

**Personal identity co-construction through arts and language lived
experiences.**

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Abstract

This research study explores the intersection of language learning, artistic expression, and personal identity formation among a teacher and his students. Employing a qualitative approach rooted in narrative inquiry, the study investigates how students' engagement in sculptural projects facilitates the exploration and commitment dimensions of personal identity. Through analysis of students' project choices, reflections, and learning experiences, the study reveals the intricate connections between individual interests, values, and identity construction processes. Findings suggest that students' project selections reflect their diverse aspirations and interests, providing insights into their evolving identities. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of adaptability and creative engagement in language learning contexts, emphasizing the role of interactive experiences in shaping personal identity. Overall, this research contributes to our understanding of the complex interplay between language acquisition, artistic expression, and the formation of personal identity as co-constructed by teachers and students.

Resumen

Este estudio de investigación explora la intersección del aprendizaje del lenguaje, la expresión artística y la formación de la identidad personal entre un docente y sus estudiantes. Empleando un enfoque cualitativo basado en la indagación narrativa, el estudio investiga cómo la participación de los estudiantes en proyectos escultóricos facilita las dimensiones de exploración y compromiso de la identidad personal. A través del análisis de las elecciones de proyectos, reflexiones y experiencias de aprendizaje de

los estudiantes, el estudio revela las conexiones intrincadas entre los intereses individuales, los valores y los procesos de construcción de la identidad. Los hallazgos sugieren que las selecciones de proyectos de los estudiantes reflejan sus diversas aspiraciones e intereses, proporcionando ideas sobre sus identidades en evolución. Además, el estudio destaca la importancia de la adaptabilidad y el compromiso creativo en los contextos de aprendizaje de idiomas, enfatizando el papel de las experiencias interactivas en la formación de la identidad personal. En general, esta investigación contribuye a nuestra comprensión de la compleja interacción entre la adquisición del lenguaje, la expresión artística y la formación de la identidad personal, tal como es co-construida por maestros y estudiantes.

1. Contextualization

Personal identity is a starting point to analyze the different components that define a big part of who we are (Olson, 2002). This identity is co-constructed and has great value in terms of what we as students want to achieve in our lives related to our goals. It is important to highlight that personal identity has been addressed in many research studies and several research fields where they explain the complexity that we as human beings have. This study has arisen because of the importance of portraying that personal identity, in this case, of a preservice student-teacher based on the art and language life experiences.

Therefore, this study will narrate two main elements that have marked personal identity, on one hand, the lived experiences that the teacher Felipe Moya has developed mainly because of his relation to sculpture and instrument performance. This stems from his empirical knowledge of sculpture learning and guitar technique practices and his knowledge as a language student due to his need to understand artists who speak English and his interest to understand what they are saying or explaining, which transcends passion into the main contribution to his English learning process. Felipe's identity co-construction includes a group of twelve students from the ASE foundation, who are between fourteen and seventeen years old. ASE is a foundation created in 1999 by Martha Myriam Baquero Trujillo, as a nonprofit organization, which seeks to provide training for all people linked to it. A task made possible through development in different knowledge fields and skills in a comprehensive pedagogy framework, thanks to alliances with high and medium-level institutions and projects such as EnlASE to generate income

for its community and be successful in the job market in different enterprises and companies, and also AlimentASE, a project that complements feeding in the schools associated with its community and Formal Education to help students through language workshops like English, French, and Portuguese.

The students involved in this study are from the ASE foundation and come to the Villemar el Carmen IED School, located in Bogotá, Fontibón locality, to receive their English lessons on Saturdays. They are working on a project for the end of their semester, which contemplates a Project Based Learning approach, where they have to create a sculpture in groups and present it for the final foundation closing ceremony in English. Thus, this study is relevant according to the issues involved in personal identity and how discovering it can have an impact on society, as it covers topics about authentic persons who can reach a cultural change and "singular subjects with the capacity to act, control their existence, exercise their freedom, choose and build their selves and achieve their selves" (Álvarez, 2011, p. 428).

