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**Pursuing teacher professional development:** a sociocultural study on the use of  
the EPOSTL in combination with class activities

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the EPOSTL in combination with class activities**

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Maria Rosa da Silva Costa

**PURSUING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A SOCIOCULTURAL  
STUDY ON THE USE OF THE EPOSTL IN COMBINATION WITH CLASS  
ACTIVITIES**

O presente trabalho em nível de doutorado foi avaliado e aprovado por banca  
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julgado adequado para obtenção do título de doutora em Estudos da Linguagem.

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“Education is a social process; education is growth; education is not a preparation for life; education is life itself.”  
(DEWEY, 1916, p. 239)

## RESUMO

Com as mudanças que ocorreram no campo de formação de professores, onde o ensino de língua inglesa apresenta um nível de profissionalismo muito maior que antes (RICHARDS, 2008), instituições de formação de professores têm enfatizado a importância de encorajar alunos-professores a buscarem alternativas para os problemas que eles podem vir a encontrar em seus contextos de sala de aula. Johnson (2009) argumenta que a formação de professores de segunda língua deve ofertar aos professores as ferramentas necessárias para ajudá-los a construir suas experiências instrucionais baseadas em uma teoria sobre o aprendizado e o ensino de línguas. Assim sendo, baseando-se na teoria sociocultural (VYGOTSKY, 1987), que enfatiza que o aprendizado e o desenvolvimento são processos situados e dinâmicos que ocorrem através de relações sociais, o presente estudo tem como objetivo investigar até que ponto o uso do Portfólio Europeu para Futuros Professores de Idiomas (EPOSTL) em combinação com atividades de sala aula contribui para o desenvolvimento profissional de professores. Esta pesquisa qualitativa foi conduzida na forma de um estudo microgenético e os participantes foram seis alunos-professores do programa de graduação em Letras-Ingês Licenciatura em uma universidade federal no sul do Brasil. Eles foram acompanhados por quatro meses durante uma disciplina de prática de ensino na qual foram solicitados a manter um portfólio onde deveriam registrar informações sobre seu desenvolvimento. Todas as interações que aconteceram durante as aulas com os formadores de professores e com os colegas de sala foram gravadas em vídeo e todos os materiais usados em aula foram coletados com o intuito de comparar as narrativas dos alunos-professores no portfólio com o seu desenvolvimento real, especialmente durante as apresentações de micro-aulas e as sessões de feedback. Os resultados indicam que os alunos-professores tiveram a oportunidade de refletir sobre suas experiências de ensino durante o curso, tendo em vista que eles usaram o EPOSTL e as atividades de aula para descrever e dar sentido a novos conceitos aos quais foram expostos durante as aulas. Suas narrativas serviram como ferramentas de mediação para regular os próprios pensamentos e internalizar esses conceitos adquiridos, assim como reforçar a noção de que o desenvolvimento de conceitos segue, de fato, um caminho sinuoso (VYGOTSKY, 1986). O portfólio e as atividades de aula ajudaram os alunos-professores a esclarecerem explicitamente seus processos de ensino através da exposição dos seus entendimentos e serviu como um recurso onde eles conseguiram reconhecer os seus pontos fortes e as suas fraquezas. O EPOSTL e as atividades de aula também auxiliaram os alunos-professores a relacionar suas experiências com princípios teóricos a fim de reduzir a lacuna entre conhecimento teórico e prática de ensino e permitiu que eles baseassem sua instrução sistematicamente em um grupo de declarações de princípios, combinando conceitos científicos com entendimentos e práticas situados.

**Palavras-chave:** Formação de professores. Desenvolvimento profissional. Portfólios.

## ABSTRACT

With the shift in the field of teacher education, where English Language Teaching presents a much higher level of professionalism than before (RICHARDS, 2008), teacher education institutions have been emphasizing the importance of encouraging student-teachers to pursue alternatives for the problems they may find in their classroom context. Johnson (2009) argues that Second Language Teacher Education should provide teachers the tools to help them to construe their instructional experiences grounded on theory about language learning and teaching. Thus, drawing on sociocultural theory (VYGOTSKY, 1987), which emphasizes that learning and development are situated dynamic processes which occur through social relations, the present study aims at investigating to what extent the use of the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) in combination with class activities contribute towards teacher professional development. This qualitative research was conducted as a microgenetic study, and the participants were six student-teachers from Letras – English Licenciatura undergraduate program at a federal university in the south of Brazil. They were accompanied along four months while doing an elective course in teaching practice, in which they were asked to keep a portfolio where they should record information regarding their development. All their interactions with teacher educators and peers during the lessons were video recorded and all class materials were gathered in order to compare their narratives in the portfolio to their actual development, especially during their microteaching presentations and feedback sessions. Results indicate that the student-teachers had the opportunity to reflect on their learning experience during this course, as they made use of the EPOSTL and class activities to describe and to make sense of some new concepts they were exposed to during their classes. Their narratives functioned as mediational tools in order to regulate own thinking and internalize these concepts, as well as reinforced the notion that concept development indeed follows a twisting path (VYGOTSKY, 1986). The portfolio helped the student-teachers to make their learning process explicit by exposing their understandings and served as a resource where they could recognize their strengths and their weaknesses. The EPOSTL and the class activities also helped student-teachers to relate their experiences to theoretical principles in order to reduce the gap between theoretical knowledge and teaching practice and allowed them to systematically anchor their instruction to a set of principled statements by merging scientific concepts with situated understandings and practices.

**Keywords:** Teacher education. Professional development. Portfolios.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>CEFR</b>	Common European Framework of Reference
<b>DLLE</b>	Departamento de Língua e Literatura Estrangeiras
<b>ECML</b>	European Center or Modern Languages
<b>ELP</b>	European Language Portfolio
<b>EPOSTL</b>	European Portfolio to Student-teachers of Languages
<b>IFSC</b>	Instituto Federal de Santa Catarina
<b>PPGI</b>	Programa de Pós Graduação em Inglês
<b>SCT</b>	Sociocultural Theory
<b>SLTE</b>	Second Language Teacher Education
<b>TE</b>	Teacher Educator
<b>UCD</b>	University College Dublin
<b>UFPI</b>	Universidade Federal do Piauí
<b>UFRGS</b>	Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul
<b>UFSC</b>	Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina
<b>UNINTER</b>	Centro Universitário Internacional
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of Proximal Development

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The field of language teaching and learning has been experiencing extraordinary changes in the last decades. Learning theories have changed from a passive view of transmission of knowledge to a more active view of construction of knowledge (BRUNER, 1990). Following this, there has also been a similar shift in the field of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE), as the behaviorist view of teacher learning has been replaced by a sociocultural perspective on teacher learning (FREEMAN, 2016). Teacher-learners are now seen as producers of knowledge based on their experiences and interactions in a variety of contexts; they are actively involved in the process of understanding new knowledge which they are exposed to, as they assimilate it with concepts and ideas that were acquired.

One of the most well-accepted theories in the field of SLTE is Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (SCT). Although not being originally intended to explain SLTE, SCT is now a frequently researched theory in the area. According to this theory, everything is learned on two levels: first, through interaction with others, and then integrated into the individual's mental structure. This theory describes human learning as a socially mediated process, where social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition (VYGOTSKY, 1978). Hence, it is in the social world that the learners observe more capable others using psychological tools (language being the most important one) and "imitate" them.

Vygotsky's views in relation to students' learning in the school setting are relevant to teachers and teacher educators. His developmental theory based on the notions of mediation (the indirect relationship we establish with ourselves and the world), self-regulation (a form of mediation in which we can regulate our own activities), concept development (the process that explains how everyday and scientific concepts develop) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (the difference between what an individual can achieve alone and what he or she can achieve with assistance) (VYGOTSKY, 1978) can help understanding teachers' professional growth and their practice within their social contexts.

Aligned with SCT is the continuing interest in reflective practices in SLTE, which remains widespread in recent studies as well as SLTE materials (BELVIS;

PINEDA; ARMENGOL; MORENO, 2013; BURKERT; SCHWEINHORST, 2008; CAKIR; BALCIKANLI, 2012; FARRELL, 2012; HARMER, 2015; VELIKOVA, 2013; YESILBURA, 2011). In fact, Wright (2010) has acknowledged that the goal of SLTE is to produce “reflective teachers, in a process which involves socio-cognitive demands to introspect and collaborate with others, and which acknowledges previous learning and life experience as a starting point for new learning” (p. 267). Wright’s view on the goal of SLTE emphasizes the need for reflection on teachers’ experiences and confirms that it has been recognized as a powerful tool for change in teachers’ classroom practices and professional development.

Reflection in SLTE can be explored in a number of ways. Inquiry-based approaches to professional development have been used as successful instruments for creating opportunities for teachers reflect and guide their own learning and development through collaborative analysis of their everyday experiences in the classroom. In addition, they are consistent with a sociocultural perspective, as they promote dialogic mediation among teachers, see participation and context as essential aspects to teacher learning, and consider classrooms important sites for professional learning (JOHNSON, 2009). For instance, the use of narratives as a vehicle for teacher inquiry has become a common practice to support teacher development in SLTE (BURNS, 2009; BURTON, 2009; JOHNSTON, 2009). Hence, narratives resulting from diaries, autobiographies, blogs and teaching portfolios are considered powerful instruments which can guide teachers towards more reflective and informed decisions in their practices.

Johnson (2009) argues that SLTE should provide teachers with the tools to help them construe their instructional experiences grounded on theory about language learning and teaching. Teachers should be encouraged to become managers and apprentices of the learning process, exploring opportunities to direct, plan and assess their teaching with the assistance of more experienced professionals, as through dialogic reflection teacher educators can support the creation of zones of proximal development (JOHNSON, 2009; WARFORD, 2011). With the growth of SLTE programs, a key curriculum plan issue is how to help students develop as learners of teaching through and beyond their formal academic studies. The relevance of fostering professional development in order to enhance

teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge has been stated in numerous teacher education programs. To reach this objective, teacher education institutions have been emphasizing the importance of encouraging students to pursue innovative alternatives for the problems they may find in their classroom context.

According to Wolf (1991, p. 129), "portfolios provide a connection to the contexts and personal histories of real teaching and make it possible to document the unfolding of both teaching and learning overtime". Moreover, teacher educators have reported that the process of developing portfolios can help student-teachers understand the complexities of creating improvements on their teaching, making connections between classroom learning and teaching experiences, and becoming reflective practitioners (LOUGHRAN; CORRIGAN, 1995; WINSOR; ELLEFSON, 1995). Thus, portfolios have a vital role in the context of foreign language learning and teaching, as they meet many second language teachers' needs (BERNHARDT; HAMMADOU, 1987; DAY; SHAPSON, 1996; FOX, 1999; MOORE, 1996) and are considered to be effective tools which document teacher growth, promote professional development and reflective practice.

Another characteristic of teaching portfolios is that they are viewed as a way of promoting teacher development through teacher-directed learning. Johnson (2006) argues that teachers "have not only the right to direct their own professional development but also the responsibility to develop professionally throughout their careers" (p. 250). That is, teachers are expected to make decisions about priorities and goals, to be dedicated, to take charge over their own development and to be eager to make improvements in their practice.

Opportunities to develop skills such as the ability to reflect critically, to build a connection between theory and practice and to develop strategies to deal with the complexities of teaching are now seen as essential characteristics to be supported in the area of teacher education. Bearing this in mind, I intend contribute to the field of SLTE by investigating the use of the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) (NEWBY *et al.*, 2007) in combination with class activities as a tool to pursue teacher professional development in a pre-service SLTE context in Brazil. Succeeding other contributions developed by the Council of Europe, the EPOSTL is a portfolio for student-teachers undergoing initial teacher education which



has been widely used all over the world, and aims to encourage teacher reflection, prepare student-teachers to teach in different contexts, promote discussion between student-teachers and their peers and teacher educators, facilitate self-assessment and track progress.

The participants of this study were six student-teachers of an English Language Teaching program offered by a federal university in the south region of Brazil. In order to collect data to answer my research question, the student-teachers were asked to fill in some specific parts of the EPOSTL (in order to document their professional development) while doing a teaching practice course which took approximately 4 months to be completed. The course as well as the class activities they were asked to do during the course were strongly related to aspects from the portfolio. They also had their classes video recorded and I had access to all the work they did during the course. More details on the context, the participants and data collection and analysis will be dealt with later in this dissertation. Next, I intend to describe what motivated me to conduct this research and the reasons why I believe this work is relevant to the field of SLTE.

## 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND REASONS FOR CONDUCTING THIS RESEARCH

Researchers from the discipline of Applied Linguistics recognize that there are weaknesses in initial English teacher education programs in Brazil (ALMEIDA FILHO, 1992; GIMENEZ, 2005a). One of these weaknesses, I argue, might be the fact that teachers do not have the habit of documenting their learning and teaching processes. These processes may bring them great opportunity for reflection and improvement that may be lost as they might not be able to keep them in their memories or think about them critically. Moreover, research has demonstrated that foreign language teachers perceive themselves as lonely (DAVIS; OSBORN, 2003), having little contact with other teachers.

Bearing this in mind, I argue that student-teachers would benefit from different opportunities to reflect collaboratively in their teacher education programs. More specifically, this study investigates a tool which is associated to innovative

practices in SLTE which have the potential to enhance situated second language teacher learning and professional development.

Before describing the reasons that influenced my decision to suggest the EPOSTL in combination with class activities as a tool to pursue teacher professional development, it is important to mention what the participants of this research do in their undergraduate program regarding reflective practices. The description given is based on information received by the student-teachers who took part in this study.

The teaching practice internship module for the SLTE course in which student-teachers were enrolled is a combination of two courses, *Estágio Supervisionado I* and *Estágio Supervisionado II*. Both courses happen during the last two semesters of the program and consist of a variety of activities performed in a real teaching context, which is usually a regular public school.

In *Estágio Supervisionado I*, student-teachers' main activity is to observe how English classes are taught in a regular school. They keep in contact and have weekly meetings with their teacher educator and the school's English teacher whose class they are observing. During this first semester the student-teachers are required to write weekly observation reports on the classes they observed. As the focus of this course is to give student-teachers the opportunity to observe and experience teaching in real contexts, in the end of the semester they start to teach a few lessons in the class they were doing their observations, so the transition from observing to teaching can happen smoothly.

In the second semester, during *Estágio Supervisionado II*, the student-teachers are required to teach 14 hours in the same class they observed in the previous semester. This part of the course is usually done in pairs or groups of three in order to cover the whole semester's content. During this time, they have direct contact with their teacher educator, the school English teacher, the other school teachers and the pedagogic department. They receive support towards lesson planning, evaluations, activities and projects, class management and any other aspects of real teaching which they might find difficult to deal with. Every time they teach, they are observed by their peers and there is either their teacher educator or the school teacher in class also observing them. Later they receive feedback from all of them on what the positive aspects were and what needed to be improved during

that lesson. The student-teachers also have to describe their perception of the lesson they taught in their report.

By the end of the second semester, the student-teachers are required to hand in a file with reports which were written during the whole year. The file contains descriptions of the classes they observed, the lesson plans they created, the activities they did in class, the evaluation methods they used, the feedback they received and their own perception of their practice.

The activities mentioned are commonly used in many teacher education programs, and they seem to provide opportunities for student-teachers to do some reflection on their teaching practice. However, the reports are applied quite late, only in the last year of the program. In addition to that, the report appears to offer the student-teachers a document that serves as the basis for their assessment carried out by their teacher educators, which could be improved by bringing a better understanding of student-teachers' learning and a foundation that informs their decision regarding their practice. Thus, I believe the report could be improved in order to promote reflection since the early stages of the program as well as to address the perspective of teacher-learning as a continuous and life-long process.

There are also several pedagogical reasons that support this study. According to Johnson (2009), preparing language teachers involves giving them the tools to interpret their instructional experiences, considering current theories about language learning and teaching. To promote professional development effectively it is required that student-teachers take control over their own learning process; they need to participate actively in the decisions which concern the direction, planning, execution and assessment of their teaching, with the assistance of more experienced professionals.

While there is no agreement on what theory-driven tools may improve the learning process in language teacher education, there is an understanding about the value of discussing micro-practices such as strategies, routines and moves which can enhance pedagogical knowledge. Additionally, some have emphasized the need of a more dialogically driven approach in order to promote awareness of these practices during both pre- and in-service phases to facilitate deeper understanding of the complexities of language teaching and learning (EDGE, 2011).

The EPOSTL provides dialogic reflection (SCHAUBER, 2015) which considers numerous aspects which student-teachers are exposed to in their profession, whether regarding aspects such as the contextualized challenges of classroom practice or the review of the principles behind theoretical assumptions being explored. The dialogic interaction promoted by the EPOSTL is both a proactive and a reactive process concerning essential practical elements necessary for effective second language teaching.

Another reason is that initiatives to improve teacher pre-service programs tend to focus on either independent reflection or mentored interaction which underestimates the value of the combination of both practices. We argue that the promotion of reflective practices is an essential part of English Language Teaching and it should be introduced and encouraged during pre-service teacher education programs. Although there is a predominant interpretation of reflection as a solitary act, the EPOSTL proposes reflection through collaboration, facilitating expert modeling of reflection for teacher-students through dialogue related to challenges that need attention in order for improvement and understanding to occur. Put differently, teacher preparation becomes interactive when student-teachers can reflect on their practice during dialogue with peers and/or a mentor to identify problems, exchange ideas and collaborate toward solutions.

Additionally, teachers have a more serious perspective on contextualized professional development, as it emphasizes practice and draws it closer to theory. The dichotomy between theory and practice can be partially explained by the inability to render theory in applicable terms, which is done in the EPOSTL through the descriptors presented in the portfolio. When professional development is supportive, job-embedded, instructionally focused, collaborative and ongoing, teachers are more likely to consider it relevant and authentic, which has the potential of making teacher learning and improved teaching practice more likely (HUNZICKER, 2011).

In relation to the contributions made by the Council of Europe, little has been discussed in the literature in Brazil. For instance, there is little academic research on the use of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (2001) – when we find studies in the area, we can observe that they usually work only with the level of competencies or proficiency exams, rather than looking at the document as

guidelines for a variety of aspects in second language teaching and learning. In relation to the use of the EPOSTL, to this moment, I have not found any research using this tool in Brazil, even though it has been object of investigation in many other countries. This suggests that there might be a gap in the literature which I intend to fill in by presenting this work due to the potential contribution of the document.

While these are good reasons to introduce the EPOSTL into a teacher education program, it is important to recognize that I was also driven by some personal experience. One of the reasons why I decided to investigate the use of the EPOSTL was the fact that it helped me in various ways when I used it as a student during a Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (MA in TESOL) program. The first contact I had with the portfolio was in the beginning of the program. The teacher educator was an enthusiast of the documents provided by the Council of Europe, so she introduced me to the EPOSTL and explained how it could contribute to my teacher education experience during the MA.

By using the portfolio, I had the opportunity to re-examine my thoughts and beliefs related to language learning and teaching, I could relate the content of the program to the competencies presented in the self-assessment section of the portfolio and identify my strengths and weaknesses, I was able to reflect on my abilities in a systematic way and on a regular basis, and I could also track my progress throughout the MA program. Furthermore, the EPOSTL gave me basis and encouragement to develop professionally, and I feel that I have become more autonomous and more reflective regarding my teaching practice.

For all these reasons, I argue that this work gives a perspective on a comprehensive tool as an alternative for student-teachers to pursue professional development. The objective and research question that guide this study are presented next.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Considering all that has been stated, it seems reasonable to try to introduce a portfolio in SLTE contexts as a potential way of pursuing professional development. As it is part of this research's proposal to investigate innovative means in order to

improve student-teachers practices in teacher education program, this work focuses on investigating student-teachers' learning experiences and tracing their professional development through narratives in the form of a portfolio. Bearing this in mind, my research question is: To what extent does the use of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities contribute towards teacher professional development?

The research question considered only a fraction of the portfolio which consisted of four descriptors, being: (1) I can start a lesson in an engaging way; (2) I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses; (3) I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class; (6) I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.

A more detailed description of how this question will be approached will be seen in Chapter 3 – Method.

### 1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

This Doctoral dissertation will be divided into 5 chapters, namely Introduction; Review of Literature; Method; Findings and Discussion; and Final Remarks. I now provide an overview of each chapter.

In Chapter 1 – Introduction, I mention briefly some changes in the field of SLTE. I proceed presenting some theoretical groundings (Sociocultural Theory, Reflective Practice) and current practices (Narratives, Portfolios) that support professional development. I also present the statement of the problem to be investigated, providing reasons to explain the relevance of this research, the objective of this research as well as the question which will guide this investigation, and describe the organization of the dissertation.

In Chapter 2 – Review of Literature, I bring an overview on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, discussing central concepts in the theory (mediation, self-regulation, concept development and the zone of proximal development) and theories which inform the role of reflection in teacher education. Next, I emphasize the role of narrative as a mediational tool and describe characteristics and benefits of teaching portfolios, giving details on the tool used in this research. Following this, I

give an overview of the field of SLTE and clarify how the theories and practices described inform my study.

In Chapter 3 – Method, I present a description of the methodological aspects of this research, such as the nature of this study, the research objective and question, the context of investigation, the participants, the procedures for data collection and for data analysis.

In Chapter 4 – Findings and Discussion, I provide some discussion of the data collected, which consists of the analysis of the Self-Assessment section (focusing on the descriptors chosen for this study) combining student-teachers' narratives to the documents which support their statements (video recording interactions, feedback sheets) and comments regarding their development. I also present some extra findings that represent student-teachers views on the use of the EPOSTL.

In Chapter 5 – Final Remarks, I summarize the main findings of this research obtained from qualitative analysis of data collected from the Self-Assessment section of the portfolio, aiming at answering the research question proposed in this study. I also discuss some limitations, pedagogical implications and further research directions.

## 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter I provide the theoretical background which guides this study. First, I give a description of SCT, which serves as basis of this work. The main concepts which are part of the theory are explained: the role of mediation, internalization and the development of self-regulation, the ZPD and concept development. Second, I define the theories which inform the process of reflection and reflective practice in language teacher education and outline how this notion has been explored in Brazil. Third, I give a perspective of narratives as a mediational tool and its transformative power. Fourth, I discuss the role of teaching portfolios, their different types and their benefits. Fifth, I mention the contributions of the Council of Europe to the field of Second Language Teaching, focusing mainly on the tool investigated in this study: the EPOSTL. I also outline some studies on the use of the EPOSTL and their findings. Sixth, I give an overview of the field of SLTE and the challenges faced worldwide, especially in Brazil, focusing on the theories and tools used in this research. Finally, I summarize the chapter and attempt to enlighten how all the theories and tools described align and contribute to the field of SLTE.

### 2.1 SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY (SCT)

Vygotsky's sociocultural approach to human development and cognition has transformed the way we understand fundamental processes related to the mind. The complexity and diversity in Vygotsky's formulations have also originated scholastic debate and posed many questions seeking some clarification regarding his framework, as his theory was not only innovative, but also challenged previous epistemological views about human development and cognition.

SCT argues that the development of human cognition and higher mental functions come from social interactions, and for that reason the author always defended that in order to study the development of the human mind, it is necessary to study individuals in a social context; "while human neurobiology is a necessary condition for higher order thinking, the most important forms of human cognitive



activity develop through interaction within social and material environments” (LANTOLF AND THORNE, 2007, p. 201).

An important contribution that SCT has brought to the field of SLTE is the concept of language. In SCT, learning occurs through interaction with other people and society, where the individual actively participates in the construction of knowledge. In this process, language is seen as an important mediational tool in the development of higher mental processes of learners (VYGOTSKY, 1986) that aids cognitive development and mediates knowledge. It has double value, since it enables communicative and cognitive functions to move from ‘the interpsychological’ to ‘the intrapsychological plane’ (VYGOTSKY, 1987), working both as a social and a psychological tool. As a social tool, language is seen as social practice – considering language and society cannot be studied separately –, allowing interaction between individuals, facilitating communication, knowledge sharing and development; as a psychological tool, it enables cognitive and metacognitive interaction with one’s self, helping to organize thoughts and ideas.

Lantolf and Thorne (2006) state that, since SCT is a theory of mediated mental development, it aligns with theories and concepts of language which focus on communication, cognition, and meaning. Thus, the view of language from a sociocultural perspective gives us a more complete concept of language, as it not only offers the notion of language as a vehicle for communication, interaction and socialization, but also as a mediational tool that enables us to think, organize and generalize knowledge and thus to transform the world and the self. Bearing this in mind, this is the concept of language that will serve as basis of this research, following many other studies in the same field this research intends to contribute to, which is SLTE.

Many theoretical principles associated to SCT are now widely used in research in several areas, including Second Language Acquisition and Learning (DUNN; LANTOLF, 1998; LANTOLF; PAVLENKO, 1995) and SLTE (JOHNSON, 2009). In the next subsections, the main concepts of this comprehensive theory – mediation, internalization, self-regulation, ZPD and concept development – will be discussed in more detail.

### 2.1.1 The Role of Mediation

Central to Vygotsky's SCT is the concept of mediation (LANTOLF; THORNE, 2006). Generally, the relationship between people and the world can happen in two different ways: direct or mediated. The direct relationship regards aspects such as involuntary attention, which leads to the development of elementary mental functions, whereas the mediated (indirect) relationship includes auxiliary means (mental or physical) that are introduced between ourselves and objects and leads to the development of higher mental functions – being able to control these auxiliary means is what allows us to organize and regulate our mental activity. Vygotsky's SCT claims that higher mental functions are mediated by culturally constructed means that result out of participation in cultural activities in which cultural artifacts and cultural concepts interact in complex psychological phenomena. Put differently, just as physical tools amplify our biological abilities (for example, a stick amplifies our reach) cultural artifacts, such as literacy, amplify memory and raise the ability to shape and transfer information and knowledge. The following statement from Lantolf (2001, p. 80) explains the concept of mediation more clearly:

The central and distinguishing concept of sociocultural theory is that higher forms of human mental activity are mediated. Vygotsky argued that just as humans do not act directly on the physical world but rely, instead, on tools and labor activity, we also use symbolic tools, or signs, to mediate and regulate our relationships with others and with ourselves. Physical and symbolic tools are artifacts created by human cultures over time and are made available to succeeding generations, which often modify these artifacts before passing them on to future generations. Included among symbolic tools are numbers and arithmetic systems, music, art, and, above all, language. As with physical tools, humans use symbolic artifacts to establish an indirect, or mediated, relationship between ourselves and the world. The task for psychology, in Vygotsky's view, is to understand how human social and mental activity is organized through culturally constructed artifacts and social relationships.

It is important to address the fact that artifacts are not originally mediational means, but they take this characteristic through repeated use. For instance, it is not possible to understand the function of a hammer if we have not observed this tool in use or taken part in the activity of hammering. The same happens to language, that is, we cannot understand the function of language just by analyzing its structure; it is

necessary to experience the world with it. Likewise, it is not from mere observation that one becomes professional.

Another significant aspect is that there are two categories of mediation: explicit and implicit. According to Wertsch (2017, p. 65),

Explicit mediation involves the intentional introduction of signs into an ongoing flow of activity. In this case the signs tend to be designed and introduced by an external agent such as a tutor in order to help re-organize an activity in some way. In contrast, implicit mediation typically involves signs in the form of natural language that have evolved in the service of communication and are then harnessed in other forms of activity.

Vygotsky believed that human learning happens on two levels. First, humans learn through interaction with others, and then what is learned is integrated into the individual's mental structure:

Any function in the child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category. This is equally true with regard to voluntary attention, logical memory, the formation of concepts, and the development of volition (VYGOTSKY, 1978, p. 57).

In SCT, both planes – interpsychological and intrapsychological – are viewed as being inherently related. For Vygotsky, the connections between social and individual planes were essential to help explaining the development of higher mental functions. In addition, he did not view higher mental functioning in the individual as a direct and simple copy of processes organized within the social plane, but rather as the transformations that take place when one comes to internalize what has been socially experienced.

Vygotsky claims that signs – elements which represent objects, situations, events and experiences – are not fixed or stable, but rather dynamic and developing. A basic premise in his theory is that 'sign meaning develops', an understanding that "the relationship between the word (sign form) and thought (sign meaning) does not remain constant, but instead is unstable and undergoes fundamental change" (JOHNSON; DELLAGNELO, 2013, p. 410). This is to say that sign users go through

a developmental path as they try to make sense of a sign until this sign gets to the level of full understanding of its meaning and/or function.

Moreover, these signs are not isolated; they are shared by the members of a particular social group, enabling communication and improving social interaction. It is by experiencing the concrete world and making contact with the culturally determined forms of organization of the reality that individuals can construct their sign system, which will later go through a process known as internalization.

### **2.1.2 Internalization: Moving Towards Self-Regulation**

Internalizing signs is vital to the development of higher mental functions, as it allows individuals to interact with the physical world through mediation. The process of internalization can be described as “the process through which a person’s activity is initially mediated by other people or cultural artifacts but later comes to be controlled by him/herself as he or she appropriates and reconstructs resources to regulate his or her own activities” (JOHNSON, 2009, p. 18). Thus, in this process, cultural artifacts take on a psychological function progressively from externally, socially mediated activities to internal mediation controlled by the individual.

According to Vygotsky, the process of internalization is only possible due to the human capacity to imitate the activity of other humans. However, the imitation in this case is not seen as mindless mimicking, as it comprehends an active reasoning process which results in transformations of the original activity.

The process of internalization is strongly linked to the concept of self-regulation, which is a kind of metacognition in human mental activity, also named ‘strategic activity’ by some researchers (WERTSCH, 1980). In SCT, self-regulation is a form of mediation which refers to one’s capacity to regulate their own activity and thinking through linguistic means, where their activity is subordinated or regulated by others at first, and gradually develops in order to become self-regulated.

According to Vygotsky (1978), children learn to engage in activity through social interactions between themselves and more experienced members of the same culture. Children gradually develop conscious control and individuality, following three

levels of regulation in interaction: object regulation, other regulation, and self-regulation.

Object regulation, which is the first stage, is a process in which children are controlled directly by the environment, having their attention focused on objects which dominate cognition at that particular moment.

For example, given the task by a parent of fetching a particular object such as a toy, a very young child is easily distracted by other objects (a more colorful, larger, or more proximate toy) and may thus fail to comply with the parent's request. This is a case of the child being regulated by objects (LANTOLF; THORNE, 2006, p. 200).

It is a primitive stage, as children's behavior is determined by environmental resources, resulting in stimulus-responsive action. Research (WERTSCH; HICKMANN, 1987) has shown that even if children are able to carry out a task by themselves, they are not able to pursue an action independently whenever a particular goal is not "directly suggested by the environment" (WERTSCH, 1979b, p. 89).

The second stage is other-regulation, which is a process in which children are regulated by a more experienced one – an adult, a teacher, a sibling or a more knowledgeable peer – in the social activity which is being shared. This stage "includes implicit and explicit mediation (involving varying levels of assistance, direction, and what is sometimes described as scaffolding)" (LANTOLF; THORNE, 2007, p. 200). At this stage, children are able to use external signs as a mediator to their response; in order to affect children's behavior, the connections between the stimuli and signs must be concrete. Put differently, children can carry out some tasks provided that they receive linguistically mediated assistance by more capable ones. This linguistically mediated assistance is usually referred to dialogic speech, and it is seen as the primary means of providing other-regulation (WERTSCH, 1979a, 1979b). However, it has been claimed that non-linguistic features (e.g., facial gestures) should also be considered as mediated assistance (FOLEY, 1991).

The third stage is self-regulation, a process in which the ability to accomplish activities requires minimal or no external support. It means that the control of children's behavior does not "reside on immediate stimuli (object regulation) or in another person (other regulation); instead, it is in an internally self-generated

cognitive plan” (ANTÓN, 1999, p. 83). According to Thorne and Tasker (2011, p. 496),

Self-regulation, as the label implies, refers to individuals for whom object- or other-regulation is unnecessary because originally external forms of mediation have been internalized and are therefore no longer needed for the execution or completion of a task. In this way, development can be described as the process of gaining greater voluntary control over one’s capacity to think and act either by becoming more proficient in the use of mediational resources, or through a lessening reliance on external mediational means.

It is important to highlight that the progression which happens through the stages does not necessarily eliminate the previous stages completely. For instance, a person who is self-regulating his or her thinking can also make use of an object such as a book to regulate his or her activity as well.

Vygotsky stated that higher mental functions are consciously self-directed thought processes which would fundamentally involve self-regulatory processes, allowing children to actively participate in a cultural activity at metacognitive, motivational and behavioral levels. The capacity of self-regulation can be considered the main outcome of development, which relates to the transformations that occur in children’s cognitive and social skills during the process of internalization (DIAZ; NEAL; AMAYA-WILLIAMS, 1990). Moreover, it is important to address the fact that a child is not necessarily self-regulated in various different tasks and not all children obtain self-regulation mechanisms for the same task at the same time; self-regulation is a relative phenomenon and it depends on one’s Zone of Proximal Development, a concept which will be explained next.

### **2.1.3 The ZPD**

The ZPD is described as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (VYGOTSKY, 1978, p. 86). Hence, it is a concept in SCT that refers to the difference between what an individual can achieve alone and what he or she can achieve with assistance.

Successful development during the ZPD depends upon interaction, and the range of skill development that can be achieved with adult guidance or peer collaboration goes beyond what can be achieved alone. An essential aspect of the ZPD is that, instead of indicating only the level of development already reached as most traditional tests and measures, it has brought the notion that what one can currently do with help from more competent peers can indicate what one can potentially achieve independently in the future.

Another important aspect to be addressed is that guidance in ZPD should be carefully measured, as a minimum level of guidance must be given, so that the child can successfully achieve her/his goal, but over-assistance can reduce the child agentive capacity. In co-construction of knowledge it is stated that assistance should be given when needed, in the quality and quantity needed, but then gradually dismantled when the individual can mediate herself/himself. Moreover, the child needs to be cognitively prepared or at a certain level of maturation in order to develop an understanding of what is being taught. By stretching their skills and knowledge, children are able to gradually extend this ZPD or even create new zones.

Although Vygotsky's theory was developed over the learning and development of children, it is common sense that any kind of learning and development can be looked at from these lenses. In second language studies, for example, it has been suggested that teachers make use of collaborative learning exercises, giving opportunity to less capable children to develop with help from more capable peers – within the ZPD – as

the ZPD is not only a model of the developmental process but also a conceptual tool that educators can use to understand aspects of students' emerging capacities that are in early stages of maturation. When used proactively, teachers using the ZPD as a diagnostic have the potential to create conditions for learning that may give rise to specific forms of development in the future. (LANTOLF; THORNE, 2007, p. 207)

In this same vein, the work of second language teacher educators is to mediate teachers' processes of learning to teach by "intentionally insert[ing] new tools or signs into the activities that constitute teacher education with the goal of qualitative transformation in how novice teachers think as well as how they teach"

(JOHNSON; DELLAGNELO, 2013, p. 410). Thus, this sort of mediation provided should be contingent to one's zones of proximal development.

