



# Narrative Events of Pre-Service Teachers at the End of their Teaching Practicum with Regard to their Pedagogical Advisor: Learnings Reported

doi:10.11144/Javeriana.syp35-68.neps

**Recibido:** 30 de septiembre de 2015  
**Aceptado:** 28 de marzo de 2016  
**Disponible en línea:** 31 de mayo de 2016

**Submission Date:** September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
**Acceptance Date:** March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
**Available online:** May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Eventos narrativos de docentes en formación al término de su práctica docente respecto a su asesor pedagógico: aprendizajes reportados

Acontecimentos narrativos de docentes em formação no fim da sua prática de ensino no que diz respeito do acompanhamento de discentes: aprendizagens relatadas

## Origen del artículo

Este artículo surge de la investigación “Eventos narrativos significativos de profesores en formación en torno a experiencias de práctica docente en la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras: Huellas desde la autovaloración” en la que trabajaron la Pontificia Universidad Javeriana y la Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas.

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## Abstract

This article reports results of a qualitative study which aimed to inquire about meaningful narratives of 184 students of a teaching degree in Modern Languages in a private university in Bogotá. The study intended to identify and characterise different aspects (linguistic, social, cognitive, pedagogic, emotional, or else) which pre-service teachers narrated as being meaningful for their learning once they finished their foreign language teaching practicum. Narrative events were collected through a self-evaluation instrument that was submitted by the students of different cohorts (I-2009 to II-2012) at the end of their teaching practicum. The article focuses on pre-service teachers' relationship with their pedagogical advisor during their practicum period. Analysis of the data showed that pre-service teachers established a close bond with their pedagogical advisor in which the advisors' support, experience, attitude, and knowledge are highlighted, particularly related to the role pre-service teachers acquire as didactic agents and not merely as pedagogical educators.

**Keywords:** pre-service teachers; teaching practicum; pedagogical advisor

## Resumen

Este artículo reporta los resultados de un estudio cualitativo que indagó sobre las narrativas significativas de 184 estudiantes de un programa de licenciatura en lenguas modernas en una universidad privada de Bogotá. El estudio buscaba identificar y caracterizar diferentes aspectos (lingüísticos, sociales, cognitivos, pedagógicos, emocionales, u otros) que los profesores en formación narraron como significativos para su aprendizaje al finalizar la práctica docente. Después de terminar este periodo, los eventos narrativos de diferentes cohortes de practicantes (2009-I a 2012-II) se recogieron a través de un instrumento de autovaloración. El artículo se centra en la relación de los profesores en formación y su guía pedagógico durante el periodo de la práctica. El análisis de los datos reveló que los profesores en formación establecieron una relación estrecha con su guía pedagógico y, en esta relación, se destacaron el apoyo del guía, su experiencia, actitud y conocimiento, particularmente en relación con el papel que los futuros profesores adquieren como agentes didácticos, no como educadores pedagógicos.

**Keywords:** profesores en formación; práctica pedagógica; guía pedagógico

## Resumo

Este artigo relata os resultados de estudo qualitativo que inquiriu sobre as narrativas significativas de 184 estudantes em um programa de licenciatura em línguas modernas em uma universidade privada de Bogotá. O estudo visava identificar e caracterizar diferentes aspectos (linguísticos, sociais, cognitivos, pedagógicos, emocionais, ou outros) que os professores em formação narraram como significativos para o seu aprendizado na finalização da prática docente. Após terminar tal período, os eventos narrativos de diferentes cohortes de praticantes (2009-I a 2012-II) foram coletados através de um instrumento de autoavaliação. O artigo centra-se na relação dos professores em formação e seu guia pedagógico durante o período da prática. A análise dos dados revelou que os professores em formação estabeleceram relação estreita com seu guia pedagógico e, nessa relação, destacaram-se o apoio do guia, sua experiência, atitude e conhecimento, particularmente no que diz respeito ao papel que os futuros professores adquirem como agentes didáticos, não como educadores pedagógicos.

