discussed portray the role that the teaching practicum and the teaching experiences in the schools the participants were placed played in their beliefs about teaching and learning.

The process of analysis of the data collected for this study was based on the grounded theory approach, which in Corbin and Strauss' (2015) words, "allows for the identification of general concepts, the development of theoretical explanations that reach beyond the known, and offers new insights into a variety of experiences and phenomena" (p. 6). Additionally, Creswell (2012) states that "Grounded theory enables you to generate a

broad theory about your qualitative central phenomenon “grounded” in the data” (p. 422). Creswell (2012) also affirms that it “is a systematic, qualitative procedure ... that explains, at a broad conceptual level, a process, an action, or an interaction” (p. 423). This data analysis approach helped us to inductively establish bottom-up assertions based on relevant pieces of information from the interviews with the participants.

The interviews were initially transcribed and the transcriptions imported to the data analysis software Atlas ti. 6. Creswell (2012) explains how this program enables the researcher to organize all sorts of data and assign *codes* and *memos* to specific segments of information called *quotations*, which can be searched, retrieved, and organized in concept maps. That said, the documents were analyzed through the codification of the relevant information in the light of the research questions. Creswell (2012) explains that “the object of the coding process is to make sense out of text data, divide it into text or image segments, label the segments with codes, examine codes for overlap and redundancy, and collapse these codes into broad themes” (p. 243). By examining and refining the relations between these codes, we managed to construct categories and subcategories to be later described, aiming at understanding the role of the teaching practicum in the pre-service teachers' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning. In this regard, Creswell (2012) argues that “describing and developing themes [or categories] from the data consist of answering the major research questions and forming an in-depth understanding of the central phenomenon through description and thematic development” (p. 247). Thus, the categories formed from the codes account for the commonalities between the different participants’ statements and the relation between them and the research questions.

As a way of giving trustworthiness to our findings, we relied on investigator triangulation (Merriam, 2009) to support the validity of the claims we make. The two researchers participated in both the collection of the information and the analysis of the data collected. The researchers' understandings of the information were contrasted, and agreements over codification, categorization, and conclusions were reached. As found in Merriam (2009), this triangulation analysis is suggested by Patton (2002), who describes it as "having two or more persons independently analyse the same qualitative data and compare their findings" (p. 216). We also relied on member checking as a way to raise the credibility and validity of the findings of this study. To do this, we showed the participants the codes and emerging themes of the data analysed from the first and second interview before starting the third and final focus group interview to check the accuracy of the analysis at that stage of the data collection phase. In this regard, Creswell (2012) states that the revision of the emerging findings involves asking the participants in an interview about the accuracy of the report by asking them if they agree with the established categories and their descriptions. Methodological triangulation was also applied to validate the findings. This means that we corroborated evidence from different types of data or methods of data collection (individual interviews, a focus group interview, fieldnotes and documents) to ensure the accuracy and credibility of findings (Creswell, 2012).

Research Categories

The role of the teaching practicum in the pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning unfolded in two main categories that explain how this phenomenon took place in the particular experiences the participants lived. These experiences were mediated by various factors and situations that converged at different moments and in different ways in the

practicum. As a first category, we proposed *Shaping a trip mindset: The teaching practicum as a trigger of beliefs in building teaching profiles*, which accounts for the role of the teaching practicum in unearthing the beliefs the pre-service teachers held about EFL teaching and learning before going to the classroom and during their teaching practice. The second category is called *Trip Agendas: Confronting Beliefs in the Teaching Practicum,* which provides a general understanding of the role of the teaching practicum in constructing and deconstructing the participants' assumptions about EFL teaching and learning in their contexts.

Shaping a trip mindset: the teaching practicum as a trigger of beliefs in building teaching profiles. Considering scholars' research in the field of teacher preparation, it is known that pre-service teachers enroll in their teaching practicum after having experienced their schooling years, the majority of their undergraduate coursework, and different contextual factors (Borg, 2003). As teachers in training, they have walked multiple small paths, some of them rough some of them smooth, where they have been taken in the process of learning how to teach English as a Foreign Language. Throughout the undergraduate program, they have been packing the tools they might consider useful for one of the last but most crucial stages in their education journey, the teaching practicum. Although this knowledge is a combination of linguistic, pedagogical, methodological, and, psychological principles which are part of their formal EFL teaching education, it is heavily influenced by pre-service teachers' previous experiences as language learners (Lortie, 1975). As stated by Freeman (cited in Borg, 2003) "the memories of instruction gained through their 'apprenticeship of observation' function as de facto guides for teachers as they approach what they do in the classroom" (p. 88). In this same breath, Johnson (1994) asserts that "preservice ESL teachers' beliefs may be based largely on images from their

formal language learning experiences, and in all likelihood, will represent their dominant model of action during the practicum teaching experience" (p. 450). In line with what has been discussed above, the five pre-service teachers of this research study also built initial beliefs about EFL teaching and learning during their experiences as learners in the three years prior the beginning of the teaching practicum. They have even kept some ideas from their years of elementary and secondary schooling, as well as the particularities of their surrounding educational context. These beliefs started to become apparent before and during the teaching practicum, where the pre-service teachers had the chance to explore them and built their own theories.

This category displays, through two metaphors, the way the initial beliefs and sources of beliefs of the pre-service teachers who participated in this study started to become apparent before starting and during their teaching practice. Both metaphors analyze how the teaching practicum was a catalyst for beliefs construction and transformation where the PSTs prepared for and explored the teaching practicum territory, building their theories to go through the journey successfully.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggested that a metaphor "is the understanding and experiencing of one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 5), or "the characterization of a phenomenon in familiar terms" (Dickmeyer, 1989, p. 151). Following this understanding, we decided to use metaphors to display our vision of the findings; we saw the teaching practicum as a journey where the PSTs live different experiences that informed, reinforced, confronted and transformed their beliefs. The first metaphor is *Packing the practicum luggage: Journey myths and survival tips*. This sub-category will discuss findings regarding our first two sub-questions: a)

what the PST's beliefs about EFL teaching and learning are, and b) what the sources of the PST's beliefs about teaching and learning are. Based on our analysis, pre-service teachers' language teaching cognition in the form of beliefs is informed by their educational experiences as learners in the ELT program, the experiences, and ideas other pre-service teachers had shared with them about the teaching practicum, a three-week teacher advisor preparation seminar on how to face the forthcoming journey. The second metaphor, *Exploring Practicum Territories: Building Theories to Read the Teaching Map,* refers to the exploration of the real context of the teaching practicum, for a period of twelve weeks, where beliefs continue becoming apparent due to the PSTs experiences as learners, the reflection upon their actions in the classroom and the influence of the ongoing preparation seminar they were taking. The adventurous environment of the practicum exposed pre-service teachers to a reality that helped them from their views of teaching, learning, and the teaching practicum as well.

Packing the practicum luggage: journey myths and survival tips. Undertaking an unknown but worth-living journey requires preparation. It also demands you to have a mental picture of the experience you are bound to have, and it is even useful to know the myths and fairytales of that place, so you start understanding the reality of the journey. It is also recommended to buy heavy-duty luggage and know about survival skills such as building a fire, shelter, first aid, boiling water, and of course, making a rescue signal just in case you wander off in the wilderness. Through this metaphor of the preparation for the journey, we analyze and discuss the first set of findings in this category regarding the initial beliefs, sources and tensions between their beliefs about EFL teaching and learning and the reality the 5 PSTs held by the time they were about to start the teaching practicum. Supporting our choice to express our ideas using the metaphor of a journey, Kuswandono (2013) compares the process of learning to teach as a

meaning-making journey, where the students receive a set of technical procedures, which they pick up like if they were curious gathering things by the side of the road.

To analyze the data, we conceived the teaching practicum as a trigger of beliefs that sparked participants' use of those assumptions to guide themselves throughout their practicum journey. In this process of getting their cognition ready, they held onto sets of ideas coming from their experiences as learners, the interaction with other PSTs who have already finished their practicum and their teaching practicum preparation seminar.

Based on the above, most of the participants considered activities used by the language teachers they had in college as relevant to be applied in the practicum. They held the belief that what some of their previous teachers did in their language classes was useful for their classes. On this regard, P5 commented:

> "Pues yo siempre me copeo.Yo me guiaba mucho por lo que me han enseñado, pues lo que me enseñó el profesor Alberto. Entonces todo lo que él más o menos me ha enseñado yo lo guardo, o sea, yo todo lo guardó desde primer semestre yo lo tengo todo. Entonces hay cosas que él ha hecho qué me sirven y qué y que yo digo que me van a servir para llevarlo a mi práctica."
>
> [I always copy what other teachers did. I guided mysellf with what I have been taught, what professor Alberto taught me. Then, I keep everything he has taught me. I mean, I keep everything since my first semester. I have everything. So, there are things he has done that I use and, I think, will work for me to take it to my teaching practice] (Personal Interview 1, August, 2018).

P3 also commented:

> "Tenía muy en cuenta las clases de inglés en la universidad. Como eran mis clases, como yo pude aprender inglés en la Universidad, porque realmente aprendí inglés fue acá en la Universidad. Entonces yo pensaba mucho en las clases que había tenido de inglés en los semestres anteriores, y Asimismo yo pensaba que iba a preparar mis clases"
>
> [I had very much in mind the English classes in the university. How my classes were, the way I could learn English in the university, because I really learned English here at the University. Then I thought a lot in the English classes I had had in the previous semesters. I thought I would prepare my classes in the same way] (Personal Interview I, August, 2018).

These two fragments illustrate how the participants valued what they experienced as foreign language learners before the beginning of the practicum journey. The first PST highlights the teaching processes she lived, and how the role of the teacher and the activities implemented by him were worth reproducing or as she called it worth copying to take to the teaching practicum. Additionally, the second PST focuses on her learning process, stressing that she really learned English at the university, giving credit to the way her classes were, and expressing her willingness to prepare her classes based on her learning process experience. According to Yüksel and Kavanoz, in their (2015) qualitative study about the influence of prior experiences on pre-service language teachers' perceptions of teaching, understanding PSTs' background experiences and the aspects they find essential is important for teacher preparation programs. They assert that "extended prior experience causes student teachers to develop personal beliefs and knowledge about teaching" (Yüksel & Kavanoz, 2015, p. 777), especially when observing their teachers

actions which carry a potential impact on the pre-service teachers' future practices (Calderhead &Robson, 1991).

As the journey towards the teaching practicum approaches, the PSTs continue packing their luggage full of beliefs but this time beliefs about the nature of the teaching practicum. The PSTs start seeing the teaching practicum as a difficult and intimidating myth, which requires much more PSTs teaching practice experience before they embarked on this journey. These beliefs had emerged from their interaction with former PSTs, whose teaching practicum process has already finished. P2 asserts that there are many myths regarding the teaching practicum:

> "hay muchos mitos como que uy eso es muy duro. Eh los profesores de prácticas no le van ayudar a usted en nada, no puede utilizar el tablero, ojo con eso porque tienes que armar puras clases lúdicas y lúdicas y lúdicas y lúdicas y lúdicas y actividades y juegos y los profesores la van a dejar sola; usted verá que va a hacer en prácticas. Yo decía uno de mis miedos pues más terribles era como yo voy a armar un plan, como armar una clase, o sea que leyes hay para yo armar mi clase, o sea que temas tengo que mostrar, que temas tengo que enseñar, tengo que contextualizar. Preparar clase para mí era un miedo terrible"
>
> [There are many myths, like, uh! That is very hard. Eh the teacher advisors will not help you with anything. You cannot use the board. Watch out! Because you have to plan fun and enterntaining classes and activities and games, and the teachers will leave you alone. It´s up to you what you will do in the teaching practicum. I used to say one of my most terrible fears was how I was going to put together a plan, how to put together a class, I mean, what laws are there for me to put together my class, what topics do I have to

show, what subjects do I have to teach, I have to contextualize. Preparing a class was for me a terrible fear] (Participant 2, Personal Interview 1, August, 2018)

Participant 4 also expressed a feeling of doubt over the teaching preparation process during the LTEP before starting the teaching practicum stating that more practice is needed over theory:

"A veces uno siente eso, como que la falta de prácticas más seguidas en la universidad lleva a los estudiantes a pensar de que toda esa teoría que dictan en las clases uno la ha olvidado de alguna manera o totalmente por la falta de práctica. Pensaba que no iba a ser capaz o que tal vez no iba a tener el conocimiento suficiente para aplicarlo. De hecho llegué a dudar de todo el proceso académico que había llevado a cabo porque, no sé, a veces soy muy inseguro"

[Sometimes you feel like, like the lack of more continuous practices in the university leads the students to think that all that theory that is lectured in the classes has been forgotten in some way or totally because of the lack of practice. I thought that I was not going to be able or maybe I would not have enough knowledge to apply it. As a mater of fact, I came to doubt the whole academic process that I had carried out because, I do not know, sometimes I am very insecure] (Participant 3, Personal Interview I, August, 2018).