Furthermore, through life experiences narration, it is possible to identify many events that have been important experiences in Felipe Moya's life, considering that "experience is the result of a relation that subject has with something that is not it, a relation with something that has a place in it, and after which it is not the same" (Guzmán & Saucedo, 2015, p.1026). According to it, life experiences are also relevant in education because "in the educational field, frequently it goes to the concept of experience to cover phenomena and distinct order processes, that goes from learning and didactics until issues related to teacher and students' behavior" (Guzmán & Saucedo, 2015, p.1023).

Therefore, this research study is in keeping with the narrative of the experiences of the students and the teacher's role immersed in the same context and with some specific conditions to understand the impact of the experiences on these identities. It takes place in the city of Bogotá, where Felipe Moya is currently a student at the University Santo Tomas English bachelor's degree at a distance program. It is based on the methodological design of narrative inquiry, which is joined to research macro project two, understanding and characterizing EFL in the LLEI: experiences and phenomena in the preservice teachers' educational contexts, and also to the research subproject two, the voices of the LLEI realities: Life stories and experiences.

2. Research statement

In this study, the main problem arises from a theoretical interest in understanding the impact on the students' and teachers' identity through an exploration of two forms of art, namely sculpture and music, in conjunction with languages, and how they contribute to the co-construction of personal identity. This research study is rooted in an inquiry into a subject of study rather than a problematic situation. There is a personal interest in exploring the empirical knowledge that has been acquired over the years.

Thus, the main focus of the study also encompasses the various life experiences related to this empirical knowledge, which initially began as a hobby but has now evolved into something that defines both the teacher and students' roles. Therefore, some aspects to consider within this research include the theory of psychological continuity proposed by John Locke, in which "the identity of people is preserved with the identity of consciousness" (Gürler, 2019, p.1).

Locke's theory elucidates many aspects associated with identity and personal identity since "For him, the continuity of personal identity over time is the continuity of consciousness, which is mediated through memory. Locke argues that thinking and perception cannot be separated from consciousness" (Gürler, 2019, p.7). All of this can serve as a reference to comprehend personal identity from a perspective that transcends both the body theory and the soul theory. However, it is important to consider another issue beyond the boundaries of personal identity that is relevant to understanding how

psychology studies personalities, namely the relationship of personality with social identity, because "many personality traits are intrinsically social, in that they describe how an individual relates to others: one cannot be honest, kind, rude, assertive, or even independent, without someone to be honest, kind, rude, assertive, or independent towards" (Vignoles, 2017, p.4).

While Locke's theory posits that consciousness forms the basis for understanding personal identity, it has faced criticism from various perspectives, including considerations of what happens when individuals experience amnesia. These critiques have led contemporary discussions on defining personal identity to encompass different fields of study and include other concepts that are integral to this purpose.

2.2 Research question

How is the personal identity co-constructed based on the art and language lived experiences of a preservice student-teacher and his students in his practicum setting?

2.3 Research objectives

2.4

2.3.1 General objective

To portray the personal identity of a preservice student-teacher and a group of his students based on the art and language lived experiences.

2.4.2 Specific objectives

- To set how the artistic lived experiences contribute to developing personal identity.
- To set how the languages' lived experiences contribute to developing personal identity.
- To analyze the personal identity as a result of art and languages.

3. Literature Review

The theoretical framework through which is possible to understand this research study covers different theories according to several authors, who provide us with the main conceptual and theoretical bases, that are necessary to address personal identity and its co-construction based on the art and language life experiences. Additionally, one of the other aims in this theoretical framework is to analyze two studies as this research study and find a feasible relation.