The concept of ZPD is introduced by Vygotsky in the context of instruction and it leads to conscious awareness in the development of scientific concepts which "enable learners to move beyond the limitations of their everyday experiences and function appropriately in a wide range of alternative circumstances and contexts" (JOHNSON, 2009, p. 21). The characteristics of these concepts and how they develop will be addressed in the next subsection.

#### **2.1.4 Concept Development**

In his studies, Vygotsky distinguishes between two types of concepts: everyday concepts and scientific concepts. Everyday concepts are learned through everyday experiences and social interaction with others, they are "empirically based and require lengthy periods of practical experience to develop. They are, however, at the heart of our lived experience as human beings and are, for the most part, more than adequate for carrying out our daily activities" (LANTOLF, 2007, p. 39). On the other hand, scientific concepts evolve from formal instruction, as learning how to read or write at school or, in second language teaching, as learning what the meaning of 'pair work' is, having in mind that in order to think in concepts, one has to understand the meaning and the functional role of a sign in order to make it a concept.

To start acquiring scientific concepts, one needs to reach some level of maturation in the development of everyday concepts. Developing a concept is an ongoing process and word meaning changes because "concepts do not emerge fully formed with the acquisition of new words by the child but follow a long process of development through a complex series of stages and phases" (MILLER, 2011, p. 67). During this process, one develops complexes and pseudoconcepts, which can be seen as two gradual steps when building a concept. We can say that a complex is when somebody learns to label a canine dog and then label any other creature with four legs a dog. A pseudoconcept is when somebody learns to label a canine dog and then labels any canine-like creature a dog (e.g., a wolf). A proper concept would be achieved when the person learns to label a canine dog and differentiates it from



other animals – a cat or a wolf, for example, even though they might look similar (SMAGORINSKY; COOK; JOHNSON, 2003). To put it differently, when developing a concept, a person goes through a complex, then narrows it to a pseudoconcept, and finally comes to a unified concept.

Vygotsky (1986) states that “scientific concepts grow down through spontaneous concepts, and spontaneous concepts grow up through scientific concepts” (p. 194), which indicates the dialectical relationship between these kinds of concepts. In SLTE, teachers are often exposed to scientific concepts related to research and theories which inform their profession. Some parts of their professionalization become “making connections between the scientific concepts they are exposed to in their L2 teacher education coursework and their everyday concepts about language, language learning, and language teaching” (JOHNSON, 2009, p. 21). Thus, by linking both everyday and scientific concepts, one can develop “true concepts”, which are new understandings that enable teachers “to reorganize their experiential knowledge and this reorganization creates a new lens through which they interpret their understandings of themselves and their classroom practices” (JOHNSON, 2009, p. 15).

SCT has been widely used in the field of SLTE and it will be the basis of this study, as it provides a comprehensive theory of learning and development. Moreover, it aligns with other theoretical concepts which will be dealt with in this work, such as reflective practice.

## 2.2 REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Reflection and reflective practice have become essential principles in language teacher education and development programs. The growth of reflection in teaching and teacher education can be traced back to John Dewey, an educational philosopher who believed that traditional education (as practiced in America) was rigid, static and inadequate for the society and economy of the time, which was developing rapidly. He emphasized the importance of the individual’s lived experience as a starting point for learning and was among the first to write about reflective practice, where he explored experience, interaction and reflection. In his

book, *How We Think* (1933), he stated that he considered reflection a form of freedom from routine behavior:

Reflection emancipates us from merely impulsive and merely routine activity, it enables us to direct our activities with foresight and to plan according to ends-in-view or purposes of which we are aware, to act in deliberate and intentional fashion, to know what we are about when we act (p. 17).

According to Dewey (1933), reflective practice was seen as

Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends, constitutes reflective thought [...] It is a conscious and voluntary effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of reasons (p. 16).

Hence, it can be argued that he encouraged teachers to make informed decisions about their teaching. Moreover, these decisions should be based on systematic and conscious reflections, rather than momentary thoughts about teaching.

Dewey (1933) also stated that teachers who do not consider the importance of thinking intelligently about their work become slaves to routine, and he observed that one of the main challenges of learning was learning how to think intelligently: “While we cannot learn or be taught to think, we do have to learn how to think well, especially how to acquire the general habits of reflecting” (p. 35). An important characteristic of his work is that he believed that reflection or reflective thinking begins when doubt, confusion and perplexity are present; “Thinking is not a case of spontaneous combustion; it does not occur just on ‘general principles’. There is something that occasions and evokes it” (p. 15). During a pre-service teacher education program, student-teachers are exposed to a number of new concepts and it is most likely that they will deal with situations which involve confusion and doubt, thus making teachers and teacher educators great explorers of the notion of reflective practice.

Donald Schon (1983, 1987) followed Dewey’s thoughts and his theory of inquiry, making essential contributions to the notion of reflective practice within educational grounds. The models for reflective practice based on his principles

describe processes that translate theory into action for educators. In his writings, Schon identifies two types of reflective practice: reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action. Reflection-on-action involves reflecting on an experience that you have already had, exploring why you acted the way you did, considering positive and negative aspects, and bearing in mind what could have been done otherwise. Put differently, it occurs when teachers reflect on their daily lessons and classroom actions and use the information which they collected to change their practice. The latter (reflection-in-action) involves reflecting on your actions while doing them and considers some aspects, such as best practice, throughout the process:

The practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behavior. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation [...] He does not keep means and ends separate but defines them interactively as he frames a problematic situation. He does not separate thinking from doing [...] Because his experimenting is a kind of action, implementation is built into his inquiry. (SCHON, 1983, p. 68)

In other words, if teachers think reflectively about an episode of teaching after class, they engage in reflecting-on-action. On the other hand, if they think about the episode while in the midst of teaching, they engage in reflection-in-action.

Reflection-in-action, according to Schon, is where “practitioners surface and criticize [...] tacit understandings [...] and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness” (1983, p. 61). He considers that someone who is engaged in reflection-in-action “becomes a researcher in the practice context” (SCHON, 1983, p. 68). Thus, reflection-in-action is not carried out by following established ideas and techniques, as every situation is unique; however, teachers can base their thoughts on previous situations, which allows them to examine their beliefs and experiences and how they connect to their theories-in-use.

For Schon, starting to view things with a critical lens and doubting their actions will bring teachers professional growth, as they can think about possible situations and their outcomes, analyzing their actions and carefully planning alternative ones if necessary. Thus, “Teachers who engage in reflective practice can develop a deeper understanding of their teaching, assess their professional growth,

develop informed decision-making skills, and become proactive and confident in their teaching” (FARRELL, 2008, p. 4).

In Brazil, the notion of reflective practice has been widely discussed, and a whole generation of Brazilian researchers who have been influenced by the works of Schon have proposed a model of teacher education based on reflective practice. Alarcão (2005) defines reflective teachers as professionals who need to understand who they are and why they do what they do, gaining awareness of their role in society. She adds that “teachers must be active agents of their own development and the operation of schools as organizations serving the great social project which is the education of their learners”<sup>1</sup> (ALARCÃO, 2005, p. 177). In this vein, teachers do not act as knowledge transmitters, but, through their interaction with their learners and their community, they can think critically about their practice;

Teachers play an important role in the production and structuring of pedagogical knowledge because they reflect, in a situated way, in and on the interaction that is generated between the scientific knowledge [...] and its acquisition by the student, reflect in and on the interaction between the teacher individual and the student individual, between the school institution and society in general. In this way, they have an active role in education and not a purely technical role that is reduced to following norms and recipes or to the application of theories external to their own professional community.<sup>2</sup> (ALARCÃO, 2005, p. 176)

Alarcão’s statement not only focuses on the active role teachers have in the construction of knowledge within their community, but also the importance of finding a balance between theory and practice. In this sense, Vieira-Abrahão (2002) stated:

Knowledge is built through reflection on the real problems encountered and through theories that are necessary for understanding and searching for solutions. [...] We consider it necessary for the student-teacher to have access to theories and principles, research results and techniques, teaching

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1 Translated from the original in Portuguese: “os professores têm de ser agentes ativos do seu próprio desenvolvimento e do funcionamento das escolas como organização ao serviço do grande projeto social que é a formação dos educandos” (ALARCÃO, 2005, p. 177).

2 Translated from the original in Portuguese: “os professores desempenham um importante papel na produção e estruturação do conhecimento pedagógico porque refletem, de uma forma situada, na e sobre a interação que se gera entre o conhecimento científico [...] e a sua aquisição pelo aluno, refletem na e sobre a interação entre a pessoa do professor e a pessoa do aluno, entre a instituição escola e a sociedade em geral. Desta forma, têm um papel ativo na educação e não um papel meramente técnico que se reduza à execução de normas e receitas ou à aplicação de teorias exteriores à sua própria comunidade profissional” (ALARCÃO, 2005, p. 176).

strategies and techniques, but not to be presented in an imposing and dogmatic way or as unique truths that can be applied in any context.<sup>3</sup> (p. 65)

Hence, theory and practice should not be separated in the process of reflective teaching practice; they should complement each other and be integrated in order to facilitate learning and the construction of knowledge. Much of Freire's work shows a deep debate on the need for balance between theory and practice:

Curiosity about the object of knowledge and the willingness and openness to engage theoretical readings and discussions is fundamental. However, I am not suggesting an over-celebration of theory. We must not negate practice for the sake of theory. To do so would reduce theory to a pure verbalism or intellectualism. By the same token, to negate theory for the sake of practice, as in the use of dialogue or conversation, is to run the risk of losing oneself in the disconnectedness of practice. It is for this reason that I never advocate either in a theoretic elitism or a practice ungrounded in theory, but the unity between theory and practice. In order to achieve this unity, one must have an epistemological curiosity – a curiosity that is often missing to dialogue as conversation. (FREIRE, 1970; 2000, p. 18-19).

It is important to understand that “to make changes, it is not enough to develop a theoretical activity; it is necessary to act practically”<sup>4</sup> (GHEDIN, 2005, p. 133). Thus, when teachers reflect on their teaching practice, they should try to apply changes not only in their way of thinking, but also in their way of acting. Freire (1996) argued that “reflection serves as an invigorating instrument between theory and practice” (p. 39). He considered reflection an instrument which guides teachers to a transformative action, making them think about their identities and their stories. Thus, there is a common understanding that reflection can bring social transformation, as well as a strong emphasis on defending the need for teacher education programs to support teachers' reflection on their practice in order to improve it for themselves and all those who participate in their school community.

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3 Translated from the original in Portuguese: “O conhecimento é construído por meio da reflexão sobre os problemas reais encontrados e por meio de teorias que se fazem necessárias para a compreensão e busca de soluções. [...] Consideramos necessário que o aluno-professor tenha acesso às teorias e princípios, a resultados e técnicas de investigação, às estratégias e técnicas de ensino, mas que os mesmos não sejam apresentados de forma impositiva e dogmática, como verdades únicas e aplicáveis a qualquer contexto” (VIEIRA-ABRAHÃO, 2002, p. 65).

4 Translated from the original in Portuguese: “Para produzir mudança não basta desenvolver uma atividade teórica; é preciso atuar praticamente” (GHEDIN, 2005, p. 133)

The models of reflection given suggest that teachers should look at their own experiences, reviewing and examining them, considering what evidence they can gather from their practice, and then plan what action they want to take as a result. Narratives, which will be explained in the next subsection, have been used as legitimate tools to promote reflective practice in SLTE.

### 2.3 NARRATIVE AS A MEDIATIONAL TOOL

Narrative as a tool for teacher inquiry has become very popular among SLTE researchers as one of the main ways of understanding and documenting teachers' professional development (CLANDININ; CONNELLY, 2000; JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2002). It is a representation of teachers' experiences and plays a crucial role in the construction of self and identity.

In SCT, narrative (as a cultural activity) is not seen as a device that simply describes one's experience, but rather a powerful mediational tool that can potentially facilitate cognitive development (GOLOMBEK; JOHNSON, 2004). It serves as a semiotic tool that gives teachers the opportunity to describe how understanding emerges and how it is being used towards transformation in their teaching practice.

Johnson and Golombek (2011) address three ways in which narrative functions as a mediational tool in fostering teacher professional development. These functions – narrative as externalization, narrative as verbalization and narrative as systematic examination – are not seen as mutually exclusive, but rather interrelated, as a single narrative activity can entail all three functions. They are described in the following paragraphs, according to the authors' views.

Narrative as externalization functions as a way through which teachers externalize their understandings and their feelings and give voice to their perceptions in order to make sense of their beliefs, thoughts, fears and expectations. It gives teachers the opportunity to reflect and articulate problems they might encounter in their teaching environment and begin to self-regulate and take control over their behaviors. By making their thoughts and moments of distress explicit, they open up to social influence (from teacher educators, peers) which can potentially allow them to reconstruct their understandings and picture resources to transform their practices.

In narrative as verbalization teachers use scientific concepts intentionally as instruments to have greater awareness of their cognitive process. It functions in a sense that it is not the process of thinking, but rather a way of regulating the thinking process. Teachers turn it into a strong mediational tool that allows them to make sense of theoretical constructs which they are exposed to in SLTE and start using those concepts to perceive their teaching experiences in a more informed way and to regulate their thinking and their teaching practices.

Narrative as systematic examination functions as a tool for inquiry which assists teachers in shaping what they learn. By engaging in narrative activities as a vehicle for inquiry, teachers systematically analyze their experiences and relate them to current conceptions of language learning and also language teaching. This can happen through narrative activities that follow a set of parameters – for example, parameters associated with writing a learning to teach history or an action research project – that encourage teachers to observe and examine themselves, their practice and their social, historical and cultural contexts in a systematic way. These kinds of narrative activities allow inquiry-based learning that is self-directed, collaborative and relevant to teachers' routines (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2011).

It has been suggested by Johnson and Golombek (2002) that the use of narrative as a mediational tool can foster teacher professional development, as it “enables teachers to act with foresight. It gives them increasing control over their thoughts and actions; grants their experiences enriched, deepened meaning; and enables them to be more thoughtful and mindful of their work” (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2002, p. 6-7). The cognitive processes which teachers undergo when they engage in narrative activity can help researchers to trace qualitative transformation in teacher professional development. Narrative activity can also raise teachers' awareness regarding their weaknesses and encourage them to ask teacher educators for assistance, which can support teachers' progress within the ZPD.

Through narrative “experience is literally talked into meaningfulness” (SHORE, 1996, p. 58). When narrative is considered a mediational tool, the act of narrating represents a combination of description, interpretation and analysis which has strong influence on how one comes to understand what one is narrating about. Thus, productive narrative activities should be encouraged, as they create spaces for

change, transformation and teacher development not only when they are finished, but throughout the whole process. One narrative type that has been widely used to develop teachers' professional selves are teaching portfolios, which are known to be great tools to promote reflection, enlighten teachers' decisions and support their views through more personal, detailed and reflective narratives. In the next section I will describe the different types of teaching portfolios and the benefits of using this tool.

## 2.4 TEACHING PORTFOLIOS

This section presents a variety of aspects related to the use of teaching portfolios. It discusses their theoretical groundings and their function as a pedagogic tool for mediating teacher learning. It also provides an overview of the use of portfolios in teacher education and the benefits they can potentially bring.

### 2.4.1 Different Types of Teaching Portfolios

Portfolios, together with other tools such as checklists, journals, conferences and so on, have been received with much enthusiasm by second language teachers (BROWN; HUDSON, 1998). The reason for this interest was due to the nature of the portfolio, which is capable of capturing complex characteristics of teachers' professional practices, which might not be possible through other approaches. Portfolios are not only viewed as self-assessment instruments that allow teachers to reflect individually, but they also give teachers opportunities to reflect collaboratively through interaction with teacher educators and peers when taking part in activities such as peer coaching, peer reviews, discussions and feedback sessions on the bases of their own documents related to their learning of teaching or their actual teaching practice.

A teaching portfolio is a collection of documents concerning one's teaching and it is considered a systematic and organized way of reflection. It has a dynamic nature, as it is seen as



An evolving collection of carefully selected or composed professional thoughts, goals and experiences that are threaded with reflection and self-assessment. It represents who you are, what you do, why you do it, where you have been, where you are, where you want to go, and how you plan on getting there (EVANS, 1995, p. 11).

It usually contains selected evidence of performances and/or samples of work that are followed by teachers' reflections, their own products and other similar evidence (SELDIN, 1991; WOLF; DIETZ, 1998; SMITH; VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, 2000). They can be presented in many different versions, and the online ones have gained popularity as they facilitate constant update and allow the addition of not only physical portfolios, but also digital content such as audio and video recordings, multimedia presentations, websites and photographs.

Generally, there are two types of teaching portfolios: a professional "showcase" portfolio (the type that functions as a showcase of the teacher's work, showing his performance at its best) and a professional teaching portfolio that is usually used in pre-service teacher education programs (the type that promotes critical thinking and reveals the development of the teacher during their learning of teaching). The first type of professional portfolio, or "showcase" portfolio has been described as

A collection of documents and other items that provides information about different aspects of a teacher's work. It serves to describe and document the teacher's performance, to facilitate professional development, and to provide a basis for reflection and review (RICHARDS; FARRELL, 2005, p. 98).

This kind of teaching portfolio provides structured information of the teacher's work in a continuous process of development that occurs throughout the teacher's career. Evidence of the teacher's professional achievements can be documents such as different learning activities produced during teaching practice, authentic materials developed by the teacher, knowledge and skills acquired through practice in different contexts, reflections evaluating the teachers' performance from mentors and peers, among others.

The second type of professional teaching portfolio can be found in many initial teacher education programs, and it has numerous different purposes. It can document the process student-teachers experience during their learning of teaching,

thoughts and actions. It also serves as a reflective tool to help student-teachers to understand their strengths and weaknesses and set targets for themselves (RICHERT, 1990). According to Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999), in this kind of portfolio teachers can show their learning evidence, which demonstrates their progress and acquisition of knowledge from their experiences in teacher education. These portfolios normally present the student-teachers achievements through lesson plans they have written or presented, projects they have been part of, descriptions of classes they have observed or taught, observation notes, video recording of classes and feedback notes from their teacher educator and peers. They also compile documents concerning student-teachers' needs, their beliefs, their willingness to innovate, their teaching philosophy, self-evaluation and goal setting, leading them to reflect on how to improve their learning process and leading them to personal growth and development (KLENOWSKI, 2002).

#### **2.4.2 Benefits of Using Teaching Portfolios**

According to a number of researchers, there is a considerable number of benefits for a teacher using a professional portfolio as a learning instrument, such as developing professional reflection and critical thinking in relation to oneself and to pedagogical practice, raising awareness of subjective theories, learning on higher thinking levels in order to understand complex concepts, doing research and solving problems and forming creative syntheses (CAMPBELL *et al.*, 1997; DARLING-HAMMOND; SNYDER, 2000; HAUGE, 2006; MANSVELDER-LONGAYROUX *et al.*, 2007; REYNOLDS, 2000; WADE; YARBROUGH, 1996; ZEICHNER; WRAY, 2001).

Portfolios have also been found to be beneficial as instruments for teacher assessment and professional growth (WOLF, 1996; BEERS *et al.*, 2000; BOND *et al.*, 2000; TUCKER *et al.*, 2002; ATTINELLO *et al.*, 2006) as well as for promoting reflective practice (ADAMS, 1995; WADE; YARLBOROUGH, 1996; WOODWARD, 1998; KLENOWSKI, 2002; CONDERMAN, 2003). According to Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999), teaching portfolios are seen as very strong sources of learning because they assist teachers on recording and reflecting on their learning as evidence. These recordings "allow to gather and explore narrative sequences that,

otherwise, would be lost in an ocean of other thoughts, actions and events<sup>5</sup> (HOLLY, 2007, p. 101). Winsor (1998) also states that the portfolio process can enhance teachers' reflection on themselves and their practice in a continuous basis.

Through portfolios student-teachers can explore their own theoretical and practical background of teaching and learning as it unfolds in their narratives and moments of reflection, combining practical and formal theories they have learned or even developed. Moreover, considering its systematic and organized form of reflection, a portfolio can develop several aspects of learning to teach. It can, for example, help student-teachers to move from concrete experiences to abstract conceptualization of learning to teach, making sense of their practices and developing ideas and theories based on their practical experiences, or the other way around, as they can also make sense of abstract theories linking them to concrete practices. In this sense, student-teachers are encouraged to discuss about teaching and pedagogy and develop a broader perspective of what teaching actually represents, considering it as a complex, high order, intellectually engaging and practically satisfying professional activity (MCLEAN; BULLARD, 2000).

Moreover, teacher educators have reported that through the process of developing portfolios, student-teachers come to realize the complexities of teaching better, start to make connections between what they learn in the classroom and their teaching practice, and become reflective practitioners (LOUGHRAN; CORRIGAN, 1995; WINSOR; ELLEFSON, 1995).

There is also strong evidence that teaching portfolios can cause a positive impact on teaching practice. Wolf (1996, p.17) reported that portfolios gave teachers the opportunity to "retain examples of good teaching so they can examine them, talk about them, adapt them, and adopt them". Van-Wagen and Hibbard (1998) have also found that when engaged in the construction of portfolios teachers become more skilled when analyzing students' work and more aware of the impact they have on student learning. In addition, research has shown that teachers who have used a professional portfolio use a broader range of different assessment means and have more detailed notes on the development and progress of their students' learning

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5 Translated from the original in Portuguese: "... permitem reunir e explorar sequências de narrativas que, de outro modo, se perderiam numa miríade de outros pensamentos, ações e acontecimentos" (HOLLY, 2007, p.101).

(ZEICHNER; WRAY, 2001). At an institutional level, other researchers found that teachers and administrators were positive about the changes that portfolios can bring to teaching practice (ATTINELLO *et al.*, 2006).

In Brazil, researchers have also addressed the importance of using portfolios in teaching practice internships, as during initial teacher education it is fundamental the adoption of innovative means that can cause an impact in the future practice of the student-teacher, establishing positive and significant experiences (VILLAS BOAS, 2012; ARAÚJO, 2011). According to Bastos (2015, p. 62) “Learning portfolios are devices that allow us to capture the singularity of each student-teacher during their initial education in undergraduate programs”<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, Vieira and Sousa (2009) emphasize that a portfolio allows us to identify aspects related to the way student-teachers reflect about their learning objectives, considering what was accomplished and what was not.

Bearing in mind the benefits mentioned as essential to mediate teachers’ professional development, I will reference some contributions made by the Council of Europe regarding language learning and teaching and describe the EPOSTL, a portfolio which will serve as a resource for this research.

## 2.5 THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

For many decades, the Council of Europe has played an important role in the second language education field, not only in the European context, but far beyond its border. The organization has participated in many second language education projects, and in 1994 they created the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), which brought new insights on the field of language teaching and learning, having as its mission “the implementation of language policies and the promotion of innovative approaches to the learning and teaching of modern languages” (Article 1 of its statute). One of these insights has been the creation of what is today known as

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6 Translated from the original in Portuguese: “Os portfólios de aprendizagem são dispositivos que permitem captar a singularidade de cada docente, em formação inicial, durante o processo de formação superior” (BASTOS, 2015, p. 62).

the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR), which is further explored in the next subsection.

### **2.5.1 The CEFR**

In 2001, the CEFR was launched, stimulating a tendency concerning a convergence of educational practices in Europe. Being one of the most important documents dealing with language learning and teaching, the CEFR provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations and textbooks in order to facilitate comparison and mutual recognition of language qualifications and foster independent learning. In the document we can find a description of what language learners need to learn in order to acquire communicative competences, including knowledge and skills they should develop to communicate effectively in another language (COUNCIL OF EUROPE, 2001).

The Framework also covers cultural context in which the language is set and defines levels of proficiency, allowing learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning (on a life-long basis). The CEFR is used worldwide as a framework to determine the level of proficiency of students for placement at language institutes and universities' programs. Another important project developed by the Council of Europe within the ECML is the European Language Portfolio (ELP), which will be described next.

### **2.5.2 The ELP**

Introduced in 2001, the ELP is a tool that also incorporated the common reference levels of language proficiency. Aiming at supporting learner autonomy and allowing users to record their learning achievements and experience with other languages, the ELP was developed following a learner-centered dimension present in the *Communicative Approach*<sup>7</sup> to language learning, as it emphasized the active involvement of the learners in the learning process as well as their responsibility for

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<sup>7</sup> Communicative Approach in language learning is an approach that is used in learning the second language or foreign language that emphasizes on the improvement of communicative ability (RICHARDS; RODGERS, 1986).

their own learning. In sum, the ELP enables language learners to reflect on and assess their own language competence and record their linguistic experiences, taking cultural experiences into consideration.

Considering all these developments, the shift in the role of the language teacher, which became more complex and demanding, represented implications for the conception of language teacher education programs. A general trend in the field of language teacher education calls for a change from the mere transmission of methods and practices towards encouraging student-teachers to become autonomous and critically reflective teachers (FREEMAN; RICHARDS, 1996). Bearing this in mind, I present the EPOSTL, another tool developed by the Council of Europe within the ECML which was also aligned with the principles of the CEFR.

### **2.5.3 The EPOSTL**

In 2007, the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) was published within a project initiated by the European Centre of Modern Languages (ECML) of the Council of Europe and coordinated by six teacher educators from the following European countries: the UK, Norway, Austria, Poland and Armenia (NEWBY *et al.*, 2011; NEWBY, 2012). The coordinators' initial idea was to produce a common teacher education curriculum, but after considering all the particularities of each country the idea was withdrawn and, instead, they created a project entitled 'A Framework for Teacher Education', which had the main goal to address the question of harmonizing teacher education in Europe. The project went through some draft versions, and suggestions (given during workshops in Austria) from all 34-member states of the ECML were taken into consideration.

The project resulted in a portfolio (EPOSTL) for students undergoing initial teacher education which has been widely used all over the world and has been translated or adapted in 16 languages so far. In Japan, for instance, in 2009, the document was adapted and named J-POSTL (the Japanese Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages) (KIYOTA *et al.*, 2011; HISAMURA *et al.*, 2013; HISAMURA, 2014; TAKAGI, 2015).

The portfolio supports student-teachers on a process of reflection on the didactic knowledge and skills required to teach languages, assists them to assess their didactic competences and enables them to monitor their progress and record their experiences of teaching during their teacher education program (NEWBY *et al.*, 2007). The main goals of the EPOSTL are:

(i) to encourage student-teachers to reflect on the competences a teacher strives to attain and on the underlying knowledge which feeds these competences; (ii) to help prepare prospective teachers for their future profession in a variety of teaching contexts; (iii) to promote discussion between student-teachers and their peers, and between student-teachers and their teacher educators and mentors; (iv) to facilitate self-assessment of prospective teachers' developing competence; (v) to provide an instrument which helps chart progress (NEWBY *et al.*, 2007, p. 5).

The EPOSTL contains three main sections:

1. a Personal Statement giving student-teachers the opportunity to think about their own previous experiences related to language teaching/learning. Moreover, this part can be very useful as student-teachers can access their *perezhivanie*<sup>8</sup> and reflect on their expectations towards the program they are taking part;
2. a Self-Assessment section, involving 195 descriptors to facilitate reflection and self-assessment of didactic competences. This section is divided into topics concerning foreign language teaching and learning – Context, Methodology, Resources, Lesson Planning, Conducting a Lesson, Independent Learning and Assessment of Learning. Each topic has a set of descriptors that are presented as 'can do' statements – as the ones in the CEFR – that are used as progress charts. Students are required to color the chart, identify the date they colored it, and comment on their development in the reflection grid so that their progress can be linked to the documents available in the dossier. This section of the portfolio gives the student-

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8 *Perezhivanie* is a term used throughout Vygotsky's writings which refers to the subjective significance of lived experiences that contribute to the development of one's personality; especially the emotional and visceral impact of lived experiences on the prism through which all future experiences are refracted (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2016). The term is related to how one interprets and understands their past experiences (e.g., apprenticeship of observation) and present experiences (e.g., how they are experiencing the practices of teacher education).

teachers the opportunity to reflect on their understanding and their development during their teacher education program;

3. a Dossier, which helps student-teachers in documenting their progress and any example of work that they consider relevant to their teacher education/profession. In this section students provide a variety of documents (such as lesson plans, class materials, observation notes and written feedback) describing moments in which they believe to have improved in any specific topic.

There are other less comprehensive sections of the EPOSTL (an Introduction; a Glossary of Terms used in the EPOSTL; an Index of terms used in the descriptors; a User's Guide, which provides information about the EPOSTL) which will not be considered in this study.

#### 2.5.3.1 *Research in the Use of the EPOSTL*

The use of the EPOSTL has motivated research on the topic, and several studies within a variety of contexts have been conducted in order to investigate different aspects of this tool. Most studies were concerned with the exploration of the EPOSTL's general objective, which is to enable student-teachers to reflect on their teaching knowledge and skills. These studies on the use of the EPOSTL were carried out in different contexts, including teaching practicum (STRAKOVA, 2010; FENNER, 2011a; INGVARSDÓTTIR, 2011; ORLOVA, 2011; VELIKOVA 2013; OKUMUS; AKALIN, 2015), methodology courses (MAKINEN, 2011; MEHLMAUER-LARCHER, 2011; CAKIR; BALCIKANLI, 2012; CINDRIC *et al.*, 2015) and bilateral teacher education programs (JONES, 2011; 2012).

In Japan, research projects were conducted in order to adapt self-assessment descriptors of the EPOSTL to their educational context (JIMBO *et al.*, 2012). Many descriptors were used in order to create the JPOSTL (Japanese Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages), the Japanese version of the EPOSTL, which is used in pre-service teacher education.

In Slovakia, Strakova (2010) made a comparison between the experiences of Slovak pre-service students who piloted the portfolio during their two-week teaching



practice and students who worked with this document in the wider context. Through questionnaires and a focus group discussion, she gathered data which informed that the portfolio can be beneficial only if it is a part of a day-to-day teaching experience within sufficient time.

In the Czech Republic, Orlova (2011) described introducing the EPOSTL in pre-service teacher education programs. Following the results of initial feedback provided by the students, her research suggests a six-stage procedure to make the portfolio's implementation as effective as possible. She also states that to make the most efficient use of the EPOSTL, it should be integrated in all components of teacher training courses (e.g., seminars, lectures and the practicum) and should be used on a systematic and continuous basis.

In Iceland, with the aim of strengthening the connections between the University of Iceland and partnership schools, Ingvarsdóttir (2011) explains a pilot project of using the EPOSTL as a platform with the objective of transforming the traditional model of teacher training into a collaborative learning environment.

In Norway, Fenner (2011b) gave a description of a project which happened in 2009, in a post-graduate program at University of Berge, where a one-year pilot implementation of the EPOSTL took place. Her study involved three types of contexts (lectures, seminars, and the practicum at schools) and aimed at stimulating reflections on the development of trainees' skills and knowledge. Her findings show that the EPOSTL helped the students to identify a link between the theory and practice of teaching, to outline their expectations of teaching, to reflect upon the aims and objectives of the lessons they planned, and on their own teaching. Moreover, she concludes that the EPOSTL was found to be a tool to help the student-teachers through the different stages of their training.

In Turkey, a study examined the attitudes of student-teachers regarding microteaching experiences within the curriculum based on the EPOSTL (Ogeyik, 2009). The results show that ELT students at Trakya University held positive attitudes towards microteaching applications. Also in Turkey, Mirici (2014) coordinated a project which aimed at gathering academics and students of English language teacher training from a variety of contexts and providing them with a common basis

to share experiences and ideas of how to design effective EPOSTL supported implementations in their system.

As seen in this section, there are several studies in which the EPOSTL was the object of investigation. Overall, the results have indicated that the portfolio can contribute to SLTE in several ways and can help solving remaining challenges in the field. Proceeding with the theoretical description of this study, I will now give an overview of the field of SLTE.

## 2.6 SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION – AN OVERVIEW

The field of SLTE has progressed and its knowledge-base has expanded significantly. The movement from a behaviorist view of teacher learning in the 60s into a more sociocultural perspective on teacher learning (FREEMAN, 2016) allowed SLTE to become a more solid field and explore a range of topics such as teacher cognition, reflection, research, narrative, self-development and expertise (FARRELL, 2018).

The 1960s was a major period of expansion for English Language Teaching. Influenced by popular methodologies at the time, such as Audiolingual and Situational Language Teaching, teacher training for language teachers began with short programs and certificates, which aimed at giving future teachers the classroom skills they needed. The discipline of applied linguistics also dates from the same period, contributing to the field with academic knowledge and theories. Since then, much has been debated regarding the dichotomy that exists between practice and theory within the area of SLTE.

In the 1990s, the distinction between practice and theory could be recognized through the expressions “teacher training” – regarding teaching skills or competencies for a specific context, involving certificates such as CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) – and “teacher development” – regarding long-term development of the teacher, mastering the discipline of applied linguistics and involving academic qualifications (e.g., MA degrees) (RICHARDS, 2008).

Currently, the field of SLTE has adopted a sociocultural perspective, showing great concern on reducing the dichotomy between theory and practice in order to

help student-teachers to make sense of their work. Moreover, acknowledging the importance of reviewing what teacher learning actually involves and the processes through which teacher learners go through in order to learn how to deal with the complexities of the profession has been emphasized.

### **2.6.1 The Nature of Teacher-Learning**

Traditionally, teacher-learning was considered the application of theory to practice, advocating for a view of teacher educators as mere transmitters of knowledge. Student-teachers were considered empty vessels which should be filled in with theoretical knowledge (usually disconnected from their reality) and methods that were thought to be appropriate for any teaching context.

However, current views see teacher-learning as the theorization of practice, where room has been given to the knowledge of the practitioner, as well as teachers' prior experiences, personal values and beliefs. As Burns and Richards (2009) stated, "teacher-learning is not viewed as translating knowledge and theories into practice but as constructing new knowledge and theory through participating in specific social contexts and engaging in particular types of activities and processes" (p. 4).

When we consider teacher-learning as a field of inquiry, we are interested in the mental processes involved in the learning of teaching and understand that learning is situated and has a social nature (LAVE; WENGER, 1991). According to Johnson (2006), research has depicted teacher learning as:

Normative and lifelong, as emerging out of and through experiences in social contexts: as learners in classrooms and schools, as participants in professional teacher education programs, and later as teachers in settings where they work. It described L2 teacher learning as socially negotiated and contingent on knowledge of the self, subject matter, curricula, and setting. It shows L2 teachers as users and creators of legitimate forms of knowledge who make decisions about how best to teach their L2 students within complex socially, culturally, and historically situated contexts (p. 239).

To understand how teachers participate and learn from the physical, social, cultural, and historical contexts in which they work and study, it is necessary to address the processes of participation and socialization in which they engage, and how these processes create communities of practice.

### 2.6.1.1 *Communities of Practice*

The notion of community of practice is grounded in the sociocultural theories, which defend that human development occurs through social interaction in cultural/historical practices which are mediated by cultural artifacts, tools and signs (VYGOTSKY, 1978). Clearly, if we consider that it is through participation and collaboration with others in cultural activities and practices that human social and cognitive development occurs (ROGOFF, 2003; WERTSCH, 1991), we can argue that community is a concept which lies in the heart of SCT.