**Palavras-chave:** professores em formação; prática pedagógica; guia pedagógico

# Narrative Events of Pre-Service Teachers at the End of their Teaching Practicum with Regard to their Pedagogical Advisor: Learnings Reported

## Introduction

It is assumed in this research article that both the act of teaching and learning languages are primarily relational acts and they cannot be conceived of as technical, as simply writing lesson plans for teaching or learning methods (Nieto, 2003). In this line of thinking, language teacher education becomes a political act (Freire, 1970): “For the truly humanist educator and the authentic revolutionary, the object of action is the reality to be transformed by them together with other people—not other men and women themselves” (p. 94). Recent research on the matter, better known as ‘practitioner research’ (Anderson & Herr, 1999), has established a new paradigm that tends to articulate processes of teachers’ professional development where teachers become subjects who produce knowledge; the paradigm sees this articulation from both a political and an epistemological perspective.

Regarding language teacher education, Johnson and Golombek (2002) argue that it is through reflection that pre-service teachers can establish a relationship between the knowledge acquired along their formal education and the context where they begin teaching. “When theoretical knowledge is situated within the social contexts where it is to be used, when the interconnected-

ness of that knowledge is made obvious, and when language teachers have multiple opportunities to use that knowledge in interpretative ways, then theoretical knowledge has relevance for practice” (Johnson & Golombek, 2002, p. 8). On the basis of such an idea lies self-reflection (Schön, 1990; Wallace, 1990).

With the purpose of understanding teachers’ initial education in the field of languages, self-assessment forms written by pre-service teachers of a degree in Modern Languages in a private university in Bogotá were analyzed in relation to their foreign language teaching practicum. For the collection of these texts—which is a routine at the end of the practicum—, students are asked to discuss and agree on the criteria to assess their performance during the practicum, mainly in relation to three spaces—as we called them—: the school where they did their practicum, the in-class seminar, and the periodic meetings with their pedagogical advisor. After reaching an agreement, they are given a form with three sections titled School, In-class seminar, and Pedagogical Advisor. Below each heading, pre-service teachers are asked to assess themselves; they are always encouraged to think of themselves and write in first person (I). Upon finishing their self-reflection, they give

themselves a grade which corresponds to 5% of the final grade of the subject. As narrative events, these self-assessment texts become knowledge that teachers-to-be have developed after finishing the most practical experience of their undergraduate education as teachers of English and French as foreign languages and, thus, the formative significance of these experiences is investigated.

The research from which this article derives focused on two broad questions to be analyzed in the aforementioned spaces. The questions are:

1. What —linguistic, social, cognitive, educational, emotional or other— aspects of teaching practice are narrated as meaningful experiences by language student teachers?
2. What theories of teaching and/or educational thought have language student teachers built from the experiences narrated about their teaching practicum?

Answering these questions will contribute to constructing localized knowledge in relation to initial teacher education in English and French as foreign languages and will help to reinforce initial teacher education processes, which have been a concern of

the Colombian Ministry of National Education. Besides, both the Colombian English Language Teaching (ELT) community and the Colombian French as a foreign language (FLE) community will be benefited.

This article deals only with the space of the pedagogical advisor and focuses on the aspects that pre-service teachers made relevant in their self-assessment regarding the relationship with their advisor, namely the social, emotional, and pedagogical aspects. In the texts, there was no evidence of psychological, cognitive, or linguistic aspects made relevant in this space, or at least not as relevant as the others. The above questions are thus answered here with these delimitations.

The research as a whole supports the consolidation of a research line called Languages, Learning, and Teaching, which explores the relationship between language learning and teaching, especially when these processes are mediated by language and, in many cases, when language is the object of study. Simultaneously, it feeds the lines Discourse Studies within Educational Contexts and Processes of Teachers' Professional Development, where observation is made to analyze how teachers are (re)constructed as subjects in meaningful narrative moments of their teaching.

The study was carried out by two research groups within an inter-institutional research project: Lectoescrinautas, from Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas; and Language, discourse, and complexity, from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.

### Literature review

From the perspective of social psychology, Bruner (1990) stated that there is a tendency in human beings to share their stories by putting them into narratives which deal, in general, with the variety that is present in humankind and in a given culture. This research accepts that general position, but when talking about narrative events, we are referring to discursive acts narrated either orally or in writing.