3.1 Personal Identity

Numerous theories attempt to define personal identity, ranging from philosophical standpoints to more modern interpretations that disassociate personal identity from consciousness. John Locke is renowned for his theory of psychological continuity, which ties personal identity closely to consciousness. However, contemporary perspectives, as outlined by Karaś et al. (2019), reference Matsumoto's psychological dictionary to offer a definition where identity is linked to self-perception and recognition by others (pp.6-7). These definitions frame identity as an answer to the question "Who am I?" and highlight the traits that set individuals apart from one another (Karaś et al., 2019, p.6). Central to both contemporary understandings of personal identity is the role of life experiences in shaping our sense of self and, consequently, how we are perceived by others. This leads

to the concept of personal identity formation, wherein life experiences play a crucial role across various developmental stages.

A pivotal model in understanding personal identity formation is Marcia's identity status paradigm, particularly relevant during adolescence. This model aligns with Erikson's psychosocial theory, which posits that each life stage is accompanied by a specific challenge that must be addressed. According to Marcia, adolescence involves navigating two key dimensions: exploration and commitment. Crocetti (2017) elaborates that exploration entails considering different identity possibilities, including values, beliefs, and goals, before making decisions. Commitment, on the other hand, involves making these choices and engaging in activities that reflect them. Herein, life experiences become crucial as they are both the outcome of the activities we choose and the influences shaping our pursuit of values, beliefs, and goals.

This narrative seamlessly integrates with the earlier discussion, emphasizing the significant role of life experiences in the co-construction of personal identity, both through empirical knowledge and the theoretical frameworks proposed by Locke, Marcia, and Erikson. Together, these theories and models provide a comprehensive view of personal identity formation, underscoring the interconnectedness of consciousness, life choices, and societal recognition in the development of our sense of self.

3.2 Art

Throughout world history, numerous theories have emerged that define the arts, ranging from philosophical perspectives to artist-driven interpretations. Philosophers such as Plato, who discusses art in his Socratic dialogue "The Republic," alongside Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, and modern thinkers like Theodore Gracyk, have all contributed to our understanding of what art encompasses. On the artist side, figures like Joseph Kosuth and Walter Benjamin have offered their insights, further diversifying the discourse. Theodore Gracyk, in his book "The Philosophy of Art," categorizes definitions of art into three main groups: functionalist, expressionist, and institutional.

Isrow (2017) highlights that the term "art" derives from the Greek words "techne" and "poesis," indicating the possession of skills and abilities for creation, as well as the act of creation itself (pp. 92-93). This broad definition opens up a multitude of forms and categories within the arts, crucial for discussions on personal identity formation. Specifically, this research study focuses on sculpture and music, which are considered forms of art rather than categories.

The connection between personal identity and art is intricately linked to how art serves as a medium for exploration and commitment, two dimensions central to Marcia's identity status paradigm. Engaging with art as a chosen activity reflects a commitment, while the exploration of art allows for the discovery of new values, beliefs, and goals. However, the development of personal identity through art goes beyond the initial stages

of formation. As Byström (2017) notes, "developing an identity is an ongoing process for artists, they learn by doing. It is more of a vocation than a conscious decision" (p.18).

This statement underscores that personal identity development, particularly in the context of art, is a continuous journey that involves learning, adaptation, and deeper engagement with one's chosen medium.

3.3 Sculpture

Sculpture is regarded as one of the primary fine arts, a category that includes various forms of art appreciable through our senses. As a part of the visual arts, it is appreciated visually, meaning that "the art of sculpture is the branch of the visual arts that is especially concerned with the creation of form in three dimensions" (Ben-Nun, 2020, p.8). According to Ben-Nun (2020), sculpture is not permanent, and it encompasses more than just objects or activities, having evolved to include new kinds of objects and a broader range of activities (pp. 6-7).

For Felipe Moya, sculpture has represented a process of evolution based on interaction with different materials or objects, and this process has encompassed various activities learned through each artistic project. Such activities include painting, understanding human body proportions through anatomy books, and becoming acquainted with different materials like foam board for making dioramas (creating a sculpture context), as well as using diverse tools like drills and stiletos.