Lave and Wenger (1991, p. 15) describe communities of practice as “groups of people who are informally bound to one another by exposure to a common class of problems or to pursue a common goal”. In a community of practice, the individuals construct and develop their own identities and understanding by participating actively and interacting with others in cultural practices that are situated in a specific social community, such as a teacher education course (LAVE; WENGER, 1998; WENGER; LAVE, 2001). Through interaction, sharing and participation in a particular cultural practice, the members of the community develop an understanding of their practice and their role in the community.

Researchers using this perspective examined how novice teachers begin as peripheral participants in their communities of practice only to establish themselves through trajectories toward becoming full members of their communities (LAVE; WENGER, 1991). There have also been studies investigating the organization of teaching practice courses in pre-service teacher education around the community of practice model and the benefits it provided in helping pre-service teachers understand the relationship of theory in practice (BECK; KOSNICK, 2001; SIM, 2006; SUTHERLAND; SCANLON; SPERRING, 2005). Lave and Wenger’s (1991) model of apprenticeship aligns with the understanding of how teachers learn to become professionals (DARLING-HAMMOND, 1996), and other studies on teacher education used this model to investigate student teaching and novice teachers’ professional development.

The dichotomy between practice and theory in SLTE has given room to a “reconsideration of the nature of teacher learning, which is viewed as a form of socialization into the professional thinking and practices of a community of practice” (RICHARDS, 2008, p. 2). Hence, if we consider that teacher learning and teaching arise from participation in the social practices in classrooms, then teachers’ knowledge and how they use this knowledge is “highly interpretative and contingent on knowledge of self, setting, students, curriculum, and community” (JOHNSON; FREEMAN, 2001). By characterizing teacher learning as socially-situated, we can claim that the knowledge, values and beliefs brought into teaching by the participants should be reshaped by teacher education in order to work successfully within social contexts or their communities of practice (WENGER, 1998; CHAIKLIN; LAVE, 1996; KIRSHNER; WHITSON, 1997).

Bearing in mind that learning occurs through interaction of a group of participants within a community of practice, there has been a reconsideration of the traditional methods of teaching in SLTE programs, and the course room is now seen as a community of learners who are engaged in social practices and constructing meaning collaboratively.

### **2.6.2 Reconceptualizing the Knowledge-Base in SLTE**

In the last 30 years there has been a shift in the field of SLTE, which has led researchers and practitioners to question the historical and theoretical views that have defined the knowledge-base of SLTE (FREEMAN; JOHNSON, 1998; FREEMAN; RICHARDS, 1996; RICHARDS; NUNAN, 1990). Freeman (2002) has raised the issue that in the field of SLTE, the knowledge-base is largely drawn from other disciplines, and not from the work of teaching itself. Freeman and many other scholars have emphasized that the knowledge-base in SLTE should be re-examined, and processes of teaching, teacher-learning, teacher beliefs, theories and knowledge about teaching should be considered.

Wallace (1995) describes three models of teacher education: the craft model, the applied science model, and the reflective model. Barduhn and Johnson (2009) characterize these approaches as follows:

In the craft model all of the expertise of teaching resides in the training, and it is the trainee's job to imitate the trainer. The applied science model has been the traditional and the most present model underlying most teacher education and training programs. The followers of this model believe that all teaching problems can be solved by experts in content knowledge and not by the 'practitioners' themselves. The third model, the current trend in teacher education development, envisions as the final outcome of the training period that the novice teacher become an autonomous reflective practitioner capable of constant self-reflection leading to a continuous process of professional self-development (p. 59-65).

This categorization expresses the movement to the sociocultural perspective, which regards learning as a social process and focuses on the co-construction of knowledge and understanding through social participation.

In general terms, there is a call for a broader epistemological framework where both transmitted knowledge and practical knowledge are valued to inform teachers' practice. The knowledge-base of SLTE must be founded in research which is based on the activity of language teaching itself, which focuses on who does the work, where and how it is done (FREEMAN; JOHNSON, 1998). The knowledge-base of SLTE must consider how teacher-learning takes place, contemplating the complexity in which the process of learning occurs.

Despite having difficulty in defining what constitutes the core knowledge-base in SLTE, Johnson (2009) has proposed that SLTE programs should address at least three broad areas:

(1) the content of second language teacher education programs: What second language teachers need to know; (2) the pedagogies that are taught in second language teacher education programs: How second language teachers should teach; and (3) the institutional forms of delivery through which both the content and pedagogies are learned: How second language teachers learn to teach (p. 11).

In other words, the knowledge-base should serve as the basis for discussions on how to prepare second language teachers to perform within the teaching profession.

Following all the rationale described, we can argue that much has been accomplished in SLTE. Nevertheless, we still have ways to go when preparing teachers to their future profession. As Johnson and Golombek (2016) have precisely

pointed out, SLTE needs to be more mindful of how teacher education programs are designed and how they best serve teachers. Much attention has been given to the gap between theory and practice in SLTE and, as Wright (2010) mentioned, “a growing and healthy ‘practitioner research’ culture in SLTE, in which teacher educators are examining the effect of the learning experiences they initiate” (p. 288) and the self-initiated innovations by teacher educators in different contexts worldwide. Nevertheless, we still need to solve the issue of how to prepare teachers adequately to succeed in their first year(s) (RICHARDS, 2016), by reflecting on what student-teachers need to learn in their SLTE programs.

### **2.6.3 SLTE and its Challenges in the Brazilian Context**

The questions related to SLTE which are currently discussed in the Brazilian context are very similar to the other contexts described earlier in this work. Several researchers have published studies which bring reflections that help us to understand the field of language teacher education in Brazil (e.g., ALMEIDA FILHO, 1999; LEFFA, 2001; GIMENEZ, 2002; CELANI, 2002; KLEIMAN, 2001; BARBARA; RAMOS, 2003; CONSOLO; VIEIRA-ABRAHÃO, 2004; MAGALHÃES, 2004; VIEIRA-ABRAHÃO, 2004). In these studies, language teacher education from both pre-service and in-service contexts are approached and examined from different theoretical backgrounds and methods, focusing on relevant issues such as the dichotomy between theory and practice.

As the field of SLTE has also triggered the interest of Brazilian scholars, several academic discussions have referred to challenges in the field. For instance, Gimenez (2005b) presents seven challenges in language teacher education in the Brazilian context: (1) The knowledge-base of the profession; (2) Research relevance; (3) Relationship between theory and practice; (4) Impact and sustainability of proposals resulting from research; (5) Interface between research and public educational policies; (6) Professional identities of teacher educators; and (7) The integration between pre-service and in-service teacher education. Her views in relation to each of the challenges are described in the following paragraphs.

When discussing the issue of the knowledge-base of the profession, Gimenez (2005b) affirms that, even though the guidelines for language teacher education emphasize the need to think about practice in all the courses throughout the program, the subject is usually explored only during teaching practice activities. She mentions the discipline of Applied Linguistics as a contribution to teacher education, as it involves practical questions and recognizes the social aspect of the language (opposed to those which adopt a view of language as abstraction). The view of Applied Linguistics not only as a practical discipline, but also as a theoretical area, makes it one of the essential areas to be included in the knowledge-base in SLTE (CELANI, 2000).

In relation to research relevance, Gimenez (2005b) mentions that we can still observe, in many cases, theory guiding practice. According to her, the discipline of Applied Linguistics has recognized the classroom as a great site for research. She mentions the importance of carrying out research and analyzing practice within its context, considering that teachers' decisions are more influenced by their previous knowledge, their beliefs and values, than by their interest in implementing theories. She considers, therefore, that research should be aligned with action by emphasizing the growth of theoretical references and their connections to specific contexts.

In the third challenge, relationship between theory and practice, Gimenez (2005b) indicates Applied Linguistics as a multidisciplinary area which contributes to overcome the division between theory and practice, particularly when it considers knowledge which comes from personal experiences. She defends the reflective approach as a way to conceive the articulation between theory and practice, as it can create a movement between scientific and practical knowledge.

Regarding the issue of impact and sustainability of proposals resulting from research, Gimenez (2005b) states that one of the biggest challenges for teacher educators is the disconnection between SLTE proposals and the real-life situations which teachers will encounter in their workplace. She sustains that Applied Linguistics has contributed by considering the context an important aspect in order to understand the work of a teacher, as it accepts theoretical and methodological diversity. She adds:



When looking for references in other areas of knowledge, especially about learning from a sociocultural perspective, teacher education in Applied Linguistics approaches solutions that can have a greater impact on collectively sustained practices. In this way, it could respond more adequately to the demands of education policies, generally light-years distant from the research and reflections produced in academia<sup>9</sup> (2005b, p. 10-11).

In relation to the interface between research and public educational policies, Gimenez (2005b) states that decisions related to teacher education still lack influence from research results. She supports reflection on how teacher educators can contribute effectively to the elaboration of teacher education policies which promote the creation of learning communities sustained by objective conditions, such as time and supporting materials for discussions. In addition to this, it is essential that the results are shared with the community and do not remain restrict to the academic context.

When approaching the matter of professional identities of teacher educators, Gimenez (2005b) reflects on the fact that teacher educators, especially the ones involved with initial teacher education, are related only to teaching practice, and not seen as researchers. It seems that the work of a practitioner is diminished when compared to the work of the researcher. According to her, when considering teacher education as a socially situated practice and doing research on it from this perspective, room is created to conceive research as a learning space, so researchers can make use of their own context of practice as suitable research sites. The adoption of a reflective approach emphasizing the creation of learning communities can be tested within teacher educators' own institutional contexts and can provide a better perspective on their identities as educators.

The last issue mentioned by Gimenez (2005b) is the integration between pre-service and in-service teacher education, an aspect which she considers a great challenge to be overcome. She calls for a space where future teachers, teachers and teacher educators can dialogically discuss and analyze the reasons for their actions

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9 Translated from the original in Portuguese: "Ao buscar referenciais em outras áreas do conhecimento, especialmente sobre aprendizagem em uma perspectiva sócio-cultural, a formação de professores na LA se aproxima de soluções passíveis de maior impacto em práticas sustentadas coletivamente. Desta forma, poderia responder de modo mais adequado a demandas de políticas de formação, geralmente distantes anos-luz das pesquisas e reflexões produzidas na academia" (GIMENEZ, 2005b, p. 10-11).

and the path they would like to follow. She defends the importance of this space being full of cooperation, where all the participants of the learning community can express how they make sense of a problem and then work on the creation of a common point of departure where all can collaborate with potential solutions.

The challenges listed by Gimenez (2005b) provide a broad perspective of the area of SLTE in Brazil. As mentioned, the relation between theory and practice and the need for research that can contribute to language teacher education policies remain essential issues in the area. Moreover, the author gives suggestions of how SLTE can benefit from the reflective approach and the discipline of Applied Linguistics and indicates future paths to be followed.

## 2.7 HOW THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE ALIGNS WITH THIS STUDY

In this chapter, I intended to describe the theories which inform this research. I started by giving a description of SCT, focusing on the concepts of mediation, self-regulation, concept development, and the ZPD. These concepts align with the theoretical basis of the EPOSTL in many ways.

For instance, a study in Turkey (CAKIR; BALCIKANLI, 2012) pointed out that student-teachers were able to recognize where they actually were and where they needed to be in relation to their teaching practice, as suggested in the notion of ZPD (WILLIAMS; BURDEN, 1997). From a sociocultural perspective, learners who work in cooperation with others who may be more expert than themselves expand their potential for cognitive development, as suggested by Vygotsky in his explanation about the ZPD. Successful development during the ZPD depends upon full interaction, and the range of skill development that can be achieved with adult guidance or peer collaboration goes beyond what can be achieved alone (VYGOTSKY, 1978). Thus, the collaborative learning provided by the portfolio offers teachers a valuable experience in their teaching practice context.

I highlighted theories which inform reflective practice in learning and teaching – which is one of the main objectives of the EPOSTL – and gave a portrait of how these theories have been explored within the Brazilian context, as the concepts of ‘reflection’ or ‘reflective practice’ are entrenched in the literature and discourses of

teacher education and teachers' professional development. Then, the transformative power of narrative was also addressed, as the EPOSTL provides opportunities for student-teachers to work with narratives not only to report their beliefs, but also as a mediational tool to reflect on their practice. Following this, I gave explanations on teaching portfolios and their benefits, focusing on the EPOSTL, which is an important contribution given by the Council of Europe to the field of SLTE. I also gave examples of studies which investigated the use of the EPOSTL and mentioned their findings.

Despite the considerable number of studies in the topic, this research has its particularities. First, to my knowledge, there has been no research investigating the use of the EPOSTL in Brazil. In fact, there has been very little research based on the language teaching and learning documents provided by the Council of Europe. Second, I am investigating the use of the EPOSTL by undergraduate students of an English Language Teaching program at a public federal university during an elective course, whereas most research has applied the portfolio to different contexts – MA students, or student-teachers during their practicum. Third, due to limited time, only a fraction (four descriptors) of the portfolio was used in this investigation. Most studies have analyzed the portfolio as whole, including the all 195 or most of the descriptors. Fourth, I am examining data collected directly from the portfolio, as well as student-teachers views on the use of it – research on the portfolio has focused mainly on teachers' views after making use of the tool.

Following this, I provided an overview of the field of SLTE, regarding the nature of teacher-learning, the reconceptualization of the knowledge-base and the challenges it faces worldwide as well as in the Brazilian context. I believe this review of literature informs this research in a comprehensive way, as the theories and tools described here are associated to the EPOSTL, and it is my hope that, by doing research on the use of this portfolio within this specific context, I provoke some reflection that can contribute to the field of SLTE.

The following chapter brings a detailed description of the methodology in this study.

### 3 METHOD

This chapter covers the methodological aspects of this research. First, I explain the nature of this study. Second, I return to the research objective and the research question which was presented previously in the introduction. Third, I give a description of the context in which the investigation will take place, the participants, procedures for data collection and data analysis.

#### 3.1 THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

In order to carry out this investigation through a detailed analysis, this research is characterized as a microgenetic study (WERNER, 1948; WERTSCH; STONE, 1978) following a qualitative paradigm (CASSEL; SYMON, 1994). Qualitative research is a broad methodological approach that covers many different research methods. As it is highly insightful, it has been widely used by social science researchers and practitioners in many fields, including education. This approach represents

A focus on interpretation rather than quantification; an emphasis on subjectivity rather than objectivity; flexibility in the process of conducting research; an orientation towards process rather than outcome; a concern with context – regarding behaviour and situation as inextricably linked in forming experience; and finally, an explicit recognition of the impact of the research process on the research situation (CASSEL; SYMON, 1994, p. 7).

Furthermore, qualitative studies propose that the research topic must be understood “holistically” (MCKAY, 2006, p. 6), and take into consideration many different factors that might affect the participants.

Within a qualitative paradigm, microgenetic studies have been seen as a promising method to studying change processes and individual differences in development, as these are specifically aimed to allow the researcher to closely observe processes of change rather than products. A microgenetic study is a ‘very short-term longitudinal study’ (WERTSCH, 1985) which focuses on moment-to-moment changes in psychological functioning. It is an observational research method in which the researcher attends closely to the social interactions and the use of tools

within the learning environment in order to understand the genesis (or the origins) of cognitive change.

The theory of learning which guides the development of this method is rooted in Vygotsky's SCT. According to Vygotsky (1978), in order to build a more complete picture of the development of human understanding, it is necessary to look at how people use language and how they use external tools in learning activities. Wertsch (1991) presents four time scales of human development based on SCT: (1) cultural historical time, regarding the development of culture and society over time; (2) phylogenesis, regarding the evolutionary development of a species; (3) ontogenesis, regarding developmental processes that occur in an individual in the span of his/her lifetime; and (4) microgenesis, regarding the development of a specific understanding or facility in an individual that occurs over a short period of time. The development of certain types of thinking or the understanding of specific concepts happen at the level of microgenesis.

Many domains have used the microgenetic method in research, such as early emotional development (DE WEERTH; VAN GEERT; HOIJTINK, 1999; MESSINGER; FOGEL; DICKSON, 1999), early language development (RUHLAND; VAN GEERT, 1998) and social writing (JONES, 1998). In addition to this, empirical findings arrived at through microgenetic analysis are considered remarkably consistent (KUHN, 2002).

There are two main premises which underlie the use of the microgenetic method. The first is that the only way to obtain essential information necessary to understand change processes is through the observation of microgenetic details of the individuals' (and their partners') behavior in particular contexts. The second is that it is fundamental to observe and understand changes at the micro-level of real time in order to understand changes at the macro-level of developmental time (WERNER, 1948).

There are also some important advantages of using microgenetic analysis in this study. First, collecting and analyzing all interactions over a given period of time gives the researcher the advantage of understanding the trajectory of the cognitive change. Second, this method captures characteristics which provides details related

to the participants' development, as well as their context and the events which led them to make particular decisions during the period of data collection.

### 3.2 OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Implementing a portfolio in a second language teacher education program seems to be a viable way of understanding how student-teachers develop during their first contact with a community of teacher-learning and teaching practice. The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL) is strongly believed to contribute to professional development as a reflection tool in foreign language teacher education and to enable student-teachers to develop an awareness of their own teaching practice (BURKET; SCHWIENHORST, 2008).

The main objective of this research was to investigate to what extent the use of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities contribute towards teacher professional development. I examined the application of the EPOSTL and class activities as a tool to contribute towards professional development collaboratively with teacher educators and peers in an elective course at an undergraduate English Language Teaching program at Federal University of Santa Catarina. I also analyzed the students' views on their experience while making use of the portfolio. At this point, the present research aims at investigating what has been proposed through the question: To what extent does the use of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities contribute towards teacher professional development?

This question will focus specifically on aspects related to four portfolio descriptors which will be investigated: (1) I can start a lesson in an engaging way; (2) I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses; (3) I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class; and (6) I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.

A more detailed description of the document and the reasons why the investigation will focus only on these four descriptors of the EPOSTL will be provided in section 3.4.1.

### 3.3 RESEARCH CONTEXT

The EPOSTL has been used in different teacher education contexts, such as pre-service and in-service teacher training, as well as teaching practice (NEWBY, 2011), and included in methodology courses as a resource for raising awareness of the complexity involved in teaching, reviewing and monitoring students' academic progress (ORLOVA, 2011). It is the aim of this study to investigate to what extent the use of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities contribute towards teacher professional development. The participants of this research were undergraduate students during their initial teaching practice experiences in the program, as the intention of this work was to develop a research focused on student-teachers, as some studies carried out in the area (GOLOMBEK; JOHNSON, 2004; CHILDS, 2011, JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2011; JOHNSON; DELLAGNELO, 2013; ARSHAVSKAYA; WHITNEY, 2014; BIEHL; DELLAGNELO, 2017; DELLAGNELO; MORITZ, 2017).

#### 3.3.1 The Undergraduate Program

The classes were observed and video recorded in the undergraduate program in English Language (*Letras-Inglês*<sup>10</sup>), a course offered by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature (DLLE – *Departamento de Língua e Literatura Estrangeiras*) at Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC – *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina*), located in the state of Santa Catarina, south region of Brazil. The origins of the program at UFSC date back to the 1960s, when the university was founded. The first professors had a crucial role in designing a rich curriculum, integrating humanistic and scientific knowledge which justifies the success of the area and the development of well-known and respected graduate programs.

The *Letras-Inglês* program intends to provide students with education that prepares them to master the foreign language as well as its culture, so that they can work in a variety of contexts as teachers, literary critics, editors, translators, writers, among others. The program's goal is to assist students in developing several abilities, such as the use of the foreign language in text production (oral and written);

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10 The information regarding the course was available at <http://www.lle.cce.ufsc.br> on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

analytical reflection towards language as a phenomenon that is communicative, epistemological, educational, psychological, social, ethical, historic, cultural, political and ideological; the development of a critical view in relation to theoretical perspectives underpinning their professional education; the development of an academic-scientific posture regarding questions related to second language acquisition; the use of current technology in the field; a perspective on linguistics, literary and translation knowledge, an understanding of intercultural contexts and a conscious and autonomous practice aiming continuous professional development.

To date, the undergraduate English Language program has three main branches: Linguistics, Literature and Translation, providing a range of theoretical approaches related to language and literature, applied linguistics, discourse analysis, literature and cinema in both Portuguese and English, among others. The program also addresses two correlated degrees, which means that during the first half of the program students take a variety of courses related to Linguistics, Literature, Translation, English Language and Literature as a whole, and after that they decide whether to take *Bacharelado* (which prepares students to do research and work in the areas of English Language, Literature or Translation) or *Licenciatura* (which prepares students to teach English in a variety of contexts). Moreover, other elective courses and activities are also offered, ensuring the students have a varied and enriching experience in their academic context.

All the participants of this study were doing the *Letras-Inglês Licenciatura* program, which means they were all pursuing a teaching career. Upon completion of the program, the novice teachers usually find teaching positions at public and private schools, as well as language institutes. Some big companies also hire these teachers in order to provide classes of English for Specific Purposes to their employees.

The *Letras-Inglês Licenciatura* undergraduate program lasts eight semesters and its pedagogic project (document which outlines all the relevant aspects of the course) describes 3390 hours (*horas-aula*)<sup>11</sup> of activities in total. Students are required to attend 2556 hours (*horas-aula*) of obligatory courses, 108 hours (*horas-aula*) of elective courses<sup>12</sup>, 486 hours (*horas-aula*) of student-teaching practice and

11 In *Letras-Inglês Licenciatura* curriculum, an hour equals to 50 minutes in class. It is called *hora-aula*. Thus, all the hours described here are related to 50 minutes.

12 There are several elective courses available to undergraduate students. The completion of the hours is obligatory, but the course itself is chosen by the students according to their own interests.



240 hours (*horas-aula*) of complementary activities which encompass academic, scientific or cultural events, such as conferences, seminars and participation in research projects, not only in the *Letras-Inglês* program, but also in other programs which belong to the area of Human Sciences.

From the first to the fourth semesters in *Letras-Inglês Licenciatura* students take courses covering a range of topics such as Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Translation, English Oral and Written Comprehension and Production, Literature and Research in Foreign Language. From the fifth semester on, they start taking courses related to teaching and teaching methodology, such as School Organization, English Teaching Methodology and Educational Psychology. During the seventh and eighth semesters students take two courses related to teaching practice (*Estágio Supervisionado I* and *Estágio Supervisionado II*). In these courses, student-teachers are required to do an internship at a local public school. They deal with preparation of lessons, creation of materials, evaluation and all the other duties of a teacher. Their work is supervised by a collaborative teacher (who is the actual teacher in the school context in which they are learning to teach) and a teacher educator, who observes some of their lessons in order to follow their progress and give them feedback on their practice. The collaborative teacher and the teacher educator are also available to discuss any improvements to be made and, most importantly, help student-teachers to overcome the difficulties they encounter when teaching in real contexts.

The participants of this research were taking an elective course which was given by one of the professors of the Foreign Languages and Literature Department in collaboration with one of her advisees, a PhD candidate from the English Post-Graduate Program: Linguistics and Literature Studies (PPGI – *Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês: Estudos Linguísticos e Literários*), a program which is connected to the same department as the undergraduate program mentioned previously. The participation of the Doctoral advisee occurred in order to fulfil a requirement from the Post-Graduate Program called *Estágio de Docência*, which is a teaching internship module where the PhD advisor and advisee work together on a course for undergraduate students.

### 3.3.2 The Course

The elective course entitled “*Tópicos especiais em língua inglesa: teoria e prática de sala de aula*” (Appendix A) was made available to undergraduate students as a source of input that encourages student-teachers to reflect and discuss about teaching and pedagogy. This elective course corresponded to 72 hours (*horas-aula*) of the *Letras-Inglês* undergraduate program, and it concerned the multidimensional nature of the teacher as a learner of teaching, regarding their context, their practice and learning teaching concepts present in learning English as a Foreign Language. The objective of the course was to help the student-teachers to recognize how the process of becoming a teacher takes place, through participation in theoretical and reflective activities and pedagogic practice.

The content proposed in the course included notions on SLTE and the structure of a class, second language acquisition theories and teaching methods, content in language teaching and pedagogic reflective practice. The first part of the course started with discussions related to teacher beliefs, such as what being a good teacher encompasses and the challenges teachers can face during their teaching careers. The discussions moved on to what a good class involves and the core principles of such belief. The student-teachers had the opportunity to learn about the different methods and approaches which were used in English Language Teaching (Audiolingual, Communicative Language Teaching, Grammar Translation, Task-based) and debated about the importance of considering that there might be no best method (PRABHU, 1990), as learning a second language is a social and situated activity. After this part of the course, the student-teachers were asked to write about the method they liked the most and the advantages of using task-based and communicative approaches.

The second part of the course focused on how to plan a class. The student-teachers were exposed to the main features of a class plan and worked on essential concepts such as contextualization, student practice, modeling, wrapping up, links between tasks and accountability. Following this, the student-teachers were provided with readings about designing different tasks. All the four skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) were presented individually, emphasizing their use, giving

examples of tasks and discussing how the student-teachers could work with each skill effectively during their practice. Then, they were asked to plan a task in pairs on each of the four skills and, after presenting their task plans, the student-teachers were asked to produce written responses to questions related to their performance, addressing their strengths and weaknesses.

The third part of the course dealt with evaluation. The student-teachers reviewed the different types of evaluation which are most used in ELT and debated on the importance of using a variety of tools to evaluate their own students. After that, they moved on to actual teaching practice.

The fourth part of the course was dedicated to the microteaching presentations. The student-teachers were asked to plan and present an individual thirty-minute class considering all the aspects they had seen in the course. While the student-teachers were presenting their lessons, their peers and teacher educators performed the role of potential learners (as they would encounter in a real classroom), as to try to achieve a more natural teaching practice environment. Each microteaching presentation was followed by a twenty-minute feedback session given by their peers and their teacher educators. Each student-teacher was required to present two solo microteaching presentations, in order to make a comparison between their first and second presentations and to give them opportunity to reflect and improve the points which they needed to work on. In their final assignment, the student-teachers had to give written responses related to their perception of the course, giving examples of how the course had helped them in relation to planning and conducting classes in general, and analyzing their performance in both microteaching presentations they presented. This final task also included a question in relation to their views on the use of the portfolio during the course. The course curriculum, most of the materials used during the classes and the activities that student-teachers were required to do were made available on *Moodle*<sup>13</sup>.

The evaluation of the student-teachers in the course considered a variety of elements, such as their participation and attendance, critical reviews on the readings, reflective written responses on class planning and microteaching sessions, and a final paper along with the completion of the portfolio.

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13 Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning) is a free software that supports online learning and is used in the university where this research takes place.

### 3.3.3 The Teacher Educators and the Researcher

There were two teacher educators in the course, Adriana and Paola. Their role was to plan the content of the course and organize the schedule. They were also responsible for teaching the student-teachers as well as evaluating them as the course progressed. Throughout the course they took turns, so some days one of them would teach, and other days, the other teacher educator would give the lesson. However, in some classes they would teach/evaluate the student-teachers in collaboration. Even though I did not have a teacher educator role during the lessons, I took part in some decisions related to the content of the course, attended meetings in order to discuss how we could better approach the matters of this research, participated in discussions during class and recorded the lessons.

#### 3.3.3.1 *Adriana (Teacher Educator)*

Adriana has been teaching English for over thirty years. She has worked for language institutes teaching English as a Foreign language and has coordinated many teaching education programs. She has vast experience with third level education (undergraduate and post-graduate courses) and has worked for the two main public universities in the state of Santa Catarina, UFSC and UDESC (*Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina*).

In 1987, Adriana finished her undergraduate program at UFSC. She holds a master's degree which she finished in 1997 and a doctorate degree concluded in 2003, from the same University. Both master's and doctorate degrees were acquired from PPGI (*Programa de Pós-Graduação em Inglês*). She has also completed research abroad (in 2011 and 2017) in Applied Linguistics at Penn State University, in the North-American state of Pennsylvania, where she deepened her knowledge in SCT. She is currently a professor at the DLLE (*Departamento de Língua e Literatura Exrangeiras*) and PPGI at UFSC and has experience with both on-campus and distance learning. Her research interests are mainly linked to language teacher education, from preparation to practice, analyzing the professional development of the language teacher, in pre-service as well as in-service contexts.

Recently, Adriana's research has been, to a great extent, based on SCT, thus focusing on learning and development as a phenomenon which takes place within specific social contexts of language teaching and learning. She has several pieces of research in the area, including two co-edited journals, *Ilha do Desterro*, in collaboration with Karen Johnson, and *Fórum Linguístico*, in collaboration with Rosângela Pedralli. She also published a study on how the Brazilian program "English without Borders" showed to be an effective environment for second language/ foreign language teacher professional development (DELLAGNELO; MORITZ, 2017).

### 3.3.3.2 *Paola (Teacher Educator)*

Paola has been working in English Language Teaching for nearly thirty years. She started her career in 1989 and has acquired experience teaching learners of all ages and levels in language schools, regular schools and also has taught in-company private students. For twenty-five years she worked in a language institute, first as a teacher and later as a pedagogical coordinator. In her latest position as a pedagogical coordinator, she dealt with the administrative part of the job (organizing class schedules and school events, taking measures concerning students and parents' issues) as well as the pedagogical duties (organizing pre-service courses, hiring teachers, observing classes and providing feedback, holding pedagogical workshops for teacher development).

In regard to her academic background, Paola is currently a PhD candidate in Linguistic Studies at UFSC. She holds a degree in *Letras-Ingês* (English Language) from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), a post-graduate degree in teaching methodologies from UNINTER, an MA degree in Linguistic Studies from UFSC. Her research is mainly focused on Teacher Education and she has attended a number of workshops and seminars in the area.

Her latest research dealt with a microgenetic study which analyzed concept development through mediating sessions (BIEHL; DELLAGNELO, 2017). Paola traced a novice teacher's developmental path, while this beginner teacher was being mediated by a more experienced other. Paola's research investigated to what extent

mediating sessions between a novice teacher and a teacher educator created an impact on teacher's development, considering particular scientific concepts related to English Language Teaching. Her findings suggested the relevance of the teacher educator's mediation that is intentional and goal-oriented.

### 3.3.3.3 *The Researcher*

I have been working as an English Teacher for fourteen years. My career began when I started my undergraduate program in English Language and Literature, in 2005, at Federal University of Piauí (UFPI). I taught in some governmental programs and some public and private schools, at primary and secondary levels. In 2008 I moved to Ireland and in 2009 I started working for a school which offered English and Business courses to immigrants and European students. I had the opportunity to teach foreign students from all over the world, at all levels, and also worked with materials development, producing some books for internal use. The school followed a communicative approach, but teachers had a lot of flexibility and could change their methodology according to their students' needs. When I left the school in 2014, there were nearly a thousand students taking classes there, which made them one of the largest English schools in Ireland.

While in Ireland I also did a Master's Degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) at UCD (University College Dublin) in 2012. When I returned to Brazil in 2014, I worked for a language institute based in Florianópolis, in Santa Catarina, for a period of six months. After that I worked for a year in a primary public school with children aged from 6 to 11. I currently hold a position of English teacher at the Federal Institute of Santa Catarina and work mainly with teenagers doing secondary school as well as technical courses.

My educational background is based mostly on English Language Teaching. My primary degree is in English Language and Literature from UFPI and I hold a master's degree in TESOL from UCD. I have also completed several TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) courses, including a CELT (Certificate in English Language Teaching), and I am currently a Ph.D. candidate at UFSC. I have always had a lot of interest in the area of teacher education, and after working with teacher

training, I decided to focus on teacher autonomy, area which I chose to work with in my master's thesis. After my return to Brazil I decided to take some courses in the Doctoral Program (the program has some places available to students who are not in the program yet but want to do courses within the program in order to choose their research area) and had the chance to deepen my knowledge in theories related to Second Language Acquisition. My interest in teacher education grew considerably as I took courses in SCT, and after entering the program I finally decided to do research in the field.

### **3.3.4 The Participants**

Aiming at a deeper and more careful study, the number of participants in this investigation was kept to six student-teachers taking part in the elective course described previously in this chapter. The student-teachers were enrolled in the course "*Tópicos especiais em língua inglesa: teoria e prática de sala de aula*" offered in the *Letras-Inglês Licenciatura* (Language Teaching) degree course at UFSC, which is focused on teaching practice, specifically the development of skills for planning, choosing materials and making decisions on how to present a class. The criteria taken into consideration regarding the choice of the student-teachers were: 1 – willingness to complete the portfolio with detail whenever required; 2 – willingness to have their microteaching and feedback sessions recorded and analyzed. Even though some student-teachers were reluctant at the beginning, as they were afraid of not being able to complete the portfolio because they would be very busy in that semester, they accepted the challenge and saw this research as an opportunity to improve professionally.

During student-teachers' first meeting with the teacher educators and the researcher, the objective and procedures of this study were explained to them, and upon their acceptance, they were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix B) authorizing their data to be used to inform the present research. Considering this is a research that involves human subjects, an approval from the Ethics Review Board (CEPSH – *Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa com Seres Humanos*) (Appendix C) from UFSC was submitted and granted under number 2.620.158. To protect the

participants' privacy and to prevent their identification, their names were replaced by other names which were randomly chosen by the researcher: Joana, Peter, Lisa, Mary, David and Pam.

The group of participants was formed by six student-teachers whose ages ranged from 22 to 48 and had had very different academic and professional experiences. The majority of the student-teachers in the group had acquired some knowledge of English Language not only from the regular schools where they studied, but also from language institutes where they also took part in English language learning programs.

Regarding their teaching experiences, most student-teachers had experiences of some sort before they entered their undergraduate program. The participants currently teach students of different ages (kids, teenagers and adults) and different class levels (beginner, elementary, intermediate and advanced) at language institutes, regular schools and they also have private students. A more detailed description, which will be presented later, was based on information given in a written report where the student-teachers were asked to describe their teaching experience timeline, combined to the information they provided in their Personal Statement (first section of the EPOSTL).

The first part of the EPOSTL (personal statement) was crucial in order to build a rich profile of the students' histories and their experiences with the learning and the teaching of a second language. In this section they also provided insights, their expectations and what they considered important to learn in their teacher education program.

On the first page of the personal statement, the student-teachers were asked to write their names, the institution where they were studying and the date they began to use the EPOSTL. On the second page, they had the first activity, which was to complete a table with positive and negative aspects – such as teacher's abilities and practices – of their own language learning experience that might influence how they wish or do not wish to teach. The second activity was a combination of two questions:

- a) What aspects of teaching are you most looking forward to?
- b) What aspects of teaching are you least looking forward to?



On the third page they had activity number three, which was a combination of three questions related to their expectations of their teacher education course:

- a) What do you expect most from your teacher education?
- b) What do you want most from your teacher education?
- c) What do you think that your teacher educators expect from you?

On the same page they had a fourth activity which was to answer a question in Likert scale related to what they considered important for a language teacher:

**Figure 1** – Personal Statement (question 4) in the EPOSTL.

■ 4. How important do you consider the following for a language teacher? Add your own ideas. Discuss with a partner and give reasons for your choices.