For Chambers and Jurafsky (2008) a narrative event refers to a sequence of events, marked by the use of a verb and where participants are mentioned. From a sociological standpoint, a meaningful event is a distinct event, has a pattern that emerges from others and leads to changes within a defined period (Griffin, 1993). The narrative event comprises meaningful happenings, facts, memories, among others, which are relevant for the speaker or writer. In that sense, this study resonates with Castaneda-Peña (1997) for whom the narrative events are significant in the case where

they are used to create and negotiate ways within a group, [and] that the narrative form is a way to prompt what is considered unusual, rare or completely out of the ordinary, for this to take an “understandable or at least explicable” form; and this of course represents a way of negotiation of meaning. (p. 9)

It can be said that a significant narrative event is one that is perceived as such from the experience of who narrates or who becomes aware through memory exercises, emotional reactions or internal sensations (Labov, 1997). According to Porter, Larson, Harthcock, and Kelly (2003), the narrative event leads to action, for at the moment of assessing the narrative event, different alternatives

arise indicating behavioral changes or generation of own knowledge based on reflection.

The teaching practicum is the period where the practitioner teacher acts and makes decisions to face different teaching situations (Woodward, 1992). In this period, the pre-service teachers make use of their intellectual skills to improve their practice keeping in mind their own interests, judgments, and personality, among others (Richards & Nunan, 1990). It is in this context that the concept of reflection claimed by Serna (2005) applies to both the in-service teacher and the pre-service teachers. Reflection allows them to develop

a sense of belonging in a community of professionals, working with student teachers on the articulation of their conceptions of teaching and education in general, as well as promoting an attitude of listening to their voices, are basic fundamentals in the education of student teachers with a clear idea of their own personal and professional identity. (p. 57)

The concept of self-assessment is understood as the “information about the learners provided by the learners themselves, about their abilities, the progress they think they are making, and what they think they can or cannot do yet with what they have learned in a course” (Blanche & Merino 1989 in Yang & Xu, 2008, p. 20). O’Neal (2012) sees self-assessment as “a concept and a process perceived as reflective observation that gives students opportunities to make sense of their socialization and learning experiences” (p. 160). These experiences allow student teachers to see themselves in their role of teachers and lead them to reflection through self-assessment. When they assess themselves in their role as teachers, what they do is to learn about strengths and weaknesses. They realize there are areas where they have to exploit their potentialities, and areas that need work to compensate for their drawbacks.

According to Oscarson (1989 in Benson, 2001), self-assessment can be internally or externally oriented. The former is an internal activity

directed by the individual himself and which acquires greater personal value to the student as there is a greater perception of himself; the latter is an external activity directed by others and which concerns the comparison of the student's performance versus parameters established by others for the given performance. We speak of both: the first in which the teacher in process of becoming one reflects according to their beliefs about teaching and according to their experience during the teaching practicum, and the second one in which the student teacher matches his/her performance to a standard that is expected from any teacher.

During the period of the practicum, student teachers are mentored by the pedagogical advisor. "A highly experienced teacher who provides a more personalized guidance to the pre-service teacher throughout the processes of planning, execution of, and reflection on the tasks assigned to them in the school". This curricular actor has the following functions:

- Correct, give feedback, and provide advice on all lesson plans and activities planned by their advisee(s).
- Observe and assess the pre-service teacher's performance.
- Promote reflection of the advisee(s) upon their actions in the school and support their analysis of the problems they may face, the possible solutions, and their implementation.

Both local and foreign researchers have studied the role of advisors during the practicum and the implications for the development of pre-service teachers. Viáfara (2005a) devised a model for making the relationship between the mentor and the pre-service teacher more profitable for the development of the latter. In this model, documenting the performance of the pre-service teacher through different reflection mechanisms is the key to bettering their practice. Particularly in his study, the notes of the mentor taken during the observation of a lesson were read and com-

mented by the pre-service teacher; the reactions of the pre-service teacher became self-reflections that genuinely boosted their performance. A surprising finding, however, was that student teachers, when facing difficulties with methodology, "expect[ed] for their counsellors to provide them with the answers for their difficulties" (Viáfara, 2005a, p. 66). Viáfara (2005b) also found that providing feedback in this way minimizes anxiety and augments confidence. What Viáfara highlights is the crucial role mentors play in the development of the practicum of pre-service teachers.