Therefore, sculpture is the main form of art within the visual arts that will be explored in this study, serving as a foundation to analyze art life experiences. This is particularly relevant as the students involved in this research will engage in a sculpting project, guided by Felipe Moya, their preservice teacher, who has been learning sculpture techniques independently for about eighteen years.

3.4 Languages

The concept of language encompasses a broad spectrum of theories, intersecting fields such as linguistics and sociolinguistics, each offering distinct perspectives. Within linguistic theories, two primary paradigms emerge the functionalist and the formalist, which diverge in their understanding of language's core functions. Vázquez (2017) highlights Dik's perspective within the functionalist paradigm, which posits language as a tool for interaction, primarily serving the function of communication and facilitating social interactions (p.116-117).

Contrastingly, the formalist paradigm perceives language as a system primarily geared towards the expression of thoughts, with its psychological counterpart being the capacity to create, interpret, and judge sentences (Vázquez, 2017, p.116). This distinction in language perspectives connects closely with Marcia's paradigm of personal identity formation, particularly the aspect of judgment implied in the formalist view, suggesting that language plays a critical role in decision-making processes, a key component of what

Marcia refers to as commitment. Therefore, it posits language as an integral element in the formation of personal identity.

Beyond the dimensions of personal identity formation previously discussed, language emerges as a pivotal element influencing our personal identity. Through language, we construct our experiences, as it enables us to express our knowledge and understanding of the world. As Ahmed (2016) eloquently puts it, "We as human beings, normally, have physical and personal identities. Not only what we are when one looks at us but also: we are what we know. And what we know is expressed through language" (p.256). This encapsulates the intrinsic role of language in shaping our personal identities, emphasizing its importance in the articulation of our experiences and knowledge.

3.5 Lived experiences.

Experience stands as a cornerstone within philosophical discussions, particularly emphasized by empiricism, which posits experience as a fundamental pathway to knowledge. This concept plays a pivotal role in this research, especially considering the investigation's objectives to explore how life experiences related to art and languages contribute to the development of personal identity. Recognizing the significance of experience is crucial for understanding the mechanisms behind identity formation and development, as the choices made throughout adolescence and beyond are deeply influenced by our accumulated experiences, which in turn, shape our knowledge base.

Therefore, it's vital to conceptualize experience in a way that encompasses life experiences at its core.

According to Acampado (2019), Dewey's educational philosophy adopts a holistic approach, wherein experience is derived from the interactions individuals have with their surroundings (pp. 3-4). This perspective highlights interaction as a key component of the experience, suggesting that it should be viewed as a communicative, historical, and cultural phenomenon, rather than merely an individual or mental process (Acampado, 2019, p.3). This understanding is essential for identifying life experiences, whether they pertain to language or art, and for dissecting specific life experiences that were pivotal in Felipe Moya's personal identity formation process.

Reflective practice plays a critical role in this context. Reflection, as Habib (2017) points out, fosters a culture of self-learning among both teachers and students, as reflective teachers are more likely to cultivate reflective learners (p. 945). Through reflective practices, individuals engage in a process of analyzing, evaluating, and improving their learning experiences, which effectively translates into generating knowledge through experience. This aligns with the aim of this study to facilitate a sculptural self-learning experience for the participating students, many of whom are collaborating on sculpture projects and leveraging technology, such as online tutorials, along with techniques introduced by their teacher, to enhance their sculpting skills. The integration of reflective practices thus emerges as a powerful tool for achieving empirical knowledge and enriching the life experiences of students within the scope of this research.

3.6 Similar studies

In examining the influence of music and plastic arts on identity formation, two distinct but complementary academic investigations provide valuable insights into how these artistic domains contribute to personal development. The first study, conducted by Professor Rolando Angel Alvarado at the Universidad de Chile, delves into the role of music in the formation of human beings, particularly highlighting its impact on identity formation. According to Alvarado's findings, music is intrinsically linked to the processes of exploration and commitment outlined in Marcia's identity status paradigm. This connection is rooted in the way music fosters self-growth and self-knowledge, two critical components of identity development. When individuals choose what music to listen to, they are actively participating in the construction of their identities, utilizing music as a medium for expressing their beliefs, values, and behavioral inclinations. Music's capacity to enhance creativity and perceptual development further underscores its significance as a vehicle for communicating and reinforcing personal identity.