	How important? not → very important				
1. Cooperating with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Good organisational skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Being able to explain grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(NEWBY *et al.*, 2007, p. 11)

After reading the participants' teaching experience timeline and their answers to the questions presented in the personal statement section, I describe each of them with detail as it follows.

#### 3.3.4.1 Joana

In 1996, Joana moved to the countryside of São Paulo, a state in the southeast of Brazil. She wanted to finish her English course, so her mother enrolled her in a language institute. During her course she was invited to teach children, which was her first experience as a teacher. Her groups of students kept growing and

a couple of years later she began to teach teenagers and adults. In 2003 she stopped teaching and went to Japan for a year. She returned to Brazil in 2004, taught for a few years in the same school where she had taught previously and in 2007 went back to Japan. In Japan she had the opportunity to work as an English teacher at a language institute, something which she described as “an amazing experience”.

In 2008 she returned to Brazil and went back again to the same job she had at the language institute where she used to study and also started to teach private classes. She moved to Florianópolis in 2011, and during the following year worked in a vocational school. In 2013 she started in the undergraduate program in *Letras-Inglês Licenciatura*, 17 years after she had her first English teaching experience. Since 2014 she has been teaching children and teenagers from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to high school in a regular school located in her neighborhood.

When describing her experiences of being taught in the personal statement section of the portfolio, Joana mentioned positive aspects such as well-planned classes, motivating environment, dedication, organization, punctuality, holding students' attention and engaging students in the classes. For negative aspects, she mentioned that teachers would leave the classrooms many times during class without apparent reason and punishment to learners for speaking incorrectly in the target language. In order to avoid the problems she described as negative aspects, she suggested that teachers should correct students privately, instead of exposing the student in front of the whole class.

When asked what aspects of teaching she was most looking forward to, Joana stated that she had been teaching for a long time and was looking forward to putting all her knowledge into practice in this course. She did not mention any aspect of teaching she was least looking forward to. In relation to her expectations from her teacher education course, Joana said that she expected to learn more techniques to improve her classes. She also said that she believed that what her teacher educators expected from her was commitment and responsibility with the proposed activities and participation in class. The most important aspects for a language teacher, according to Joana, were being up to date, paying attention to students' difficulties, having well planned classes, involving students' in the class content, giving feedback students and motivating them.

### 3.3.4.2 *Peter*

Peter started teaching in 2014 at a Language Institute in his hometown. He stated that in his first experience working as an English teacher he “realized that knowing the language is quite different from teaching the language”. For the last 3 years he has been teaching English classes in a program offered by the university where he is currently studying. According to him, this opportunity has been extremely reflective due to the fact that at the same time he is teaching he is also a student-teacher. He started to reflect about his methods and choices in class. He has also mentioned some moments where he struggled, stating that he found very hard to bring coherence between his objectives and real actions in class.

Since 2016 he has also been working in a project called English without Borders. He stated how challenging this experience has been through the following extract: “It’s been a new challenge to me, mainly because in this program teachers do not rely on textbooks. We need to construct the whole course which allows me autonomy to choose materials and approaches”.

When describing his experiences of being taught in the personal statement section of the portfolio, Peter mentioned positive aspects such as teachers who mastered their subject of matter, provided effective communication, motivation, flexibility and friendly environment, worked with a plurality of methods and gave clear instructions. For negative aspects, he mentioned lack of organization, not having an appealing methodology, not giving constructive feedback, and focusing only on form (ignoring cultural aspects). When asked what aspects of teaching he was most looking forward to, Peter stated he was looking forward to being more coherent in the assessment methods he used. On the other hand, he said that being exhausted by the overload of preparing classes and marking exams was the aspect of teaching he was least looking forward.

Regarding his expectations from his teacher education course, Peter said that he expected to be inspired enough to pursue a career as a teacher. He also said he wanted to become aware of the implications that would come from his actions in class, as he wanted to be sure of what he was doing in class and why he was doing

it. In addition to this, he stated that his teacher educators expected him to improve his teaching skills and to become more critical when deciding what to do in class and how to do it. According to Peter, the most important aspects for a language teacher were cooperating with others, providing coherent assessment, being able to use technology and setting equal expectations to all students.

#### 3.3.4.3 Lisa

For Lisa, the idea of taking part in an undergraduate English teaching program only came after years working in different areas, as she decided to stop working with Law and embraced the area of English Language Teaching as a professional goal. In 2011, after spending a year in the USA, Lisa decided to give up her Law career and asked for a chance to teach English in the language institute where she used to study. A few months later she was given the opportunity to teach two groups of teenagers, and a year later she got another teaching position in another language institute teaching teenagers and adults.

In 2013 she went to the Netherlands for a year to work as an au pair. When she returned to Brazil, she went back to her previous job and started in the undergraduate program (*Letras-Inglês*) in 2015. During that year she started to work for other two language institutes, teaching children, teenagers and adults. She left the jobs she had in the language institutes in 2016 and has been working on an English language program and in the project English without Borders, both offered by the university where she is studying. She has also started to teach in English language programs from other universities.

When describing her experiences of being taught in the personal statement section of the portfolio, Lisa mentioned positive aspects such as patience while waiting for students to finish their activities and the importance of bringing new topics to class according to students' previous knowledge. For negative aspects, she mentioned a particular situation in which her teacher was impatient with the students and made her so uncomfortable in class that she got demotivated and did not finish the semester.

When asked what aspects of teaching she was most looking forward to, Lisa stated that she was looking forward to being patient enough to work with kids, as she was afraid of not being ready for that. The aspect of teaching she was least looking forward to was organization, even though she said she was organized in general. In relation to her expectations from her teacher education course, Lisa said that she expected to be given the opportunity to learn different approaches, methods and studies that are related to teaching and learning of languages and to be able to go deeper on the studies and practices which would be helpful in her classes. She said she wants to be ready to face a classroom full of students, certain that she has the background knowledge needed to base her class proposals. She also said that she believed her teachers educators expected her to use all the opportunities she had to put in practice activities based on the theories studied. The most important aspects for a language teacher, according to Lisa, were good organizational skills, being able to explain grammar and having a good relationship with students.

#### 3.3.4.4 *Mary*

Mary had her first teaching experience when she was 12 years old, helping elderly people how to use computers and access the internet, and basic commands of how to use the computer to write letters, emails, use MSN or SKYPE. She stated: "I do feel it is important to mention that, because that actually – not at that time, I think – meant a lot to me, and still does nowadays, because even without realizing it then, that was the first time I got teach something to somebody, and it felt great! Maybe that was when I discovered that I liked teaching, but only now I realize it".

She started to teach English in 2013 when she was invited to cover another teacher's maternity leave in a private school in Florianópolis. For five months she taught two groups of each of these grades: 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. In her own words, "The experience was challenging, mostly regarding the classroom management and dealing with a lot of different learning styles and different personalities of students at the same time, but very exciting – enough that it had me change my choices of course and plans on the Letras program".

From 2013 (when she started her undergraduate course *Letras-Ingles*) to 2017 she had some private classes with children and teenagers. She also covered her mother, who was an English teacher, a few times when it was necessary. Those opportunities, according to her, allowed her not only to reflect and think about how much learning she still has to do, but also to motivate her and renew this will of teaching. During her internship, which happened in 2017, she taught 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at a regular public school and described the experience as challenging, exciting, full of learning opportunities and from there, she felt more prepared to face a classroom. Even though she feels she has a lot more to learn and to discover, it was gratifying to see that students have learned something that we taught, and they enjoyed while it.

Since the beginning of 2018, Mary has been working in a private language institute. She mentioned that “everything is very new and challenging – as it is a ‘closed’ method, and I am not very acquainted with it. I have three groups, all of kids and teens, and as for that reason, I have, a sort of, more liberty and I’m enjoying it”.

When describing her experiences of being taught in the personal statement section of the portfolio, Mary mentioned positive aspects such as being able to engage students in the activities, using a lot of different examples when explaining something, using relevant real life situations and having empathy with the students. For negative aspects, she mentioned that sometimes teachers know a lot but are not able to explain something in an easy or understandable manner, or they lack empathy.

When asked what aspects of teaching she was most looking forward to, Mary stated that she was looking forward to being able to make herself clear/understood, to connect with her students so that they can engage in a productive learning environment. The aspect of teaching she was least looking forward to was difficult situations related to classroom management, as having large classes for example.

In relation to her expectations from her teacher education course, Mary said that she expected to practice teaching and learn from her mistakes so that she could become a better teacher. She said she wanted to learn how she could make herself clearer to her students and how to deal with many different learning styles in the same classroom. She also said that she believed her teachers educators expected

her to make good use of English, provide good practice and good body language when teaching and show good results.

The most important aspects for a language teacher in Mary's opinion were good organizational skills, being able to manage the classroom, providing meaningful lessons, planning in advance, and motivating students.

#### 3.3.4.5 *David*

David gave up the chance to study veterinary medicine and moved to Florianópolis to start in the undergraduate program (*Letras-Ingês*) in 2015. During that year he applied for a teaching position in a language institute where he spent a week on a training course, but he did not fill in the position. Regarding this episode, he gave the following opinion: "I was not chosen, but honestly, I did not like their method, as it was extremely repetitive".

David's first teaching experience happened during this course, when he started teaching in a voluntary program offered to the community in general by the university where he is studying to become a teacher. He showed his enthusiasm and uncertainties towards this opportunity when he wrote:

I will start my classes next week. I am a little bit nervous, of course, but I think it is going to be great [...] I will check their knowledge of the language to know their necessities and also what they expect from the course. It will be my first teaching experience ever. The aspect I liked the most about the program is that we have freedom to have our own teaching methods and the choice of the materials and topics we are going to work on. It will be a challenge for me of course, as it demands more work and time, but I am actually very excited for it. I will start the course plan very soon, but also knowing that some things may be changed depending on the people's demands in the class. It's not that I will teach only what they want, as they may not even know what to expect, but I want to know their interests and their necessities and work on them (David's Portfolio).

When describing his experiences of being taught in the personal statement section of the portfolio, David mentioned positive aspects such as having interactive activities and using a variety of materials as videos, songs and games. For negative aspects, he mentioned that sometimes teachers did not master the target language nor explored the listening and speaking skills enough.

When asked what aspects of teaching he was most looking forward to, David stated that he would like to be a teacher that also tries to help students organize their learning process. He said that people may learn English on the internet, in another country, but some people need a mediator, someone to show them the path to achieve their goals, and he wanted to be that mediator; he wanted to be the kind of teacher who likes to know his/her students' needs. The aspect of teaching he was least looking forward to was the fear of being more worried about giving grades than giving attention to his students' learning. He mentioned that the learning process is more complex than only grades and if he had to teach in a regular school context, he would not like to be a teacher that throws whatever content at the students, or forces something on them. David believed that students need to have an interest in learning the language, and if they do not, he hoped to be able to make it interesting for them.

In relation to his expectations from his teacher education course, David said that he expected to have a very rich environment, as it is very good to hear what people who were already teachers had to say. He said he enjoyed listening to his peers' opinions on what works and what does not in the classroom. He also said he wanted to know everything he could from the (language) teaching universe. In relation to what he believed teacher educators expected from him, David said that he thought they expected him to know well many aspects of second language teaching, such as methods, activities, and organization. According to David, the most important aspects for a language teacher were cooperating with others, good organizational skills, being able to explain grammar and being fluent in the language.

#### 3.3.4.6 Pam

Pam is the oldest in the group. She moved to Boston (USA) in 1998 to work as a cleaner and returned to Brazil in 2009. Just before that, she did a 12-week summer course in the English Language program at Harvard University. She started in the undergraduate program in *Letras-Inglês Licenciatura* in 2015. Pam had her first experience as an English teacher during this course.

When describing her experiences of being taught in the personal statement section of the portfolio, Pam mentioned positive aspects such as listening to



students, trying to understand their differences and bringing extra resources to class. For negative aspects, she mentioned teachers only focusing on form and not caring about students' interests. When asked what aspects of teaching she was most looking forward to, Pam stated that she was looking forward to teaching and learning from different people (her peers). The aspect of teaching she was least looking forward to was the fear of being a restrict and traditional teacher or choosing a teaching career due to lack of options in her life.

In relation to her expectations from her teacher education course, Pam said that she wanted to learn how to become a good teacher and to be engaged, and that was what she also believed to be expected from her by the teacher educators. The most important aspects for a language teacher in Pam's opinion were cooperating with others, listening to students and trying to understand their problems, planning the lessons in advance and being engaged.

### 3.4 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The data collection lasted four months. During that time, the student-teachers had access to relevant information related to the connection between the EPOSTL and the course they were taking whenever it was necessary. The lessons they attended, as well as their microteaching and feedback sessions, were video recorded in a Samsung S2 tablet by the researcher for later analysis. The activities they did (lesson plans, written responses, and feedback sheets) were also collected and added to their dossier in order to be linked to their narrative on the EPOSTL.

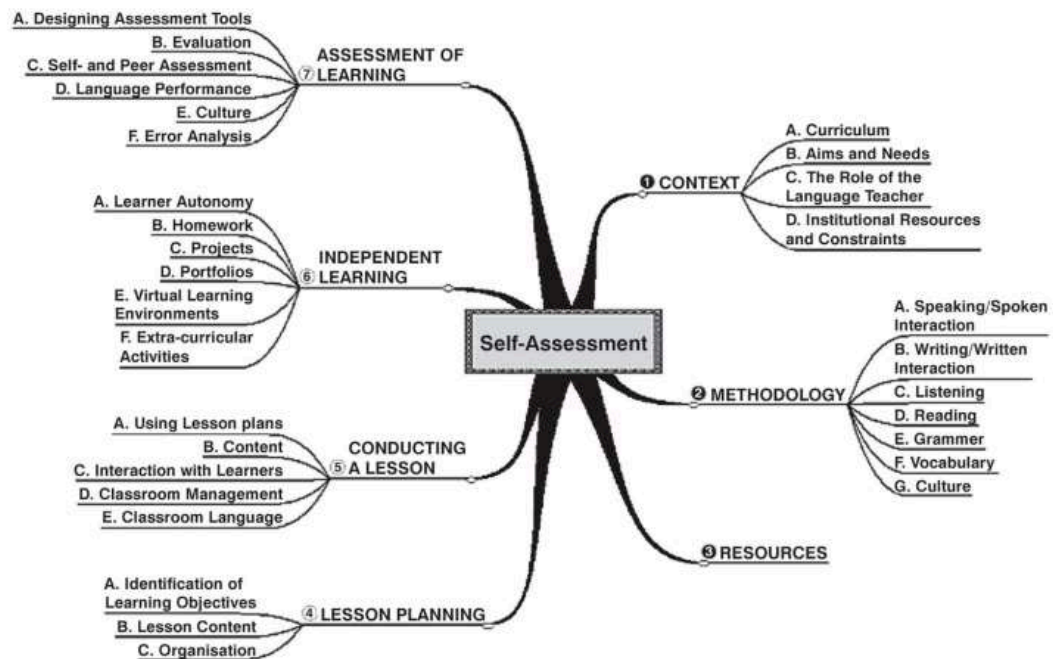
#### 3.4.1 The Self-Assessment Section and the Dossier

The second part of the portfolio, the self-assessment section, which was one of the resources analyzed in this research, presents 195 descriptors and a reflection grid area where the student-teachers should record the descriptor number, the date when the reflection happened, and their comments on that particular episode. The descriptors of the EPOSTL are categorized according to the chart in Figure 2:

**Figure 2** – Categorization of descriptors in the EPOSTL.

### ■ Categorisation of descriptors

The descriptors are grouped into seven general categories. These represent areas in which teachers require knowledge and a variety of competences and need to make decisions related to teaching. Each heading has been sub-divided as follows:



(NEWBY *et al.*, 2007, p. 6)

The completion of the descriptors should be done gradually, as shown in Figure 3:

**Figure 3** – Self-Assessment scales in the EPOSTL.

### ■ Self-assessment scales

Each descriptor is accompanied by a bar, which will help you to visualise and chart your own competence. You can colour in the bar according to your own assessment. This may take place at different stages of your teacher education.

On completion of your teacher education programme you may have produced a bar which looks something like this.

1. I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.




(NEWBY *et al.*, 2007, p. 6)


Aiming at a more elaborated analysis and due to the limited time available for data collection, the availability of the student-teachers who accepted to be part of this investigation, and the content covered by the course, only a fraction of the self-assessment descriptors of the portfolio was used.


Part A “Using Lesson Plans” of section number 5 “Conducting a Lesson” (Appendix D and Figure 4) was chosen for this work during a meeting between the researcher and the teacher educators (before the beginning of the academic semester). The main reason for the choice was that the course the students were taking, “*Tópicos especiais em Língua Inglesa: Teoria e Prática de Sala de Aula*”, was mainly focused on the development of pedagogic skills in teaching practice, and the section on “Conducting a Lesson” describes a variety of pedagogic skills required in language classrooms. Part A “Using Lesson Plans” considers knowledge related to ordering activities coherently as well as in a flexible way, reflection on the learners’ prior learning experiences in order to be responsive to their individual performance in class, and moments of interaction from an initial settling down to maintaining attention and finishing the class in a focused way, always encouraging learner initiatives and responses. The descriptors from Part A of Section 5 that were used for data collection were the descriptors number 1, 2, 3 and 6, as shown in Figure 4:


**Figure 4** – Section A (Using Lesson Plans) in the EPOSTL.


■ A. Using Lesson Plans


■ 1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way. 

■ 2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses. 

■ 3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class. 

■ 4. I can adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situations occur. 

■ 5. I can time classroom activities to reflect individual learners’ attention spans. 

■ 6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way. 

(NEWBY *et al.*, 2007 p. 39)

Items 4 (I can adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situations occur) and 5 (I can time classroom activities to reflect individual learners' attention spans) were taken out from this work. In relation to topic 4, it was understood by the researcher and the teacher educators that this aspect was already included in topic number 2. Regarding topic 5, the content of the course did not cover individual learners' attention spans, so it was decided that this theme would also be withdrawn.

The third part of the EPOSTL, the dossier, is a table to be completed with documents that support the moments of reflection students wrote about in their reflection grid. The information required in this part is the number of the document attached, the date, the category and the description. In order to minimize the participants' efforts in the completion of the portfolio, they were asked to give all their works (lesson plans, readings, written responses, feedback sheets and notes) to me, so that I could organize their dossier documents and link them to the video recording. Thus, for this research, I gathered and looked into all the student-teachers' academic work regarding the course, along with the video recording of microteaching and feedback sessions, in order to better inform my research question.

### 3.5 PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION

Following important feedback regarding the use of the EPOSTL on her research, Orlova (2011, p. 20) suggests that the implementation of the portfolio should go through six stages:

Stage 1 – The EPOSTL should be introduced to the student-teachers and the tasks in the Personal statement section should be set;

Stage 2 – Self-assessment sections should be selected;

Stage 3 – Descriptors should be integrated into the course;

Stage 4 – Descriptors should be employed for microteaching tasks;

Stage 5 – Student-teachers should use the EPOSTL during their practicum;

Stage 6 – Students' opinions of the EPOSTL should be surveyed.

In order to provide a more explanatory description of the data collection process, the present work was influenced by these guidelines.

### **3.5.1 Selection of Self-Assessment Descriptors**

In a meeting before the beginning of the course, the researcher and the teacher educators decided what descriptors would be relevant for that specific group of student-teachers, considering the content they would be working with in the course they would be taking. Thus, the readings, written responses, activities, microteachings and feedback sessions during the course were well aligned with the descriptors of the portfolio.

### **3.5.2 Introducing the Portfolio to the Student-Teachers**

During an initial meeting (the first class), the teacher educators and the researcher presented the EPOSTL to the student-teachers and explained how the tool worked. The participants received a summarized copy of the document containing the personal statement section, the self-assessment section with the descriptors chosen and the reflection grid.

### **3.5.3 Completing the Self-Assessment Section**

Students were asked to complete the self-assessment descriptors and the reflection grid every time they felt they had improved in a particular descriptor, linking it to documents, statements and situations that would show their progress. They were also advised to fill in the document after each microteaching session, so they would not forget the feedback received from their teacher educators and their peers.

### **3.5.4 The Recording of the Lessons, Microteaching and Feedback Sessions**

Considering all the video recorded material, I gathered over 40 hours of class activities of the course (lessons, microteaching presentations, feedback sessions), divided into 25 classes. During the solo microteaching presentations, each student-teacher had to present two classes of thirty minutes each. The microteaching presentations were followed by feedback sessions where teacher educators and

peers were asked to fill in a feedback sheet (Appendix E) related to the student-teacher's performance, aiming at the descriptors chosen from the portfolio. After the completion of the feedback sheet, there was also oral feedback, which would take approximately 15 minutes, given by the teacher educators and the peers, which was also recorded to compare with the information presented in the portfolio and to better inform this research. During the feedback session, teacher educators would ask the student-teachers how they felt about their presentation and comment on their performance. Peers were also invited to give their views on the presentations. After this, all the feedback sheets would be handed to the presenter, for later appreciation.

Below I present a figure which shows how the video recordings were organized, after their collection. I describe the class number and some of the discussions and activities which took place on each date. It is important to clarify that this figure states the classes according to the video recordings and does not include the dates in which the student-teachers were required to attend other events or to do activities online via *Moodle*. Additionally, the video recordings do not include the first class, as it was when the student-teachers had their first contact with the teacher educators and also when they received guidance on the use of the portfolio.

**Figure 5** – Organization of the video recordings

<b>Video Class</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>A Summary of each class</b>
1	02/03	What's a good teacher? What's a good class? Student-teachers discussed myths and truths related to teaching in general (classroom management, teaching materials, curriculum, evaluation).
2	06/03	Student-teachers discussed their beliefs related to teaching in general and reflected on how apprenticeship of observation can influence their decisions.
3	09/03	How can I teach? Theories, methods. Is there a best method? Student-teachers reviewed the main methods related to English Language Teaching and discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each method.
4	13/03	Task based/communicative approaches. Student-teachers reviewed the core principles of task based and communicative approaches, identifying characteristics of real-world tasks and pedagogical tasks.
5	16/03	Student-teachers kept reviewing aspects related to tasks, and they also reviewed language skills, focusing on communicative activities and linguistic competences.

6	20/03	Student-teachers started to review task steps and the importance of having authentic materials. Student-teachers also started working with contextualization and ways of beginning a lesson.
7	27/03	Student-teachers kept working with task steps: student practice and how to wrap up a task. There was also some discussion on classroom interaction (pair work, group work, whole class).
8	03/04	Working on task steps: continuing a class; linking tasks. Student-teachers reviewed class procedures (preparation, performance and accountability) and started working with contextualization.
9	06/04	Student-teachers discussed the concept of accountability and reflected on how to create activities that can provide learners with accountability moments (when learners can perceive their learning).
10	10/04	Student-teachers reviewed the four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and their characteristics, considering their purposes, differences and ways to work with each skill.
11	17/04	Student-teachers identified examples of listening tasks (pre-listening, while listening and post-listening activities) and speaking activities, discussing important aspects to consider when teaching them.
12	20/04	Student-teachers started their microteaching presentations in pairs/groups. The first skills they had to present were listening and speaking. Peter and David were first, followed by Lisa and Mary.
13	24/04	Student-teachers worked with examples of reading activities and discussed important aspects to consider when teaching it (pre-reading, while reading and post-reading activities).
14	27/04	Student-teachers worked with examples of writing activities and discussed important aspects to consider when teaching it. They also reflected on the process of writing and how this helps the learners.
15	04/05	Joana, Lisa and Peter presented their microteaching on reading and writing skills. David and Pam were the next pair to present, also on reading and writing.
16	08/05	Student-teachers discussed the concept of language as social practice and reflected on how this concept can impact their teaching worlds and affect their professional practice.
17	11/05	Student-teachers discussed the different ways of evaluating learners and how to best assess them. Pam and another student presented their microteaching on grammar.
18	15/05	In this class, Peter and David presented their microteaching on grammar. Following this, Joana and Lisa presented next, also a grammar microteaching.
19	22/05	Lisa had her first solo microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session. Following this, Mary also had her first microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session.
20	05/06	Pam had her first solo microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session. Following this, Joana also had her first microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session.

21	08/06	Peter had his first solo microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session.
22	19/06	David had his first solo microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session. Following this, Mary also had her second microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session.
23	26/06	Lisa had her second solo microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session. Following this, Joana also had her second microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session.
24	29/06	Pam had her second microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session.
25	03/07	Peter had his second solo microteaching presentation, followed by a feedback session. Following this, David also had his second microteaching presentation followed by a feedback session.

Data elaborated by the researcher (2019)

### 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

After all the data (portfolios, video recordings, written responses, class plans and feedback sheets) were collected, data analysis took place. First, the portfolios were read and analyzed individually. The second part (self-assessment) was read in combination with the reflection grid and the dossier as to understand the shifting point where the student-teachers felt that their development occurred. Second, the video recordings were watched by the researcher as many times as necessary and all the relevant passages were transcribed. Third, an analysis of the student-teachers' portfolios was carried out, linking their narratives to the video recorded lessons, the microteaching and feedback sessions, and the other data available in the dossier. After that, all the feedback sheets were read, and all the important observations were considered and added to the analysis in order to support the participants' narratives.

After taking notes regarding each student, an analysis of the narratives, the video recordings and all the other documents was carried out in order to look for aspects that could represent student-teachers points of development. It is important to emphasize that the aspects which were investigated in this study were specifically the ones related to the chosen descriptors – (1) I can start a lesson in an engaging way; (2) I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses; (3) I can ensure smooth transitions between



activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class; and (6) I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.

In the end, all the data collected was analyzed in order to answer the question which guided this research.

### **3.6.1 Procedures for Data Analysis**

In this section I describe the steps of the data analysis in greater detail, addressing the purpose of each phase and explaining how they helped me to answer the question I had proposed.

#### **3.6.1.1 Phase 1**

In phase 1, I read the second section of the portfolio (self-assessment descriptors) and identified the descriptors that the student-teachers completed. This section was read in combination with the reflection grid, where student-teachers were asked to describe the reason why they believed they had improved in a particular descriptor. Then, I linked their chart progression to their narratives and analyzed the documents which I had gathered in the dossier (video recordings, lesson plans, feedback sheets). These documents represented elements which student-teachers believed to have brought them more knowledge or reflection in relation to the skills presented in the descriptors. At this point, they also referred to specific lessons or a given microteaching session – by themselves or their peers. At this moment of the data analysis, I was able to examine student-teachers' motivations and their perspectives on how they believed they had developed professionally, and I hope to have grasped potential moments of transformation in the student-teachers' learning path.

#### **3.6.1.2 Phase 2**

In phase 2, I watched the video recordings of the lessons, microteaching presentations and feedback sessions attentively and transcribed the moments that

supported the student-teachers' narratives in their portfolios. I tried to identify in the video recordings moments that were linked to what student-teachers had described in the portfolios so as to understand how mediation looked like at those moments. In the microteaching video recordings I intended to see how the content student-teachers had seen in their course up to that point had helped them with their organizational skills and classroom practice; if the readings they had done in the course had helped them to build a more theoretical view on teaching, if they had improved their knowledge in order to make more informed decisions and if they had a better understanding of what is expected of them in their future professional contexts.

The feedback video recordings presented a series of contributions from teacher educators and peers, helping student-teachers' identify their strengths and weaknesses and collaboratively reflect on necessary improvements on the areas covered by the descriptors. After watching all the videos and making notes on all the microteaching presentations I was able to determine if the student-teachers had worked on improving the weak aspects in their practice which were addressed gradually after each microteaching they presented, during the feedback sessions and also through feedback sheets. I was also able to identify if a particular student-teacher's microteaching presentation or even a feedback session had influenced or had caused any impact on other student-teaches' narratives.

### 3.6.1.3 *Phase 3*

In phase 3, I combined the narratives and documents presented in the portfolio which were previously analyzed (self-assessment descriptors and dossier) to the microteaching presentations and the feedback sessions which were video recorded. This phase's main purpose was to provide information in order to answer my research question, which was "To what extent does the use of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities contribute towards teacher professional development?", considering only a fraction of the portfolio which consisted of four descriptors: (1) I can start a lesson in an engaging way; (2) I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses; (3) I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for

individuals, groups and the whole class; (6) I can finish off a lesson in a focused way. When I analyzed all these documents together, I was able to see if student-teachers' narratives and their perspectives on their development corresponded to their actual development – if they did what they believed they had learned to do in the course; if they made decisions based on their theoretical background they had acquired or reviewed during the course rather than their previous beliefs regarding teaching practice; if they really improved on what they said they had improved; if the materials or documents they used to justify their professional development actually had an impact on their practice. In addition, I could identify if their narrative activities had helped them to reflect on their professional development and influenced their performance during the microteaching sessions.

Following the description given on the methodological aspects of this research, the next chapter deals with the analysis of the data collected.

## 4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter I provide the findings and discussion of the data collected, which consists of the analysis of the Self-Assessment section (focusing on the descriptors chosen for this study), combining student-teachers' narratives to the documents which support their statements (video recording interactions, feedback sheets and assignments) and comments regarding their development. In addition to this, I highlight the views of the participants in relation to the use of the portfolio.

### 4.1 SELF-ASSESSMENT SECTION

The analysis of the self-assessment section of the EPOSTL (Appendix F) included some steps. First, the reading of the self-assessment section was done in combination with the reflection grid. Second, there was an analysis of the documents attached in the dossier (lesson plans, feedback sheets). Third, all the videos were watched and moments that supported the student-teachers' narratives in the reflection grid were transcribed and addressed. Fourth, observation notes from the feedback sheets were also added. Finally, comments in relation to student-teachers' narratives were made in order to identify shifting points which I believe to be important moments of reflection in the portfolio and during the classes, as well as to elucidate signs of potential development.

The presentation of this analysis is divided according to the four descriptors discussed in this work. The descriptors have been taken from the self-assessment section of the EPOSTL, part A "Using Lesson Plans" of section number 5 "Conducting a Lesson", and represent knowledge related to coherence and flexibility and towards the ordering of activities, being responsive to students' interests and moments of interaction during the beginning, the middle and the end of the class. The four descriptors chosen were: (1) I can start a lesson in an engaging way; (2) I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses; (3) I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class; (6) I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.

In order to provide the student-teachers with opportunities to develop the skills required to improve abilities related to the descriptors, the classes were filled with plenty of input and theoretical background on concepts aligned with the descriptors. These concepts as well as the input were chosen by the teacher educators according to the context and to their understanding of what was the best way to accomplish the competences described in each descriptor. For instance, in relation to descriptor 1 – I can start a lesson in an engaging way – the teacher educators chose concepts such as contextualization and modeling, which they believe to be important concepts that should be developed by the student-teachers in order to start a lesson in an engaging way. These theories and concepts chosen by the teacher educators are addressed in each of the descriptors' section.

Each descriptor section is organized by the student-teachers' fictional name. Within their names' subsection, I describe episodes which happened during the classes, where I bring extracts from interactions in the video recordings and comments from the feedback sheets. Following this, I present the participants' narratives in their portfolios. All the extracts taken from the video recordings and the feedback sheets, as well as the portfolio narratives, are organized in a chronological sequence. In order to keep this analysis more concise, I chose 3 participants' data to be presented in each descriptor, in a way that that each participant appears twice in the analysis. At the end each episode and narrative stated (in each of the descriptors), I present a comment to summarize the events and provide an analysis to address the participants' development.

The transcriptions presented in this part of the study have been edited from its original form in order to improve clarity and avoid confusion that can potentially be caused by the repetition of words or grammar mistakes. The meaning of the narratives has not been altered, nor suffered any kind of interference that could possibly impact the results shown in this analysis. Moreover, during the completion of the portfolio, the student-teachers had the choice to address more than one descriptor in a single narrative. Bearing this in mind, I have decided to write the narrative and its analysis only once, in one of the descriptors, to avoid repetition – these moments have been delineated on footnotes.

#### 4.1.1 Descriptor 1 – I can start a lesson in an engaging way

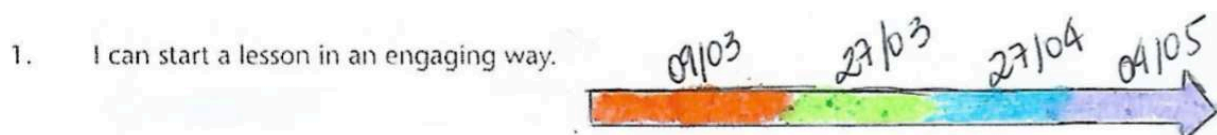
In relation to descriptor 1 – I can start a lesson in an engaging way – the procedures of a lesson (preparation, performance and accountability) were reviewed, emphasizing the importance of preparation as it helps to set the mood and contextualize a lesson; helps to build up students' confidence; makes students perceive the goals of the task; helps to get students thinking in the right direction; focuses on students' attention; prepares students for the lesson ahead; makes instructions less 'explained' and more 'practical'.

Contextualization and modeling were two important concepts seen in preparation. Contextualization is the moment of the class where the teacher sets the mood and introduces the topic that students will be working on during the class. It can be done through visual aids such as pictures and/or videos, or even through simple questions. Modeling is represented by controlled dialogues conducted by the teacher, so that the whole class can observe the pair who is practicing – in the case of an open-pair modeling. It is an effective way to give instructions, as it provides students with vocabulary, intonation, pronunciation, grammar needed for the task, and it also lets students know what is expected from them – both in relation to the language to be used and the degree of complexity in which they have to approach the task.

Besides preparation (contextualization and modeling), intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were also reviewed. All these concepts, which are considered important to the development of the competence stated in descriptor 1, are presented in the excerpts below, with narratives from the portfolio, extracts from the video recordings, the feedback sheets and other class activities.

##### 4.1.1.1 Joana

**Figure 6** – Joana's scale (Descriptor 1)



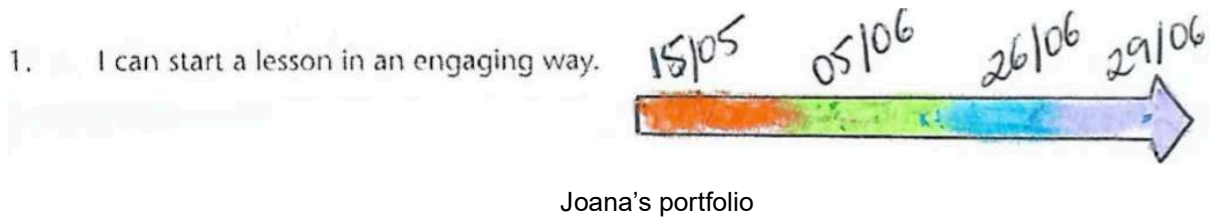


Figure 6 shows that Joana painted the descriptor “I can start a lesson in an engaging way” 8 times along the semester, indicating the moments in which she perceived changes in her development. Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to her narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(1)** During class 2 (March 6<sup>th</sup>), while giving the TEs her views on a text she had read, Joana mentioned what she had found most important in the reading she had done:

They say that we have different kinds of learners. Some learners look forward to come to class, others may dread coming to class, some anticipate that they will be engaged in activities that they don't like, sometimes feeling frustration and loss of faith [...] and they said, as a teacher, we have a crucial role in developing, in the classroom, an atmosphere that motivates students and their learning [...] and what catches my attention here is that they repeat the word enthusiasm [...] I think it's four times: enthusiasm for teaching, enthusiasm can be communicated in many different ways, such as show interest in the students and the activities we use [...] and if our students sense that we are positive with the material, the books and the course, they are likely to share your enthusiasm. Establishing a warm and caring attitude towards students also contributes to building a positive class atmosphere (Joana, class 2, March 6<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on March 9<sup>th</sup>:

The lesson creates motivation to learn and provides opportunities for success. This sentence caught my attention to think about the lesson carefully. Putting myself in students' shoes is the first step to plan a class that can be successful. Professor showed some slides and the word “enthusiasm” appeared 4 times, so it's something that we can't lose (Joana's portfolio, March 9<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Joana mentioned that the fact that the lesson creates motivation to learn and provides opportunities for success is something that caught her attention. She also mentioned enthusiasm as something that “we can't lose”,

indicating that enthusiasm and motivating learners is an important attitude towards an engaging class.