These previous pieces of data show how on the one hand, PSTs load themselves with feelings of doubt, fear and anxiety when approaching to the teaching practice. In this case, these

beliefs seem to feed their anxiety and insecurity. On the other hand, beliefs coming from former professors' classes at the university might cause more confidence since they regard those professors as experts and what they taught them as solid knowledge to hold on to. Nicholas and Williams (2010) refer to the meaningful school experiences PSTs had with their professors as promoters of personal efficacy beliefs. This means that the PSTs thought of themselves as more confident and effective teachers when starting the teaching practicum journey.

At a national level, similar findings are presented by Florido and Fernandez' (2014) study with tenth-semester PSTs, highlighting that participants in this study also felt beliefs of nervousness, confusion, anxiety, and insecurity at the beginning of the teaching practicum process. At a more global level, Agustiana (2015) studied on the PSTs anxiety in the teaching practicum, established two factors with the most anxiety level: the insecurities to face the teaching practicum for the first time and the lack of teaching practice experience both with 3,4 mean rate. These factors shaped the participants' emergence of negative beliefs influencing the PSTs' early cognition towards the nature of the teaching practicum.

Other scholars have also documented the phenomenon of PSTs fear and anxiety toward the teaching practicum (Danner, 2013; Romp, Royse, & Dhooper, 1993; Merç, 2011; Yoon, 2012). In our study, data shows that the interaction PSTs had with former PSTs, the lack of teaching experience, and the idea of facing an unknown journey shaped our participant's entry beliefs creating negative judgments and preconceptions towards the exercise of the teaching practicum. This study reveals how the PSTs' entry beliefs about the practicum are also constructed by accepting others' views of the practice when they did not have direct contact with the context of the teaching practicum.

Once the PSTs have packed some beliefs for their teaching practicum journey based on their learning experiences as students, and their interactions with other PSTs, they have one more place to stop to finally finish packing their initial teaching practicum luggage. In this last stop, the teaching practicum advisors give lectures to the PSTs during the three weeks before the PSTs actual teaching practice journey. During this short period, students pack what we call survival tips. They packed beliefs about curriculum and the relevance of lesson planning. The travelers had specific appreciations about the suggested curriculum published by the Colombian Ministry of Education. Consequently, they worked on sessions analyzing the Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje (Based Learning Rights), how to structure a lesson according to its specific moments. Concerning the suggested curriculum, P4 relied on this document to know what to teach:

> "Ya nos habían presentado el currículo sugerido de primaria, entonces yo ya había leído ese documento, entonces ya tenía unas bases de qué temas uno les puede enseñar…[los currículos sugeridos] le dicen a uno que enseñar, que tipo de temas los muchachos pueden ver, que conocimientos ellos ya tienen"
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> [We had been already presented the suggested curriculum for primary school, so I had already read that document. So I already had some bases on what topics one can teach them… [The suggested curriculum] tell you what to teach, what kind of topics the kids can see, what knowledge they already have] (Participant 4, Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

P2 relates to the previous information about the importance of the suggested curriculum by stating "*entonces yo era como más bien pensando en las cartillas que da el ministerio y yo pensaba de ahí tengo que sacar algo, de ahí va a salir algo*" [then, I was more like thinking about the booklets that the ministry gives, and I thought I have to get something out of there. Something will come out of there] (Participant 2, Personal Interview I, August… 2018). This data show how the PSTs relied on the materials supplied by the Colombian Ministry of Education to guide their choices on what to teach based on the population considered in those documents. They also manifest how from that material they can have some "rocks to hold on to." We can conclude that pre-service teachers depend on curriculum guidelines to support their initial methodological claims. Kauffman, Johnson, Kardos, Lui, and Peske (2002) state that new teachers find in the curriculum a source of methodological support when deciding what skills and knowledge to cover, how to design lessons and implement them effectively.

Regarding the relevance of lesson planning in their upcoming teaching practicum journey, P2 expressed: *"uno de mis miedos pues más terribles era como yo voy a armar un plan, como armar una clase o sea ¿qué qué qué leyes hay para yo armar mi clase?"*.[One of my most terrible fears was how I'm going to put together a plan, how to put together a class, I mean, what laws or procedures are there for me to put together my class?] (Participant 2, personal Interview I, August, 2018). PSTs found difficulties when thinking about planning their lessons at the beginning of their teaching practicum, which caused feelings of uneasiness. From Tashevska (2008), PSTs express that planning their lessons seems to be difficult at the beginning of their teaching because of timing, staging, sequencing, problem-anticipation and aims aspects. Based on the aforementioned discussion, lesson planning is a key aspect of PSTs' teaching practice in regards to teaching efficacy. Another participant expressed the following comment regarding the

importance of lesson planning: "*yo creo que es muy importante hacer un lesson plan para ir a hacer la clase*" [I think it's very important to make a lesson plan to give the class] (Participant 5, personal Interview I, August, 2018). Concerning the importance of lesson planning, Sahin-Taskin (2017) asserts, "developing preservice teachers' planning skills is considered key in raising effective teachers" (p. 57). Thus, the importance that PSTs gave lesson planning posed a challenge and concern for them when trying to be effective.

Exploring practicum territories: building theories to read the teaching map.

The trip has been undertaken and there is no way back. For most prospective teachers this teaching practicum II course represents the first time they teach EFL to adolescents. Although the participants taught EFL to little children some months back, this new teaching experience was very different. Their new students did not think nor did behave the same way their previous ones did, and they knew it, which made them anxious. Some of these secondary school students were taller than they were, and some of the schools' settings they were assigned enjoyed the reputation of having "trouble" students too. The journey is twelve weeks long and the territory is unknown. Boys, girls, classrooms, plans, cooperating teachers, advisors, eyes everywhere beside the road fill the horizon. Everything can happen, and every PST carries their own map to decide where to go and what to do on this new territories. In this adventure, every choice they make counts: content, time, classroom organization, group work, strategies, in one word, teaching. Every class is a new possibility for learning and unlearning, and new ways of thinking and understanding teaching are developed every day.

In this section, we use the metaphor of exploring a new territory (teaching high school students in public institutions), and how experiencing this exploration took the participants to build theories from their beliefs to read the map of teaching and go through the practicum without

getting lost. This teaching adventure helped manifest some of the beliefs the PSTs held about teaching and also the practicum. Here, as we show the role of the teaching practicum in the participants' beliefs about teaching and learning, we simultaneously provide answers to the sub-questions: What are the PST's beliefs about EFL teaching and learning? And what are the sources of the PST's beliefs?

More than a test or a challenge, experiencing the teaching practicum is an opportunity for student teachers to construct the guiding knowledge underpinning their pre-service teachers' teaching ideals, a crucial part of every teacher's identity (Danielwicz, 2001). Relying on a commitment to teaching, Fung (2005) points out that in the practicum, pre-service teachers require a philosophy of teaching and learning that brings values and ends, which "have to be experienced, reflected on, and constructed properly" (p. 44). These values, which according to Pajares (1992) compound teachers' cognition along with perceptions, beliefs, and ideologies, are influenced by the pre-service teachers' language learning experiences, their teacher education program courses, and also the practicum journey.

The complexity of designing and carrying out lessons in every particular context puts the participants in situations of having to make the decisions more experienced travelers have to make day to day. To do so, some PSTs decided to guide their route by using their learning experiences and following the steps of their teachers in previous courses, as also happened when getting ready for the journey. When asked about her teaching decisions, P2 commented:

> *"yo tomo lo bueno y lo aplico, pero lo tomo más de la experiencia, o sea, yo creo que esto si es algo que lo he tomado más de lo que he vivido de la experiencia, que de la teoría que me han dictado en el tablero o me han puesto a exponer."*

> [I take what is good and apply it, but I take it more from my experience. I believe that this is something that I have taken more from what I have lived from experience than from the theory that I have been dictated in the board or that I have talked about in presentations] (Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

Thus, regarding more field driven decisions, P5 referred to her belief that using videos helps students learn better, reproducing her previous professor's methods. When asked about activities she replicated from their previous professors, she stated:

> "*Los videos, porque él utiliza muchos videos. Bueno, no sé si lo hace ahora, pero él utilizó muchísimos videos para enseñar. Y no son videos así de que, ay, gramaticales, sino, mmm, videos chistosos; cosas de Los Simpsons, él utilizó mucho Mr Bean*."
>
> [Videos, because he uses many videos. Well, I do not know if he does it now, but he used many videos to teach. And they are not videos like, mmm, grammatical, but, mmm, funny videos; things from The Simpsons. He used a lot of Mr. Bean."] (Personal Interview I, Agosto 2018)

Not only did the practicum journey expose PSTs' beliefs about the replication of materials and content used by their previous language professors, but also classroom management strategies perceived as successful. In the following excerpt, P2 gives an account of this consideration. She consented she had picked classroom management ideas from previous professors she had in her university. She noted:

> *"cómo tratar a los muchachos, cómo hablarles, de que manera expresarme, eh, con ellos, eh, qué actitud tomar frente a ellos en caso de que ellos sean groseros conmigo,*

eh eh, yo he tenido profesores que los muchachos son groseros con ellos aquí en la universidad y el profesor les responde con otro golpe, o sea, no, literal! Jmm! Eh, hay muchachos que son súper, por decirlo así, inmaduros y son groseros con el profesor, y el profesor también se comporta y se iguala con ellos y también es grosero y responde igual. Como he aprendido de otros docentes, qué, qué hay que saber manejar las cosas, qué si uno tiene problemas con un estudiante no quiere decir que uno el resto de la materia el resto del semestre uno vaya a estar indispuesto con ellos, entonces eso, eso, esas cosas las he estado aplicando."

["How to treat the boys, how to talk to them, how to express myself, eh, with them, eh, what attitude to take in front of them in case they are rude to me. Eh eh, I have had professors here at the university whom the boys are rude to, and the professor responds with another yell. I mean, no, literally! hmm! Eh, there are guys who are super immature and rude to the professors, so to speak. And the professor also behaves like them and is also rude and responds the same way. However, I have learned from other professors that you have to know how to handle things. Having problems with a student does not mean that one will be indisposed with them the rest of the course, or the rest of the semester. Then that; I've been applying those things."] (Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

In this regard, Johnson (1994) highlights how the PSTs' learning experiences leave "lasting images of their teachers, the curricular materials they used, the instructional activities they participated in, and the overall organization of second language instruction" (p. 443). She also adds that "these images, both positive and negative, seemed to have a powerful impact on

these pre-service teachers' beliefs about second language teachers and second language teaching" (p. 443). This notion had been initially suggested by Lorie (1975), highlighting how beliefs from their experience as students were more powerful than the effect of formal instruction itself (as cited in Pajares, 1992). This is reaffirmed by Farrell (1999), whose study (documented by Borg, 2003) informs PSTs "were inclined to approach grammar in the way they had been taught it themselves (inductively or deductively) because it was effective (even though in some cases it may have been boring)" (p. 100). A significant number of beliefs that became apparent in the PSTs' practicum have their source in the PSTs' previous learning experiences and their professors' teaching methodology, which will become a matter of interest subsequently in this analysis.