Internationally, after a revision of the literature on tutoring in the practicum, Cid Sabucedo, Pérez Abellás, and Sarmiento Campos (2011) found that tutors are essential for advisees as they provide support to their professional development and help them to reflect and socialize their experience. It is, however, with emotional and psychological support that advisors contribute the most to pre-service teachers, boosting their confidence.

### Methods and procedures

This study is qualitative descriptive and exploratory in nature, and its focus is on the experience of the subjects who are part of a specific situation that involves them in facing their teaching practicum for the first time as part of a curricular requirement in order to graduate as language teachers. We want to qualitatively map the personal ways in which our research participants experience, conceptualize, perceive, and understand aspects related to specific phenomena that surround them in the contexts in which they work. When we speak of how a teacher-to-be conceptualizes, understands, and experiences, we are not referring to a process of mental representation or cognitive structure; rather, we focus on how the conscious subject brings about the phenomenon using narrative forms to which we have referred as narrative events—see above—. For this reason, this study is not specifically narrative. It is precisely the inner relationship between the subject—in this case the teacher-practitioner—and the phenomenon—in this case the teaching practicum—which reveals

the significant experience on its own (Richardson, 1999) which is carried by a narrative event, not by a conversational narrative (Castañeda-Peña, 1997) or by a general narrative (Labov, 1988; Silva-Corvalan, 1989). In that line of argument, we would like to maintain that we are not posing a narrative position in this study simply because, as has been recognized in the specific literature, “some studies (...) make use of narrative data-collection and/or analytical methods without showing serious commitment to a narrative epistemology” (Barkhuizen, 2013, p. 8). Defining an angle of such ‘commitment’ is what makes this study exploratory and qualitative. In that sense, we find reasonable to put forward an argument that starts concealing what is exploratory and what is qualitative in this particular study. This study offers an exploratory view that goes beyond the individual narrative event. This could be critical when researchers think of generalizations. The narrative events collected as data for this study are not simply personal and individual. Looking at them qualitatively for an extended period of time allows for certain degrees of interpretive generalization. Following Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett (2008, pp. 129-130), we would like to claim that our data is useful to “open up a culture and reveal the operation of otherwise obscured (...) social conventions (...) meanings and motivations”. In that sense, the narrative angle, the exploratory, and qualitative tend to collude. Such collusion will need major room to be explained but it suffices to say for now that “to argue that it is paradigms that are in contention is probably less useful than to probe where and how paradigms exhibit confluence and where and how they exhibit differences, controversies, and contradictions” (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011, p. 97).

The input for the study was the student teachers’ self-assessment reports. After being transcribed and converted into hermeneutic units, they were analyzed using specialized qualitative data analysis software called Atlas.Ti in order to facilitate the identification of analytical categories and their relationships. In that line of argument the use of