Complementing Alvarado's research, Dionys Esther Prioló Franco's study at Universidad Santo Tomas focuses on the strengthening of personal identity through plastic arts. Prioló's research emphasizes how children, in particular, use plastic arts as a means to articulate their life experiences, encapsulating their ideas, imaginations, visions of life, and perceptions of their surroundings. This expressive capability of plastic arts serves as a potent mechanism for identity strengthening, enabling individuals to navigate and interpret their realities through artistic creation.

Both studies collectively affirm that life experiences, whether mediated through music or plastic arts, play a pivotal role in the fortification and enrichment of personal identity. By engaging with art and music, individuals are not merely partaking in passive consumption but are actively involved in a dynamic process of self-discovery and identity construction. This process is characterized by the exploration of various facets of the self and a commitment to personal values and beliefs, as manifested through artistic preferences and expressions. Thus, music and plastic arts emerge as vital components of the identity formation process, offering unique pathways for individuals to explore, define, and communicate their identities within the tapestry of human experience.

3.7 Task-Based Project Learning: Enhancing Language Acquisition and Personal Identity

The Task-Based Project Learning (TBPL) approach has been implemented in this project with the aim of enriching English language acquisition and the construction of participants' personal identity. Through the completion of task-centered artistic projects, students have not only had the opportunity to enhance their language skills but also to explore and express aspects of their personal identity.

Integration of TBPL with findings on personal identity:

Exploration of Personal Interests: Projects were designed to allow students to select themes and characters that reflected their individual interests and passions. This promoted a deeper emotional connection with the assigned tasks and fostered authenticity in linguistic and artistic expression.

Engagement with Relevant Themes: By choosing projects that addressed topics relevant to the students, such as environmental conservation or respect for life, TBPL facilitated the connection between language learning and participants' personal and social concerns. This strengthened their commitment to the learning process and promoted a deeper understanding of the English language in meaningful contexts.

Development of Language Skills: The completion of task-based projects provided an authentic context for the development of language skills in both oral and written production. Students were motivated to use language effectively and communicatively to plan, execute, and reflect on their artistic projects.

Self-Concept and Self-Discovery: Through TBPL, participants had the opportunity to explore and reflect on their skills, interests, and personal values in the context of language learning and artistic expression. This contributed to a greater self-awareness and the development of a stronger and more authentic personal identity.

The integration of Task-Based Project Learning in this project has proven to be an effective strategy for enhancing both English language learning and the construction of participants' personal identity. By providing an enriched and meaningful learning

environment, TBPL has facilitated the integration of linguistic and expressive skills with personal and cultural experiences, in line with the research objectives.

According to Nunan (2004), "Task-based learning provides an effective framework for language acquisition by engaging learners in authentic, meaningful tasks that promote language use in real-life contexts." This perspective underscores the value of Task-Based Project Learning in facilitating language learning and personal identity construction, aligning with the objectives of the research project.

4. Research design

To address the research design in this study, it is important to define qualitative research and narrative inquiry and go beyond to find an explanation about why this study involves both. This first main step is essential to understand how this study will be carried out, and to evaluate the two kinds of data collection methods and the instruments that are going to be employed during it.

4.1 Methodology

This study is qualitative research because it explores narratives to analyze if there is identity co-construction through artistic projects developed during English language sessions. It uses a focus group approach in order to condense more student's perceptions. The instruments to collect data were reflective journals and the artistic projects that students created during the lessons. Their reflections were interpreted by teacher Felipe Moya and connected with his experience and reflection as well.