Beliefs rooted in the preparation seminars and orientations also emerged in the PSTs' exploration of the teaching practicum territories. As the PSTs' went through the lands of teaching, they exhibited perceptions they had formed in the three weeks preparation before the teaching practice took place. What their practicum advisors discussed with them in that period would also play its role in their travelling experience. P4 made clear how he regarded the contextualization of their lessons to the local or regional reality as a necessary road to take in his way, something he had been recommended to do during the orientation. He explained:

> "*Siempre se me ocurría más darles contextos en los cuales ellos usaran el inglés, ellos, como lengua extranjera. En plantearles ambientes o contextos, lo mismo que acabé de decir, temas contextualizados, por ejemplo, el medio ambiente, la salud, derechos humanos, cosas así. Porque eso si nos lo había dejado muy claro la profesora Lucía (his practicum advisor), de enseñar el inglés pero no de una manera gramática u*

obsoleta, sino muy funcional, de que los estudiantes encuentren razones por los cuales aprender inglés y que tipo de situaciones ellos pueden necesitar y usar el inglés."

[I always thought about giving them contexts in which they would use English as a foreign language. I thought about setting environments or contexts, as I just said, contextualized topics, for example, the environment, health, human rights, things like that. Because that was something Professor Lucía (his practicum advisor) had made clear to us; to teach English not in a grammatical or obsolete way, but very functional; that students find reasons to learn English and the kind of situations they may need and use English] (Participant 5, Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

This belief was evident in the following comment from P4 during his second interview. When explaining the development of one of his lessons, he noted:

"porque es una realidad que estamos viviendo y porque... durante el ejercicio del segundo video, Ya olvidé mencionar eso, ya entramos no solamente a hablar a nivel global sino como las problemáticas de Florencia: la contaminación de las quebradas, que las calles, todo eso. Entonces pues yo consideré que era buena idea manejar este tipo de contaminación ambiental teniendo en cuenta las problemáticas de la ciudad."

[Because this is a reality that we are living and because ... during the exercise of the second video, I forgot to mention that, we began to speak not only at a global level but also about the problems in Florencia: the pollution of the streams, the streets, and all that. So, I considered that it was a good idea to talk about this type of environmental pollution, taking into account the problems of the city] (Participant 4, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

In consonance with the idea of orienting PSTs on their ways to develop their teaching practice, Zeichner (1996) indicates that "the purpose of the practicum from an applied science point of view is for the student teacher to develop the ability to act in ways consistent with the ideology of their courses" (p. 129). At Universidad de la Amazonía, the practicum is a program course in itself and the PSTs' advisors play an important role in guiding this process. This source of beliefs was also evidenced in the way some participants stuck closely to what they were told to do in respect to class planning and teaching procedures. In the second interview with P3, she stated:

> *"Si, fue una sugerencia de la profesora de prácticas de la universidad. Y si es muy importante porque muchos niños… Usted los puede llevar a clases Y ellos pueden participar y usted no les dice como tal el tema o ellos desconocen el tema como tal y ellos aprendieron ese tema X o Y, pero sin saber cómo se llamaba, sí? Entonces desde un comienzo decirles 'este es el tema,' Necesito que ustedes aprendan esto, este es el objetivo de la clase."*
>
> [Yes, it was a suggestion from the teacher advisor. It is very important because many children ... You can have them in classes and they can participate, and you don't tell them the topic as such or they do not know about the topic, and they learned that topic X and Y, but without knowing what it was called, OK? So, from the beginning, to tell them "this is the topic". I need you to learn this; this is the objective of the class] (Participant 3, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

This type of belief shows how this PST relied on the information her teaching practicum advisor provided her with without any conscious reflection or criticism. In this regard, Stones and Morris (1972) and Wallace (1991) discuss how the master teacher (in our case the teaching practicum advisor) is the one who holds the wisdom of the teaching profession and only transmits this knowledge to the young trainee. In this model of professional training, the master teacher tells the students what to do, shows them how to do it and the practitioner's role is to adopt, follow, imitate and reproduce the given knowledge as if it were a recipe. From this professional training viewpoint, teaching is seen as a craft (see Wallace, 1991); an expert driven top-down approach of teaching training process (Richards, 2015), which leaves little room for critical reflection.

During this teaching practicum, process participants' beliefs also emerged from the reflective practice the exploration of the teaching territory prompted in the PSTs. The teaching territory can be tough; many travelers can tell. The lands of public education are vast and rough, and the fear to get stranded was there. These new experiences in the teaching practicum brought the participants to a multiplicity of unanticipated situations that challenged their still juvenile self-appropriation of teaching, and forced them to respond in the best way they could. Thus, practicing teaching would take them to developing new understandings of their classroom reality. As opposed to the adoption and application of recipes for teaching, their difficult experiences prompted reflective processes developed individually and also in the reflective discussions held with practicum advisors and classmates. This reflective practice helped them make their own decisions, revealing again their beliefs about teaching and learning. After facing the problematic situation of personal conflicts between his students, P4 reflected on this phenomenon by sharing his own understanding. He stated:

> *"Dentro del grupo existe mucho la provocación mutua hacia el conflicto. Existe la intolerancia, el bullying y al más mínimo detalle empiezan situaciones de agresiones verbales o físicas. Este tipo de situaciones me han demostrado que el docente no solo tiene la obligación de impartir conocimientos de determinada disciplina, sino que también tiene el deber de formar los estudiantes en valores como el respeto, la tolerancia y la aceptación del otro".*
>
> [Within the group there is a lot of mutual provocation towards conflict. There is intolerance, bullying, and at the smallest detail, situations of verbal or physical aggression begin. This type of situations have shown me that the teacher not only has the obligation to impart knowledge of a certain discipline, but also has the duty to educate students in values such as respect, tolerance and acceptance of the other]
> (Participant 4, Reflection week 4, September 2018)

This excerpt shows the effect of the classroom reality on the participant's beliefs on his role as a teacher. This critical view of what he observed in his students' behavior was a trigger for his response to the problem. By the same mean, Mann and Walsh (2017) state that since teacher contexts might be "wild" sometimes, reflection is to be a daily-life professional process, which must underpin any teacher's teaching acts. Regarding the aforementioned issue faced by P4, in his final written report (one of the requirements of the practicum II course) the participant shared:

> "The teacher (referring to himself) developed one lesson plan that mainly focused on activities that promote the students' interaction and sharing of their ideas about some behaviors or actions of their partners they did not like or made them feel bad. For that

> reason, this type of situations makes teachers in the process to reflect on the fact that teachers sometimes have to make a parenthesis in the usual academic activities and topics to avoid bullying situations and other scholar conflicts resulting in harder situations to manage or even finishing in a tragedy. Moreover, the dialogue with students about every abnormal situation helps to have good control of these scholar conflicts." (Participant 4, final written report, December, 2018)

This comment from P4 shows how, based on his reflection on the classroom situation, he developed his personal theory to address the situation presented in his classroom context. Besides describing what he did, he went beyond by making sense of his role as a teacher, asserting that teachers should take ownership of their students' personal growth as human beings. In the same document, P4 kept elaborating:

> "the teaching practice II is a relevant process since teachers in the process of formation face a real context that involves they acquire new teaching strategies, social and professional abilities and both professional and personal values such as the responsibility, commitment, punctuality, patience, respect, creativity, and love and passion for what you do" (Participant 4, final written report, December 2018)

This last comment makes evident the level of reflection the participant showed in his experience, revealing the sense he makes of the teaching practicum. These actions developed by the teacher can be related to the process of reflection in, and on action (Schön, 1987) as well as processes of higher thinking skills (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) where by means of reflection; the PSTs analysed, and evaluated their classroom contexts, strengthened their beliefs and created

their personal theories. According to Van Manen´s (1977) third level of reflectivity, PSTs beliefs deal with approaching moral and ethical issues in the teaching practicum. At a more local level Rico, Becerra, Trujillo, Vera, Cáceres and Parra (2012) analyzed how a process of reflection enhanced PSTs practicum experience. They found how some PSTs devoted some time in their classes to cultivating positive human qualities. In other words, PSTs' "responsibilities went beyond teaching an FL, encompassing aspects such as moral values and well-being in order to guarantee a safe and respectful environment for the learning process" (p. 55). The reflection processes the PSTs developed in this study contributed to facilitating the building of theories such as that of considering English language teaching as a socially constructed process that goes beyond disciplinary knowledge only.

The reflective practice behind the PSTs' building of theories was also fostered by the two-hour weekly group meetings held by one of the teaching practicum advisors and the PSTs under his guidance (P1, P2 and P5). When asked about these encounters, P5 discussed:

> *"hicimos una rueda e íbamos escribiendo cada uno en una hoja y después lo leíamos. Así pues, eso era chévere, pues nos dividimos como en grupos y contábamos que le pasó a uno y que le pasó al otro. Ya después daba como una reflexión final y ahí sí pues todo el mundo hablaba porque, es que a mi parecer, eran como muy poquitas las horas, a veces porque uno quería, pues éramos como diez, once, no se, y todos queríamos hablar"*
>
> [We made a circle and each one started writing on a sheet of paper and then we read It. So, it was cool because we were divided into groups and we shared what happened to oneself and what happened to other partners. Afterwards, he (the teaching practicum

> advisor) gave like a final reflection, and then everybody talked. In my opinion, there was little time, because we were like ten, eleven, I do not know, and we all wanted to talk] (Participant 5, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

P5 added on the dynamics of the group conference:

> *"En base a lo que todos decíamos, él (el profesor de prácticas) hacía reflexión de todos y ahí se metía a veces María y hablaba y ella contaba sus cosas y pues siempre el era como que '¡animo muchachos! vamos a seguir, ¡ustedes pueden, ustedes son buenos!' O sea, cosas que lo animan a uno. Él decía eso. Por otro lado, decía otra compañera, pero siempre había una reflexión al final".*
>
> [Based on what we all said he (the teaching practicum advisor) made and overall reflection about everybody, and sometimes María would intervene and talk and she would share about her things. Then, he was always like, 'Come one guys us! Let's continue, you can! You are good!' I mean, things that encourage us. He said that. Then, another partner talked. There was always a reflection at the end] (Participant 5, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

The above excerpt shows how the reflections held during the teaching practicum journey promoted horizontal participation between the teaching practicum advisor and the PSTs, where the prospective teachers felt encouraged to continue the teaching practicum journey. In Mann and Walsh's (2017) elaboration on reflective practice, they make special reference to dialogic reflection as significant element in reflective approaches to professional development. They highlight that experiential knowledge "is supported by collaborative discussion where

thoughts and ideas about classroom practice are articulated and reformulated in a progression towards enhanced understanding" (p. 39).