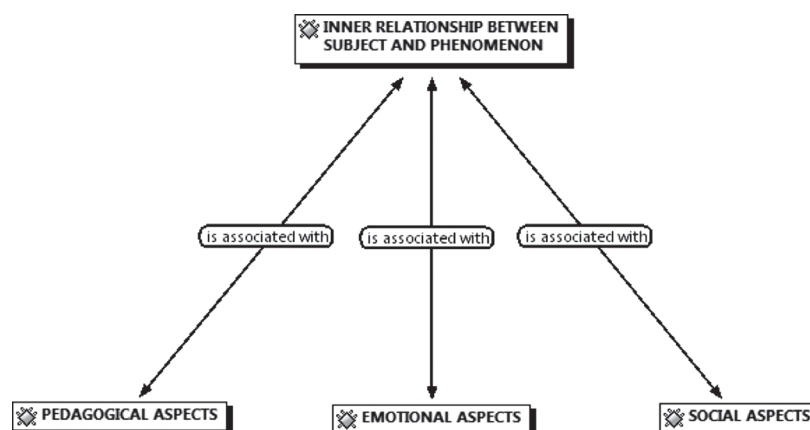
this software was “fully integrated (...) [to] the very design of [this] research project” (Bourdon, 2002, paragraph 29); this allegedly being a paradigmatic confluence (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011) between a narrative angle, and the exploratory and qualitative framework chosen. Thus, each narrative event was identified taking into account its Atlas.Ti code. During the analysis, the codes that emerged were classed into categories and subcategories and then organized in a chart designed on the basis of the aspects that constituted the focus of the study; this means that the codes of “each category describe how [narrative events] belonging to the category are likely to look like” (Gläser & Laudel, 2013). The analysis included (a) the meanings attributed to the experiences reported by the participants; and (b) internal and external structures inherent in the ways in which participants lived the phenomenon under study. The data obtained from (a) and (b) formed categories of description organized in a space of description of the phenomenon under study reflecting how these categories are related. The logical relationships of the components of the categories that were identified will be discussed in an integrated way: (1) conscious structures, (2) structures of meaning, and (3) forms of perception of experiences.

The participants in this study were all the students of a degree in Modern Languages in a private university in Bogotá (Colombia) doing their practicum in 2009-I, 2009-II, 2010-I, 2010-II, 2011-I, 2011-II, 2012-I y 2012-II. Prior to the practicum, they had performed the role of teacher assistants in the same context for a period of 6 months, which allowed them to become acquainted with the school culture and prevailing teaching practices. Together there was a total of 184 pre-service teachers aged 19 to 23.75% of whom were female students and 25% male students. English was the preferred language for 80% of the participants while French was chosen by 20%.

## Results and findings

The analytical categories found in the data set with regard to the relationship between the pre-service

Figure 1: Inner relationship between the subject and the phenomenon: aspects related to the pedagogical advisor



Source: own work.

teachers and the pedagogical advisor correspond to elements related to emotional, pedagogical, and social aspects, as seen in Figure 1. The excerpts here represent narrative events that were made meaningful by individual student teachers; their value lies in how relevant the experience was for the writer and not in how often it was mentioned. There are plenty of examples to substantiate claims but we are showcasing a selection for the purposes of this article.

The relationship between the subject and the phenomenon is first analyzed in the narrative events through the emotional aspect that the student teachers pointed out as relevant in their written self-assessment regarding the pedagogical advisor. One instance where this aspect is highlighted is associated with issues of responsibility, as shown in the following excerpt:

But after talking about this, I kinda understood the things I missed because I didn't talk to my pedagogical advisor ...I just waited for her to appoint us for a meeting; perhaps I thought I was not supposed to talk to her on a regular basis, I've talked regularly to my thesis advisor but I didn't talk to other teacher extra class.<sup>1</sup> [JSS - 0930-029-M-IN-C16-PR - 14:43 (211:211)]

In this case, responsibility is understood only at the end of the practicum as something that is

socially constructed between the two parties: the pedagogical advisor and the advisee. It could be argued that in JSS's case, an opportunity of being advised was lost, but there might be also a sense of awareness about this. Nonetheless, this became a learning situation for the teacher-to-be where there is room for self-improvement.

Awareness of self-improvement is also viewed by the participants in terms of positive achievements in classroom management, confidence, and experience. The data show that this awareness seems to originate in prior self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses. Recent research studies have found that tutor-student engagement is the foundation for awareness of learning and in multilingual contexts, for example, this is supported by the co-construction of reciprocity and what is called pedagogic attention (Ruiz & Coyle, 2015). It seems that awareness of self-improvement could constitute in initial teacher education a fruitful avenue of research that relates both learning partnerships (e.g. pedagogical advisor-student teacher) and learning awareness (e.g. being a teacher of teachers-becoming a new language teacher).