4.1.2 Qualitative Research Methodology

Qualitative research methodology is highly regarded in the social sciences due to its ability to encompass various data collection methods, such as interviews, which facilitate a deep understanding of participants' perspectives. Unlike quantitative research,

qualitative research does not convert verbal symbols into numerical data; instead, it relies on the words of participants or researchers to describe the phenomenon under study (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017, p.44). This approach focuses on exploring the intricate dynamics of social relations and understanding aspects of reality that cannot be quantified (Almeida, Faria & Queirós, 2017, p.370).

Given these characteristics, this study employs qualitative research methodology, specifically utilizing a narrative inquiry design. Narrative inquiry involves analyzing stories shared by participants to gain insights into individuals, cultures, and societies (Wolgemuth et al., 2019). Since personal identity is closely linked to life experiences, narrative research offers an effective means of exploring this relationship, particularly within the framework of Marcia's identity status paradigm.

Hence, the present research endeavor is oriented towards the examination of sculptures, driven by the intention to engender an authentic experiential milieu conducive to language acquisition through visual arts, while concurrently fostering the coalescence of students' individual identities via interactive engagement. This endeavor was made feasible through the collaborative arrangements established among student initiatives and the pedagogical framework of Task-Based Learning (TBL). This methodological approach affords students the opportunity, during the task phase, to engage in hands-on exploration of various sculpting techniques, augmented by constructive feedback on their homework assignments utilizing pertinent materials.

Furthermore, the students were afforded the opportunity to engage with each lesson's primary English topic, thereby fulfilling both pragmatic language objectives and

language usage objectives within the aforementioned Task stage. Simultaneously, they were able to expand their lexicon pertaining to artistic techniques and tools. These included techniques such as employing brushes to create textures, utilizing ribbon tools for texture creation, employing rulers or similar implements for precise material cutting, manipulating wire to construct supportive structures, incorporating creases into fabric, detailing hair, employing water to manipulate materials, utilizing rollers to flatten materials for fabric or hair creation, and applying varnish to impart crystalline clarity to eye details.

These techniques were collectively disseminated among the students subsequent to their implementation in refining their respective projects. Throughout this process, the teacher provided continuous oversight, offering guidance and elucidation on each technique while actively demonstrating its application to individual student projects. Noteworthy characters emerged from this collaborative endeavor, including representations of iconic figures such as Mike Wazowski, a flock of ducks, a hybrid human-goat character, creatively adorned pencil holders, and depictions of Pokémon and their offspring.

4.1.3 Focus Groups

As a supplementary method to narrative inquiry, focus groups are utilized to gather in-depth data based on participants' experiences through group interactions. This methodology allows participants to share their experiences and perspectives in a group

setting, guided by a moderator. The data collected through focus groups provide valuable insights into participants' life experiences, which can be further analyzed to understand their influence on personal identity formation (Poliandri et al., 2023, p.2-3).

At the time of the practice, there were a total of 12 students involved. However, the study focused on just 4 of them who continued with the project and agreed to take part in the research. This decision made the analysis easier. Additionally, the teacher, Felipe Moya, also went through the same steps and connected with these 4 students, fulfilling the study's goal of exploring the personal identity of a pre-service student-teacher and a group of students through their shared experiences in art and language.

4.2 Instruments

Data collection methods in this study are aligned with narrative research principles, focusing on capturing life stories and experiences related to personal identity formation. The description of life story episodes, including written narratives that were asked to be created at the end of each session. These methods enable the study to delve into various stages of personal identity formation, including arts, and to examine the influence of language learning experiences.

Personal narratives, which involve participants sharing long-form stories based on memories, offer additional insights into their personal identities and experiences. By engaging participants in storytelling, researchers can elicit authentic and natural speech, providing a deeper understanding of their lived experiences (Canals, 2017, p.397).

4.2.1 Reflective Journals

Reflective journals serve as the instrument where the student's narratives were collected, allowing participants to document their thoughts, feelings, and experiences throughout the study. These journals facilitate self-reflection and introspection, providing valuable insights into the participants' evolving identities and the impact of art and language experiences on their personal development (Northern Illinois University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2012).