Participant 2 also highlighted more aspects of the reflective processes during the weekly meetings of the teaching practicum course:

> *"Para mi las clases no solamente eran de armar estrategias para tener unas clases buenas en los colegios, sino pues si era algo como reflexivo, reflexionaba después de cada clase, no solamente de acuerdo a los errores que yo tuviera si no también de los errores de los compañeros, las estrategias que se utilizaban que eran buenas"*
>
> [For me the classes were not only to put together strategies to have good classes in the schools, but it was something reflective. He reflected after each class; not only according to the mistakes I had, but also the mistakes of my practicum partners, the strategies we used that were good.] (Participant 2, Personal Interview II, october 2018)

P2 continued:

> *"yo reflexionaba no solamente en cuanto a que debía darles, si no a lo que lo que ellos necesitaban, yo reflexionaba en el sentido de que yo decía este es el tema que ellos tienen que ver pero también cuáles son las necesidades de ellos, de qué manera puedo darles este tema para que ellos lo capten. Las clases de prácticas me sirvieron para eso, para también ayudarme a entender mi grupo desde el punto de vista de otros docentes compañeros"*
>
> [Not only did I reflect on what I should give them, but also on what they needed. I reflected in the sense that I said 'this is the subject they have to see', but also what their needs are. In which way I can give them this topic for them to get it. The teaching practicum classes helped me in that sense. These classes also help me understand my

group from the point of view of other practicum partners] (Participant 2, Personal Interview II, October 2018)

Regarding these last comments on the reflective nature of the weekly encounters, it can be noted how the PST reflected on her teaching process -strengths and weaknesses- as well as her peers PSTs'. P2 also showed how she reflected on view of her students' needs to understand her group better. The aforementioned ideas converge and become similar to Vacilotto and Cummings' (2007) idea of PST peers supporting each other in the process of sharing teaching ideas, developing materials, rethinking practices and beliefs, enjoying equal status in processes of mutual collaboration, and evaluating each other by reflecting on their own practices. All in all, the reflective exercise brought the participants understandings and perceptions to build their personal theories of action. As shown in this discussion and analysis in this category, the role of the teaching practicum was a determining element in the appearance of beliefs before and theory building during the teaching practice through the influence of the PSTs learning experiences, teaching practicum seminar, and reflective practices.

Trip agendas: confronting beliefs in the teaching practicum. As mentioned earlier in this study, PSTs arrived at their teaching practicum journey carrying a set of beliefs they had picked up over the course of their particular learning experiences. They held beliefs about lesson planning, materials to implement in the classes, English use, classroom management, the teaching practicum itself, and their role as English teachers**.** As they began to move through their teaching practicum, their agendas continued in flux. Expectations, fears, projects, dreams filled their packs in their complex and uncertain trip. In this second category, we refer to those plans, understandings, personal particularities, and evolving perspectives as Trip Agendas. We discuss

how they are challenged with the reality of the teaching practicum journey. This classroom practice might be influenced by correlating factors.The same way budgets, time, accommodations, destinations, weather, incidents and partners necessarily coincide to make the journey a unique experience, the factors within the practicum journey also converge to shape travelers' beliefs. The practicum advisors who guided the PSTs process, the cooperating teachers in charge of supporting the PSTs classes, the contextual particularities, and even the PSTs themselves played their role in particular ways in the journey development. The complexity of this relation is high as the travelers' agendas collide with the reality of the trip affecting the PSTs' initial beliefs.

In this category, we discuss the findings regarding the role of the teaching practicum in the reinforcement and transformation of the PSTs' beliefs about teaching and their practicum. In the first sub-category, we analyze the phenomenon of PSTs ratifying their personal understanding in the teaching practicum journey. In the second sub-category, we show how some of the participants' beliefs were reshaped by the different factors mentioned above.

The teaching practicum journey involved four influencing factors. They were the context particularities, the teacher practicum advisor, the cooperating teachers, and the PSTs' emerging professional identity. In regards to the teacher practicum advisors, the practicum journey referred to in this study involved two teacher practicum advisors, each with different paradigms and singular ways of guiding their PSTs in their teaching. Practicum advisors, also called tutors, have an important responsibility in teacher preparation processes. Zeichner (1996) pointed out the "uneven quality of practicum supervision or mentoring" (p. 132), referring to the disparity between the level of involvement in the guiding process and the type of feedback provided to

student-teachers from one advisor to another. This disparity played its part in each one the participating PSTs' particular agendas.

In the case of cooperating teachers, three different personalities and philosophies of teaching accompanied the route followed by the pre-service teachers.We relate these cooperating teachers' philosophies with Clarke, Triggs and Nielsen's (2014) conceptions of cooperating teachers based on their level of participation in the PSTs preparation process. Two cooperating teachers could be categorized as absentee landlords. This means they had little participation in the PSTs teaching practicum process. Another cooperating teacher was more of a "supervisor of practica". This interaction between PST and cooperating teacher was largely unidirectional (from the cooperating teacher to the PST) and blocked the PSTs autonomy in the process. Finally, the last cooperating teacher was a coach for the PST, cooperating with her and providing constant guidance and motivation throughout the process. These stakeholders also play a crucial role in the development of the teaching practicum. Based on Clarke, Triggs and Nielsen (2015), the cooperating teacher is an experienced teacher who has a significant and critical role in the success of the PSTs' practicum. In this sense, cooperating teachers interaction with the PSTs also represented a factor of influence throughout the teaching and learning process in the teaching practicum.

Another key element in the complex confrontation of beliefs that takes place in the teaching practicum is the particularities of the school contexts the participants were placed in. A convergence of elements such as physical conditions, institutional policies, students' profiles, and many others become an important factor in the way the travelers' agendas meet the reality of their journey, and the impact it has on the PSTs' beliefs. In this respect, Zeichner (1996) warns the necessity for student-teachers to have an understanding of their school context and their work

in the classroom to be able to deal with all the aspects that are involved in their effectiveness as teachers.

As a final element in this analysis, we consider the pre-service teachers' emerging professional identity as a factor for beliefs confrontation which has been under continuous construction throughout the teaching preparation program. In this regard, professional identity is conceived as "an ongoing process of interpretation and reinterpretation…[where] teachers make sense of themselves as teachers as they develop professionally" (Chong, Low & Goh 2011). Professional identity formation is therefore a key maturation process that begins before and during PSTs'preparation program, and continue to be developed as the PSTs identify themselves with the profession (Chong et al., 2001), where teachers understand who they are and how they think by means of the multiple social interactions they face in their preparation programs (Danielewicz, 2001).

The discussion we develop in this section seeks to be an answer for the following questions: a) What are the tensions between the PSTs' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning present in their teaching practicum?, and b) How do the PSTs' beliefs evolve throughout the teaching practicum? These tensions and evolution are intertwined by several factors in different ways, unveiling the complex interactions between the PSTs beliefs and those factors that take place in the teaching practicum.

Living the journey up: ratifying personal understandings. Personal understandings, beliefs, and perceptions fill the explorers' trip agendas. Ready or not, the journey develops in unexplored teaching territories and the travelers begin to comprehend what it is like to be there, to be an EFL pre-service teacher in public education in Florencia Caquetá. This experience would allow the pre-service teachers to confront their beliefs about English teaching in regards to the

experience of teaching English to teenagers in their particular school contexts. In this subcategory we refer to the practicum as a journey once again, and discuss how this trip (teaching experience in secondary public schools) allowed the participants to ratify some of the beliefs they held about aspects of teaching and other aspects related to the teaching practicum. To do so, we draw on the factors that facilitated the reinforcement of such beliefs, contributing to the exploration of the role of the teaching practicum in the PSTs' beliefs and giving an answer to the sub-questions mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The phenomenon of reinforcement of beliefs is the first of two phenomena described in this category. It was particular to some participants and it occurred due to the conjugation of particular factors.

The cooperating teacher was important in reinforcing P3 perception of the usefulness of worksheet as materials for teaching. When she was asked about her lesson plans for her practicum lessons before starting the teaching practicum journey, she answered: "*Ehhh una warming up con flashcards, trabajaría con flashcards, después les daría un video, después les daría participar y ahí si un taller. mmm, una worksheet*" [Ehhh a warming up with flashcards, I would work with flashcards, then I would give them a video, then I would allow them to participate, and then a workshop. mmm, a worksheet] (Participant 3, Personal Interview I, August, 2018). Several weeks after the beginning of the journey, when asked about her lesson planning during the practicum, P3 commented: *"comenzando, se debe tener los DBA, qué es lo que los niños deben de saber en este grado, si? Y a partir de eso, pues buscar diferentes worksheets que ellos puedan hacer para mejorar"* [Beginning, you must have the DBA, which is what the children should know in this grade, right? And from that, look for different worksheets

that they can develop to improve] (Participant 3, Personal Interview II, October, 2018). These excerpts show a consistent belief about the use of worksheets in her lessons. During the final focus group interview the participants, P3 revealed how her cooperating teacher used the worksheets she prepared for her lessons, helping her to ratify her understanding about this type of materials. In this way, she described:

> *"El material que yo preparé me sirvió mucho, porque ella lo implementaba con casi todos los sextos. Solo con una worksheet que hacía, y yo le mandaba todo lo que hacía, si yo hacía diapositivas, si sonaba una canción, un video, todo eso lo implementaba con sexto A y sexto C. O sea, que durante toda la práctica ella trabajó con casi todas mis worksheets para los sextos."*
>
> [The material that I prepared helped me a lot, because she implemented it with almost all the sixth grades. Only with a worksheet that I did. I sent her everything I did. If I made slides, if I played a song, a video, she implemented all that with sixth A and sixth C. This means that during the whole practice she worked with almost all my worksheets for the sixth grades] (Participant 3, Focus Group, February, 2019)

This final excerpt shows the degree of satisfaction the participant had with the work she had done through the use of worksheets she prepared. Her gratification came from understanding that if her cooperating teacher, a more experienced educator, constantly used the material P3 had prepared, her work must have been good and was therefore useful and worth keeping it. This experience might have made her feel proud of herself and, in some way, the fact that her cooperating teacher implemented the material P3 developed reinforced her belief that what she

was doing was right. Duquette (1994) suggests different facets of the role of the cooperating teacher in the teacher preparation programs. She remarks that one of those facets is that of "providing opportunities for students to experiment with new techniques" (p. 348). One of the participants in her study - a cooperating teacher - stated that part of her role was "to provide a safe testing ground for the student to try out new ideas and strategies for self-evaluation purposes" (as cited in Duquette, 1994, p. 348). The role that the cooperating teacher played in P3's practicum experience was supportive and acknowledging. This attitude towards the participants' work may represent her perception of the student teacher as someone skillful in her job, making the student teacher stick to the strategy she believed was right.

Let us revise the case of P4. We initially asked him (during the first interview) about the strategies from his previous teachers' methodologies that he would implement in his classes. He commented: "*en primer semestre fue el profesor Wilson, y de él no puedo decir que he tomado cosas porque todo con él fue con un libro, entonces en el aula de clase yo creo no me iba a funcionar*." [Professor Wilson was in the first semester. I can not say that I have taken things from him because everything with him was with a textbook, so I think this was not going to work in the classroom] (Participant 4, Personal Interview I, August, 2018). This comment reveals a perception of unsuitability to use this type of materials for his lessons based on his experience as a student, determining a personal understandings about English teaching. During the second interview, while elaborating on his experience using a textbook institutionally adopted by the school he was assigned to, the same participant added:

> *"uno se ve limitado a seguir los temas que están en la cartilla, a seguir la secuencia; si bien la cartilla está con una secuencia perfecta, todas las actividades las tiene*

planeadas, todo parece color de rosas, pero no hay que se aplica al aula de clase y casi no funcionan porque siempre lo mismo, como muy repetitivo, los temas, la misma... el mismo orden, las flashcards, las imágenes, la socialización de la imagen, es el audio todo el muy mecánico. Se vuelve como todas las clases la misma metodología."