From Joana's narrative in the portfolio, it can be observed that the text she read in class seemed to have caused some impact on her development. It indicates, for instance, that, even though she may have been exposed to the notion of teacher motivation and enthusiasm before, she had not been able to link teacher motivation to learner motivation or to class engagement. She may have had lessons on teacher motivation, read texts, been taught scientific concepts related to it, or even experienced moments of motivation and enthusiasm while teaching a class. Nevertheless, it was only at that point that she was able to make a link between both concepts. This may have happened because she was exposed to these concepts at different stages of her teacher education path and the ability to make this connection was, at first, not within her ZPD. It was in that moment, while reading and discussing a text with her TEs and peers that a new ZPD was created and she was able to understand the relation between teacher and learner motivation and how it could help her to start a lesson in an engaging way. Her narrative in the portfolio served to reinforce what she had just realized.

(2)<sup>14</sup> The next time Joana painted the scale in descriptor 1 was in response to the content of class 7 (March 27<sup>th</sup>), in which TE Paola reviewed some methods and theories of learning and emphasized the importance of planning a class and using approaches that match and align with the aspect to be taught. In relation to this episode, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on March 27<sup>th</sup>:

In this class I could remember some methods and theories of learning. These methods help us choose the best way to present and teach a topic to the students (Joana's portfolio, March 27<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Joana stated in her reflection that recalling methods and theories of learning was an important aspect to remember, as she believed they could help teachers to present a topic to the students. Indeed, student-teachers need to learn effective methods which are helpful to deal with learners' differences. In other words, student-teachers must be equipped with sufficient knowledge and effective

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14 This reflective narrative was also related to descriptors 2 and 3. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 1.



teaching skills (DARLING-HAMMOND; BRANSFORD, 2005; DARLING-HAMMOND, 1999) in order to deal with the complexities of their working environment and thus be able to engage students in a class. Even though it is not clear in what ways she has developed in relation to how to start a lesson in an engaging way, Joana painted the continuum that day. Her narrative was short and direct, not giving much room for a more detailed analysis or a better comprehension to what extent she actually developed.

**(3)<sup>15</sup>** During class 14 (April 27<sup>th</sup>), the TEs dedicated most of their time to the writing skill, discussing with the student-teachers some important aspects to be considered when teaching how to write. Regarding this episode, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on April 27<sup>th</sup>:

The writing process helps the learners reinforce what they have learned and improve this skill. Creativity can also appear on paper where the imagination can go beyond (Joana's portfolio, April 27<sup>th</sup>).

In this excerpt, Joana identified characteristics of the writing skill. She mentions that the writing process helps learners to reinforce what they have learned, as well as promotes the development of creativity. As seen, Joana painted under this descriptor and wrote this comment as she believed she had gone through some development. Even though she may have been exposed to characteristics of the writing skills before, it may have been the first time she realized that writing can be used for reinforcement and creativity. It is hard to make a clear connection between Joana's comment and the descriptor, as her comment is very broad. Nevertheless, she painted and commented under this descriptor, showing that, somehow, she felt this particular class provided her with important input that led her to improve or develop her ability to how to start a lesson in an engaging way.

**(4)<sup>16</sup>** During class 15 (May 4<sup>th</sup>), Joana presented her microteaching on reading and writing with Lisa and Peter. During the feedback session, TE Adriana talked about how the class they presented was engaging:

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15 This reflective narrative was also related to descriptor 2. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 1.

16 This reflective narrative was also related to descriptors 2, 3 and 6. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 1.

I liked everything, I felt it was engaging, I felt like I wanted to know whether there was a date, actually [...] and the picture, the image [...] you explored the image, asked us what we thought that was [...] so, that was good (TE Adriana, class 15, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on May 4<sup>th</sup>:

Our microteaching about the reading and writing task reinforced the attention that we need to have when choosing a topic to the class, we must put ourselves in students' shoes to see if the topic is interesting for their ages and ask ourselves "will it add something for their lives and learning?". If the answer is "yes", go ahead (Joana's portfolio, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Joana stated that this presentation made her think about the importance of considering students' needs and interests when choosing a topic. According to McCarthy (2015),

When a topic connects to what students like to do, engagement deepens as they willingly spend time thinking, dialoguing and creating ideas in meaningful ways. Making learning contextual to real-world experiences is a key learning technique with differentiating for student interests.

Thus, in Joana's narrative in the portfolio it can be noticed that the feedback provided by the TE after her microteaching directed her reflection towards the importance of students' needs and preferences and how this can contribute to starting a class in an engaging way.

**(5)**<sup>17</sup> During class 18 (May 15<sup>th</sup>), Joana presented her second microteaching covering a grammar content in pairs with Mary. During their feedback session, TE Paola asked their peers what they had liked (or not) about the class. Some of them gave their opinion:

It protagonized us a lot, like [...] all about us, all about everything that we had [...] it departed from us and then they put on the board [...] you protagonized us all along. Beautiful (Peter, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

It was a lot of fun [...] and engaging (Mary, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

I think it was very interesting and engaging (David, feedback sheet, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

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17 This reflective narrative was also related to descriptor 2. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 1.

In relation to this episode, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on May 15<sup>th</sup>:

In our microteaching about grammar, it was interesting to realize how we really can present grammar points in a more stimulating and understandable way (Joana's portfolio, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Joana's narrative shows that she realized that she can present grammar points in a more stimulating and understandable way. Her narrative implies that she believed that presenting grammar topics in an engaging way was not an easy task to accomplish, and this belief was probably influenced by the myth that learning grammar is essentially boring.

In this episode it can be observed that the positive feedback Joana received confirmed that the choices she made in relation to how to present her grammar content helped her to start her class in an engaging way. It is clear that she had some beliefs in relation to the teaching of grammar, probably due to her own experience as a learner, which we call apprenticeship of observation (LORTIE, 1975). Lortie's concept of the 'apprenticeship of observation' describes how teachers' socialization as students throughout their school life has a major influence on their teaching, thus being largely responsible for many of the preconceptions that pre-service student-teachers hold about teaching. For instance, Johnson's study (1994) gives an insight into the tension that student-teachers face as they struggle to establish a teaching style that reflects their beliefs instead of simply applying the models learned at school during their apprenticeship of observation. Johnson (1994) found that despite recognizing the limitations of the teacher-centered models they held, student-teachers recorded feeling unable to change due to a lack of alternatives, and hence they found themselves reverting to these earlier models. Fortunately, Joana's case seems to be the opposite, as she is trying to transgress old habits and beliefs.

**(6)**<sup>18</sup> During class 20 (June 5<sup>th</sup>), Joana presented her first solo microteaching. She used a coursebook and did not adapt the planning (as she was supposed to do), which was pointed out by the TEs, as they expected her to have planned her own activities. TE Paola said:

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18 This reflective narrative was also related to descriptor 2. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 1.

We can't use pre-planned materials like this, ok? You cannot use things that have been planned before [...] you have to plan your own classes [...] you didn't plan this, you got a class that has already been planned [...] you performed a class, you know? And when we talk about planning classes you are going to plan a class, and not perform a class [...] do you get the difference? For example, Pam got one listening from a coursebook, but she did other activities with the listening, so that's ok, because you have to get input somewhere [...] for example, if you got this text here, and worked with other things [...] but this is not your plan. Somebody else has planned this for you (TE Paola, class 20, June 5<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on June 5<sup>th</sup>:

My first individual microteaching was about speaking and reading. The topic was interesting, but I felt stuck because I was following the steps from a book (and I couldn't do this!) but it was worth because the feedback from my professors and classmates helped me to realize some mistakes that I made so I could plan my next one better (Joana's portfolio, June 5<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Joana's narrative shows that she reflected on the episode, writing that she felt stuck as she was following the steps from a book, which might indicate that she realized the need for extra resources when planning and conducting her classes in order to engage her learners. Nevertheless, she mentions that the feedback from her teacher educators and peers was important so that she could identify some mistakes she had made and work on them in order to present a better class next time. Without this interaction, the mediation from the TEs and the collaboration of her peers, she may not have been able to recognize these weaknesses and reflect on them through her writings in the portfolio. As SCT posits, it is in the situated activity that learning and development are more likely to take place. The feedback Joana received clearly reflected on her comments in the portfolio and it can potentially bring positive results in her teaching and expressive professional development. Moreover, Johnson and Golombek (2016) claim that a clash may also trigger development. It was therefore expected that this would be a moment of development. Luckily, Joana also had this perception and painted her scale as she felt this development.

(7)<sup>19</sup> During class 23 (June 26<sup>th</sup>), Joana presented her second microteaching solo. In her first solo microteaching presentation she used pre-planned materials, which was criticized by the TEs. In her second solo presentation, she came up with a

<sup>19</sup> This reflective narrative was also related to descriptor 2. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 1.

grammar class with authentic materials and very interactive activities, which she created herself. During her feedback session, TEs and peers praised her performance:

Through the examples that you showed and wrote on the board, you asked students to create sentences based on the examples [...] the model, right? so the model was there on the board, and based on that students expanded the model and created sentences (TE Paola, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

And I remembered to ask questions before the pictures (Joana, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

Yes, you did. It's forever. That's good. We understand that learning that is situated is more relevant, it is more meaningful for you, and then it's exactly what happened to you, like [...] it was in the activity of teaching that you did not do something that you were supposed to, and then we talked about it, and then you are now saying 'that's forever, I will always remember that (TE Adriana, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

Very nice games, engaging. I learned a lot from your class (Peter, feedback sheet, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

Nice topic, nice input, nice game. Very engaging (Mary, feedback sheet, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on June 26<sup>th</sup>:

On my second individual class I presented a grammar topic in a focus on form where I tried to pass the information interacting with the "students". I heard from a professor that I was more comfortable this time. It was true! I prepared all the material and thought about all the steps, automatically these details make the difference. In the beginning of the class I asked some questions before the pictures (lesson learned) so my contextualization was done! At least, I enjoyed this class and I could improve some aspects and the best part is that I could feel the improvement! (Joana's portfolio, June 26<sup>th</sup>)

In the excerpt, Joana's narrative shows that she reflected on the contributions made by her TEs and peers during her previous solo microteaching presentation and decided not only to plan her own class on her second solo microteaching presentation, but also to prepare all the materials she used. Her feedback was much better this time, as TE Paola said that she contextualized well through examples and used modeling appropriately, giving students the opportunity to expand the model and create sentences, which made her class extremely engaging. Reflecting on this episode on her portfolio, Joana mentioned that in the

beginning of the class she asked her students some questions before the pictures in order to do her contextualization, and in parenthesis she says (lesson learned), indicating that she learned (or at least recognized) the need for it (most likely from the feedback she received in her first solo presentation). Once more, the importance of situated learning can be identified here. Joana had already been presented with the concepts of contextualization and modeling, and she was knowledgeable and confident enough to put them in practice in her class.

Joana's claim that the lesson had been learned appears to reinforce that it was the integration and the interface between scientific and everyday concepts that gave her confidence to claim development. In the course she was exposed to the scientific concepts of contextualization and modeling and their relation to the notion of starting a lesson in an engaging way and was able to relate them to everyday concepts she already had, as she was used to contextualizing and doing modeling in her lessons, despite not knowing the right moment to use these concepts or the reason behind their use.

Her narrative also points to the importance of teacher educators providing teachers with support, especially bearing in mind that her previous microteaching had not been a positive experience. As SCT posits, when these moments of teachers' cognitive-emotional dissonance arise, teacher educators should take advantage of them and provide student-teachers with responsive mediation in order to create the potential for productive teacher learning and development (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2016). In addition, she said that she enjoyed this class as she improved some aspects and was able to actually see her improvement. Here, it can be observed that Joana had feedback on some weaknesses, and through the mediation provided by her TEs and her peers, followed by the reflection described in her portfolio, she was able to recognize and work on these weaknesses, indicating development in her ability to start a class in an engaging way.

**(8)<sup>20</sup>** During classes 23 (June 26<sup>th</sup>) and 24 (June 29<sup>th</sup>), Joana and most of her peers presented their second solo microteaching. As mentioned previously, Joana received excellent feedback on her presentation from her TEs and peers:

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20 This reflective narrative was also related to descriptors 2, 3 and 6. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 1.

I felt a great difference between the first class and this one. It's interesting because the other class was all planned, so you just had to follow, but in this class, you were much more comfortable. It seems that you were much more secure in this class than the last one. Interesting, right? And I am glad that you are glad about the result (TE Paola, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

I think it was very coherent to the target audience that is 8<sup>th</sup> grade because it is very engaging to have to stand [...] we had so much fun [...] and I think children would go crazy to participate [...] I can see that you have experience with teaching children, because I would never think about this kind of interaction [...] we are going to use your idea now in practicum (Peter, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to these episodes, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on June 29<sup>th</sup>, her views on how productive the course had been and that she believed she had also learned a lot from her peers' microteaching presentations:

I could learn many things with my classmates' microteaching. Different ways of contextualization, amazing kinds of activities and games. I could take part of exciting and engaging classes. I felt like an elementary or a high school student. This semester was fun, pleasurable and productive (Joana's portfolio, June 29<sup>th</sup>).

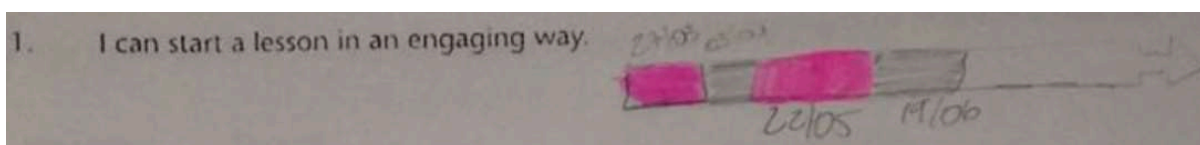
In the excerpt, Joana's narrative shows that she reflected on the achievements she had made throughout the course and emphasized that much of her learning came from her own peers. Likewise, other peers seemed to show appreciation for Joana's classes, as seen in Peter's comment in class, when he praised Joana (referring to the fact that he would never think of using a certain kind of interaction that Joana used in her lesson) and that he would borrow her idea and introduce it into his own practice. In this episode, Peter stated that he could see that Joana had experience teaching children, which was something he seemed to lack. Thus, it indicates that Joana brought ideas from her real teaching context to use in her microteaching presentation in class; that is, she made use of everyday concepts and linked them to scientific concepts she was learning in the course in order to build true concepts.

These episodes also emphasize the importance of teachers sharing knowledge and helping each other to develop within their community of practice, as it is through participation and collaboration with others in cultural activities and practices that human social and cognitive development occurs (ROGOFF, 2003; WERTSCH, 1991). Moreover, research has considered that peer observation

provides sustainable professional developmental chances to teachers to update their teaching strategies (SANTOS, 2016), which can be clearly observed in this situation, both from Joana to her peers, and the other way around.

#### 4.1.1.2 Mary

**Figure 7 – Mary's scale (Descriptor 1)**



Mary's portfolio

Figure 7 shows that Mary painted the descriptor “I can start a lesson in an engaging way” 4 times along the semester, indicating the moments in which she perceived changes in her development. Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to her narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(9)** The first time Mary painted her scale was during class 7 (March 27<sup>th</sup>), when TE Paola explained that modeling was part of contextualization because it prepares learners to perform the task:

In procedures we have three steps: we have the preparation (how we are going to prepare students for the task), and what we did here in open pairs is one of them, you are modeling the language that they need, you are going to have the performance [...] and then you are going to see how the pair work, or group work interaction was (TE Paola, class 7, March 27<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Mary wrote on her portfolio, on March 27<sup>th</sup>:

Modeling is within contextualization (Mary's portfolio, March 27<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Mary's statement on her portfolio might suggest that she had not understood yet the concept of modeling, its function and its application, or that she had recognized some of these aspects through TE



Paola's explanation. Either way, it can be implied that the explanation TE Paola gave reverberated through her narrative. In this case, Mary's narrative seems to function as verbalization (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2011), as

From a sociocultural theoretical perspective, verbalization is not construed as being equivalent to thinking, but rather as a means of regulating the thinking process; in other words, verbalization is not so much to state (or write) what is known, but to assist in the internalization process (p. 492).

Mary's narrative may indicate that she is intentionally using the scientific concepts she saw in class as tools for understanding, or *thinking in concepts* (KARPOV, 2003), which can be seen as both an outcome of and evidence for internalization. The development of a scientific concept begins with learning to name and define it (VYGOTSKY, 1986). However, it is necessary that Mary connects her everyday concepts to the scientific concepts she is learning in the course; once internalized, these concepts have the potential to function as psychological tools, enabling her to have greater awareness and control over her cognitive process and engage in more informed ways of teaching in a variety of contexts.

**(10)** The second time Mary painted her scale was during class 8 (April 3<sup>rd</sup>) when TE Adriana explained that modeling was a controlled dialogue conducted by the teacher in order to assist students in their performance. TE Adriana said:

Modeling has a lot to do with pair work, group work, and especially when it concerns pair work, it is actually open pairs. Do you know the difference between pair work and open pair? [...] They [modeling through open pair] are controlled dialogues conducted by the teacher, so that the whole class can listen to the pair who is practicing (TE Adriana, class 8, April 3<sup>rd</sup>).

After giving some examples of modeling activities, TE Adriana asked the student-teachers if they used open pair in their classes or if they used to go straight to pair work. Lisa answered:

Sometimes I use, but I don't even realize that I am using open pair, because we didn't know the name (Lisa, class 8, April 3<sup>rd</sup>).

Mary nodded and replied:

Yes, we didn't know the name (Mary, class 8, April 3<sup>rd</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Mary wrote on her portfolio, on April 3<sup>rd</sup>:

I've been doing open pair modeling without knowing that it was the name of it (Mary's portfolio, April 3<sup>rd</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Mary wrote that she had been doing open pair modeling without knowing that it was the name of the activity. That is, she was used to doing it, but she did not realize it, because she did not know the scientific name of the activity. According to Vygotsky (1986), performance that is not guided by high quality conceptual thinking results in "mindless" behavior. He stated that "real concepts are impossible without words and thinking in concepts does not exist beyond verbal thinking. That is why the central moment in concept formation, and its generative cause, is a specific use of words as functional 'tools'" (p.106-7). Thus, considering that language complements thinking, naming things is an important prerequisite in order to understand them, and that may explain why Mary did not understand the scientific concept or the function of modeling before.

However, it can be observed that modeling was as an everyday concept in Mary's teaching practice. According to Johnson (2009),

From a sociocultural perspective, the professional development of L2 teachers becomes a process of building on teachers' everyday concepts about language, language learning, and language teaching to enable them to understand the scientific concepts about language, SLA, learning, and L2 teaching that are produced, accepted, and adapted in the profession (p. 14).

By linking her "experiential" knowledge to the "expert" knowledge she was acquiring in the course, Mary is inclined to transform the way she describes and interprets her lived experiences. Looking ahead, these new understandings will enable her to reorganize her experiential knowledge, which creates a new lens through which she can interpret her understanding of herself and her classroom practice. Thus, as the development of scientific concepts start from and are heavily influenced by experiential knowledge (everyday concepts), Mary seems to be on the right path in her development of the scientific concept of modeling, which will facilitate her ability to start her lessons in an engaging way.

**(11)** During class 19 (May 22<sup>nd</sup>), Mary presented her first solo microteaching, and TE Paola asked if the peers felt prepared to watch a video which was part of Mary's presentation. One of the peers said that since all of them were familiar with that particular TV series, they felt ready – on the contrary, it would be hard to do the activities proposed. TE Paola pointed this in the following extract:

Mary, what would you do if people didn't know the series? This is something that we should predict, right? What if nobody remembers? What if nobody knows the series? (TE Paola, class 19, May 22<sup>nd</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Mary wrote on her portfolio, on May 22<sup>nd</sup>:

The choice of the topic is very important when planning a lesson and although it may seem that you know (think) that everybody knows the topic or the input data you bring you should always think of the possibility of at least one of your students may not know it. I forgot about that and took it for granted that everybody knew the characters of FRIENDS (the series) and forgot to introduce them (Mary's portfolio, May 22<sup>nd</sup>).

In the excerpt related to Mary's reflection on her first solo microteaching presentation, it can be observed that she had some difficulties during her class' contextualization. On the portfolio, Mary reflected on the situation, as she wrote that she realized the importance of considering students' previous knowledge when planning a class and choosing a topic to present (something previously addressed by Joana and Lisa in their own narratives) and not taking for granted that all students would like or would know the topic.

Mary's narrative implies that the mediation she received during her feedback session made her reflect on aspects related to her contextualization. Through her statement, it can be seen that she painted her scale after she acknowledged that her performance had flaws. However, in her writings she seems to be aware of her mistakes and how she can improve her teaching practice and start her lessons in an engaging way.

**(12)** During class 22 (June 19<sup>th</sup>) Mary had her second solo microteaching presentation. As in her first solo microteaching, Mary received some criticism towards the topic she chose, as there was a possibility of students not being acquainted with the movies she presented. TE Paola addressed a concern Mary raised in one of her

assignments, in which she wrote that she would try to think more about the possibility of students not being aware or acquainted with the topics she presented in her classes. Once more, TE Paola described the same issue in her presentation, and asked her how she could have tried to solve the problem in case students were not familiarized with the topic:

One thing that you put here [in a written assignment about what they (student-teachers) could have done to have improved their previous presentations] was: 'I will try to think more about the possibility of the students not being aware or acquainted with the topic or characters'. So, I was not acquainted with Pocahontas when you talked about Avatar and Pocahontas [...] what if nobody knows? You have to try to solve this problem. What could you have done? (TE Paola, class 22, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

Then I would use another character, Shrek. But if nobody knew Shrek then I would [...] if we had more time, I could probably open the website that has the summary. It is a little bit longer, but if we had time and we need to work on this [...] or we could watch the trailer from the movie (Mary, class 22, June 19<sup>th</sup>)

In relation to this episode, Mary wrote on her portfolio, on June 19<sup>th</sup>:

I introduced my input data in a better way, but I still think it could have been better because instead of letting a student explain the movie, I could have opened a real summary on the internet and explained to them. Also, we could have watched the trailer (Mary's portfolio, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

In this excerpt it can be implied from Mary's narrative that the questions provided by her TE motivated Mary to reflect on alternatives to overcome this issue (I could have opened a real summary on the internet and explained to them. Also, we could have watched the trailer) and improve her contextualization. In this situation it can be seen that the inquiring provided by TE Paola refers to intentional implicit mediation, which is when the expert other intentionally leads the other person to discover the answers by herself, giving clues so that she reflects and reorganizes the activity on her own (BIEHL, 2016). The mediation provided by TE Paola can also be described as strategic mediation, a concept developed by Wertsch (1985), which has been characterized as

Cognitive assistance that moves from implicit to explicit, is responsive to immediate need, and is concerned more with cognitive transformation than behavioral performance [...] Thus, strategic mediation, for Wertsch, must be

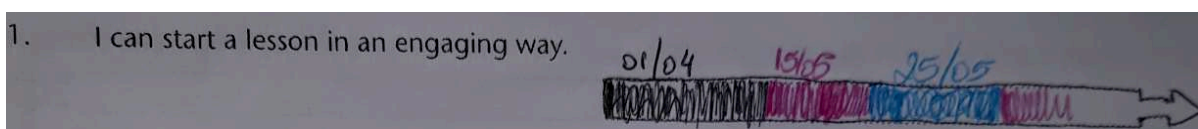
minimally intrusive, allowing learners to exert and exhibit as much control over the task as possible. Likewise, assistance must be regulated, for example too much assistance decreases learner agency, while too little increases frustration (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2016, p. 30).

Effective mediation should be emergent, dynamic and contingent on the interactions between teachers and teacher educators. Moreover, it has to be continuously negotiated during ZPD activity; to provoke professional development, teachers need to attempt to accomplish something which they cannot do on their own, but still being quite active, shaping the quality and character of the mediation that emerges during interactions with teacher educators.

During her second solo microteaching presentation, Mary had the same issues in relation to her choices of contextualization in her lesson as she had in the first microteaching. The fact that she seems to understand the concept but is unable to incorporate it within her teaching indicates that she had not understood the concept, or at least not the concept fully formed, which embraces both scientific and everyday concepts. Nevertheless, in this case, it can be observed that TE Paola was attuned to Mary's difficulties, as much as Mary was attuned to TE Paola's mediation, which resulted in Mary's reflection towards possible solutions to overcome the issue she had during her presentation and bring engagement to the beginning of her lesson. Moreover, even though it is clear that she improved and new zones of proximal development were created, it would be interesting to see a third microteaching presentation to confirm that she had understood and was able to use contextualization in an effective way in her lessons.

#### 4.1.1.3 Pam

**Figure 8** – Pam's scale (Descriptor 1)



Pam's portfolio

Figure 8 shows that Pam painted the descriptor "I can start a lesson in an engaging way" 4 times along the semester, indicating the moments in which she

perceived changes in her development. Although she did not indicate the date of the last time she painted it, she did write it on her reflection grid (June 6<sup>th</sup>). Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to her narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(13)**<sup>21</sup> During class 7 (March 27<sup>th</sup>), TE Paola gave an assignment to the student-teachers. It was their second assignment, which was a written response asking them to describe the class plan they did during class 7, saying why they decided to plan the class the way they did. The assignment also required that they mentioned the task components they worked with in class (goal, input, grouping, procedures, link). Below I present Pam's written response in the assignment, in which she described a lesson plan which she had prepared step by step:

The purpose of the lesson is to teach the students how to introduce themselves to someone and how to get information about another person. The lesson was planned, keeping in mind the interaction between people and how this communication with the other could be taught to the student. Thus, the main purpose of this lesson is communication among students. To work with the students the teacher will use pictures, audio and extra exercises, which he will bring to class. First, the teacher works on understanding the text and pictures with the class in an individual way, contextualizing the pictures, questioning students' initial understanding of what they are seeing. Then, the exercises will be performed in pairs and trios, with the goal of having all the students (or as many as possible) participating in the dialogue, interacting with each other. Finally, the teacher will initiate a dialogue with the large group, questioning what they have learned about their colleague, taking advantage of this moment to take note of what the students have learned and what he needs to work in terms of vocabulary, grammar, etc. (Pam's written response 2, March 27<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Pam wrote on her portfolio, on April 1<sup>st</sup>:

When I reflected on the question of the written response, I realized that the most challenging task of a teacher might be work the speaking, because we are afraid of speaking out and people laugh at us (Pam's portfolio, April 1<sup>st</sup>).

In this excerpt it can be observed in Pam's narrative on the portfolio that she addressed how she struggled with activities that focus on speaking. According to her it was while reflecting on her decisions regarding the lesson plan that she realized

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21 This reflective narrative was also related to descriptors 2, 3 and 6. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 1.

that speaking is the most challenging task for a teacher, because “we are afraid of speaking out and people laugh at us”. By saying that, it can be inferred that, as a student, she may have been through a situation in which she experienced people laughing at somebody or even herself while practicing speaking.

It is not clear to what extent Pam’s reflection is connected to the concepts of contextualization and modeling or to the descriptor “I can start a lesson in an engaging way”. In fact, she wrote this narrative and marked as being related to all four descriptors analyzed. Nevertheless, it can be implied that her narrative here has functioned as externalization, which is

A means of enabling teachers to disclose their understandings and feelings by reacting and giving voice, oral or written, to what they perceive, creating opportunities for introspection, explanation, and sense-making. It enables teachers to make their tacit thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, fears, and hopes explicit; to create cohesion out of what might have once seemed disconnected; and to articulate the day-today problems teachers confront in their professional worlds (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 211, p. 491).

From a sociocultural perspective, Pam’s written words have a mediational function, as she makes her understandings explicit to others and open to influence. In addition to this, her narrative as externalization can be used to self-regulate her behaviors and also to control her world, which represents an initial step towards cognitive development.

**(14)** During class 15 (May 4<sup>th</sup>), Pam and David presented their first microteaching in pairs. During the recording we can observe that they seem both very nervous and whispered to each other in various occasions. Their conversation regarded mostly their decisions and what they were supposed to do in their presentation. During feedback, the learners (peers) commented that they missed clearer instructions as they got confused and did not understand the order of the activities. TE Adriana said:

I think it was engaging, but I felt things were detached, because there was the TV series, then you talked about the TV series, and then you showed the series and there was nothing to do [...] the rest of the class had nothing to do with the series or with what was going on with the series, right? It had to do with the character, right? (TE Adriana, class 15, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

I got a bit lost with the instructions for the activities (Lisa, feedback sheet, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

Instructions on how to formulate the interview could have been clearer (Peter, feedback sheet, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Pam wrote (days later) on her portfolio, on May 15<sup>th</sup>:

Doing my first microteaching I realized how hard it is to plan a lesson! It is a lot of things to think about and I didn't do it with my plan. During the class I tried to fix some things, but David and I didn't work well, we had to talk about something, but we got anxious and nothing worked (Pam's portfolio, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

In this excerpt it can be observed that Pam has shown on her portfolio some moments of potential development in her practice (I say potential because there is no evidence of change in her practice, despite observing reflection and struggle, which are attitudes that may lead to development), as through her narrative she recognized how hard she finds to plan a lesson. Teachers engage in certain actions as they teach, and considering that teaching is a complex cognitive skill, it requires cautious planning and rapid decision making regarding the complexities of multidimensional classroom situations. Furthermore, she mentioned getting really confused and anxious, which may have happened due to her lack of experience in teaching practice. Since David was also a novice teacher who had recently started teaching, neither of them had an expert one to rely on when planning their lesson.

As seen previously, an essential element in the interdependent process embedded within the ZPD is that of a "more capable" or "more knowledgeable other" (VYGOTSKY, 1987); it is necessary that someone more capable (a more expert peer) guide someone less able (a less expert peer) through a learning task. In that sense, Pam (and possibly David) may have relied on her apprenticeship of observation (LORTIE, 1975), which represents her own experience as a learner.

The fact that Pam was anxious and forgot to give instructions impacted on her lesson, and she did not start it in an engaging way. However, she seems to acknowledge her mistake, even though she may not have yet reflected on possible solutions to overcome this problem.

**(15)** During class 19 (May 22<sup>nd</sup>), Pam attended Lisa's first solo microteaching presentation, in which Lisa received very positive feedback towards her performance,



even though she confessed that she was quite nervous and worried. Lisa received feedback comments such as:

It was very nice. I didn't notice that you were nervous, because you seemed so confident [...] you speak things clearly, you don't rush, you take your own pace, so you didn't seem nervous at all [...] everything was well connected (Peter, class 19, May 22<sup>nd</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Pam wrote (days later) on her portfolio, on May 25<sup>th</sup>:

I want to be Lisa when I grow up! Her classes are how I want my classes to be. It is good to watch teachers with more experience and then discuss the classes with my classmates. It helps me think about a lot of things (Pam's portfolio, May 25<sup>th</sup>).

In this excerpt it can be observed that Pam has shown on her portfolio some admiration towards Lisa's performance. As Lisa had been teaching for quite a while, whereas Pam was still having her first experiences in the classroom, it is natural that Pam identify positive aspects in Lisa's teaching. In this case, it can be observed the importance of peer observation for teachers. Hendry & Oliver (2012) defined peer observation as the act of two teachers collaborating and observing one another while teaching with the goal to improve the quality of teaching of both observed and observer.

Peer observation is the most common form of collaborative professional development and it can be a source of reflective analysis for teachers (TODD, 2017). As a part of reflective practice activities, peer observation provides teachers with some insightful feedback related to professional and personal competence. Other advantages of using peer observation in SLTE include giving teachers the opportunity to learn from each other in a non-threatening environment and sharing ideas and suggestions openly and constructively to their mutual professional benefit. According to Tzotzou (2014), peer observation is an effective tool that teachers could utilize to build awareness of using a wide variety of teaching techniques to run the class more effectively and exchange ideas related to teaching method and materials.

An important aspect of peer observation is that both teachers, the observed and the observer benefit from this practice. For the observed, they have the

opportunity to get new insights to improve their teaching because they can identify some problems they cannot observe by themselves. For the observer, peer observation supports the sharing of ideas and expertise among teachers.

In Pam's case, it can be seen that she painted her scale after her peer's presentation believing to have acquired some knowledge and progressed in her ability to start a lesson in an engaging way. This corroborates with the main argument in SCT, which states that the development of human cognition and higher mental functions come from social interactions, that is, learning is socially constructed. Thus, it can be suggested that Pam's development occurred in her experience of observing Lisa's microteaching performance.

**(16)** During class 20 (July 5<sup>th</sup>), Pam had her first solo microteaching presentation. The objective of her lesson was to develop the ability to make questions using the word "how" in order to talk about measurements or distances (e.g., how far, how long). During her feedback session TE Paola mentioned some points that could have been improved in her contextualization:

So, what was missing? Vocabulary presentation. You have to work more on presentation. What is presentation? It is providing students with enough input, so they are able to carry out this activity by themselves [...] in a real class, students would have a hard time doing this without having seen the vocabulary first [...] so, what could you have done to prepare students better to perform this activity? (TE Paola, class 20, June 5<sup>th</sup>).

Maybe I could have written different questions there, adding questions with how long, how deep, ok? (Pam, class 20, June 5<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Pam wrote on her portfolio on June 6<sup>th</sup>:

I realized that my biggest problem is contextualization. I cannot start the lesson and keep it all together. My links are not smooth because my contextualization is not good. I see the difference in myself after starting this course, but I don't know, yet, how to connect everything (Pam's portfolio, June 6<sup>th</sup>).

In this excerpt it can be observed that Pam struggled to understand the concept of contextualization, and she showed some reflection in her narratives by saying that she realized this is her biggest problem. She said her contextualization was not good and mentioned that, although she saw some difference in herself since she started this course, she still did not know how to connect the activities in her

class. Vygotsky (1987) affirmed that when children learn scientific concepts at school away from the context in which they are used, these concepts may be limited to thinking within an abstract context:

We find the weakness of the scientific concept where we find the strength of the everyday concept, that is, in its spontaneous usage, in its application to various concrete situations, in the relative richness of its empirical content, and in its connections with personal experience (p. 218).