There are also two main aspects that the data show as important to consider when attempting to identify and characterize this emotional aspect. On the one hand, from the participants'



words, it is possible to assert that their beliefs about being a teacher are grounded in a process of reflection about themselves, i.e. introspection. On the other hand, pre-service teachers appear to have preconceived notions about what being a teacher entails both in terms of the teacher as an entity (qualities like patience and skills like group management) and in terms of the teaching work, e.g. what a teacher does and does not do (use of gestures to manage discipline; not to shout at students). The emotional aspect, thus, becomes a kind of well-balanced factor between the negative feelings originated in the lack of action and JSS's realizing it (Servent, Villa, Blanco & Rivas, 2009; Hernández & Prieto in Utria, 2007).

When pre-service teachers put together their self-awareness and their preconceptions about what a teacher is and what teaching implies, reflection arises in terms of their suitability and if they can be competent teachers. "I must admit that at the beginning I didn't feel that confident because I don't know if I have what it takes to be a teacher<sup>2</sup> [CAJ - 1130-121-M-IN-C2-PR - 17:31 (218:218)]".

It is then that the role of the pedagogical advisor seems to gain importance. The advisor is seen by the pre-service teacher as the one that boosts their confidence and guides them to gain experience as teachers. The advisor's experience, help, and knowledge are key to the improvement that the pre-service teachers identify. In CAJ's case, the emotional connection with the pedagogical advisor offers an opportunity to establish more confidence to voice questions and doubts discovering qualities not known to CAJ before.

Such may be the case of ADB and LFM, who created strong bonds with their pedagogical advisor thanks to their confidence on them. Within this train of thought, it could be deduced that the pedagogical guide becomes a source of knowledge. "I willingly adopted each of the suggestions made by my pedagogical advisor because her experience, her knowledge were aimed at the strengthening and improvement of my classes<sup>3</sup> [ADB - 1230-174-M-FR-C10-PR - 19:30 (55:55)]".

Group management was not so easy for me because I'm not used to shouting (children, the least); but, as my pedagogical advisor wisely says, 'it is the teacher who makes things work for the group'. I always tried to keep calm and to support the kids. In this moment, kids don't need a shout to be organized; simply, by means of signs and gestures, they get organized. Now I feel proud of myself because I achieved something I never thought was possible.<sup>4</sup> [LFM - 1130-123-F-IN-C12-PR - 17:43 (310:310)]

It is interesting that the pre-service teachers do not describe the impact of their advisor in terms of pedagogic improvement as to how to develop a class or guide the teaching and learning process with regard to methodologies; the main focus appears to be the logistic and emotional aspects: improving group management and gaining confidence. "As time passed by, I began acquiring confidence and experience thanks to the help of school teachers and the pedagogical advisor<sup>5</sup> [CAJ - 1130-121-M-IN-C2-PR - 17:31 (218:218)]".

What seems to be evident in CAJ's self-assessment is that the relationship with the pedagogical advisor and the school teachers builds confidence. This helps him to view his own learning of teaching as meaningful in pedagogical terms.

The pedagogical aspect in relation to the role played by the pedagogical advisor includes other traits linked to life in a language classroom. For example, SC assesses this relationship positively in terms of the merely instructional act of teaching:

Regarding the pedagogical advisor, as I have pointed out several times, I think it was really helpful to have worked with [pedagogical advisor] because she has the experience and what I didn't grasp or didn't know how to do easily, she quickly corrected it or she helped me with the activities<sup>6</sup>. [SC - 1210-130-F-IN-C9-PR - 18:3 (30:30)]

It could be inferred that prior to their practicum period, the teacher of teachers (Díaz-Maglioli, 2012) has been a source of knowledge along with texts and peers. However, it is in the teaching

practicum where teachers-to-be face new forms of learning. The experience of being assessed by the pedagogical advisor is seen by the practitioners as a valuable possibility where the unexpected emerges, becoming an opportunity for learning. This seems to be a condition for providing feedback rather than testing pedagogical knowledge. This also appears to be a condition to become part of a professional community (Wenger, 1998).