[one is limited to follow the topics that are in the textbook, to follow the sequence. although the textbook has a perfect sequence, all the activities are planned, everything looks like beautifully, but there is no connection to the classroom and it does not work because it is always the same, very repetitive, the themes, the same ... the same order, the flashcards, the images, the socialization of the images, the audios. It is very mechanical and all the classes become like the same methodology] (Participant 4, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

We can see how in this excerpt P4 gives a reason for his discontent with having to use a textbook to teach English. He argues that the predesigned and mechanical dynamics of the lessons proposed in textbooks makes teaching repetitive and monotonous, something that limits him. Based on the confrontation of his belief about textbooks and his experience as a PST in his school teaching territory, P4 concluded:

"como practicante uno se ve limitado a seguir el libro porque simplemente eso es lo que uno tiene, los resultados que uno tiene que presentar al final de la práctica. Pues porque así lo exige el cooperador porque él también se ve limitado por la las políticas de la institución educativa"

> [As a PST, one is limited to following the book because that is simply what one has; the results one has to present at the end of the practice. Well, because the cooperator demands it because he is also limited by the policies of the educational institution] (Participant 4, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

In this last excerpt, P4 explains what caused the issue of having to follow a textbook all the time, and maintained his dislike with the limitations this brought to his teaching practice. It can be identified how factors such as the contextual particularities, the cooperating teacher, and the practicum requirements converged and set the ground for the situation that made the PST reinforce his negative understanding of using textbooks to teach English. This phenomenon is documented by Trent (2010), whose study in Hong Kong makes relevant claims about the relations of power in the practicum process. Trent explains that cooperating schools demand PSTs to follow institutional schemes strictly. In that way, "following the directions of the school became not one of choice but of necessity for these preservice teachers" (p. 5). In his experience, P4's suffered the imposition of a teaching strategy considered effective by his cooperating school; furthermore, the cooperating teacher played a passive role in discharging his institutional pressure on the preservice teacher. Thus, in consonance with Sheridan (2016), beliefs or learnt principles of productive pedagogy that are previously held can be reinforced by the connections between what is experienced in coursework and in the practice of teaching.

Another example of the influential role of the contextual particularities came about in beliefs such as the use of L2 in the EFL classroom. In the case of P2, who was assigned to teach ninth graders, we asked her about her preference for language use in the classroom, and she initially stated:

> *"considero que uno no puede utilizar 100% el inglés en un colegio, pues en un colegio público y con los niños allá no, no, no del todo el inglés. Así me exijan que utilice el inglés lo más posible van a haber unos momentos en los que no se puede porque los niños se van a salir de control en que van a ser indisciplinados en que van a ser agresivos y yo no voy a poder estar ahí con mi inglés resignada hablándoles"*
>
> [I think that one can not use 100% English in a school, because in a public school, with children there, speaking English the whole class is hard. Even if I am required to use English as much as possible, there will be instances when you can not use English because children will get out of control, will be undisciplined. They will be aggressive and I will not be able to be there, forced to using English with them] (Participant 2, Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

After several weeks of living up the practicum journey, her perception of using L2 in the EFL classroom persisted and was reinforced by her experiences in her lessons. This phenomenon was evident in the second interview when she acknowledged:

> *"Pues uno no puede utilizar el inglés todo el tiempo, eso es una mentira, en un colegio público, no, y depende del proceso que hayan llevado los muchachos en los otros años escolares pues sí que es cierto. Entonces uno no puede utilizar, uno no puede pues aspirar a llegar hablando en inglés todo el tiempo porque no le van a entender a uno, porque se le enojan, se ponen que lo linchan a uno, eee… pero sí utilizarlo, o sea, ellos aprenden cosas como comandos, palabras, vocabulario, todo eso ellos lo utilizan, eee sí,*

Además, que eso cansa, o sea, uno se cansa, o sea, uno se desgasta, uno como profesor parado todo el tiempo intentando, pues uno si puede dar toda la clase en inglés, pero para uno hacerse entender haciendo las señas y mire que es que eso es esto y allá, eso es desgastante para uno, ¿sí? Entonces hay cosas que definitivamente… cuando se arman esos problemas entre ellos, que definitivamente no le entienden a uno, alguna explicación de alguna actividad, entonces uno tiene que utilizar el español."

[Well, you can not use English all the time, that's a lie, in a public school, no, and it depends on the process the boys have carried out in the previous school years. Yes, that's true. So you can not use one, you can not aspire to speak in English all the time because you will not be understood, because they get angry, they become irritable, eeeh... but one can use it sometimes; they learn things like commands, words, vocabulary; they use all that. Besides, that is tiring, I mean, one wears out. One as a professor standing all the time trying to use English. Actually, you can give the whole class in English, but in order to make yourself understood you have to use body language a lot, and that is exhausting, right? There are things that definitely ... when problems arise among them and they definitely do not understand you, or some explanation of some activity. So, one has to use Spanish] (Participant 2, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

As found in Viáfara (2005), classroom management has a significant influence in student teachers' language choice in the classroom, as was the case of P2. The necessity to control the development of her lessons in her conflictive class reinforced her belief of relying on L1 for this purpose. She, however, maintains her intention to use L2 in the instances she considered possible.

As evidenced in the excerpts above, contextual particularities played an important role in reinforcing some beliefs. Even though factors such as the practicum advisor guidance, or the cooperating teacher's role were also present, they did not seem to have a major influence in the participants' beliefs about language use.

Other factors such as the practicum advisor's role, and the PST's teacher identity emerged in P5 as she dealt with contextual issues in regards to the students' learning process. This experience had a significant influence in P5's understanding of the students' learning process and the role of the teacher in this process. The following excerpt shows P5's perception that students' learning is affected by their personal issues. She also highlights the necessity to know about students' lives and understand what is behind their behavior. In the first interview with her, she described:

> *"hay muchos estudiantes que tienen problemas...siempre me intriga ver estudiantes que no trabajan en clase, pues en las clases que he tenido con usted, usted se ha enfocado en que si, si usted está haciendo esto, o que si usted no le está yendo bien algo es porque hay algo detrás de eso. Entonces siempre me ha interesado cómo saber ese algo de mis estudiantes"*
>
> [there are many students who have problems ... it always intrigues me to see students who do not work in class, because in the classes I have had with you *(referring to the interviewer, her previous English teacher and practicum advisor at the time of the interview)*, you have focused on if you are doing this, or if you are not doing well, there is something behind that. Then I was always interested in knowing that something from my students] (Participant 5, Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

During her second interview, P5 brought up her experience with a student who barely got engaged in her lessons. In this respect, she described:

> *"Yo tuve un estudiante que era muy calladito en el salón. Yo le pregunté mucho al profesor* (referring to the cooperating teacher) *que por qué era así, incluso a él no lo note en las tres primeras clases… Yo no lo había notado. Y una vez que tocaba participar me dijeron: "Es que él no sale ni al tablero" "Él no sale ni a hablar" usted le dice así sea en español o en clases: "Javier dígame esto"… Él no lo va hacer porque a él no le gusta eso"*
>
> [I had a student who was very quiet in the classroom. I asked the teacher *(cooperating teacher)* a lot about why he was like that. I didn't even notice him in the first three classes ... I had not noticed him. And one day that students had to participate, their classmates said: "He does not even come to the board. He does not even speak." You tell him either in Spanish or in classes: "Javier, tell me this" ... He will not do it because he does not like that] (Participant 5, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

Based on the situation she encountered in her classroom, and as shown in the following excerpt, P5 put into practice what she had learned from her advisor, the need to know what is behind the students' behavior. In this way, she kept sharing about his student:

> *"Un día me senté con él en una izada de bandera, pues a preguntarle sobre la vida de él, los papás, sobre él y si, tiene problemas, y muchos. Entonces fue como trabajar ese tipo de problemas con ellos, problemas que ellos tienen en la casa, problemas que pasan en la cuadra de ellos y que no viven en sectores muy agradables, y cosas así.*

> [One day, during an institutional event, I sat next to him to ask him about himself, about his life, his parents. And yes! He does have problems, many! So, it was like working with that kind of problems with them. Problems that they have in thier homes; problems that happen in their blocks. They do not live in very nice neighborhoods, and things like that] (Participant 5, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

In doing so, P5 realized how her decision produced the outcome she expected, as will be shown in her following comment. This understanding helped her ratify her belief that personal issues affect students' learning process, and that it is necessary to know her students and the relation between the student's lives and their behavior in the classroom. In this way she concluded:

> *"Es chévere porque cuando usted trabaja eso, por ejemplo, mi estudiante Javier que es así; que no hablaba, el día que fue el profesor a hablar, habló. Entonces si sirve, conocerlos y trabajar sobre lo que pasa con ellos es bueno, porque así ellos se expresan de lo que ellos tienen como ahí guardado y pues así van aprendiendo también."*
>
> [It's cool because when you work on that, for example, my student Javier is that way; he did not speak. The day the professor went to the classroom to talk, Javier spoke. So, it does work. Knowing them and working on what happens with them is good, because that is how they express what they have inside, and in that way they begin to learn as well] (Participant 5. Personal Interview II, October, 2018).

Sheridan's (2016) study, which examines the changes of pre-service teachers beliefs, clarifies that pre-service teachers must have the opportunity to link practice with their existing

preconceptions, allowing them to critically reflect on and analyze their pedagogical reasoning in support of their pedagogical interests. In this breath, the teaching practicum provided this opportunity when different factors interrelated. Factors such as the students and context particularities, the practicum advisor, and even personal traits of the PST converged to help her reinforce her beliefs. In her comments, P5 showed a humanitarian understanding of teaching, mediated by the influence of her previous teacher and current practicum advisor and the necessity to address and solve her students' learning issues. Duquette (1994) suggests that "advisors invest a lot of their time, knowledge, and emotion into the task of working with a student teacher [and] play a key role in the development of the students' classroom practice" (p. 351). Not only does this cooperative work take place during the course of the teaching practice, but also before going to the classroom, as discussed in the previous category. Haigh and Ward (2004) also suggest that complex and diverse environments that PSTs find in their placement schools offers both challenge and opportunity, where the "teacher's role is one of critical thinker, within both metacognitive and social-political-moral frames, and creative responder" (p. 134), and this generates fertile ground for the construction and reconstruction of beliefs. Moreover, as Sinclair (2008) argues, these challenges and experiences the PSTs encounter in their journey affect the PSTs' motivation and commitment to teaching. The PSTs' motivation is booted by their willingness and desire to make the difference in their students' lives, and see their personal growth and learning (Sinclair, 2008).