In addition to this, he argued that the formation of scientific concepts is strongly related to the formation of everyday concepts, as the latter, which is based in concrete life experiences, creates the potential for the development of scientific concepts in formal contexts of instruction; “they are not separated from one another by an impenetrable wall nor do they flow in two isolated channels. They interact continually” (VYGOTSKY, 1987, p. 177). Hence, for teachers who are already teaching it might be easier to understand scientific concepts such as contextualization and modeling, but Pam had just started teaching, which made her unable to associate the concepts to her reality because she had had very few opportunities to experience and apply the concepts of contextualization or modeling in real life situations, which explains her difficulties in starting her lessons in an engaging way. It can therefore be interpreted that her ZPD has not expanded as thoroughly as those who have come to the microteaching activity with some previous everyday knowledge in regard to teaching.

#### **4.1.2 Descriptor 2 – I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses**

In relation to descriptor 2 – I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses – the concepts were generally related to class performance. The student-teachers had the opportunity to discuss about what a good teacher is and how to deliver a good class. They also studied in detail how to do their lesson plans and how important it is to have all the steps explained – even though they sometimes may need to change and show

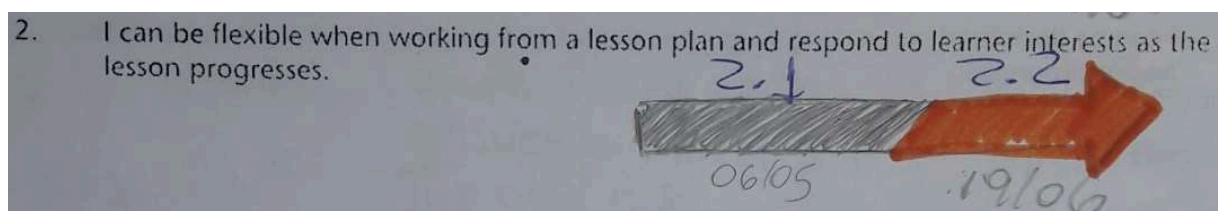
flexibility towards their lesson plan in order to provide class flow. According to Nunan (1992, p. 161 *apud* RICHARDS; FARRELL, 2011, p. 62):

While it is naive to assume that what gets planned will equate with what gets taught, and that what gets taught will equate with what gets learned, this does not mean that planning, including the formulating of objectives, should be removed from the equation. While the plans teachers lay will be transformed, if not metamorphosed, in the act of teaching, such plans provide a framework and structure for those interactive decisions which the teacher must make. They also provide a set of criteria against which such decisions must be evaluated.

In class performance, learners are expected to work at their own pace in order to try to accomplish the task individually, in pairs or in groups. The teacher's role is to observe and supervise, trying to make sure that everyone is actively involved in the activity, helping students who are stuck for ideas. Responding to learners' interests during tasks is also very important as it makes the classes more dynamic and engaging. These characteristics will be present in the extracts below, with views from the portfolio, the video recordings and the feedback sheets, followed by the researcher comments.

#### 4.1.2.1 Peter

**Figure 9** – Peter's scale (Descriptor 2)



Peter's portfolio

Figure 9 shows that Peter painted the descriptor “I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses” twice along the semester, indicating the moments in which he perceived changes in his development. Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate

them to his narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(17)** During class 15 (May 4<sup>th</sup>), Peter presented a microteaching together with Joana and Lisa. During his presentation, he asked his learners how they cope with sadness, and Pam commented:

Loneliness is not a problem for me. When I am tired, when I do something like a literature test [...] after that kind of thing I have to drink something and just talk and do something to relax [...] I like to be alone, I like to be just me, myself and my house (Pam, class 15, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

After Pam's comment, the peers started making jokes and the conversation was extended, but Peter did not interrupt them and even took part in the conversation, responding to students' interests.

In relation to this episode, Peter wrote on the portfolio (a couple of days later) on May 6<sup>th</sup>:

The writing/reading microteaching reinforced the relevance of flexibility when conducting a lesson, for instance when Pam's response to one of my questions started to change the purpose of the discussion, it was also a nice moment, which students felt motivated to communicate genuinely (Peter's portfolio, May 6<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Peter has shown some reflection in relation to his practice and described the fact that he gave room for his learners to participate in the discussions and go beyond what he had planned, considering this a nice moment, in which students felt motivated to communicate genuinely. He stated that this microteaching presentation reinforced the relevance of flexibility when conducting a lesson. Thus, in this situation it can be observed that Peter took into consideration the aspects highlighted by the TEs during the lessons and believed he was flexible when working from a lesson plan and responding to learners' interests as the lesson progressed.

**(18)** During class 21 (June 8<sup>th</sup>), Peter presented his first solo microteaching. During his feedback the TEs affirmed that he showed flexibility towards his lesson plan:

When we provided information about ourselves, or when we asked questions [...] so flexibility is there too. He had a class plan, so [...] if he didn't pay

attention to what you said, the he would not be flexible, but he answered our questions and tried to solve our problems (TE Paola, class 21, June 8<sup>th</sup>).

And when we talked about beard, and he was talking and said ok, let's go into pronunciation then [...] then he wrote beard, this is the way you pronounce [...] beard, right? So [...] I think that showed flexibility (TE Adriana, class 21, June 8<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Peter wrote on the portfolio (days later), on June 19<sup>th</sup>:

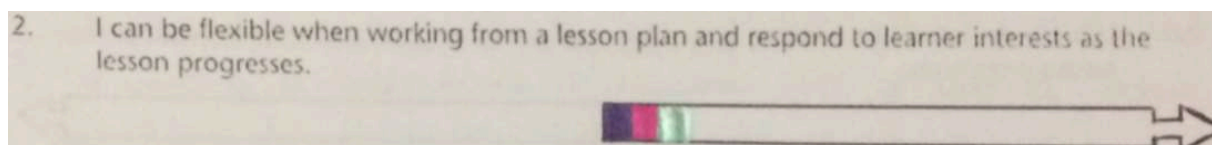
I have always thought of myself as a flexible teacher! This microteaching proved that to me! I used the teacher educator's contribution about different ways of saying "gingerhair" as a way to expand vocabulary to the whole class! It was something not planned in advance, but it allowed me to work a little with pronunciation. Very nice moment (Peter's portfolio, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Peter mentions that the microteaching he presented proved to him that one of his strengths in teaching was the fact that he was flexible in his teaching practice. As pointed out by Callum,

Teachers need to be aware of what is happening in the classroom. Students may raise an interesting point and discussions could provide unexpected opportunities for language work and practice. In these cases, it can be appropriate to branch away from the plan (BBC English).

In his portfolio, his narratives show that he was pleased with his performance, as he always thought of himself as a flexible teacher and described how he used his peers' collaboration to work on language aspects, something which he had not planned in advance. Peter took advantage of a moment in class to explore extra information and in his narrative he acknowledged that as an act of a flexible teacher. His narrative emphasized that the portfolio not only gives opportunity to student-teachers to point out their weaknesses, but also to record their successful experiences and retain examples of good teaching in order to have these examined, discussed, adapted and adopted (WOLF, 1996). In this case, it can be observed that Peter had already developed his flexibility towards his lesson plans, possibly even before this course. Although he did not show hesitation in his performance, he painted his scale indicating that he believed to have progressed in this matter somehow during this course.

## 4.1.2.2 Lisa

**Figure 10** – Lisa's scale (Descriptor 2)

Lisa's portfolio

Figure 10 shows that Lisa painted the descriptor “I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses” three times along the semester, indicating the moments in which she perceived changes in her development. Despite not having shown the dates in the scale, we can identify them in her reflection chart (April 20<sup>th</sup>, May 11<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup>). Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to her narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(19)** During class 12, on April 20<sup>th</sup>, Lisa presented a microteaching in pairs with Mary. When discussing about the flexibility shown during the microteaching, TE Paola and her peers gave her positive feedback, affirming that this aspect was covered. In relation to students' interests, one peer mentioned that he did not know the meaning of a word and was ignored when he asked for clarification. TE Paola addressed this issue by telling Lisa that she should have anticipated such an incidence:

You didn't know what doubts they would come up with, so [...] maybe one thing that you could do is to look for this vocabulary prior to the class [...] but overall, you responded to the students' engagement and then they contributed (TE Paola, class 12, April 20<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Lisa wrote on her portfolio, on April 20<sup>th</sup>:

I believe I was flexible working with the class plan and students' interest in my first microteaching (Lisa's portfolio, April 20<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Lisa's narrative shows that she believed her performance in her first microteaching was successful. However, from TE Paola's comment it can be observed that she made some mistakes which were not acknowledged in her portfolio. It has been suggested in the literature that there is some deviation between what teachers think they do and what they actually do in their classrooms (FARRELL, 2016a), which can be identified in this episode, by comparing TE Paola's feedback to Lisa's narrative of the same event. This may have happened because, even though Lisa received feedback on some points she needed to improve, she may not have considered these points important aspects to be addressed within her practice or, at least, not in her narratives. It is not clear what exactly can be implied from Lisa's narrative, except the fact that she painted her scale and believed to have advanced her ability to be flexible when working from a lesson plan and responding to the learners' interests as the lesson progresses, despite her feedback.

**(20)** During class 18, on May 15<sup>th</sup>, Lisa presented a microteaching in pairs together with Joana. When TE Paola asked Lisa's peers if they thought that the group had been flexible with the lesson plan and responded to their interests, the peers nodded and Peter mentioned an example of a situation when that happened:

We even started to discuss chocolate kinds (Peter, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Lisa wrote on her portfolio, on April 15<sup>th</sup>:

Still flexible with the plan and students' interest, especially with the answers the students gave and working with them on my examples on the board (Lisa's portfolio, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, Lisa's narrative implies that she believed to be flexible with the plan and students' interests. It can be observed in this narrative that Lisa recorded her successful experience in the portfolio and, despite not mentioning her previous problems, she painted her scale and stated to have improved in relation to having flexibility when working from a lesson plan and responding to learners interests as the lesson progresses.

**(21)** During class 23, on June 26<sup>th</sup>, during a feedback session after a solo microteaching presentation, Lisa felt that she had not started the class in an



engaging way, impacting on changes towards her lesson plan, as she mentioned during her feedback session:

I felt that sometimes in the beginning it was kind of quiet, so I had to think of questions to get people talking [...] I asked yes/no questions, so I had to think of other questions to have long answers (Lisa, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Lisa wrote on her portfolio, on June 26<sup>th</sup>:

In this microteaching I had to be very flexible towards the class plan since my first questions were all yes/no questions and I did not have students' interaction as I expected, so during class I had to think of other questions to get them interested and to participate (Lisa's portfolio, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Lisa reflected on the situation in her narratives and stated that she had to be flexible as the learners were not responding as she had expected. She recognized that their interaction was poor because her questions were not appropriate to the topic, so during her presentation she had to think of other questions to get them to participate. According to Lyons (2007), narratives can be useful to capture moments such as this, which address situated complexities of teachers' work and classroom practice which are often messy, uncertain and also unpredictable.

By observing Lisa's comment during her feedback session and her narrative in her portfolio, we can suggest that she reflected on this particular incident both in- and on-action. As previously stated, reflection-in-action refers to thinking about what one is doing whilst one is doing it; it is typically stimulated by surprise, by something which puzzled the practitioner (GREENWOOD, 1993). This allows the practitioner to redesign what is being done while it is being done (SCHON, 1983), as she did when she tried asking different questions. The reflection-on-action refers to "the retrospective contemplation of practice undertaken in order to uncover the knowledge used in practical situations, by analyzing and interpreting the information recalled" (FITZGERALD, 1994, p. 67). Thus, reflection-on-action involves looking back after the event has occurred, which happened in the portfolio.

Lisa's reflections led her to try to adapt her practice on the spot as well as to analyze her teaching performance later through her narrative in the portfolio. It is

clear that the decisions she made contributed to enhance her flexibility towards her lesson plan, as observed in her scale.

#### 4.1.2.3 David

**Figure 11** – David's scale (Descriptor 2)

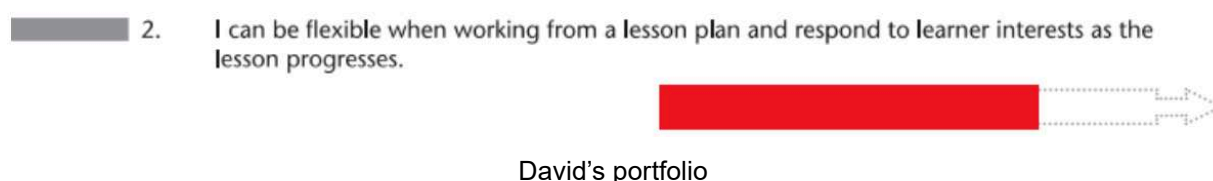


Figure 11 shows that David painted the descriptor “I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses” only once along the semester, indicating the moment in which he perceived changes in his development. Despite not having shown the date in the scale, we can identify it in his reflection chart (July 3<sup>rd</sup>). Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to his narrative in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the description.

**(22)**<sup>22</sup> During class 23, on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, David presented his second solo microteaching. During his class he changed some parts of his lesson plan, which he pointed out during his feedback session:

I mention the text and then, after that, I mention the questions. I would not mention that because I didn't plan. But then I talked to Lisa [...] what do I do? And she gave maybe the tip to mention these before, like [...] in the plan I wrote it too [...] to mention these before, but then I changed because I thought it would not be two different activities, it would just look like one. That's why in the plan I put them apart and then I changed it (David, class 25, July 3<sup>rd</sup>).

And do you think it was better to give us the questions before-hand? What do you think now?" (TE Adriana, class 25, July 3<sup>rd</sup>).

Well, I think it was good because you can take notes of important things, while you are reading [...] if I hadn't given you this before, you would have to take more time to read again [...] yes, I thought about it [...] if I did this class

<sup>22</sup> This reflective narrative was also related to descriptor 3. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 2.

again I would use the same structure [...] showing the questions before (David, class 25, July 3<sup>rd</sup>).

In relation to this episode, David wrote on his portfolio, on July 3<sup>rd</sup>:

In the second individual microteaching, the feedback from the first one was extremely important. Well, firstly, I was very nervous when I started this class, but in the end, the teachers reported that I seemed less nervous than in the previous microteaching. I thought my class would not be so interesting as it was a reading and writing class, but in reality, the feedback was positive, and they found the topic interesting and the class to be a nice one. One of the teacher educators pointed out that I should let students read the questions, so it would not be so teacher-centered. Before starting the class, I asked Lisa if I should give students the questions about the text beforehand. She said it would be good, so students could already see what they should do with the text. I did that while I gave the class, differently from what was written in my lesson plan. In the end, I liked the class and the positive feedback gave me the feeling that I really improved from all the previous microteachings (David's portfolio, July 3<sup>rd</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that David stated that he planned to present a text and then present the questions to the learners. However, after asking for advice from his peer Lisa, he decided to change that part of his lesson plan and present the questions before the text, so the learners would know exactly what to do in the activity.

In this situation, we can observe that David (a less experienced teacher) asked Lisa (a more experienced teacher) for advice. A situation such as this may be considered mentoring, which is a supportive partnership between a less experienced and a more experienced teacher (BUTCHER, 2002). It is "a process whereby an experienced teacher works with a novice teacher, giving guidance and feedback" (RICHARDS; FARRELL, 2005, p. 151-2). The purpose of mentoring is to provide support, guidance and advice to teachers in order to enable them to enhance their teaching skills to develop professionally. During feedback, TE Adriana asked if he thought that it was better to give the questions before, and he answered that it was good because he realized that, this way, students could take notes while they were reading, which also saves time.

In his reflection in the portfolio narratives, David recognized that the feedback he received from previous microteaching presentations were important to him. During the microteachings in pairs which he presented with other peers, for example, he

seemed very nervous due to his lack of experience in teaching. This time, he said he was nervous in the beginning of the class, but his peers and TEs stated that he seemed less nervous and more prepared. He recalled the situation in which he asked for Lisa's advice and how it helped him to improve his presentation and addressed his flexibility in his planning. He also said that the positive feedback had made him realize that he had improved in relation to his previous presentations.

#### **4.1.3 Descriptor 3 – I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class**

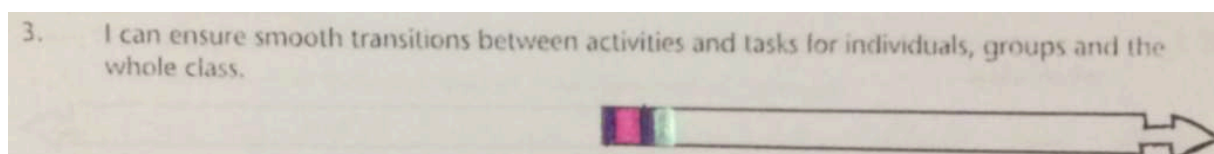
In relation to descriptor 3 – I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class – guidance on class setting and on interaction was given to the student-teachers. They reviewed settings, which refer to the classroom arrangements specified or implied in the task. As mentioned by Richards (1990), “an effective teacher understands how different kinds of grouping (such as seat work, pair work, discussion, reading circle, or lecture) can impede or promote learning” (p. 40). Task continuity – or the concept of linking – was also reviewed. It refers to the chaining of activities together to form a sequence, in which the successful completion of prior activities is a prerequisite for succeeding ones. Activities can be sequenced according to their complexity as determined by input, learner and activity factors or the logic of themes and learning pathways. According to Richards and Farrell (2011),

Research on how teacher tend to handle transitions (DOYLE, 1986; WOODWARD, 2001) suggests that skilled teachers mark the onset of transitions clearly, orchestrate transitions actively, and minimize the loss of momentum during these activities. Less effective teachers on the other hand tend to blend activities together, fail to monitor events during transitions, and take too long to complete the movement between segments of a lesson. Effective transitions help maintain students' attention during transition times and establish a link between one activity and the next. Planning for transitions involves thinking about how the momentum of the lesson will be maintained during transitions (e.g., while moving from a whole-class activity to group work) and what students should do between transitions (e.g., if some students complete an activity before others) (p. 80).

Therefore, by developing interlinked sets of activities in which succeeding steps are dependent on those which come before (either in terms of content or skills), teachers can ensure greater coherence and consistency of the language program.

#### 4.1.3.1 Lisa

**Figure 12** – Lisa’s scale (Descriptor 3)



Lisa’s portfolio

Figure 12 shows that Lisa painted the descriptor “I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class” 4 times along the semester, indicating the moments in which she perceived changes in her development. Despite not having shown the dates in the scale, we can identify them in her reflection chart (April 13<sup>th</sup>, April 20<sup>th</sup>, May 15<sup>th</sup> and June 26<sup>th</sup>). Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to his narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(23)** During class 9, on April 13<sup>th</sup>, TE Adriana started explaining links and the importance of having them throughout the class:

Task continuity refers to the chaining of activities together to form a sequence, in which the successful completion of prior activities is a prerequisite for succeeding ones [...] under this principle, activities are sequenced according to: their complexity as determined by input, learner and activity factors and the logic of themes and learning pathways [...] developing interlinked sets of activities in which succeeding steps are dependent on those which come before (either in terms of content or skills), will ensure greater coherence and consistency for your language program (TE Adriana, class 9, April 13<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Lisa wrote on her portfolio, on April 13<sup>th</sup>:

First time in class I heard about linking and how to do it (Lisa’s portfolio, April 13<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Lisa reflected on what she had heard during class and wrote on her portfolio that it was the first time in class she heard about linking activities and how it could be done. According to SCT, to start acquiring scientific concepts, one needs to reach some level of maturation in the development of everyday concepts. As it was the first time that Lisa was introduced to the concept of linking, it is understood that it will take her some time to internalize this concept, as concept development is an ongoing and a non-linear process, or, as Vygotsky (1987) puts it, a “twisting path”.

Vygotsky (1986) indicated the dialectical relationship between everyday and scientific concepts by saying that “scientific concepts grow down through spontaneous concepts, and spontaneous concepts grow up through scientific concepts” (p. 194). In SLTE, teachers are required to make connections between the scientific concepts they acquire during their teacher education courses and the everyday concepts they experience in their classrooms. Considering that in order to think in concepts, one has to understand the meaning and the functional role of a sign in order to make it a concept, Lisa will have to be exposed to the concept of linking repeatedly and also go through situations in which she will apply and experience this concept within her practice. Thus, by connecting both the scientific concept of linking (which she learned from her teacher education course) and her everyday concept of linking (which is related to her own practice), Lisa will be able to develop “true concepts”, which will enable her to reorganize her knowledge and help her interpreting new understandings of herself and her classroom practice. Once she fully internalizes the concept of linking, she will be able to apply it in her teaching, ensuring smooth transitions between activities and tasks.

**(24)** During class 12, on April 20<sup>th</sup>, Lisa presented a microteaching on listening and speaking in pairs with Mary. During her feedback session, her peers and TE Paola talked about her linking activities:

She came up with new questions about the same topic which was sports (David, class 12, April 20<sup>th</sup>).

She reiterated the questions from the beginning (TE Paola, class 12, April 20<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Lisa wrote on her portfolio, on April 20<sup>th</sup>:

During my first microteaching I was able to put in practice linking activities.  
(Lisa's portfolio, April 20<sup>th</sup>)

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Lisa acknowledged her good performance, after receiving positive feedback on the links she provided between the activities. It is important to address the fact that it was during this course that Lisa was exposed to the scientific concept of linking for the first time. In her narratives she stated that she was able to put in practice linking activities, which indicates that she was already acquainted with the everyday concept related to it, even though she mentioned that it was only in this course that she was taught the scientific concept of linking and why this is an important technique to be applied when teaching a lesson. This episode represents great progress towards the development of a “true concept” of linking, which will certainly help Lisa to ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks.

**(25)** During class 18, on May 15<sup>th</sup>, Lisa presented a microteaching in pairs with Joana. The topic of her class was “preferences”, and she talked about food and places to contextualize. However, her links were not very smooth, as observed in the feedback session:

So, from the chocolate you went to the city, to Paris. I didn't actually see the connection there (TE Paola, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

Do you think it was smooth? How did you feel about the link? Did you feel that was smooth? (TE Adriana, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

I thought it would be smoother if I started with coxinha and feijoada. On my plan they were the third and the fourth pictures, so I would go back to the pictures to link (Lisa, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

You could have changed the order [...] maybe you could have just said like [...] oh, French people have delicious chocolate [...] and the talked about food [...] something to think about [...] transitions to everything, from a question to another, from a picture to another, from one activity to another (Peter, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

You know, one thing that I always think when I am preparing is [...] imagine you are talking to a friend, you usually connect one thing to the other, right? You don't stop and say something different [...] so, one thing starts leading to another in a conversation (TE Paola, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

It could have been the chocolate, then the food, and then the cities (David, class 18, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Lisa wrote on her portfolio, on May 15<sup>th</sup>:

Learned a little bit more about linking during the feedback although I did not do it greatly (Lisa's portfolio, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Lisa acknowledged that she did not do a great job when trying to link her activities in this presentation, even though she delivered a successful class in terms of linking activities during a previous microteaching presentation (class 12). She was told by the TEs and her peers that her links were not very smooth. TE Adriana asked how she felt about the links, if she felt they were smooth, and she answered that they would be smoother if she had changed the order of the pictures she presented in her lesson. In her portfolio she stated that, even though she did not link her activities smoothly, the feedback has contributed to improve her understanding of how transitions should be dealt with.

The fact that Lisa was able to provide successful linking activities in one class but did not show consistency in the following one might indicate that she had not fully developed the concept of linking yet. According to Smagorinsky, Cook and Johnson (2003),

One's development of an approach to teaching stands in dialectical relation to one's development of a conception of teaching, which comes about through principled – e.g., systematic and rule-governed – activity in social context [...] Achieving unity in a concept does not come easily or immediately but rather follows a “twisting path” (VYGOTSKY, 1987, p. 156) that requires gradual process (SANDFORD, 1999), becoming modified as people gain new experiences and apply it in new settings (p. 1401-2).

To start acquiring scientific concepts, it is necessary that one reaches some level of maturation in the development of everyday concepts. As seen previously in this study, developing a concept is an ongoing and nonlinear process of development that encompasses a complex series of stages and phases (MILLER, 2011). Although the stage in which Lisa is in relation to the development of the concept of linking cannot be identified – if she has developed a complex or a pseudoconcept –, as cultural tools tend to be appropriated with difficulty and unevenness (WERTSCH, 1998), Lisa's narrative represents a strong sign that she is going through the process



of developing this scientific concept as well as trying to relate it to the concreteness of the classroom by providing smooth transitions in her lessons.

**(26)** During class 23, on June 26<sup>th</sup>, Lisa presented a solo microteaching which focused on a discussion about how some places can have discriminatory policies. She gave an example of barber shops where women cannot enter, but this did not seem enough to guide learners through the discussion. During the feedback session, some peers said that they would have benefited from more visual aids as they believed it would have helped in the transitions:

Did you notice this, guys? That we had difficulty starting to talk about this [...] why did we have difficulty starting to talk about this? (TE Paola, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

I thought the topic was very interesting, but in the beginning I had difficulty because I didn't have more examples, to show where we should be at, so [...] I needed more examples (Mary, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

It looks like I missed more input, maybe [...] or more pair work [...] something that you would have us talk before we go to the discussion [...] and then in this case there should be something else (TE Adriana, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

That part of the discussion [...] some pictures or videos, or anything would aid us to know what to discuss [...] I really wanted to say some things, but I wasn't sure if that was what you wanted to hear like [...] so maybe if you could just guide us on what to talk about, visualizing it (Peter, class 23, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Lisa wrote on her portfolio, on June 26<sup>th</sup>:

I identify how I can be smooth in my transitions. Sometimes it takes some time to think of what to do, but I believe I can do a good job (Lisa's portfolio, June 26<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Lisa reflected on the situation in her narratives and stated that she is able to identify how she can be smooth in her transitions. She said it may take some time to think of alternatives, but she believes she can do a good job. From her comment, it can be implied that Lisa believed that she was developing the concept of linking and trying to experiment it within her lessons, which indicates that she was seeing progress in her ability to use smooth transitions and linking activities along the course.

## 4.1.3.2 David

**Figure 13** – David's scale (Descriptor 3)

Figure 13 shows that David painted the descriptor “I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class” only once along the semester, indicating the moment in which he perceived changes in his development. Despite not having shown the date in the scale, we can identify it in his reflection chart (May 4<sup>th</sup>). Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to his narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

(27)<sup>23</sup> During class 15, May 4<sup>th</sup>, David presented a reading and writing microteaching in pairs with Pam. Both had not had much experience teaching, so they seemed quite lost and unsure of how to conduct the class. They received feedback as follows:

I think that the link was not smooth, I think that there should be something else [...] I don't know, maybe showing the interview and not saying that it was him and asking: who do you think this person is? (TE Adriana, class 15, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

You said ok, because this is a writing class, write a third question and then answer. Ok, then we had to write, but what was writing here for? It was just that one question, right? And then when I asked you if I should give it to her and she would answer, you said: no, interview her orally and then you write. So, what did I write for? My writing was just to check for my understanding? It was not for communication, it was not for interaction, you know? So, the writing component did not happen (TE Adriana, class 15, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

You asked students to do two activities at the same time, so students got confused. Activities looked a bit detached. We watched a piece of Friend's episode then looked at an interview with David Schwimmer, then we had to interview our peer, then write an extra question (TE Adriana, feedback sheet, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

<sup>23</sup> This reflective narrative was also related to descriptor 6. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 3.

In relation to this episode, David wrote on his portfolio, on May 4<sup>th</sup>:

For this microteaching, we both (Pam and I) were very nervous to present, as we were the only ones in the class who by the time the classes started were not teachers yet. I was nervous about forgetting to say something or to explain and link the activities. Therefore, I somehow advanced some topics of the class, as I was also afraid Pam could forget something. Also, as noticed in the feedback, our instructions in general could have been better for students, and as we have seen in our classes of this course, giving students clear instruction on what to do is essential (David's portfolio, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

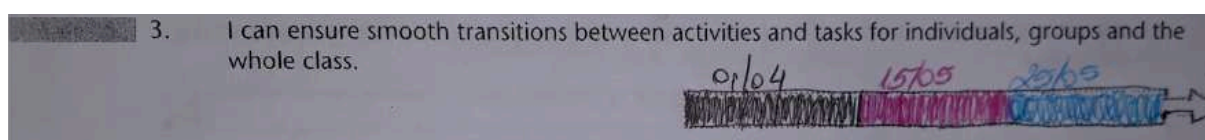
In the excerpt, it can be observed that David explained that he was very nervous during the presentation, mainly because himself and Pam were the only ones in class who had not had experience in teaching. Student-teachers may go through a great deal of anxiety during observation when they are bridging the gap between theory and practice, which may decrease with experience in teaching.

David also recognized that he advanced some topics during the lesson, although his instructions could have been better, considering that giving students clear instructions on what to do is essential. The concept of linking activities and how it can help teachers with the flow of the lesson was emphasized during the course through theories and feedback comments during other teachers' practice. However, it seems that David had not progressed enough in his understanding of this particular concept. As mentioned, he was a novice teacher, which implies that this concept was not within his ZPD yet, implicating on his difficulty to see the importance of the concept of linking.

Although David's performance did not meet his expectations, he seemed to be positive towards his development in his ability to use smooth transitions and linking activities, which was portrayed in his scale.

#### 4.1.3.3 Pam

**Figure 14** – Pam's scale (Descriptor 3)



Pam's portfolio

Figure 14 shows that Pam painted the descriptor “I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class” three times along the semester, indicating the moments in which she perceived changes in her development. Some of these moments have already been addressed previously, as the student-teachers were allowed to relate their narratives to more than one descriptor. Two dates – May 15<sup>th</sup> and June 10<sup>th</sup> – will be analyzed here. Observe that even though the date June 10<sup>th</sup> does not appear in Pam’s scale, she did make a comment on that date on her reflection grid. Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to his narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(28)**<sup>24</sup> During class 17, on May 11<sup>th</sup>, Pam presented a microteaching on grammar in pairs with Mary. During the feedback session, TE Adriana asked the peers what they thought of the transitions. Mary commented:

I think they could be, like [...] smoother [...] mostly in the end. I know that we tend to end awkwardly because we are just pretending, but like [...] ok, so that’s it, we ask the questions and then what? And the transition [...] after the video we responded [...] and you said ok, so now I want you to create the questions [...] so, for me was like [...] ok, that ended, so now we are going to do this (Mary, class 17, May 11<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Pam wrote on her portfolio (days later), on May 15<sup>th</sup>:

I definitely don’t know how to start a class! I feel as if what I think and what I do are different things and when I need nothing works. Despite this, my microteaching with my other peer was better than the other with David, maybe because my other peer has experience as a teacher. I felt more comfortable planning the lesson with him and I contributed with good ideas. I need to work more on my smooth transitions (Pam’s portfolio, May 15<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be implied that Pam has been struggling with many aspects of this course. She seems very frustrated as she starts her narrative with this statement: “I definitely don’t know how to start a class!” As it is Pam’s first year of

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24 This reflective narrative was also related to descriptors 1, 2 and 6. To avoid repetition, this narrative will appear only once, in this section related to descriptor 3.

teaching, much of the 'shock' she is experiencing is related to her attempts to balance a difficult act between learning to teach (furthering her knowledge initiated during the teacher education program) and at the same time developing her conceptions of 'self-as-teacher' or her identity within her teaching context (FARRELL, 2016b). In TESOL, as in many other areas, novice teachers face challenges and anxieties during their first year that may lead to feelings of frustration, inadequacy, stress and/or isolation if they are not addressed (DELLICARPINI, 2009). Pam's narrative presented many moments such as this, and even though it is not clear how she developed in this descriptor, she perceived some improvement in her ability to use smooth transitions and linking activities by painting her scale.

**(29)** During class 20, on June 5<sup>th</sup>, Pam presented her first solo microteaching. During the feedback session TEs and peers mentioned they had noticed some difficulty to follow Pam's instructions and how they felt she had problems with ways of linking her activities effectively. Some comments were made also on her feedback sheets:

The links between the activities could have been smoother, but she seemed very nervous (David, feedback sheet, June 5<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Pam wrote on her portfolio, on June 10<sup>th</sup>:

Reading my feedback sheets and thinking about what we are discussing in our classes is helping me plan my classes differently. But there is so much that it still does not work the way I want it to (Pam's portfolio, June 10<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Pam wrote that reading her feedback sheets and thinking about the discussions during class is helping her to plan her classes differently. However, she feels that there is plenty that still does not work for her the way she would like it to. An important aspect of using narratives is that it provides teachers opportunities to express moments of emotional-cognitive dissonance, which reveals the connection between the cognitive and affective aspects of how teachers understand and make use of their knowledge (CLANDININ; CONNELLY, 2000; GOLOMBEK, 1998). As seen previously, these moments are great sources for learning and developing, when provided with responsive mediation that targets teachers' emergent needs. Moreover, the use of the portfolio may have

contributed to Pam's reflection, by giving her the opportunity to externalize her struggles, generating this moment of cognitive-emotional dissonance, which can have great impact on her development.

From Pam's narrative, it can be suggested that she is trying to make sense of her thoughts and moments of distress explicitly, looking for alternatives to reconstruct her understandings and transform her practice. Even though it is not clear how exactly Pam improved her ability to use smooth transitions and linking activities, it can be implied from her narrative that she is in the right path.

#### 4.1.4 Descriptor 6 – I can finish off a lesson in a focused way

In relation to descriptor 6 – I can finish off a lesson in a focused way – the main concept reviewed was the concept of accountability. When providing activities that promote accountability, teachers help learners to foster a perception of the way they use the language. In this stage, teachers check learning results and help learners realize how much they learned through the activity. In other words, the main purpose of accountability is to enable learners to become aware of their progress and to assess their development.

There are many activities which can be used in order to promote accountability, such as asking learners to report on their findings or on their conversations, comparing different results, dramatizing short dialogues, asking learners about the language they used or asking learners to tell how they got to their answers. In the extracts below it is possible to identify some aspects related to accountability and how to finish a lesson in a focused way.

##### 4.1.4.1 Joana

**Figure 15** – Joana's scale (Descriptor 6)

6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.

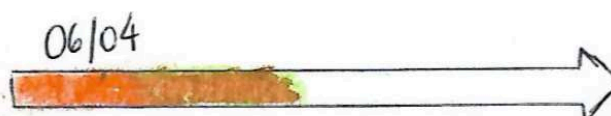




Figure 15 shows that Joana painted the descriptor “I can finish off a lesson in a focused way” four times along the semester, indicating the moments in which she perceived changes in her development. Some of these moments have already been addressed previously, as the student-teachers were allowed to relate their narratives to more than one descriptor. Only one date – April 6<sup>th</sup> – will be analyzed here. Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to his narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(30)** During class 9, on April 6<sup>th</sup>, TE Adriana was explaining the last procedure of planning a class, which is accountability. TE Adriana said:

Now we have accountability, which is the closure of the activity, like [...] kind of a wrapping up [...] accountability helps foster in students a perception of the way they use the language [...] the teacher checks learning results and helps students realize how much they've learned through the activity (TE Adriana, class 9).