Becoming a teacher is a social aspect in which the pedagogical advisor is perceived as a colleague with whom there is a sense of mutuality as expressed by ISG:

I really felt that [pedagogical advisor] backed me up. As I said in the assessment of the pedagogical assessment, her experience helped me improve in each of the activities performed at school. We held a relationship of colleagues, not only one of teacher and student, and this allowed me to feel comfortable in each one of my classes<sup>7</sup>. [ISG - 1210-150-F-IN-C2-PR - 18:11(54:54)]

The data show that the relationship between pre-service teachers and their advisors is based on the support that the latter provide in their role as guides. This newly born learning relationship is accepted by the practitioner as successful. Additionally, this could become a model for his/her professional in-service practice. Rapport, confidence, feedback, rigor, learning from mistakes, and communication are intertwined in the relationship to favor learning.

The practitioners' voices are evidence that the advisor is seen as an experienced person who can guide their process of self-improvement. It seems that the kind of potential professional connection that is established between the pre-service teacher and his/her advisor has an impact in the performance of the former in the classes. Besides, the pedagogical advisor is regarded as a counselor who provides 'wise' knowledge about the teaching process.

However, it seems that the advisor's affirmation is just something that the pre-service teacher

already knows, and it is rather the practitioner's own effort that renders a positive outcome. An instance of a case in which the pedagogical advisor's relationship to the student teacher does not seem to have a positive influence can be seen in the following extract:

Talking about the observations, at the beginning I felt somehow nervous, but as I began noticing the girls were cooperative and felt comfortable with the activities, I gained more self-confidence and began trusting in my teaching skills; I always tried to do my best during classes. Considering the fact that they were six- or seven-year old girls, who are very hyperactive and talkative, I used all my patience and tolerance for them to have a good performance in class<sup>8</sup>. [NCT - 1130-114-F-IN-C16-PR 17:50 (340:340)]

There are two important aspects to highlight regarding this extract where NCT draws on a disapproval discourse (Baxter, 2003). First, the advisor is seen here in the role of an evaluator rather than that of a counselor. The observations have an effect on the pre-service teacher's performance because they affect him/her emotionally. And second, it is interesting to see that in this case it is not the advisor's help and support that boosts the pre-teacher's confidence but his/her relationship with the students and his/her own effort.

## Conclusions

The data collected to show the relationship between what pre-service teachers make relevant in their narrative events and their perceived relation with the pedagogical advisor concentrated on three main aspects: pedagogical, social, and emotional.

There seems to be an implicit construction of knowledge which emerges from the relationship between the teachers-to-be and their pedagogical advisor. In the interaction emerging from this relationship, it is the didactic elements that are prioritized in the act of teaching itself; since, during the practicum period, pre-service teachers construct themselves as learners of teaching rather than as teachers, a strong tendency appears

to privilege the instrumental dimension of teaching over an expected interest for promoting learning in the students. This seems to be further emphasized by the pedagogical advisor who does not inquire about the students' learning process but about their advisees' teaching performance. Given this, pre-service teachers do not identify themselves in the holistic role of a language teacher as would be expected: theorizer, methodologist, researcher, ITC user, and analyst of the language. Besides, there is an absence of narrative events related to reflection fostered by the pedagogical advisor. Student teachers appear to focus more on lesson preparation and responsibility to do the tasks that they are assigned at the school.

Regarding the second research question, in terms of the theories of teaching and/or educational thought that language student teachers built from the experiences narrated about their teaching practicum, it is possible to affirm that theory is constructed based on what being a teacher is and on the actions related to this practice. This theory is framed and permeated by the feedback from the pedagogical advisor, who validates or criticizes the actions that are carried out in the classroom; the pedagogical advisor is, then, someone who possesses the knowledge, experience, and expertise with regards to what 'a good teacher' is. Pre-service teachers thus seem to draw the conclusion that good practice means following class procedures appropriately on the basis of a carefully planned lesson.

Implicitly, the narrative events show that the pre-service teachers conceive their pedagogical advisor as a figure that allows them to better their pedagogical competences. Alluding to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978), we could assert that the reality that student teachers face in the classroom context presents them with a number of challenges which can be overcome with the help of the pedagogical advisor in order to gain independence in their role as methodologists. Hence, the type of knowledge that emerges in the pedagogic domain of the work between the pre-service teachers and their pedagogical advisor

is more practical than theoretical. It would be the experience itself that the teachers-to-be build through their involvement in the teaching actions in the context of the school which seems to prevail, with the theoretical knowledge being relegated to a less significant position.