We should not ignore that other factors, not clearly evident in the participants' voices, may also interrelate with the factors discussed above, and might as well have an influence in the PST's beliefs. For example, the PSTs' emerging professional identity, or as Danielewicz (2001) conceptualizes it, "teaching selfs", could also have an impact on the PSTs' perceptions of the

realities of the classroom, and how they inform their actions. The influence of this factor could be analyzed in the case of P4, who initially held the belief that becoming a teacher was his desire and kept believing so, disregarding the difficulties he had during the journey. When asked about his previous experiences as a learner, he shared how his desire to learn English and becoming a teacher came to him. On this regard, he disclosed:

> *"nos contaba* (referring to a previous high school teacher he remembered) *muchas historias de cómo el inglés le dio todo a él todas las oportunidades de seguir adelante, ganar dinero porque era un profesor muy pobre, y de cómo él ha llegado a ser un profesor tan reconocido, de cómo el inglés le ayudó a él para ser que Isnos* (P4's hometown) *fuera de redactar documentos en inglés, y para que Isnos fuera lo que es hoy, reconocido como patrimonio inmaterial de la humanidad por sus parques arqueológicos. Entonces eso despertó, ya me despertó en mí el interés por el inglés y fue por él y la profesora Estefanía Losada que nació mi motivación por aprender el inglés, y también por ellos y otros profesores de años anteriores, de querer ser un profesor de inglés.* "
>
> [He *(referring to a previous high school teacher he remembered)* used to tell us many stories of how English gave everything to him; all the opportunities to move forward, earn money, because he was a very poor teacher, and how he had become such a recognized teacher, how English helped him to make Isnos *(P4's hometown)* more than documents in English, and help Isnos to be what it is today, recognized as intangible heritage of humanity for its archaeological parks. Then that awoke my interest in English. And it was because of him and the teacher Fernanda Almario that my

motivation for learning English began, and also for them and other teachers from previous years that I want to be an English teacher.] (Participant 4, Personal Interview, August, 2018)

In his comment, P4 draws on the life story heard and kept from his teacher, emphasizing on significant achievements he made, to explain the origin of his belief. The following except shows that living up the practicum journey was a challenging experience for him due to the contextual particurities in his assigned school. In his final reflection of the practicum (a requirement for the course), he acknowledged:

"At first, the principal problem that the class presented was their dislike regarding English, but then the discipline, their misbehavior became the major problem in the class. Hard situations like bullying among them, lack of values such as respect, tolerance, acceptance, and politeness among them controlled the environment" (Participant 5, Final practicum Report, December 2018)

During the second interview, notwithstanding the aforementioned issues, the PST shared his conviction to improving and becoming a teacher. He reasoned:

"A pesar de todas las situaciones que uno vive y enfrente en el salón de clase, uno se mantiene firme en la idea de ser docente, uno no se da por vencido como practicante...quiero seguir enseñando, quiero mejorar y llegar a ser mejor profesor o mejor profesional en el campo de la educación. Eso le demuestra a usted qué, pues qué, que sí puede mejorar y qué y que si tiene las ganas de mejorar y yo seguir enseñando"

[In spite of all the situations that one lives and face in the classroom, one remains firm in the idea of being a teacher, one does not give up as a PST. I want to continue teaching. I

> want to improve and become a better teacher or better professional in the field of education. That shows you that you can really improve, and that you do have the desire to improve and continue teaching] (Participant 4, Personal Interview II, October, 2018).

This information displays how instead of decreasing his belief that becoming a teacher was significant to him, the teaching practicum increased his desire to continue learning to be a better English teacher. Manuel and Hughes (2006) explain that there are three aspects predominating in such determination:

> intrinsic motivations bound up with a sense of the inner life, the self and the quest for fulfilment and purpose; a desire to sustain an engagement with their chosen subject(s); and the opportunity to work with young people as part of the broader social project of education (p. 10).

On this regard, reasons such as altruism and social justice, and influences from significant teachers in their previous learning experiences may implicitly be behind those motivations (Manuel & Hughes, 2006; Sinclair, 2008). Both these reasons are present in P5's case. It was evident in his first comment how he held a positive perception of their previous teachers from high school, especially the one who inspired his desire to be a teacher. Furthermore, the following comment from his final reflection of the practicum will show how his personal traits converged with his practicum experience to reinforce his vocational belief. So he reasoned:

In this sense, as a teacher practitioner, and being conscious that being an English teacher does not only have the duty to teach just the language, but also the responsibility to educate people to form good and model citizens for society…. I have to start to trust more on myself, my

abilities, and the power that I have to change my life and in some way the life of my students encouraging them to overcome any difficulty and change their contexts. (Participant 5, Teaching Practicum Final Report, December, 2018).

The cases detailed above make clear how the practicum journey may bring about multiple scenarios and experiences where PSTs test and validate their beliefs and understandings about teaching and learning. Bearing in mind that some teaching practicum experiences may receive more influence from some factors than others, different factors play decisive roles in the PSTs' reinforcement of their beliefs.

Crossroads and turning points along the practicum journey: emancipating the mind. Based on our analysis, one of the most influential factors of beliefs transformation was the context particularities, which contributed to a significant change in the way the PSTs viewed the teaching profession. After the PSTs' confrontation with the different classroom variables such as students' behaviour, organization issues, time-pressures, teacher's moods and others, the PSTs felt more aware of the reality of teaching English in public schools. Likewise, they seemed to be more empowered and motivated without the initial beliefs about the difficulty of being English teachers. They showed initial traits of being English teachers, willing to promote changes in society, developing their English classes from a more holistic perspective; ideas they did not consider at the beginning of the practicum journey.

Concerning the aforementioned aspects, the participants expressed their opinions regarding the importance of lesson planning following the pre, while and post sequence, but based on the contextual particularities of their classrooms. They seemed to change their initial beliefs about lesson planning which they had expressed must always follow the pre, while, and post structure.

In regards to the initial belief about lesson planning, P3 noted the following aspects in the first interview: "*Pues antes, incluso antes de que yo supiera que habían unas prácticas, yo ya sabía cómo diseñar un plan de clase, que debe tener un inicio, si un inicio, una mitad y un final"* [Well before, even before I knew there were some teaching practices, I already knew how to design a class plan, which should have a start, a middle and an end"]

In interview number 2, the same participant after having experienced the contextual particularities of the classroom, commented:

> "*ese elemento no debe convertirse para los practicantes como en el régimen de que todas las clases tienen que llegar al post, porque la clase varía mucho, el ritmo de la clase y los estudiantes, entonces muchas veces a uno el tiempo le alcanza para llegar hasta la mitad del while, ya sea porque en los estudiantes hubo conflicto o por cualquier tipo de situación que pasa durante la clase, no le permite llegar al post*"
>
> [That element should not become an obligation part for practitioners; that all classes have to get to the Post part, because the class and the pace of the class and students vary a lot. So, many times one only has enough time to get to the middle of the While; either because there was a conflict among the students or by any type of situation that happens during the class. This does not allow you to reach the Post] (Participant 3, Focus Group, February, 2019)

Regarding the structure of the lesson plan asked by the teaching practice advisor in the first interview, participant 4 said:

"En las materias anteriores nosotros hicimos el Pre, While, and Post, nosotros ya sabíamos que teníamos que dar un inicio, intermedio, y fin a cada clase. Pero en si fue cuando la profesora (la profesora de prácticas) dijo "ya la próxima semana ya tiene que aplicar su primera clase, me tienen que mandar la Lesson Plan. Planeen Pre, while and post"

[In the previous subjects we did the Pre, While, and Post. We already knew what we had to give a beginning, intermediate, and end to each class. But it was when the teacher (The teaching practicum advisor) said, "For next week you have to apply your first class. You have to send me the Lesson Plan. Plan the Pre, the while, and the post] (Participant 4, Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

Participant 4's beliefs about the lesson planning structure changed after experiencing the real context. He stated:

"*una manera muy estricta en la parte de la redacción en que uno no puede dejar ni un punto ni una coma fuera de lugar porque eso está afectando de cierta manera la percepción de cómo se va desarrollar la clase, cuando muchas veces redacta el lesson plan al pie de la letra y cuando va a la realidad del salón de clase, uno no alcanza a desarrollar la mayoría de las cosas; uno tiene que hacer plan B y cambiar muchas ideas, y darle un giro a la clase porque se me está hundiendo la barca, pero no puedo dejarme hundir por seguir el lesson plan. Entonces, en ese sentido no estuve de acuerdo con eso en el que se nos exija demasiado en ser específicos en la redacción del lesson plan*"

> [a very strict way to write a lesson plan where one can not leave a point or a comma out of place because that is affecting in a certain way the perception of how the class is going to develop. The lesson plan is often written with a lot of detail, and when one goes to the reality of the classroom, one fails to develop most things. One has to carry out plan B and change many ideas, and turn the class around because the boat is sinking. I can not let myself sink for the sake of the lesson plan. So, in that sense, I did not agree with the demand that we had to be specific in the writing of the lesson plan] (Participant 4, Focus Group, February, 2018)

The above excerpts show how the influence of contextual particularities such as students' misbehaviour, institutional activities, PSTs' feeling and emotions, sudden decisions, and some other variables changed the PSTs' beliefs in relation to following an already pre-established lesson plan. The PSTs expressed how the lesson plan sequence and time can be modified as the class flows based on the particularities or challenges that may appear. On this vein, John' (1991) claims show that PSTs transformed beliefs are coherent with what is considered as a sound discussion in educational field. He argues that lesson planning is an activity affected by endogenous and exogenous forces, in which both contextual and teacher's personal factors converge in the development of the lesson. John (2006) also affirms that the model of lesson planning does not consider the contingencies of teaching nor the uncertainties of the lesson such as "time-pressures, organization issues, attitudes, moods, emotions and serendipity" (p. 487). He concludes that variables such as spontaneity and improvisation must also be considered in lesson planning. These characteristics of the contexts moved the beliefs about the pre-established nature of the lesson plan away.

The effects of the context realities on the PSTs' initial beliefs about the difficulty of being a teacher in the context of the teaching practicum, transformed this belief. P5 expressed in the first interview the idea that teaching was going to be difficult. She said:

> *"yo pensé que iba a ser duro porque como tal a mí no es que me guste el inglés y no es que me gusta ser docente...a mí me da miedo, me da miedo porque dije no, para empezar los colegios que están unidos aquí en la universidad son colegios ñeros, son esos colegios que hay niños que tienen más mundo que uno.... como marihuana, que saben de vicios, qué saben de todo...yo sabía que iba a llegar un momento en el que me tocara decidir un grupo, grupo grande, ...y qué iba a ser duro para mí porque yo toda chiquitita y esos niños todos grandotes"*
>
> [I thought it would be hard because, as such, I do not like English and I do not like being a teacher either... it scares me, it scares me because I said, "no"; to start schools that have an alliance with the university are schools with difficult students. Those are schools where children who know more about life than one does....stuff like marijuana; students who know of vices, they know everything ... I knew that there was going to be a moment in which I had to teach a group, a big group, ... and it was going to be hard for me because I am short and those children are tall] (Participant 5, Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

After finishing the teaching practicum, we interviewed the same participant for the second time about her belief concerning the difficulty of the teaching practicum and she shared with us:

"Es chévere enfrentarse con contextos fuertes porque ahí es donde usted se ve diciendo si quiere ser docente y si es docente.Hay que amarrarse bien los pantalones y ser fuertecito, porque así me miren chiquitica y todo eso, yo creo que las clases nunca me las cogieron de pinta, las clases fueron buenas. Uno es el que se mete los miedos pero por culpa de otros. Pero usted se enfrenta a eso y no, es mentira todo lo que dicen. Simplemente hay que enfrentarse a eso, y conocer el contexto en que ellos están y ya".

[It's cool to face tough contexts because that's where you know if you want to be a teacher and if you are a teacher. You have to have a firm hand and be strong, because even if they see me short and all that, I think they never bothered my classes; the classes were good. It is yourself who creates your own fears because of others. But when you face that, you realize that what they say is a lie. You just have to face that, and know the context in which they are and that's all] (Participant 5, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

This participant concluded her ideas about the teaching practicum by stating: *"En conclusión, estas prácticas fueron hermosas. Conocí un contexto el cual supe llevarlo. Amé cada clase que di, a pesar de que ser docente no es de mi interés."* [In conclusion, these practices were beautiful. I knew a context which I knew how to handle. I loved every class I gave, even though being a teacher is not of my interest]. (Participant 5, Final written report, December, 2018).