In relation to this episode, Joana wrote on the portfolio, on April 6<sup>th</sup>:

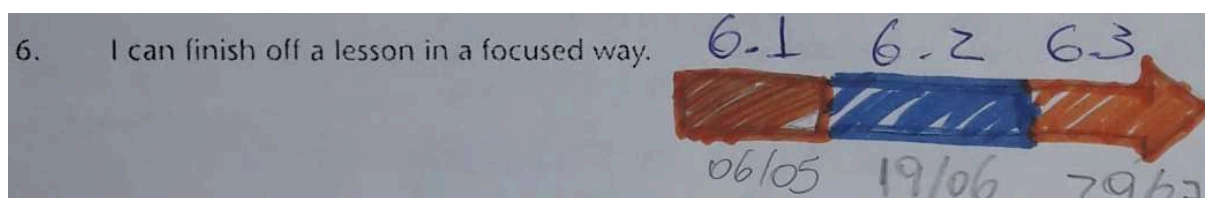
To make the students realize that they have learned something is very important because it stimulates learning and encourages them (Joana's portfolio, April 6<sup>th</sup>)

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Joana stated that making students realize that they have learned something is very important because it stimulates learning and encourages them. In fact, students generally feel better about ending an activity if it is somehow wrapped up and concluded rather than simply stopped, so the closing should be part of the plan. Joana's narrative presented a statement in which she is describing her understanding, trying to regulate her thinking and reasoning on what she was learning. From a sociocultural theoretical perspective, narrative, as a cultural activity, is not simply an instrument used to record one's

experience, but rather a semiotic tool that has the potential to facilitate cognitive development (GOLOMBEK; JOHNSON, 2004). Thus, narratives can function as a powerful mediational tool in which teachers make explicit how, when, and why new understandings emerge, understandings that can lead to transformed conceptualizations of oneself as a teacher and transformed modes of engagement in the activities of teaching (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2011), which can be identified in Joana's narrative in relation to her ability to finish off a lesson in a focused way.

#### 4.1.4.2 Peter

**Figure 16** – Peter's scale (Descriptor 6)



Peter's portfolio

Figure 16 shows that Peter painted the descriptor “I can finish off a lesson in a focused way” three times along the semester, indicating the moments in which he perceived changes in his development. Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to his narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(31)** During class 15, on May 4<sup>th</sup>, Peter presented a microteaching with Lisa and Joana. During the feedback session, TE Adriana mentioned that Peter provided a question at the end which led to a moment of accountability where he checked if the learners understood what they learned during that particular lesson:

I guess that Peter asked the question at the end [...] I see that as accountability, like [...] that was a way of saying ok, so let's sum up, let's sum up what we said here [...] when you make things clear (TE Adriana, class 15, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Peter wrote on the portfolio (days later), on May 6<sup>th</sup>:



After two microteachings in pairs I realized the importance of closing up a lesson with some meaningful way such as bringing accountability to students (Peter's portfolio, May 4<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Peter has indicated in his portfolio that after his first two microteaching presentations he started to realize how important it is to close up a lesson in a meaningful way such as bringing accountability to students. During his previous microteaching presentations he did provide activities for accountability in the end of his lessons, but he seemed confused on what could be considered accountability and its purpose, indicating that maybe he brought accountability without actually knowing that it was accountability.

From Peter's narrative it can be implied that he was only able to understand the importance of bringing accountability to students after he had the opportunity to apply the concept in his practice. It can be observed that being exposed to a scientific concept, in this case the concept of accountability, was not enough for Peter to understand or assimilate this concept; he had to apply it within his context in order to make sense of it, which will potentially be internalized, becoming part of his own practice. Hence, it seems that Peter had progressed on his ability to finish off a lesson in a focused way.

**(32)** During class 21, on June 19<sup>th</sup>, Peter presented his first solo microteaching. TE Paola asked Peter what he thought of the activities he had chosen to provide accountability, to which he answered:

I was having problems to think about accountability for both the writing little exercise and the game, then I revisited the slides about accountability [given by the TEs] and then I saw that if you ask them to share the results of the task itself, that's accountability, so I planned it for both tasks, like sharing if you could guess who the description is about, and also like [...] were you able to guess your partner's character [...] that's my accountability (Peter, class 21, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

That's it. That is accountability (TE Paola, class 21, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Peter wrote on the portfolio, on June 19<sup>th</sup>:

I struggled a little to understand how accountability could be conceived in my lesson plan. I went back to the slides and checked some strategies which

worked well (sharing results, finding common ground) (Peter's portfolio, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Peter recognized that he had been having problems finding ways to provide accountability activities for his lessons. In his portfolio he also mentioned that he revised the slides given by the TEs and checked some strategies which worked well during his presentation. The fact that Peter went back to the slides to revise information on the content showed that, even after presenting accountability activities in his microteaching sessions, he was still not able to self-regulate his activity, as he had to revise the slides (object-regulation). His narrative also emphasizes the importance of naming things, considering that, once he knew that the name of the process which should be used in the closure of a lesson was accountability, he was able to look for information given by the TEs during the course. Despite the fact that he still felt he did not fully understand the concept, it can be observed that his ZPD was expanding as he was developing the scientific concept of accountability. However, at this point, there was still a need to apply this concept successfully in his teaching practice.

Teacher learning is not a straightforward internalization of "expert" knowledge from outside in. Instead, teachers combine their "expert" knowledge with their own ideas and beliefs, in order to create instruction that is meaningful for their own objectives. This corroborates the idea that teachers are not passive receivers of theory, but rather active users of theory who transform this theory according to their own instructional contexts to fulfill their own needs (COCHRAN-SMITH; LYTLE, 1993). In his narrative, Peter revealed that he had struggled when trying to understand the concept of accountability and how he could apply it in his teaching. However, in the same narrative piece, he promptly showed what he did in order to cope with that issue and try to improve his understanding and use of the concept of accountability, in order to finish his lesson in a focused way.

**(33)** During class 25, on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Peter presented his second solo microteaching. During his feedback session, TE Paola mentioned the moment he provided an activity for accountability:

We had a kind of accountability where you asked us to check each other's words (TE Paola, class 25, July 3<sup>rd</sup>).

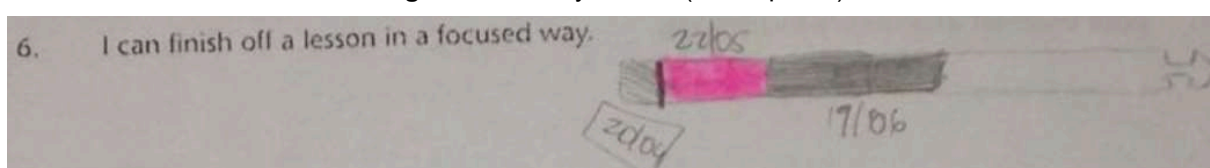
In relation to this episode, Peter wrote on the portfolio (weeks later), on July 29<sup>th</sup>:

I feel so much confident about my classes! It feels that I'm aware of my movements because I've made a careful planning, but also because I'm able to improvise (flexibility). Instead of saying "that's all for today folks" – something that the old Peter would say – I am able to finish a lesson in a focused way bringing accountability to what students have learned (Peter's portfolio, July 29<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Peter felt very confident after the feedback he received on his second microteaching presentation, as he believed that he was aware of his movements because he had made a careful planning, but also giving room to flexibility. He concluded by saying that, instead of finishing a lesson in a meaningless way – as he believed he used to do before participating in this course –, he was then able to do it in a focused way. After having issues understanding the concept of accountability and its application within his teaching practice, Peter seems to be very pleased with this microteaching performance. His confidence is revealed through his narrative, in which he states what he has learned and how he changed some old habits. Moreover, it has been suggested that portfolios are great tools which can be used not only to record teachers' failures, but also to record their moments of discovery and successful experiences (WOLF, 1996). Peter's narrative shows that he reflected on the instruction received from his teacher educators, combined it with his own experience and tried to make sense of his own teaching, explicitly and intentionally aiming at improving his ability to finish a lesson in a focused way, which was achieved as seen in this narrative.

#### 4.1.4.3 Mary

**Figure 17** – Mary's scale (Descriptor 6)



Mary's portfolio

Figure 17 shows that Mary painted the descriptor “I can finish off a lesson in a focused way” three times along the semester, indicating the moments in which she perceived changes in her development. Next, I will describe comments and discussions which happened in class (taken from the video recordings and feedback sheets) and relate them to his narratives in the portfolio. The analysis and comments will follow the descriptions.

**(34)** During class 12, on April 20<sup>th</sup>, Mary presented a microteaching on listening and speaking in pairs with Lisa. Mary ended her class by finishing a game, not being able to provide an activity that would represent accountability. TE Paola stated that, instead of handing questions to the learners, she could have asked the questions in the end of the class orally, which would have brought a moment of accountability to learners. TE Paola also said:

So, you see [...] you finished a game, then uh uh [...] everybody wins, or it was a tie [...] and if you finish the class like this there would not be accountability [...] accountability is something else that you ask to wrap up the topic, or the class (TE Paola, class 12, April 20<sup>th</sup>)

In relation to this episode, Mary wrote on the portfolio, on April 20<sup>th</sup>:

We could keep the same questions for accountability that we planned if we didn't give them to students (the way to get there because we can change some things in the way) (Mary's portfolio, April 20<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Mary mentioned that she realized she could have kept the same questions she planned if she had not given them to the students previously. According to Bohlke and Richards (2011), at the end of lesson, it is valuable to summarize what the lesson has tried to achieve, to reinforce the points of the lesson, to suggest follow-up work as appropriate, and to prepare students for what will follow. As accountability was a new concept for most student-teachers, including her, she was not sure how to proceed and what activities she could use in order to provide accountability in the end of her lesson. However, from Mary's narrative it can be implied that, during her feedback session, she realized that she could have used the same questions she gave to her learners in order to provide a

moment for accountability. This information seems to have given Mary a clearer perspective of one possible way of finishing a lesson in a focused way, as she painted her scale due to the development she felt in this particular episode.

**(35)** During class 19, on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, Mary presented her first solo microteaching. In the feedback sheets, Lisa affirmed that Mary finished her class in a focused way, but added the following comment:

Same questions about omnipotent for a day – in the beginning and during the activity (Lisa, feedback sheet, May 22<sup>nd</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Mary wrote on the portfolio, on May 22<sup>nd</sup>:

Lisa commented that she was confused because I asked the same question in the end and in the beginning of the lesson. That helped me think about the accountability process of my proposed task and how I could have done it differently (Mary's portfolio, May 22<sup>nd</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Mary used the narratives in the portfolio to comment on the event and said that Lisa's comment on the feedback sheet helped her think about the accountability process of her task and different ways of doing it. Hence, Lisa's comment provoked some reflection in Mary in relation to her choice of activities when finishing her lesson. Through her reflection, Mary was able to think of different ways to provide accountability in order to finish her class in a focused way, that is why she felt some development in this particular descriptor and consequently painted her scale.

Besides being instruments of self-assessment, portfolios give teachers opportunities to reflect collaboratively through interaction with teacher educators and peers when taking part in activities such as peer coaching, peer reviews, discussions and feedback sessions on the bases of their own documents related to their learning of teaching or their actual teaching practice. It has been stated in this study that, from a sociocultural perspective, learners who work in cooperation with others who may be more expert than themselves expand their potential for cognitive development, as suggested by Vygotsky (1987) in his explanation about the ZPD. In this situation, it is clear that Lisa, through her questioning, mediated Mary in reshaping and transcending her understanding of accountability. Mediation is a core concept in SCT

as it enables cognitive development and provides individuals with the opportunity to interact and construct their own understandings, which will later, through experiences in the concrete world, become internalized. Thus, the collaborative learning provided by student-teachers during microteaching and feedback sessions combined with the portfolio offers them a valuable experience in their learning process, something which can be identified in Mary's narrative.

**(36)** During class 22, on June 19<sup>th</sup>, Mary presented her second solo microteaching. During the feedback she received at the end of the class, Mary was not able to identify what part of her class could be considered accountability. TE Paola helped her:

Ok, I thought that was still the activity, but you are right, that was the accountability, asking if they would change it (TE Paola, class 22, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

When I was planning, that was my idea, because the writing itself is the writing, it's a task [...] but then when you exchange and you compare and you talk about what you discovered, for me that was accountability, because I had to discover what the other person wrote (Mary, class 22, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

Actually, we wrote something, and then we were going to tell you what we wrote, right?! So, that's not accountability [...] that is showing the results of the task [...] you just asked us to exchange so it's still the task [...] the accountability would be to ask 'if you could relate [...] if you could change your answer' [...] if you asked us if we would revisit our own ideas and change it, that would be accountability (TE Paola, class 22, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

In relation to this episode, Mary wrote on the portfolio, on June 19<sup>th</sup>:

I learned that questions like "did you like it" are not good accountability because they don't give much info about the students' learning process/results. On my task I thought that the part where they exchanged their summaries, so that the other students could find out which movie they were talking about, was accountability, but it appears that it was still part of the writing activity. Thank God I still had some other questions planned to be accountability too (Mary's portfolio, June 19<sup>th</sup>).

In the excerpt, it can be observed that Mary was still building her concept of accountability. She was not sure what part of her lesson could be considered accountability, which was later addressed by TE Paola during her feedback. In fact, Mary benefited from TE Paola's mediation, as she started to make sense of the new information through negotiation of meaning, as seen in the interactions which happened during feedback session and through the situated activity of teaching.

Again, the scientific concept had been understood, but by the time of putting it to practice, she could not, meaning that the concept was still too abstract for her. She needed the real context of the classroom to be able to develop an everyday concept that could enable her to actually develop and regulate her thinking and her action. Unfortunately, even though she says she developed, we have no further moments in which we could explore if the concept has indeed been developed, but we believe that her ZPD has expanded enough so as to allow her to go after her needs and do the reasoning that was necessary.

According to Lantolf and Poehner (2014), viewing mediation as co-regulation during ZPD activity positions mediation “not as a treatment that can be administered to individuals to move them from one level of development to another but rather as interaction that must remain attuned to learner needs and changes in learner contributions over time” (p. 159). Mary had been working on her concept of accountability for some time, and through her narratives related to this descriptor it can be observed that she had been developing her understanding and, therefore, her practice. In this particular episode, it can be seen that the TE’s mediational moves, from implicit to explicit, were contingent on Mary’s responsiveness and continuously negotiated during ZPD activity, which helped Mary reflect on her performance, paint her scale and write this narrative as she felt some development in her ability to finish her lesson in a focused way.

In this chapter I aimed at discussing the potential of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities as a tool for professional development. I hope I have been able to demonstrate that while being concerned with writing the self-assessment reports about their progress, student-teachers have been mediated by the very process of writing these narratives – as thought is not expressed, but completed in the word (Vygotsky, 1987). It was therefore in the midst of connecting intellectual and verbal phenomena, as teacher-students engaged in processes of externalization and/or verbalization triggered by class discussions, readings, own and peer presentations and feedback, that student-teachers created new ZPDs, expanded existing ones, and evolved.

In that respect, even though the student-teachers’ views on the use of the EPOSTL was not aimed at in this research, information collected from their final

paper suggests evidence that can support this work. In this sense, I briefly outline their understanding of the EPOSTL as a tool for assessing their progress and fostering teacher professional development. The excerpts below were taken from a final paper written in the end of the course in which they answered some questions, one of them being related to the portfolio: "To what extent do you believe the portfolio has helped you reflect on your learning and practice?". The following comments and excerpts represent their views on the use of the EPOSTL described in their final paper.

Overall, the student-teachers describe a very positive experience with the use of the EPOSTL, and several aspects related to the objectives of the portfolio (NEWBY *et al.*, 2007) were contemplated in their answers. For instance, one of the objectives of the EPOSTL, which is to encourage student-teachers to reflect on the competences a teacher strives to attain and on the underlying knowledge which feeds these competences, can be observed in the following excerpts:

I was filling the portfolio on what helped me to pay attention and reinforce what I learned (Joana's final paper).

Something that has helped me have the experience of looking back at the times I learned something during the trainings I have been through and every single class I have taught was the portfolio (Lisa's final paper).

It is essential for us to know what we are doing, and what purposes we have for doing so (David's final paper).

In addition to feedback, theoretical support, and classroom discussions, writing the portfolio has helped me rethink my beliefs about teaching (Pam's final paper).

Another objective of the EPOSTL is to provide an instrument which helps chart progress, and this feature was highlighted by the student-teachers, as seen in the following excerpt:

The portfolio came in hand as a very useful tool. It helped us to register our progress throughout the course, playing an important role in the accountability of our own improvements when juxtaposing our first and final microteaching sessions. I believe that these self-reflecting portfolios are great documents to aid us to keep track of our performances (Peter's final paper).



A third objective of the EPOSTL is to promote discussion between student-teachers and their peers, and between student-teachers and their TEs and mentors. Excerpts related to this are presented next:

Regarding the portfolio, I can say that I did enjoy and learned from the process of explicitly writing down things about the experience of teaching, but also about the discussions and activities proposed by the teachers in class (Mary's final paper).

On the portfolio, it was very interesting to start telling the teachers what our previous experiences and teaching timeline were. It was interesting for the ones who were already teachers to see the outcome of the course, and also for me, as I wrote it with the experience of a student in foreign language classes and courses. In the personal statement, we could write our experiences of being taught, what we believed as teachers and what we expect to be as teachers in the future. This part made us reflect upon what type of teachers we wanted to be (David's final paper).

It is curious how we read and discuss these beliefs brought about from our learning and how we should avoid them in our teaching and yet in preparing a lesson they appear so naturally and unconsciously (Pam's final paper).

A fourth objective of the EPOSTL, which is to facilitate self-assessment of prospective teachers' developing competence, is represented in the following excerpt:

I believe the portfolio is an excellent opportunity to reflect on the process of development, and the own awareness of this development (Mary's final paper).

In addition to the objectives of the EPOSTL, other aspects were also observed in the student-teachers answers. Retallick and Groundwater-Smith (1999) stated that teaching portfolios are seen as powerful sources of learning, as they help teachers to record and reflect on their learning as evidence. Moreover, these recordings describe important narrative sequences which, if not recorded, could be lost. The important role of the portfolios in recording the student-teachers learning was mentioned in this excerpt:

Through it, we are able to acknowledge eventual changes that would be easily dismissed if not registered down in the moments they occurred (Peter's portfolio).

Another characteristic identified in the answers was the fact that the student-teachers perceived that the EPOSTL helped them to reduce the gap between theory and practice, as suggested by previous research mentioned in this study (FENNER, 2011b). Some excerpts that show this aspect are stated as following:

Furthermore, the portfolio also allowed us to perceive how the theory studied at the beginning of this course was realized in the practice towards the end of this term in the microteaching sessions (Peter's final paper).

I could really see the connections between theory and practice, I was able to test the theory in practice and reflect about it afterwards so that I could change it on next attempt, especially with the help of the portfolio and the feedback sheets (Mary's final paper).

Some shortcomings regarding the EPOSTL were also described by the student-teachers in their answers. For instance, the difficulty in trying to record in the portfolio moments of professional development which occurred only during the course can be identified in this excerpt:

Although this has helped me greatly, it was not an easy task. I could not separate easily what were my learnings from the trainings and the ones from this course, that is why I haven't written much on the portfolio (Lisa's final paper)

Furthermore, the student-teachers were quite busy in that semester, thus not being able to dedicate much time to the recordings of their narratives in the portfolio, which was addressed in the excerpt below:

I feel that I did not seize the full opportunity as time was short, I was almost always in a hurry (Mary's final paper).

In sum, in their answers, student-teachers described how the EPOSTL:

- (1) encouraged them to reflect on the competences a teacher strives to attain and on the underlying knowledge which feeds these competences;
- (2) provided an instrument which helps chart progress, and this feature was highlighted by the student-teachers;

- (3) promoted discussion between student-teachers and their peers, and between student-teachers and their teacher educators and mentors;
- (4) facilitated self-assessment of prospective teachers' developing competence;
- (5) showed the important role of the portfolios in recording the student-teachers learning was mentioned in this excerpt; and
- (6) helped student-teachers to reduce the gap between theory and practice;

Some disadvantages regarding the EPOSTL were also described, such as the difficulty in trying to record in the portfolio moments of professional development which occurred only during the course and the lack of time to dedicate to the recordings of their narratives in the portfolio. Despite the drawbacks, the information provided appears to suggest that the student-teachers perceived that the EPOSTL as an effective tool for assessing their progress and fostering teacher professional development in a number of ways.

The TEs were also asked about their views in relation to using the EPOSTL as part of the course. TE Adriana stated that she felt that the EPOSTL complemented the scientific concepts proposed in the course, in a way that student-teachers had the opportunity to see the function of those concepts through the descriptors and how they could be applied in real teaching contexts. As an example, she mentioned the scientific concept of contextualization and its connection to descriptor 1 – I can start a lesson in an engaging way –, highlighting that the descriptor brought meaningfulness to that scientific concept. TE Paola stated that she felt that the EPOSTL brought awareness to the student-teachers in relation to their own development, as they had to write narratives whenever they felt they had improved in some way.

In the following chapter I summarize the main findings of this research. I also discuss the limitations and pedagogical implications of this study and provide further research directions.

## 5 FINAL REMARKS

The objective of this chapter is to summarize the main findings of the present study, which aimed at investigating the use of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities as a tool to pursue professional development by a group of English language student-teachers. This chapter is divided into three sections. First, I bring the major findings obtained from qualitative analysis of data collected from parts of the Self-Assessment section of the EPOSTL, aiming at answering the research question proposed in this work. Following, I present the limitations of this study, the pedagogical implications and further research directions.

### 5.1 SELF-ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTION

The data collected from the Self-Assessment section of the EPOSTL is directly related to my research question “To what extent does the use of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities contribute towards teacher professional development?”. It targets on written narratives produced by the student-teachers in the portfolio combined with oral and written narratives taken from class video recordings, feedback sheets and assignments provided by them. The fact that the narratives in the portfolio were written was important because when one writes, one has to elaborate more than in oral language, and this elaboration is already a mediational process that one engages in (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2011). Some important aspects observed in the analysis of these narratives have served as basis for this conclusive piece.

Teacher professional development can be seen as effective and meaningful when it considers the daily needs, concerns and interests of teachers, promotes reflection and goal setting, provides trainee teachers with access to external resources and opportunities for collaboration with peers and teacher educators, and attempts to reduce the gap between theory and practice (DARLING-HAMMOND, 1997; 2017; RICHARDSON, 2003). The analysis of the Self-Assessment section completed by the student-teachers in this study shows a number of aspects of

professional development that should be addressed, giving ground to answer my research question.

First, it can be observed that the EPOSTL provided student-teachers with opportunities to reflect on their learning experience during this course. They made use of the portfolio to describe some new concepts they were exposed to during their classes and to make sense of them, as their narratives served as mediational tools in order to regulate their own thinking and internalize these new concepts. Their narratives also reinforced the notion that concept development indeed follows a twisting path (VYGOTSKY, 1986), as some of the student-teachers showed struggle when attempting to understand and make use of the concepts which they were not familiar with. They made their learning process explicit by exposing their understandings and described moments in which they believed to have understood a concept but were not able to apply it in their practice, which may indicate that they had not fully developed that concept (excerpts 5, 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 23, 24, 25 and 26 as examples).

Second, through their narratives, student-teachers were able to reflect not only on their learning, but also on their practice in the microteaching presentations. Their narratives described aspects of their performance which permitted them to bring out successful and unsuccessful practices. It allowed them to recognize their strengths and their weaknesses and identify where they were and where they needed to be in relation to their development, indicating their current and some potential growth within their ZPD (WILLIAMS; BURDEN, 1997). Furthermore, this work adopted a sociocultural perspective, in which learning how to teach is based on the premise that “knowing, thinking, and understanding come from participating in the social practices of learning and teaching in specific classroom and school situations” (JOHNSON, 2009). Thus, teacher learning and the activities of teaching result from teachers participation in the social practices in classrooms contexts. It can be observed in several situations that the student-teachers improved their performance in the microteaching presentations after experiencing classroom situations and being exposed to constructive feedback given by their teacher educators and their peers, followed by their moments of reflection delineated in the portfolio (excerpts 4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 31, 33 and 35 as examples).

Third, the analysis shows that the EPOSTL helped student-teachers to relate experiences to theoretical principles, hence reducing the gap between theoretical knowledge and teaching practice, as it has been stated in some studies previously mentioned in this dissertation (BURKERT; SCHWEINHORST, 2008; FENNER, 2011a; INGVARSDÓTTIR, 2011) (excerpts 2, 3, 26, 27, 30 and 32 as examples).

Fourth, the descriptors gave them systematized and specific aspects to consider during their learning and teaching experiences. Aligned to Guskey's (2000) notion of effective professional development as "ongoing, intentional, and systematic" (p. 16), the EPOSTL allowed student-teachers to systematically anchor their instruction to a set of principled statements by merging those scientific concepts with situated understandings and practices. It also offered the student-teachers the chance to build a learning autobiography which can potentially uncover a lifetime of professional growth. This learning autobiography emphasizes the view of teacher learning as a life-long process, providing teachers with the opportunity to record their thoughts and the development of their didactic knowledge, teaching competences and skills (excerpts 1, 13, 17, 28, 29 and 34 as examples).

Considering all the aspects mentioned, these findings have positioned the EPOSTL in combination with class activities as an effective and meaningful alternative to be used in order to contribute towards teacher professional development. The portfolio gave the participants systematized and specific aspects to consider during their learning and teaching experiences, and allowed them to make connections they did not perceive before the course as, for example, relating the scientific concept of contextualization with starting a class in an engaging way. Moreover, the EPOSTL combined with class activities provided the participants of this research with opportunities to reflect on their learning experience as well as on their practice during this course and helped them in relating their experiences to theoretical principles, reducing the gap between theoretical knowledge and teaching practice.

## 5.2 LIMITATIONS, PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

### 5.2.1 Limitations

While the use of the EPOSTL in this particular context has shown a number of positive results and has contributed to the student-teachers professional development, some challenges have been identified. Concerns were raised regarding the amount of time the student-teachers had to dedicate to the completion of the portfolio. It was a very busy semester, as most of the participants were in the final stages of their English Language Teaching program. Thus, some participants stated that they did not write or dedicate time as much as they would, given the circumstances. In addition, considering that student-teachers live in a digital age, the fact that I provided them with a printed version instead of a more user-friendly tool (such as an online version of the portfolio) may have interfered in the amount and quality of time the participants dedicated to it.

Another aspect raised by some participants was the issues in making use of the portfolio, as the arrows are on one page and the reflection grid only comes after. They found it to be quite complex and made suggestions:

Maybe it would be simpler if we got the arrows part together with the descriptions part so that we could handle everything at the same time (Mary's final paper).

Moreover, the number of descriptors investigated in this study represented only a tiny fraction of the whole document, as of the 195 descriptors available, only 4 were used. This decision was made considering the number of hours of the course (72 *horas-aula*) versus the complexity of the aspects to be dealt with. To provide better understanding on the descriptors as well as how to make use of the tool, I believe that the EPOSTL should be used in other courses throughout the whole program.

Unfortunately, the only piece information I collected in relation to the report the student-teachers currently use was a description of it. Considering that this research proposes an innovative tool to be used in teacher education programs, I believe that a more detailed investigation on the tools which are currently used in the context examined would have made this work more significant and interesting. However, I did not have the chance to contact the teacher educators who assisted

the student-teachers during their teaching practice internship module nor did I surveyed students' views on the report they currently use, which would also have been insightful.

### **5.2.2 Pedagogical Implications**

This investigation considered bringing some contribution to the area of SLTE by unveiling some aspects of the student-teachers learning to teach process and how it can be enhanced through the use of reflective tools. This study was grounded on the SCT, a comprehensive theory of mind which emphasizes the role of interaction in cognitive development (VYGOTSKY, 1986). This theory supports a view of teacher learning from a socially situated perspective, which “requires a broader epistemological view, one that accounts for second language teaching as it is learned and as it is practiced by those who do it, not simply as it has been defined as others would like it done” (JOHNSON; FREEMAN, 2001, p. 66).

Considering the call for a more situated view on teacher learning, much research has been carried out in order to understand how teachers learn to do what they do. Teacher professional development has also gained much attention and it has been one of the most common goals in language teaching programs. Teachers seek professional development in order to expand their knowledge and skills, contribute to their growth, and enhance their effectiveness with students. Most of the literature on effective professional development mentions reflection as indispensable, both independently and with a teacher educator or a mentor, and dialogue as deliberation, discussion and negotiation.

Currently, the most common methodological options in research concerning reflective approach have been diaries, reports, autobiographies and reflective sessions. Portfolios have also been found to be beneficial as an instrument for the promotion of reflective practice (ADAMS, 1995), teacher assessment and professional growth (WOLF, 1996; ATTINELLO *et al.*, 2006). Through portfolios student-teachers have the opportunity to explore their own theoretical and practical background of teaching and learning as it unveils in their narratives and moments of reflection, combining practical and formal theories they have learned. By making use



of a portfolio teachers can raise reflection on themselves and their practice in a continuous basis (WINSOR, 1998), which highlights the view of learning as a life-long process.

The EPOSTL was used in this research due to its proposal regarding teacher learning. It is a comprehensive portfolio which has been linked with seven categories of good practice in teacher preparation that include: promoting teacher autonomy, fostering a reflective mode, reinforcing the rationales and approaches to learning and teaching, making the scope and aims of teacher education transparent, rendering the competences explicit, facilitating self-assessment and promoting coherence in classroom practice (NEWBY, 2012). In addition, the dialogic reflection provided around the EPOSTL aligns with what gets valued and what is expected in an effective English Language Teaching context, and such a reflective approach to SLTE considers student-teachers as active mediators of their own learning, who are encouraged to systematically explore their beliefs and classroom practices in order to take responsibility for their own development throughout their careers (FARRELL, 2015).

It has been suggested by Johnson (2001) that

When language teachers have multiple opportunities to situate and interpret that knowledge in their work, they engage in a process of sense-making that empowers them to justify their practices in the theories that they understand and can act upon in their own classrooms (p. 65).

This work suggests that making use of a teacher learning portfolio such as the EPOSTL is something to be considered in a language teaching program, as it has shown to serve as a powerful mediational tool that can promote professional development. Although proposals for change often find resistance, the implementation of the EPOSTL in the *Letras-Inglês Licenciatura* program at UFSC is appropriate for suggestion, as it would be beneficial if placed in some courses within this program, with the aim of helping language student-teachers to understand their learning process and to improve their practice. Ultimately, the goal of this research is to propose the use of the EPOSTL in combination with class activities to help student-teachers to pursue professional development in order to make sense of the

complexity involved in this professional activity, as well as to move them toward positions of autonomy in their learning and in their own classroom practices.

### **5.2.3 Further Research Directions**

Despite the developments in SLTE and the growing publications reporting research in the field, there is still significant progress to be made as we keep (re)defining our goals, pedagogical frameworks and teaching methodologies in order to react to the increasing demand of qualified second language teachers. We still have much to accomplish when preparing our student-teachers for the realities they will face during their teaching careers.

SLTE needs to be more mindful of how teacher education programs are designed and how they best serve teachers (JOHNSON; GOLOMBEK, 2016). Although it can be time consuming and difficult to try, practitioners should take a step to use, develop, adapt or improve current and alternative tools in SLTE. In this research I tried to bring some insights on the use of a portfolio for student-teachers during their teacher education program, as portfolios are great tools that can provide student-teachers with opportunities to reflect on their learning as well as their practice. By observing the world in terms of teacher education, it can be implied that there is a call for more research in the field, especially research that proposes improvements. Thus, more research in currently used and also innovative tools that promote reflection should be encouraged as a way to contribute towards second language teacher professional development.

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## 7 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A – Course Syllabus (Tópicos Especiais em Língua Inglesa: Teoria e Prática de Sala de Aula)



UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA  
CENTRO DE COMUNICAÇÃO E EXPRESSÃO  
DEPARTAMENTO DE LÍNGUA E LITERATURA ESTRANGEIRAS



#### PLANO DE ENSINO – LLE 7409

##### LLE 7409 - TÓPICOS ESPECIAIS EM LÍNGUA INGLESA: TEORIA E PRÁTICA DE SALA DE AULA

Semestre: 2018.1

Horário: 3ª das 16:20 às 18:00, e 6ª das 14:20 às 16:00 Sala: XXX CCE A

Prof.ª Dra. Adriana Kuerten Dellagnelo ([adrianak@cce.ufsc.br](mailto:adrianak@cce.ufsc.br)) e

Prof.ª MsC. Paola Gabriella Biehl ([paolabiehl@yahoo.com.br](mailto:paolabiehl@yahoo.com.br))

Atendimento: 3ª das 14:00 às 16:00 e mediante agendamento

#### EMENTA

A natureza multidimensional do professor como aprendiz de professor: o contexto, as práticas e o conteúdo do ensino e da aprendizagem de inglês como língua estrangeira.

#### OBJETIVO

Reconhecer como se dá o processo de formação docente por meio de engajamento em atividades teóricas, reflexivas e de prática pedagógica.

#### CONTEÚDO PROGRAMÁTICO

1. Noções da formação do professor e da estrutura de uma aula;
2. Noções teóricas de aprendizagem e metodologias de ensino;
3. Os conteúdos do ensino da linguagem;
4. Prática pedagógica e reflexiva.

#### AVALIAÇÃO

20%- Participação e assiduidade (faltas- perde 2 pontos se aviso/ 1 ponto com aviso/atestado)

30%- Reaction papers

50% - Avaliação final

- *A recuperação segue as normas da universidade conforme o § 2º do art.70 e § 3º do art. 71 da Resolução 17/CUN/97.*

#### CRONOGRAMA

<b>Fevereiro</b>	27
<b>Março</b>	02 – 06 – 09 – 13 – 16 – 20 – 23* – 27 – 30*
<b>Abril</b>	03 – 06 – 10 – 13 – 17 – 20 – 24 – 27
<b>Maiο</b>	01* – 04 – 08 – 11 – 15 – 18 – 22 – 25 – 29
<b>Junho</b>	01* – 05 – 08 – 12 – 15 – 19 – 22 – 26 – 29

\* Dias não letivos (atividades via moodle)

**Moodle:** Neste curso iremos usar o *Moodle* – sistema eletrônico (*software*) destinado ao desenvolvimento de atividades educacionais – para realizar atividades de apoio, tanto substituindo quanto complementando aulas presenciais.

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Obs: Outros textos podem ser disponibilizados durante o curso.