### Suggestions and proposals

Based on the findings, it is proposed:

- To identify and characterize the pedagogical practices of the pedagogical advisors who guide the practitioners.
- To further investigate what pre-service teachers' beliefs are with respect to what a teacher is.
- To inquire about the role that the pedagogical advisor has in terms of pedagogic improvement in activities and methodologies.
- To inquire how close the relationship between pre-service teachers and their advisors is and the effect that it has in their practicum.
- To investigate how pre-service teachers perceive their pedagogical advisors as well as what beliefs and information they have with regard to the roles that an advisor should play in the practicum.

These suggestions remain to be deeply explored in a research basis. However, keeping in mind our argument of paradigmatic collusion (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011) we would dare to generalize to certain extent that schools of education preparing future English language teachers need to explore whether or not they are providing their teachers-to-be students with teaching theories or learning theories, or both. Additionally, the question about whether or not these students problematize language learning remains as an underexplored issue which could be studied within the binary relationship between pedagogical advisor and teacher-to-be English language student as we tried to explore from a qualitative perspective in this study.

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### Footnotes

1. Original text: "Sin embargo y después de hablarlo, entendí en qué cosas yo había fallado al no haberme comunicado por otros medios con mi guía pedagógica y haber esperado a las citas que nos ponía, tal vez porque suponía que esa no era una labor que me compitiera, pues salvo el tutor de la tesis, creo que no lo había hecho con ningún otro profesor más allá de los horarios de clase".
2. Original text: "Debo admitir que al principio no me sentí muy confiado porque no sé si realmente tenga madera para ser Profesor".
3. Original text: "Siempre adopté, con buena cara, cada una de las sugerencias de mi guía pues su experiencia, sus conocimientos siempre tendían al fortalecimiento y al mejoramiento de mis clases".
4. Original text: "El manejo de grupo no siempre fue fácil para mí, pues no estoy acostumbrada a gritar y menos a los niños, pero como bien dice mi guía pedagógica "el docente es quien hace al grupo", siempre traté de mantener la calma y apoyar siempre a los niños. En este momento los niños ya no necesitan un grito para estar organizados simplemente con señales y gestos ello se organizan. En este punto, me siento muy orgullosa de mi misma, pues logré algo que no creía posible".
5. Original text: "...a medida que pasaba el tiempo fui adquiriendo confianza y experiencia gracias a la ayuda de los profesores del colegio y también de la guía pedagógica".
6. Original text: "En cuanto el guía pedagógico como he repetido en varias ocasiones me pareció muy útil haber estado trabajando con la 'Guía Pedagógica A' ya que tiene la experiencia y lo que yo no captaba o sabía hacer fácil, ella me lo corregía rápidamente o me ayudaba con las actividades".
7. Original text: "Realmente me sentí muy apoyada por la 'Guía Pedagógica B' como lo expresé en la evaluación de la guía pedagógica, su experiencia me permitió mejorar en cada una de las actividades realizadas en el colegio. Teníamos una relación de colegas y no sólo de profesor alumno y eso me permitió sentirme cómoda en cada una de las clases".
8. Original text: "En cuanto a las observaciones al principio me sentí un poco nerviosa, pero al ver que las niñas me colaboraban y se sentían a gusto con las actividades tuve un poco más de confianza en mí misma y en mis habilidades como docente, traté siempre dar lo mejor de mí durante la realización de las clases. Teniendo en cuenta que son niñas de seis o siete años y son muy hiperactivas y a veces muy habladoras por lo que emplee mi paciencia y tolerancia para que ellas realizaran un buen desempeño durante la clase".

### Cómo citar este artículo

Castañeda-Peña, H., Rodríguez-Urbe, M., Salazar-Sierra, A. y Chala-Bejarano, P. (2016). Narrative events of pre-service teachers at the end of their teaching practicum with regard to their pedagogical advisor: Learnings reported. *Signo y Pensamiento*, 35(68), 52-64. <http://dx.doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.syp35-68.neps>