Adding more information on the initial beliefs about the teaching profession, Participant 1 shared that her initial belief before the teaching practicum was to finish her Bachelor's Degree and not continuing with the teacher profession, she commented:

"*Como yo le decía, en mi cabeza todavía no estaba ser profesora. Me quería ir antes por otra rama. Yo le decía a mi mamá "Listo yo termino mi carrera y Quiero ir por una rama de la policía" porque siempre me ha gustado lo que tenga que ver con la marina y todo eso. Pero pues mi tía Mary me decía, "María, usted no puede hacer eso usted ya tiene un niño y no la van a recibir. Usted tiene que enfocarse en lo suyo...y yo le decía, "pero no, pues a mí eso no me gusta"*

[As I was saying, I did not think about being a teacher. I wanted to do something different. I used to tell my mother 'I will gradutate and I will join the police', because I've always liked what has to do with the navy and all that. But my aunt Mary told me, 'María, you can not do that. You already have a child and you will not be received. You have to focus on your degree' ... and I said, 'No! I do not like that] (Participant 1, Personal Interview I, August, 2018)

After the teaching practicum finished, we interviewed participant 1 again. She showed a change of her initial beliefs about the teaching profession by stating:

"Yo ahora sí quiero ser docente, ahora. O sea, antes no quería, después de eso en práctica I le cogí amor a lo que quería. Entonces cuando llego a prácticas II me doy cuenta que, o sea todo es diferente, todo es nuevo, todo, absolutamente todo, desde el contexto, los estudiantes, el ambiente en el que uno se va a encontrar entonces ahí le cogí más amor a lo que hago"

[Now I want to be a teacher. Before, I did not want to, after, in practice I, I became very fond of what I wanted. So, when I began to teach in the teaching Practice II, I realized that everything is different, everything is new, everything, absolutely everything, the

context, the students, the environment in which one is going to be. Then, I started loving more what I do] (Participant 1, Personal Interview II, October, 2018)

Participant 5 and 1 highlighted the richness of facing the reality of the educational contexts. This confrontation seemed to have helped change their belief about the difficulty of teaching in the public sector and their beliefs about being teachers. P5 also noted how facing the teaching practicum by herself, debunked the myths told by other people she believed in. We would like to stress how both participants expressed feelings of love and beauty towards the teaching practicum experience especially when they did not believe the teaching profession was their best choice. These two participants developed affectivity towards their students as a consequence of living the teaching practicum journey. Manuel and Hughes (2006) declare that teaching requires "interpersonal capacities with profound levels of personal commitment" (p. 7), where teachers develop their social justice dimensions. This supports how the particularities of the contexts they faced changed their beliefs about not being teachers to boosting their motivations and likes towards teaching EFL.

At this point of the analysis, more factors start to converge in the transformation of beliefs. As stated above, participant 1, who did not want to be a teacher, finished the practicum with the eagerness and desire to be one. Here is where the role of the teaching practicum advisor takes part in the transformation of her beliefs. When we asked her about what helped the change of her belief that being a teacher was not her interest, P1 said:

"Mi profesor (refiriéndose al profesor de la práctica), los profesores que he tenido últimamente, o sea es como ver, como buenos profesores, no lo digo solamente en tema gramatical, sino, como un profesor es más que una guía, se convierte en un mentor ¿si me entiende? Va más allá de las necesidades de los estudiantes. Entonces ver que un

profesor puede lograr eso... me dijo "bueno, yo también lo puedo hacer" y tener ese profesor que le esté a usted ahí dando como ese feedback y que realmente le importe y dedique tiempo para que usted pueda ser un buen profesor. Entonces eso es lo que le ayuda a uno. Entonces era como que a través de lo que el profesor de prácticas me decía, a través de que él también como que se mostraba interesado y quería buscar actividades y como que también como que lo motivaba a uno a seguir investigando para llegar a hacer un buen trabajo"

[My teacher (referring to the practicum advisor), the teachers I've had lately, I mean, it's like, like good teachers, I do not say it only grammatically speaking, but a teacher is more than a guide, they become mentors, do you understand what I am saying? they go beyond the students' needs. Therefore, seeing that a teacher can achieve that, I realized "well, I can do it too". Having that teacher who is there giving you that feedback, who really cares and takes time for you to be a good teacher. That is what helps you. So, listening to the teacher advisor, also his interest and willingness to look for activities motivated me to continue researching to get to do a good job] (Participant 1, Focus Group, February, 2019).

P2, also had the negative belief that the teaching practicum was going to be difficult. She initially said: "*Los profesores de prácticas no le van a ayudar en nada… y los profesores la van a dejar sola, usted verá que va a hacer en prácticas"*. [The teaching practicum advisors will not help you in anything ... and they will leave you on your own. It will be up to you what you will do in the teaching practice] (Participant 2, Personal Interview I, August, 2018). We interviewed her after the teaching practicum journey and she claimed:

> "*Tuve un muy buen profesor que no sólo a mí, sino que pude notar que en mi grupo de prácticas todos pudieron, de alguno u otra manera, cultivar su identidad como profesores...tuvimos un profesor que sí nos regañaba , que sí nos aconsejaba y nos ayudó a formar unos lesson plan, nos enseñó a trabajar en equipo, porque nosotros los lesson plan nunca los trabajamos individuales, sino que casi siempre fue grupal y fue una muy buena idea y espero que algún otro profesor lo aplique porque todos aprendimos, porque todos tuvímos diferentes grados y todos aprendimos y podemos utilizar todas las estrategias para implementarlas, pudimos tomar ventajas de las desventajas de los otros pero aprendiendo cada uno. Entonces si, gracias a Dios*"
> [I had a very good teacher. Not only for me, but also my practicum partners, everyone could, in one way or another, cultivate their identity as teachers. We had a teacher who did scold us, who did advise and help us plan our lessons. He taught us how to work as a team, because we never worked our lesson plans individually. We almost always had group work, and it was a very good idea. I hope that other teachers apply it because we all learnt; because we all had different grades at school and could use all the strategies to implement them later. We could take advantage of the disadvantages of the others PSTs, learning from one another. So, yes! Thanks God] (Participant 2, Focus Group, February, 2019).

Sheridan (2016) presents the quality of the teacher preparation program, the practicum, classroom practices, and mentors' characteristics as influential factors for beliefs changes. Considering this, both participants 1, and 2, coincide in the positive influence their teaching practicum advisor had on the transformation of their initial beliefs about the difficulty of the teaching practicum, by supporting and guiding the PSTs in their process. P1 also recognized her

teaching practicum advisor's guidance as a reason for the change of her initial belief on her choice of the teaching profession. They remarked how the role of their teaching practicum advisor provided socioemotional support, resources, assistance in curriculum and instruction (Warren-Little, 1990). Yuan and Lee (2014), based on Vygotsky (1978), present how through the teaching practicum one of her participant's expanded and deepened her beliefs about language teaching and language teachers by means of the participants' dialogic mediations with her mentor teacher. This participant ended the teaching practicum process believing teaching is a complex and dynamic labor, which requires having a broader perspective, considering the students' needs. From Viafara's (2005a, 2005b), it is understood that the teaching practicum advisor is a constant provider of feedback, a promoter of expert and collaborative coaching who helps the PSTs reflect and develop their professionalism. Therefore, the characteristics of the teaching practicum advisor helped the PSTs change their initial beliefs on the difficulty of the teaching practicum, and their insecurities of being English teachers by boosting their confidence, providing emotional, psychological, and academic support throughout the teaching practicum journey

Bearing the previous considerations in mind, it might be valid to say that the teaching practicum is a rich academic environment for PSTs (Lucero & Roncancio-Castellanos, 2019), whose role contributes to the manifestation and emergence of beliefs (Pajares, 1992; Johnson, 1994), the possibility to reinforce them based on the multiple factors converging in distinct teaching and learning scenarios, and finally its influence to transform beliefs and create new views of teaching and learning (Richardson,1990 ;Caudle & Moran, 2012; Sheridan, 2016) .

Chapter V

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

Conclusions

This qualitative case study focused on the role of the teaching practicum in the pre-service teachers' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning. This study explored the incidence the teaching practicum had on the pre-service teachers' beliefs emergence, reinforcement, and transformation.To do so, we provide an answer to the main question that guided this investigation "what is the role of the teaching practicum in the PSTs' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning at the language teaching program at the Universidad de la Amazonia?" We also present the pedagogical implications, and further research considerations.

The teaching practicum can serve as a catalyst for the emergence of PSTs' beliefs about teaching and learning. The process of manifestation of beliefs triggered by teaching practicum can occur before entering the classrooms, during preparation weeks, and during the teaching practice itself. Beliefs can emerge from experiencing teaching in real educational settings, and also, as our data showed, from the participants' mental preparation for this experience, including the effects of preparation seminars held with practicum advisors and other PSTs. Depending on the type of activities and conversations the PSTs have in the preparation weeks before actually teaching, perceptions towards teaching and learning and the different aspects and stakeholders playing a role in the teaching practicum experience can emerge in positive or negative ways.

The emerging beliefs in both the aforementioned instances mostly originate from the PSTs experiences as students. These experiences included high school, college, and informal education, as well. Borg (2003) states that student teachers enter their teaching practicum after living their schooling years, most of their undergraduate courses and different contextual factors.

As Rokeach (1968) and Lortie (1975) argue, all types of beliefs teachers develop originate in the thousands of hours they spend in the classroom as students. They also assert that once these beliefs are brought to teacher education, they are later taken to the classrooms. Johnson (1994) also supports these ideas asserting that PSTs' beliefs may be based on the images they had from their formal learning experiences and how these represent a dominant model of action during the teaching practicum experience.

To a lesser extent, other source of beliefs we identified were their teaching practicum seminars and advisors since they helped PST's get prepared for the experience of teaching in real settings. In our study, this guiding process took place before and during the teaching practice. As cited Pajares (1992), Herskovits' Cultural transmission model accounts for the development of beliefs through the influence of three different driving forces: "enculturation, education, and schooling" (p. 316), being education one of the principal purposes behind the practicum advisor's role. Regarding the PSTs' teaching experiences, those teaching situations in their particular contexts and with their particular students had them resort to what they perceived, understood and believed to make their decisions. This is supported by Cota and Ruiz-Esparza (2013), who explain that it is the pre-service teachers' experience teaching what helps discover the beliefs they hold.

Tensions between the PSTs beliefs about EFL teaching and learning and the reality of the practicum also occurred in the journey they were immersed in. Participants' prior beliefs confronted with the reality of the teaching practicum yield by factors such as the particularities of the contexts, the different profiles of participation of the cooperating teachers as well as the teaching practicum advisors. These encounters caused feelings of fear, anxiety, frustration which influenced PSTs'either manifestation or reinforcement of beliefs.

The teaching practicum also plays an important role in reinforcing the PST's beliefs. This reinforcement takes place during the PST's confrontation of their beliefs in the development of their lessons in their teaching contexts. In creating practical knowledge and new perceptions held to be true, PSTs have to experience the challenge or reinforcement of pedagogical beliefs when they respond emotionally and intellectually to the context, the people and their ideas, and the experiences in the teaching opportunities provided by the practicum. The PSTs' reinforcement of their beliefs occur through the influence of various factors stated above.

The contextual particularities can also reinforce PSTs' beliefs when their classroom experiences are congruent with their existing perceptions. What PSTs believe can occur in the classroom can be confronted with contextual realities that match and even reaffirm their expectations. (Borg, 2003) affirms that contextual factors play a significant role in allowing or preventing the PSTs' implementation of instruction aligned with their cognition, stressing that they are mutually informing.

Other factors of the teaching practicum that can reinforce PSTs beliefs are the cooperating teacher and schools' institutional constraints. PSTs' beliefs hold positive or negative perceptions about teaching and learning that can be reinforced by particular institutional policies the PST have to comply with and a passive or active role of the cooperating teacher in their practicum process. Pajares (1993) advocates for practicum actors to encourage PSTs to explore ways of teaching that challenge their attitudes, guaranteeing positive teaching experiences for them, otherwise PSTs' negative attitudes or other existing beliefs can be reinforced.

When the cooperating teacher allows the PSTs to actively engage in taking action within their classrooms to address the contextual needs and those pedagogical ideas produce a positive result, PSTs' beliefs can be reinforced as well. The beliefs about productive pedagogy the PSTs

hold before embarking in the teaching practice can establish connections with their experiences in the classroom based on their understanding of how students learn, fostering a belief reinforcement (Sheridan, 2016).