**LLE 7409 - TÓPICOS ESPECIAIS EM LÍNGUA INGLESA: TEORIA E PRÁTICA DE SALA DE AULA**

Semestre: 2018.1

Horário: 3ª das 16:20 às 18:00, e 6ª das 14:20 às 16:00 Sala: XXX CCE A

Prof.ª Dra. Adriana Kuerten Dellagnelo ([adrianak@cce.ufsc.br](mailto:adrianak@cce.ufsc.br)) eProf.ª MSc. Paola Gabriella Biehl ([paolabiehl@yahoo.com.br](mailto:paolabiehl@yahoo.com.br))

Atendimento: 3ª das 14:00 às 16:00 e mediante agendamento

**Topics + Tentative schedule**

1	27/02	1. What's a good teacher? (teacher's student's role, how to become a teacher, teaching career, reflective teaching –) <b>Adriana</b> -Introduce portfolio <b>ROSA</b> (Homework: portfolio: personal statement) <b>Rosa</b>
2	02/03	2. What's a good class? (Understanding class components (tep 21), dynamics). <b>Paola</b>
3	06/03	3. How can I teach? (Theories, methods) <b>Adriana</b> . Is there a best method? (Prabhu)/ Kuma (Postmethod) <b>Adriana</b>
4	09/03	4. Task based/communicative approaches (communicative competence) <b>Paola/Adriana</b> <b>Reaction paper 1:</b> a. What method do you like better? Why? or b. What are the advantages (if any) of using task based/communicative approach? 2. When talking in another language, what communicative competence do you think you do better? Why?
5	13/03	5. Planning a class – task guidelines ( goal, input, grouping, procedures, linking, wrapping up, assigning homework) <b>Paola</b>
6	16/03	6. Working on task step: starting a class/task: contextualizing <b>Paola</b> <b>Reaction paper 2:</b> Give an example of a class contextualization. The topic of the class is entertainment and the language focus is present perfect.
7	20/03	7. Working on task steps: student practice <b>Paola</b>
8	23/03	<b>HOLIDAY - MOODLE: ROSA</b>
9	27/03	8. Working on task steps: wrapping up a task/class <b>Paola</b> <b>Reaction paper 3:</b> 1. Based on the topic of the class you prepared the contextualization for, what kind of student practice and wrapping up can you think of?
10	30/03	<b>HOLIDAY -MOODLE ROSA</b>
11	03/04	9 Working on task steps: continuing a class: linking tasks <b>Paola</b>
12	06/04	10. The 4 skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing (purposes, differences, how to work with each skill) <b>Paola</b> <b>Reaction paper 4:</b> 1. Based on the topic of the class you prepared for wrapping up, what link to a next activity can you think of? 2. What's the most challenging skill to work with? Why?
13	10/04	11. Oral production (focus, plan a class) <b>Paola</b>
14	13/04	12. Students present their classes <b>Paola/ Adriana</b> <b>Reaction paper 5:</b> What's the biggest challenge when working with oral production? Why?
15	17/04	13. Listening (focus, plan a class) <b>Paola</b>
16	20/04	14. Students present their classes <b>Paola/ Adriana</b>

		<b>Reaction paper 6:</b> what's the biggest challenge when working with listening? Why?)
17	24/04	15. Reading (focus, plan a class) Paola
18	27/04	16. Students present their classes Paola/ Adriana <b>Reaction paper 7:</b> what's the biggest challenge when working with reading? Why?)
19	01/05	HOLIDAY -MOODLE ROSA
20	04/05	17. Writing (focus, plan a class) Paola
21	08/05	18. Students present their classes Paola/ Adriana <b>Reaction paper 8:</b> What's the biggest challenge when working with reading? Why?
22	11/05	19. How can I evaluate my students? (formative feedback and evaluation) Paola/ Adriana
23	15/05	20. Practicing planning a class of 45 min Paola/ Adriana <b>Reaction paper 9:</b> What's the biggest challenge when evaluating students? Why?)
24	18/05	21. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
25	22/05	22. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
26	25/05	23. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
27	29/05	24. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
28	01/06	HOLIDAY -MOODLE ROSA
29	05/06	25. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
30	08/06	26. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
31	12/06	27. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
32	15/06	28. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
33	19/06	29. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
34	22/06	30. 2 Individual presentations (30 min), feedback 15 min each Paola/ Adriana
35	26/06	31. Assessment/Evaluation: Paola/ Adriana a. What aspects of the class you presented do you think were good? What would you have done differently? Answer based on the course readings and workshops (250-500 words) b. Analyze of your peers' class. What did you like about it? What could have been done differently? Why?
36	29/06	32. Feedback Paola/ Adriana/Rosa

## APPENDIX B – Consent Form

**Termo de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido**  
**(Elaborado de acordo com a Resolução 466/12 – CNS/CONEP)**

Você está sendo convidado a participar de uma pesquisa sobre formação de professores de língua inglesa intitulada ***O EPOSTL como ferramenta para promover desenvolvimento profissional***. Este estudo está sob a responsabilidade da pesquisadora e orientadora Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo (Professora do Programa de Pós-graduação em Inglês da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina) e de sua pesquisadora assistente Maria Rosa da Silva Costa (aluna do Doutorado em Inglês: Estudos Linguísticos e Literários vinculado ao Programa de Pós-graduação em Inglês da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina).

O objetivo deste estudo é investigar o uso do EPOSTL como uma ferramenta para promover o desenvolvimento profissional de futuros professores de línguas em colaboração com seus educadores e colegas durante uma disciplina de prática de ensino. A investigação se dará através da análise dos portfólios preenchidos, além das gravações de aulas, micro aulas e de entrevistas semiestruturadas. A implementação de um portfólio em um programa de educação de professores de língua estrangeira parece ser uma maneira viável de entender como os futuros professores se desenvolvem durante seu primeiro contato com a comunidade de prática de ensino. Acredita-se fortemente que o EPOSTL contribui para o desenvolvimento da autonomia como ferramenta de reflexão na formação de professores em línguas estrangeiras e para permitir que os professores estudantes desenvolvam uma consciência de sua própria prática docente (Burkert & Schwienhorst, 2008).

Para a realização deste trabalho, você será solicitado a participar das seguintes tarefas: (1) ter a suas aulas, micro aulas e os comentários do educador e dos colegas gravados; (2) preencher os portfólios depois de cada aula e entrega um completo no fim da pesquisa; (3) participar de uma entrevista semiestruturada que

será gravada em vídeo. Os procedimentos serão realizados ao longo de uma disciplina do programa de graduação em letras (inglês) durante os meses de março, abril, maio e junho de 2018. O local e a data serão agendados pelos responsáveis do programa, você não precisará deslocar-se para outro local a fim de participar desta pesquisa.

Os riscos de participar dessa pesquisa são ínfimos, e podem incluir cansaço, falta de motivação, desconforto, constrangimento ou alterações de comportamento durante gravações em áudio e vídeo, ou alguma outra questão de ordem pessoal que você venha a sentir por participar das atividades dessa pesquisa de pequena escala. É importante esclarecer que você não será avaliado pelo seu desempenho individual nas atividades. É importante ressaltar que as gravações em vídeo não serão divulgadas sem o seu consentimento.

Ao final da pesquisa, os resultados do estudo serão tornados públicos e compartilhados com os participantes, porém sua identidade será totalmente preservada e não será incluída nenhuma informação que possa identificá-lo(a). As imagens gravadas serão utilizadas apenas para fins de coleta de dados para posterior acesso ao conteúdo completo das micro aulas e sessões de feedback para que a análise dos dados seja feita da forma mais precisa possível, além disso, nenhuma imagem será utilizada no relatório da pesquisa ou será divulgada por quaisquer outros meios e para quaisquer outros fins. O acesso aos dados coletados será confiado somente à pesquisadora e orientadora deste trabalho, mas sempre existe a remota possibilidade da quebra de sigilo, mesmo que involuntário e não intencional, cujas consequências serão tratadas nos termos da lei. Os resultados deste trabalho poderão ser apresentados em encontros ou revistas científicas, entretanto, eles mostrarão apenas os resultados obtidos como um todo, sem revelar seu nome ou qualquer informação relacionada à sua privacidade.

Esclarecemos também que após o término do estudo serão destruídos todo e qualquer tipo de mídia que possa vir a identificá-lo(a) tais como filmagens, fotos,



gravações em áudio etc., não restando nada que venha a comprometer o anonimato da sua participação agora ou futuramente.

A legislação brasileira não permite que você tenha qualquer compensação financeira pela sua participação em pesquisa, porém, você terá os seguintes direitos assegurados: a garantia de esclarecimento e resposta a qualquer pergunta; a liberdade de abandonar a pesquisa a qualquer momento sem prejuízo para si ou para seu tratamento (se for o caso); a garantia de que em caso haja algum dano a sua pessoa (ou o dependente), os prejuízos serão assumidos pelos pesquisadores, inclusive acompanhamento médico e hospitalar (se for o caso). Em caso de gastos adicionais, os mesmos serão absorvidos pelos pesquisadores.

O pesquisador responsável, que também assina esse documento, compromete-se a conduzir a pesquisa de acordo com o que preconiza a Resolução 466/12 de 12/06/2012, que trata dos preceitos éticos e da proteção aos participantes da pesquisa.

A sua participação nesta pesquisa é de grande valor. Através dela buscaremos desenvolver estratégias que busquem contribuir com a formação de professores de língua inglesa no Brasil. Entretanto, a decisão de participar desse estudo é tão somente sua! Ademais, ainda que você tenha consentido em participar da pesquisa e por qualquer razão não queira mais fazê-lo, poderá desistir a qualquer momento, desde que informe as pesquisadoras.

Em caso de dúvidas e esclarecimentos, você deve procurar as pesquisadoras Adriana de Carvalho Kuerten Dellagnelo ([adrianak@cce.ufsc.br](mailto:adrianak@cce.ufsc.br)) ou Maria Rosa da Silva Costa ([mrhilde2@gmail.com](mailto:mrhilde2@gmail.com)).

Caso suas dúvidas não sejam resolvidas pelas pesquisadoras ou seus direitos sejam negados, favor recorrer ao Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa com Seres Humanos (CEPSH) da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina pelo telefone (48) 3721-6094

ou nas instalações localizadas no Prédio Reitoria II, 4º andar, sala 401, localizado na Rua Desembargador Vitor Lima, nº 222, Trindade, Florianópolis.

Assinando o consentimento pós-informação, você consentirá com o uso dos dados coletados para a pesquisa. Muito obrigada,

#### Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido

Eu, \_\_\_\_\_, RG \_\_\_\_\_ li este documento, e após ter recebido todos os esclarecimentos através dos pesquisadores e ciente dos meus direitos, concordo, por livre e espontânea vontade, em participar desta pesquisa, bem como autorizo a divulgação e a publicação de toda informação por mim transmitida. Desta forma, assino este termo, juntamente com o pesquisador, em duas vias de igual teor, ficando uma via sob meu poder e outra em poder dos pesquisadores.

Florianópolis, \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.

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Assinatura do participante

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Assinatura do pesquisador

## APPENDIX C – Ethics Review Board (CEPSH) Approval

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE  
SANTA CATARINA - UFSC



**PARECER CONSUBSTANCIADO DO CEP**

**DADOS DO PROJETO DE PESQUISA**

**Título da Pesquisa:** O uso do EPOSTL como ferramenta para desenvolver a autonomia de futuros professores colaborativamente com seus educadores e colegas

**Pesquisador:** ADRIANA DE CARVALHO KUERTEN DELLAGNELO

**Área Temática:**

**Versão:** 3

**CAAE:** 82941717.6.0000.0121

**Instituição Proponente:** UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA

**Patrocinador Principal:** Financiamento Próprio

**DADOS DO PARECER**

**Número do Parecer:** 2.620.158

**Apresentação do Projeto:**

A pesquisa intitulada "O uso do EPOSTL como ferramenta para desenvolver a autonomia de futuros professores colaborativamente com seus educadores e colegas", será realizada em forma de estudo de caso. Os futuros professores apresentarão microaulas e completarão um portfólio após cada aula, apontando os aspectos nos quais que eles acreditam terem progredido profissionalmente. As aulas serão gravadas em forma de vídeo, e haverá momentos de reflexão sobre as micro aulas juntamente com o educador e os colegas. A pesquisa será feita durante 3 meses e no final será apresentada uma análise detalhada dos portfólios e das anotações do educador. Haverá também uma entrevista semi-estruturada no final dos 3 meses.

**Objetivo da Pesquisa:**

**Objetivo Primário:**

O objetivo deste estudo é investigar se o EPOSTL pode contribuir para o desenvolvimento da autonomia de alunos que estão iniciando suas carreiras como professores de língua inglesa colaborativamente com seus educadores e seus colegas.

**Objetivo Secundário:**

Investigar se o uso do portfólio europeu para futuros professores de línguas ajuda a documentar e

**Endereço:** Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Prédio Reitoria II, R: Desembargador Vitor Lima, nº 222, sala 401  
**Bairro:** Trindade **CEP:** 88.040-400  
**UF:** SC **Município:** FLORIANOPOLIS  
**Telefone:** (48)3721-6094 **E-mail:** cep.propesq@contato.ufsc.br

## APPENDIX D – EPOSTL (adapted)



Your name: .....

Institution: .....

Date of beginning to use EPOSTL: .....

The aim of the personal statement is to help you to reflect on aspects related to teaching in general and to think about questions that may be important at the beginning of your teacher education. Below you will find some questions concerning the teaching of languages which you may like to reflect on. At the end of this section, you can read some comments on the role and value of reflection.

- 1. As learners of language in school, you already have had a lot of contact with teaching. What aspects – teacher’s qualities, practices etc. – of your own language teaching might influence how you wish or do not wish to teach?

Experiences of being taught
Positive:
Negative:
(Try to analyse why these points were unsuccessful and consider what steps could be taken to improve the points you have mentioned.)

- 2. a) What aspects of teaching are you most looking forward to?

.....

.....

.....

- b) What aspects of teaching are you least looking forward to?

.....

.....

.....



## Reflection

In doing the last self-assessment activity the temptation is to respond quickly. However, on reflection, and given more time, you sometimes find that your first response needs to be modified. Initially you may have considered, for example, that 'being able to explain grammar' is very important.

not → very important

3. Being able to explain grammar

Discussion with others in your student teacher group, or with your tutor, or with teachers in school, may reveal that 'explaining grammar' can be interpreted in different ways, such as:

- explaining rules
  - in the language the learners are learning
  - in the language of school education
- or
- providing examples of use and analysing them

Further thought could prompt the idea that what is important is the learner's ability to explain grammar, rather than your ability as a student teacher to do so. It is this kind of reflection and these thinking processes that the EPOSTL is aiming to encourage.

In the example above the process of reflection has taken two forms:

- personal reflection: you have considered what the statement means on your own;
- dialogic reflection: you have discussed and perhaps modified your view by working with others.

The **purposes** of your reflection was not just to answer the question but also to justify your response in a principled, reasoned and informed way.

The process of personal reflection enhances your ability to think independently, in parallel to learning about teaching and learning. Reflecting and collaborating with others when exploring and experimenting with methodologies will also help you to widen your horizons.

In responding to the statement you may also have looked at a book on grammar to see how the word 'grammar' is defined. Reference to resources is another process in developing your critical and enquiring approach to teaching and learning.

This extended example, focused on grammar, leads to the question of which aspects of teaching and learning another language you should reflect on, engage with and explore. Although it is the content of your teacher education course which will provide the framework you need, the EPOSTL will help you to focus on specific questions which student teachers need to address. By asking you to think about a comprehensive range of aspects, features and issues related to teaching and learning a language in different countries it also seeks to enhance your ability to reflect not just on your own context but on similar contexts in other European countries.



## Conducting a Lesson

### Introduction

The section on conducting a lesson focuses on what teachers do in Modern Language classrooms and on the skills required. The first of these, expressed as a broad category, is the implementation of a lesson plan. This takes into account an ability to sequence activities in a coherent yet flexible way, to take account of learners' prior learning and to be responsive to individual performances in class.

This section also identifies as significantly important teachers' interactions with the class during the teaching and learning. Within interaction consideration is given to an initial settling down and to maintaining attention, as well as to encouraging learner initiatives and responses, and to working with and being responsive to a range of learning styles and learning strategies. Also identified in detail is the teacher's ability to manage classroom events, organise different ways of working and use a range of resources, instructional media and ICT.

The final group of descriptors focuses on the teacher's use of the target language in class. Experience and research tell us that the skills involved here have to do with deciding when it is most effective in terms of learning to use the target language and for what purposes, and when recourse to the home language might be more appropriate. Also involved is the teacher's ability to help learners understand what is said or written, as well as to encourage them to use the target language when communicating with the teacher and with each other.

**A. Using Lesson Plans**

1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way.

2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.

3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class.

6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.



**Reflection grid**

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments



## What do I put in the dossier?

It will be clear from the list which follows that not all of its suggested evidence can be gathered during your particular training period; some may only be possible when you are a practising teacher. Indeed there is no expectation that everything listed below should be produced during your initial teacher education.

In order to draw up and update the document, you are encouraged to include:

- A. Evidence from **lessons** you have given
- B. Evidence in the form of **lesson observations** and **evaluations**
- C. Evidence such as detailed **reports, comments, checklists** etc compiled by different people involved in your teacher education
- D. Evidence from your **analysis** of what you have done as a teacher – your ‘teacher actions’ - and from learners’ tasks and related performance
- E. Evidence in the form of **case studies** and **action research**
- F. Evidence from **reflection**

EPOSTL DOSSIER 

List of documents

Doc. No.	Date	Category	Description	Comments

APPENDIX E – Feedback Sheet

**MICROTEACHING FEEDBACK FORM** Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Lesson taught by: \_\_\_\_\_

Feedback given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic/ skill (s) worked with in the lesson: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Analyze your peer's lesson and check the corresponding boxes, giving reasons/exemplifying.

	True	Partly true	False	Not observed
She/he started the lesson in an engaging way (contextualization and modeling)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
She/he was flexible towards lesson plan (when needed)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
She/he responded to students' interests as the lesson progressed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
She/he ensured smooth transitions between activities/tasks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
She/he finished the task/ lesson in a focused way, allowing room for accountability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Other aspects (Ex: grouping, input data, instructions, students' pace, early finishers)


\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F – Self-Assessment and Reflection Grids

## Self-Assessment and Reflection Grid – Joana

**EPOSTI** SELF ASSESSMENT 

**A. Using Lesson Plans**

1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way. 09/03 27/03 27/04 04/05

2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses. 16/03 27/03 03/04 27/04

3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class. 27/03 03/04 24/04

6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way. 06/04

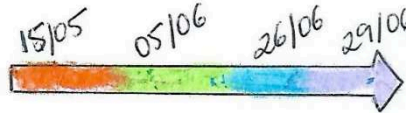
## EPOSTI

## SELF ASSESSMENT

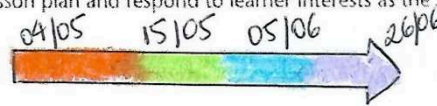


## A. Using Lesson Plans

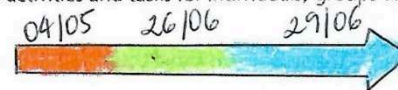
1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way.



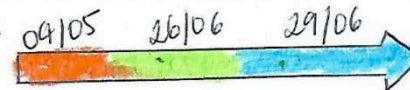
2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.



3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class.



6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.



## EPOSTL

SELF ASSESSMENT



## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
6	April 6 <sup>th</sup>	To make the students realize that they have learned something is very important because it stimulates learning and encourages them.
3	April 24 <sup>th</sup>	Knowing how to prepare the schema for reading, makes the process smoother and the reading strategies streamline and facilitate the activity proposed.
1 and 2	April 27 <sup>th</sup>	The writing process helps the learners reinforce what they have learned and improve this skill. Creativity can also appears on paper where the imagination can go beyond.
1, 2, 3 and 6	May 4 <sup>th</sup>	Our microteaching about the reading and writing task reinforced the attention that we need to have when choosing a topic to the class, we must put ourselves in students' shoes to see if the topic is interesting



## EPOSTI

## SELF ASSESSMENT



## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
—	—	for their ages and ask ourselves "Will it add something for their lives and learning?" If the answer is "yes", go ahead!
1 and 2	May 15 <sup>th</sup>	In our microteaching about grammar was interesting to realize how we really can present grammar points in a more stimulating and understandable way.
1 and 2	June 5 <sup>th</sup>	my first individual microteaching was about speaking and reading. The topic was interesting but I felt stuck because I was following the steps from a book (and I couldn't do this!%) but it was worth because the feedback from my professors and classmates helped me to realize some mistakes that I made so I could plan my next one better.



## EPOSTL

SELF ASSESSMENT




## Reflection grid


The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.


Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
1 and 2	June 26 <sup>th</sup>	<p>In my second individual class I presented a grammar topic in a focus on form where I tried to pass the information interacting with the "students".</p> <p>I heard from a professor that I was more comfortable this time. It was true! I prepared all the material and thought about all the steps, automatically these details make the difference. In the beginning of the class I asked some questions before the pictures (lesson learned ??) so my contextualization was done! At least, I enjoyed this class and I could improve some aspects and the best part is that I could feel the improvement!</p>
1, 2, 3 and 6	my classmates' classes June 26 <sup>th</sup> June 29 <sup>th</sup>	<p>I could learn many things with my classmates' microteaching. Different ways of contextualization, amazing kinds of activities and games. I could take part of exciting and engaging classes. I felt like an elementary or high school student. This semester was funny, pleasurable and productive!</p>

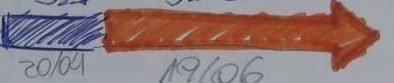
## Self-Assessment and Reflection Grid – Peter

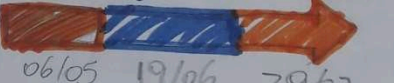
**EPOSTI** SELF ASSESSMENT 

**A. Using Lesson Plans**

1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way. 1.1 1.2 1.3  
  
 16/05 19/06 29/07

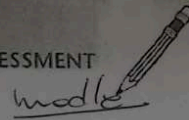
2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses. 2.1 2.2  
  
 06/05 19/06

3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class. 3.1 3.2  
  
 20/04 19/06

6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way. 6.1 6.2 6.3  
  
 06/05 19/06 29/07

## EPOSTI

SELF ASSESSMENT




## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
1.1	16/03	When Pada explained the difference between intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation the goal is to make sts engage coz they want to, not because they have to.
3.1	20/04	I just had classes with Adniana on transitions (Linking / moment turn in class, I've come to realize that <del>was</del> when every step of class is planned with transition the whole class
6.1	06/05	After two micro-teachings in pairs I realized the importance of closing up a lesson with some meaningful way. Such as bringing accountability to my sts.
2.1	06/05	The Writing / Reading micro-teaching reinforced the reason of flexibility when conducting a lesson, for instance when <span style="background-color: white; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">PAM</span> is response to one of my questions started to change the purpose of the proposed discussion, it was also a nice moment, which sts would feel motivated to communicate sth genuine.




EPOSTL

SELF ASSESSMENT 

## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
1.2	19/06	this reflection happened after my first microteaching solo, I believe I managed to start my lesson context realizing well the topic "physical descriptions" with a know celebrity "makaulim Caukim".
3.2	19/06	I had a problem with smooth transitions, (I realized that during the feedback given for the paired microteaching) I made an effort to <b>link</b> my tasks this time! I believe I delivered a good class with unified activities. I had that feeling that time went so fast, maybe because there were no interruptions between my 2 tasks.


EPOSTL SELF ASSESSMENT 

### Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
2.2.	19/06	I've always thought of myself as a flexible teacher! This microteaching proved that to me! I used people's contribution about different ways of saying Ginger hair as a way to expand vocabulary to the whole class! it was something not planned in advance, but it allowed me to work a little with pronunciation "very nice moment" which follows interests.
6.2	19/06	I struggled a little to understand how accountability could be conceived in my lesson plan. I went back to the slides and checked some strategies which worked well (sharing results - finding common ground)

EPOSTL

SELF ASSESSMENT 

## Reflection grid


The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
6.3	29/06	<p>I feel so much confident about my classes! it feels that I'm aware of my movements because I've made a careful planning, but also because I'm able to improvise (flexibility). Instead of saying "that's it for today folks" - something the old would say - I am able to finish a lesson in a focused way bringing accountability to what <del>they</del> students have learned -</p>

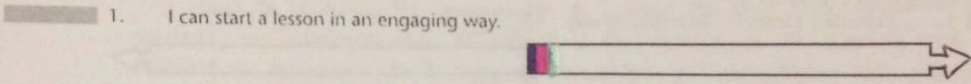
PETER

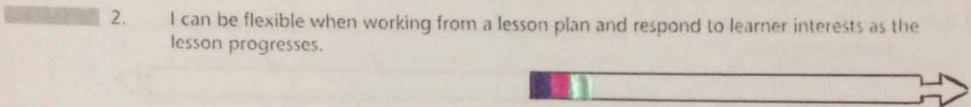


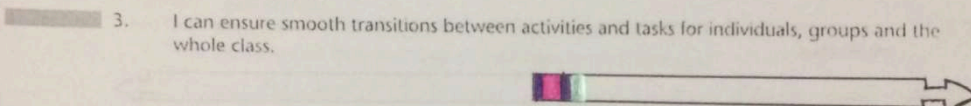
**Self-Assessment and Reflection Grid – Lisa**

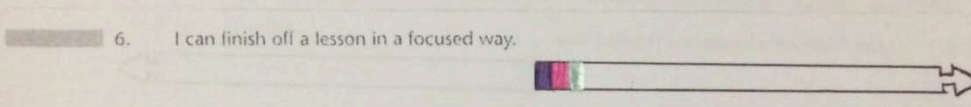
**EPOSTL** SELF ASSESSMENT 

**A. Using Lesson Plans**

1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way. 

2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses. 

3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class. 

6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way. 

## EPOSTL

SELF ASSESSMENT



## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
1	April 8	This day I heard in class about contextualization and modeling and how they help the teacher to start a lesson in an engaging way.
1	April 20	During my first microteaching and with the feedback comments I believe I've improved a little on this aspect.
2	April 20	I believe I was flexible working with the class plan and kids interest in my first microteaching.
2	May 11	Still flexible with the plan and kids interest specially with the answers kids gave and working with them on my examples on the board.
3	April 13	First time in class I heard about linking and how to do it.
3	April 20	During my first microteaching I was able to put in practice linking activities.
3	May 11	learned a little bit more about linking during the feedbacks although I did not do it quality.
4	April 20	learned I did a good job on my first microteaching.
4	May 11	learned a bit more about it through the feedbacks comments.



## EPOSTL

SELF ASSESSMENT



## Reflection grid

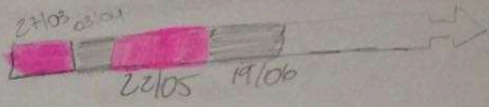
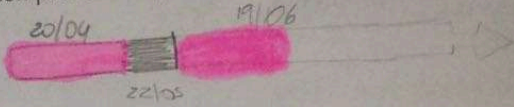
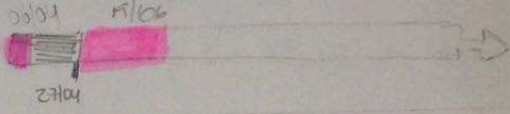
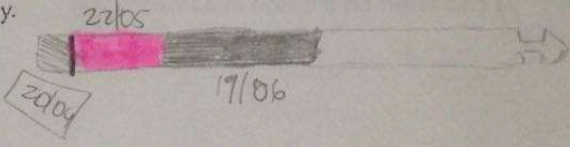
The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
1	June 26	In my last microteaching, I believe I was successful to start class in an engaging way. I think I can do this in my classes in general, always putting some effort to not go in a different direction from what is expected.
2	June 26	In this microteaching I had to be very flexible towards the class plan, since my first questions were all y/n questions and I did not have student's interactions as I expected, so during class I had to think of other questions to get them interested and participative.
3	June 26	I identify how I can be smooth in my transitions. Sometimes it takes some time to think of what to do, but I believe I can do a good job.
6	June 26	I understand that sometimes a single question can do the effect I need and have the info if students understood the lesson.

### Self-Assessment and Reflection Grid – Mary

ASSESSMENT POSTL SELF ASSESSMENT

A. Using Lesson Plans

1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way. 
2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses. 
3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class. 
6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way. 

## reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
1	27/03 03/04	→ "modelling" is <u>within</u> contextualisation → I've been doing "open-pair" modelling without knowing that was the name of it.
3	06/04	→ confirming/testing the students learning can be called " <u>accountability</u> ", but it can be a <u>task</u> also.
2	20/04	→ <u>Flexibility</u> is essential to a good and meaningful class but sometimes we end up having to make some quick decisions according to the st's answers and that can consume some time.
6	20/04 (accountability)	we can't keep the same questions for accountability that we planned if we didn't give them (st's) the ways to get there because we changed some things in the way I.

during  
microteaching





## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
3	27/04	A type of reading activity that could be part of the writing process and could be a link between the 2 skills tasks in "chain writing" as in a kind of rehearsing phase in the writing process and also as an accountability process of the reading skill/task.
1	22/05 starting engaging	In the closing of the topic in being important on planning a lesson and although it may seem that you know (think) that everybody knows the topic or the input data you bring you should always think of the possibility of at least one of your sts may not know it, and you should be prepared for it. I forgot about that and took it for granted that everyone knew the characters of the stories and forgot to introduce them.
2	22/05 flexibility & sts interests	Although I had some interesting ideas for the something new, but in the end, some of the ideas were not so good as some that I did + I should have because I was worried about the topic what it is connected with the...

## EPOSTI

SELF ASSESSMENT



## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors:

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
	Continuously	responsive towards the students interests.
6	27/06 end class feedback	• Natalia commented that she was confused as I used the same question in the end and in the beginning of the lesson. That helped me think about an accountability process of my proposed task and how I could have done it differently.
1	19/06 (class)	• I introduced my input data in a better way as I think I could have done better because instead of letting a student explain the plot I now make I could have opened a good summary on the subject and showed it to them. Also, we could have watched the trailer.
2	19/06 (Planning)	• I was more flexible towards the plan and towards the students interests and answers/participation in class.
3	19/06 (class)	• I took more time thinking about the class I could do/ask to ensure more participation.

## EPOSTI

SELF-ASSESSMENT



## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
	19/06 (end focused)	<p>① I learned a great question like "Did you like it/doing?" are not good accountability because they don't give much info about the learning process itself.</p>
6		<p>② On my task I thought that the part where they exchange their summaries so that the other student could find out which movie they were talking about was accountability but it appears that was still part of the writing activity. Thank God I still had some other questions planned to be accountability too.</p>

## Self-Assessment and Reflection Grid – David

	1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way.	 
	2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.	 
	3. I can ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class.	 
	4. I can adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situations occur.	 
	5. I can time classroom activities to reflect individual learners' attention spans.	 
	6. I can finish off a lesson in a focused way.	 

20/04

For my first microteaching experience, I relied on Peter's experience as a teacher, as he has been a teacher for some years and I just started teaching English this year, in 2018.

Mary's comment was important in the sense that we saw how important it is for everything to be connected somehow. The students need to be aware of the main topic of the class, so it does not seem to be disconnected. However, most of the feedback was positive.

04/05

For this microteaching, we both were very nervous to present, as we were the only ones in the class who by the time the classes started were not teachers yet. I was nervous about forgetting to say something or to explain and link the activities. Therefore, I somehow advanced some topics of the class, as I was also afraid Pam could forget something.

Also, as noticed in the feedbacks, our instructions in general could have been better for students, and as we have seen in our classes of this discipline, giving students clear instruction on what to do is essential.

19/06

For my first microteaching experience in the discipline, I think that the topic was interesting for them (fairy tales and storytelling), however, the level of the class I chose was wrong. I selected it to be for A2 (possibly B1) level, however, it would be good for B1-B2 or more advanced users, and not A2. The class would be too difficult for them and they would not manage to tell the story or to even understand everything brought as input.



In addition to that, I actually thought about the links between the activities and the accountability for the class, but I forgot to mention them, and the class had no links or accountability.


03/07

In the second individual microteaching, the feedback from the first one was extremely important. Well, firstly, I was very nervous when I started this class, but in the end, the teachers reported that I seemed less nervous than in the previous microteaching. I thought my class would not be so interesting as it was a reading and writing class, but in reality, the feedback was positive and they found the topic interesting and class to be nice one. Adriana pointed out that I should let students read the questions, so it would not be so teacher-centered.

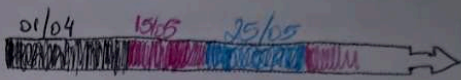
Before starting the class, I asked Lisa if I should give students the questions about the text beforehand. She said it would be good, so students could already see what they should do with the text. I did that while I gave the class, differently from what was written in my lesson plan.

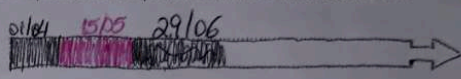
In the end, I liked the class and the positive feedback gave me the feeling that I really improved from all the previous microteachings.


## Self-Assessment and Reflection Grid – Pam

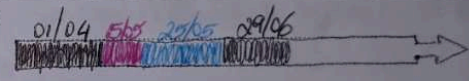
EPOSTL SELF ASSESSMENT 

A. Using Lesson Plans

1. I can start a lesson in an engaging way. 

2. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses. 

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EPOSTL

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the assignments.

Open your notebook!	Date of reflection	Your comments
	29/05	Having the discipline being introduced by Mathews after my Monday theme and pushing me for the first time is making me think a lot about the lessons in our graduation.
	15/6	I went to the [redacted] when I was 1 year old. The day when I went my classmate [redacted] and I went to school together with my [redacted] and then I saw the class with my [redacted] I thought it helped me about [redacted] of things.
	29/05	Receiving feedback from colleagues, I thought, [redacted] that I need to learn how to listen to my [redacted].
	27/05	Preparing my individual presentation I realized how the discipline is helping me. Now I do think about things when doing my homework. I hope to right this time! It's interesting to see the difference on myself when I think about [redacted] how to do a [redacted] transaction, what to ask, and things like that.

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SELF ASSESSMENT



## Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
Task Plan <u>01</u>	05/06	I realized that my biggest problem is contextualization. I cannot start the lesson and keep it all together. My links are not smooth because my contextualization is not good. I see the differences in myself after start this discipline, but I didn't know, yet, how to connect everything.
From the Task Plan 01-How Questions.	10/06	Reading my feedbacks and thinking about what we are discussing in our classes is helping me plan my classes differently. But there is so much that it still does not work the way I want it to.
	19/06	The feedback from colleagues with more experience as teachers and the ones from the professors, make me rethink my way of teaching and I really enjoy what they say, it really helps me!
	26/06	I know I have a long way to go, but sometimes I feel like I cannot make progress. And then I hear some comment (which is not for me, but it is!) and I notice that I am learning more from each class.

EPOSTL SELF ASSESSMENT 

### Reflection grid

The grid below will help you to record your reflections on the descriptors.

Descriptor number(s)	Date of reflection	Your comments
Task Plan 02 and feedbacks.	29/06	In my opinion, although it didn't go as I planned, this microteaching was better. I still have problems in contextualizing and modeling. I do not feel sure about what to do, but I feel I'm on the right way. I need to learn to wait for the sts' <del>reply</del> reply, to speak slowly and to explain better my activities. And I need to connect smoothly. I think the secret is in a better modeling.
	01/07	I know that I need to improve in many things. I'm aware of that, but doing this discipline and talking about planning a lesson and doing it work in a real class, helped me a lot. I think the practice was better than theory.