The teaching practicum also serves as a transforming factor of PSTs' beliefs. Based on the data analysis, the most influential teaching practicum factors which contribute to the transformation of beliefs are the context particularities and the characteristics of the teaching practicum advisor. Sheridan (2016) also presents both the classroom practices and the characteristics of the mentor teacher as influential factors for beliefs changes, especially when standing on a constructivist approach of teacher education (Vygotsky, 1978). Yuan and Lee (2014) display how getting in contact with the context particularities and the guiding role of mentors (Johnson, 2006; Viafara, 2005a, 2005b; Cota & Ruiz-Esparza, 2013) have a transformative influence in the student teachers' beliefs. These factors helped change the PSTs' initial fears, preoccupations, and denial towards the teaching profession. The PSTs felt more motivated and empowered to be English teachers since they learned about observational techniques and related practice to theory. Moreover, they developed their personal knowledge about teaching (Duquette, 1994), and showed more commitment to the teaching profession (Manuel & Hughes, 2006).

To sum up, the research categories of the analysis in this study display the role of the teaching practicum in the PSTs' beliefs about teaching and learning. Each category, provided beneficial information to how the teaching practicum process as a whole contribute to the manifestation and emergence, the reinforcement, and the transformation of PSTs' cognition in the form of beliefs.

Pedagogical Implications

we would like to start this reflection by saying that understanding the powerful role beliefs have on the way teachers think, know, and behave, how these are resistant to change and how possible they are to change as well, continues growing as an important focus of educational inquiry in our field. Exploring the role of the teaching practicum in the PSTs' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning has made us construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct some of our more deep-rooted beliefs by means of reflecting critically on our cognition as in-service teachers, teacher educators, and researchers. Therefore, we are now more aware of how the decisions we make in regards to the students we currently educate can impact their beliefs systems in positive or negative ways for life.

Considering this, the teaching practicum is the perfect arena for teacher preparation programs to understand and explore the phenomenon of teachers' cognition on their PSTs, in particular relation to the confrontation, reinforcement and transformation of beliefs. The contributions of this study can inform the pedagogical practices and the teaching practicum orientations in similar teacher preparation programs in the country. The insights and reflections made here can also contribute to rethinking the attention that student teachers' beliefs are being given and the role of the teaching practicum in such beliefs. Therefore, it is imperative that teaching preparation programs provide PSTs with opportunities for inquiry, for trying and testing new ideas with mutual relationships between all the stakeholders involved in the process, and for talking about teaching and learning in new ways. So the PSTs can start growing professionally and understand the broader roles university teacher educators and school teachers have in the field of language teaching, and in society.

Based on the aforementioned, we suggest that the teaching practicum curricula must be revised and articulated with alternative paradigms of teacher education underpinned by an inquiry-oriented (Zeichner, 1983), interactive teacher preparation program (Anderson, 2018), or reflective model (Wallace, 1991) approach, where all the stakeholders share the same vision of the importance of the teaching practicum and the students' cognition. Thus, the PSTs can academically position their teacher professional identity (Kayi-Aydar, 2019); The PSTs could not only be seen as passive technicians of the language, but as reflective practitioners and transformative intellectuals (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Therefore, we suggest teacher preparation programs to guide the students in the process of exploration of the nature of their beliefs and the influence of factors that have an effect in their their cognition in regards to the teaching practicum and teaching in general, since this reflects the power of teacher cognition in our daily practices. We also suggest reflective academic spaces where teaching practicum advisors, cooperating teachers and pre-service teachers unveil their hidden agendas, reconstruct them and co-construct them, so they can share their views of language teaching and learning.

Further Research

Our study focused on the issue of beliefs in the teaching practicum. Our study can contribute to the field of teacher education and teacher cognition, representing interest for teacher education programs, teacher educators, and for pre-service teachers as well. To understand this issue in-depth and provide more insights on this topic, we propose the following questions for further research: what are the cooperating teachers' perception of the pre-service teachers they receive in their classrooms? How do the cooperating teacher's attitude towards the teaching practicum and the pre-service teachers affect the pre-service teachers' experience in the teaching

practicum? How do the different practicum actors influence change on the PSTs' beliefs in the teaching practicum? How does the relationship between the practicum actors influence the pre-service teachers' development of beliefs?

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent Form

Universidad Surcolombiana

Facultad de Educación

MAESTRÍA EN DIDÁCTICA DEL INGLÉS

Registro SNIES 13265

Resolución de autorización 12549 del 23 de septiembre de 2013

Ministerio de educación nacional

Consentimiento Informado y Confidencialidad para Participantes de Investigación

El propósito de esta ficha de consentimiento es dar a los participantes en esta investigación una clara explicación de la naturaleza de la misma, así como su rol en ella como participantes.

La presente investigación es conducida por los licenciados en Inglés Jose Alexander Arcila Valencia, docente de Inglés de la institución educativa Sagrados Corazones y Abel Andrés Periñán Morales, docente ocasional tiempo completo del Programa Licenciatura en Inglés, estudiantes de la Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad Sur colombiana. El objetivo de esta investigación es explorar cual es el rol de las creencias de un grupo de profesores en formación acerca de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés en su práctica pedagógica en el programa de Inglés de la Universidad de la Amazonia.

Si usted accede a participar en este estudio, en los próximos 3 meses se le pedirá responder preguntas en dos entrevistas individuales y una entrevista grupal. Esto tomará aproximadamente entre 30 y 45 minutos de su tiempo en cada entrevista. Lo que conversemos durante estas sesiones será grabado ya sea con una grabadora de voz o de video, de modo que el investigador pueda transcribir lo que se dijo en cada entrevista.

La participación es este estudio es voluntaria, por lo que usted puede dejar de hacer parte del proyecto en el momento en que desee. La información que se recoja será confidencial y no se divulgará sin su consentimiento. En el informe no se revelará la identidad de los participantes, es así que se usará un seudónimo para referirse a cada participante. El estudio se publicará como requisito de trabajo de grado para la obtención del título de Magister en Didáctica del Inglés en la Universidad Sur Colombiana, y posteriormente en alguna revista de investigación.

Si tiene alguna duda sobre este proyecto, puede hacer preguntas en cualquier momento durante su participación en él. Igualmente, puede retirarse del proyecto en cualquier momento sin que eso lo perjudique en ninguna forma. Si alguna de las preguntas durante la entrevista le parecen incómodas, tiene usted el derecho de hacérselo saber al investigador o de no responderlas.

Desde ya le agradecemos su participación.

Yo,_____, entiendo la información que se proporcionó y acepto participar voluntariamente en esta investigación.

_____ Firma del Participante

_____ Fecha

Scanned with CamScanner

Appendix B: Phenomenological interview 1 and 2 / Focus Group Interview

Aspectos de la Enseñanza	**Entrevista fenomenológica inicial**
General questions	1. ¿Cómo se le enseñó el inglés como lengua extranjera durante su educación primaria, básica y/o media o en algún instituto o academia de inglés? 2. ¿Cómo creía que iba a enseñar inglés (dar sus clases de prácticas) antes de iniciar de iniciar su práctica de intervención? 3. ¿Cómo se visionaba sus clases antes de iniciar su práctica docente?
Principles - Cognitive, social, linguistic	4. ¿Tenía en cuenta algún o algunos fundamentos o principios de la enseñanza del inglés para proyectar/imaginar sus clases antes de ser profesor practicante? ¿Cuáles? ¿Por qué? 5. ¿Cómo creía que iba a enseñar inglés (dar sus clases de practicas) antes de iniciar de iniciar su practica? 6. ¿Qué aspectos pedagógicos creía pertinentes para llevar a la práctica educativa? (Qué enseñar, para qué enseñar, cómo enseñar, a quien enseñar?)
Methods and techniques	7. ¿Qué estrategias de enseñanza del inglés creía útiles a la hora enseñar la lengua extranjera antes de iniciar su práctica? 8. si le preguntara un estudiante de primer semestre antes de iniciar su práctica "Cómo creyó/visionó que iba a ser su rol como profesor practicante, ¿qué le respondería? 9. Si un padre de familia de una institución educativa de Florencia le pidiera su opinión/un consejo para que su hijo aprendiera mejor, ¿qué le diría?

Curriculum /syllabuses/ CEFR/ lesson planning	13. Antes de iniciar su práctica de intervención, ¿qué aspectos de la planeación de una clase creyó poder aplicar/ implementar? por qué? 14. Antes de iniciar su práctica de intervención, ¿Cómo creía que debía determinar que enseñar a cada grupo de estudiantes? (Niños, adolescentes)
Mother tongue teaching	15. Algunos autores afirman que el uso del inglés como lengua extranjera debe ser constante durante las clases, otros dicen que se debe usar tanto el inglés como el español, ¿cuál era su visión sobre el uso del inglés en el aula antes de iniciar su práctica?
Early childhood **Primary** **Secondary** **Higher Ed**	16. Antes de llegar a ser practicante de primaria, ¿cómo creía que debía enseñarle inglés a los niñ@s? 17. Antes de llegar a ser practicante de primaria, ¿como creía que debía enseñarle inglés a l@s adolescentes?
Learners' subjectivity	18. Antes de iniciar sus prácticas de intervención, ¿consideraba importante aspectos de los estudiantes a la hora de orientar y llevar a cabo sus clases?

Appendix C: Field Notes Form

Observation form

Nombre del estudiante: Institución de la práctica: Grado al que enseña: No. de estudiantes: Duración de la clase:
Resumen de la clase:
Descripción contextual:
Aspectos Metodológicos:
Aspectos de manejo de grupo:
Uso de la segunda lengua:
Otros aspectos importantes:

Appendix D: Final Written Reflection Guidelines Sample

UNIVERSIDAD DE LA AMAZONIA
EDUCATION SCIENCES FACULTY
ELT PROGRAM
TEACHING PRACTICE I & II

TEACHING PRACTICE (TP) FINAL WRITTEN REPORT

Dear Student Teachers,

Taking into account the following items and questions, write your Final Teaching Practice Report.

GENERAL FORM PARAMETERS:

- COVER
- TABLE OF CONTENTS
- RATIONAL
- GENERAL REPORT (as an essay or tale in 3rd person)* (Including difficulties)
- CONCLUSIONS
- SUGGESTIONS
- REFERENCES
- ANNEXES – EVIDENCES (PHOTOS, STUDENTS WORK EXAMPLES, ETC.)

USE APA STYLE
PRESENT IT ELECTRONICALLY INTO THE E-PP
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

***ITEMS AND QUESTIONS FOR THE GENERAL REPORT**

- Describe the context of you course: Number of students, gender, the place of work, the school, the cooperating teacher´s name and title, how many hours did you teach?

Please, take into account that each one of the following questions are for describing the same situation from the beginning until the end of the experience. In this order of ideas, the story is a permanent comparison and reflection about the TP experience.

- How was your I.E. course attitude toward the English?

- How was students' attitude towards you and the class?
- What was the predominant problem your course has at the beginning, during and final?
- How did your practice contribute to the solution of that problem?
- Do you consider the practice is relevant for your training as teacher? Why?
- What was new in your practice?
- What was your predominant teaching method? Was it good? What was your mayor difficult?
- According to your experience, how is the work as peers? Is it better individual or by pairs?
- Talk about other activities did you develop at your practice school different to teach.
- Talk about your teaching practice teacher, attitude, suggestions for your improvement and role as guide more that judge.

Appendix E Participant's WIX

This site was designed with the WIX.com website builder. Create your website today.
Start Now
REFLECTIONS
PDF
Week 1
PDF
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