4.2.2 Art projects

All the projects were made through the sessions during the whole semester according to Task Based Learning methodology, in which we have three stages, that mainly are the pre- task stage, the task stage, and the post-task stage. All the projects were carried out in the Task stage that is the longest in time. In this stage the students sculpt their characters and made the improvements to them, the idea was to create a space to provide feedback to the projects and through it reach more details in all the projects checking what they worked in their homes and what they advanced during the lesson.

Each lesson during my teaching practices was with students from 14 to 17 years old from Villemar El Carmen School public school and I could work with them in ten lessons where we practice several topics from Fundación ASE Syllabus such personal information; countries, nationalities and languages; numbers and money; seasons; shops

and places; interests, sports, activities and jobs; rooms and furniture; body parts and appearance; food, meals, cooking.

I told to the students that chose the materials to make their sculptures and it implied to think in the structures and the body of each project, it also meant to choose the tools like a paint brush, a roller, scissors, varnish, plastic tools, a brush, a ribbon tool, a ruler, a pinch, among others. I also request them to buy playdough, plasticine, or cold porcelain to make their projects as the main materials to sculpt.

I connect the English topics from the Fundación ASE syllabus with their projects thinking in the different characters each group had and I planned an activity that were related to these characters. For example, I connect the topic food and meals with the characters little Docks, Mike Wazowsky, Snorlax, and fantasy character, through an activity about write a short story in which all the groups feed their sculpture characters. Moreover, with the topic past simple and continuous and new vocabulary about days, months, and dates they write a little logbook about their project progress experiences.

5. Data Collection

Data organization involves a reflective process of the student's and teacher journals as well as their artistic products. Here, students and teacher documented their reflections on their art projects and language skills development. These reflections are asked to be consolidated into a journal at the end of each lesson and categorized according to specific themes, such as character features and overall course analysis. The data are then compiled and analyzed to gain deeper insights into the participants' experiences and personal identity formation processes.

Below, the overall description taken from the journals of each participant is presented.

Participant No. 1

This participant is characterized as a male student of 15 years old. His artistic project was little docks. From my point of view, I interpret there is an interest in learning (learned words) and a liking for English, however, there isn't the same liking for sculpture. Hence, I can say he recognizes how the topics are connected to the projects. It means, it is possible to say the lessons during the course are creating a didactic way to teach English through art.

Besides, I see that he has participated in all the sessions actively and has had a good performance in the tasks proposed for the course. He feels grateful because of the learning developed during the course and the way the teacher explains each topic since he says until now everything has been understood very well. He also mentions that overall including the project, the course has been very good. He says everything taught during the course was understood very well because teacher Felipe applied well each topic. He specifies several topics learned during the course, such as verb to be, present tenses, nationalities, WH questions, possessive adjectives and possessive apostrophes, ordinal numbers, past tenses, and future tenses.

Moreover, he explains teacher Felipe also relates this knowledge to the characters they choose for their project in features like shape, physical condition, and size. He expresses written and spoken features about his project, taking into consideration his character sculpture. He also talks about other important aspects in his project like what was the funniest part, and the challenges that arose while he was sculpting his character and the materials employed to make it. He expresses written and spoken features about his project, taking into consideration his character sculpture. He also talks about other important aspects in his project like what was the funniest part, and the challenges that arose while he was sculpting his character and the materials employed to make it. I realized that integrating the different topics from the Fundación ASE syllabus unit with characters through which the students can create language and talk about them, what they like or not, what they eat, or how they look like, was a good idea. Since my students can feel a connection between the topics and their characters and produce language.

Figure 1.

Little docks



Note. These are the little docks another sculpture that represents tenderness and at the same time respect for life.

Participant No. 2

This participant is characterized as a female student of 16 years old. Her artistic project was *Mike Wazowski*¹. I believe she has a particular taste in handcrafts, and understands the techniques employed to make a realistic eye in the character she chose. I also think is important that she had an idea about making the main structure through a Styrofoam sphere without help, which means she finds it useful to use different materials

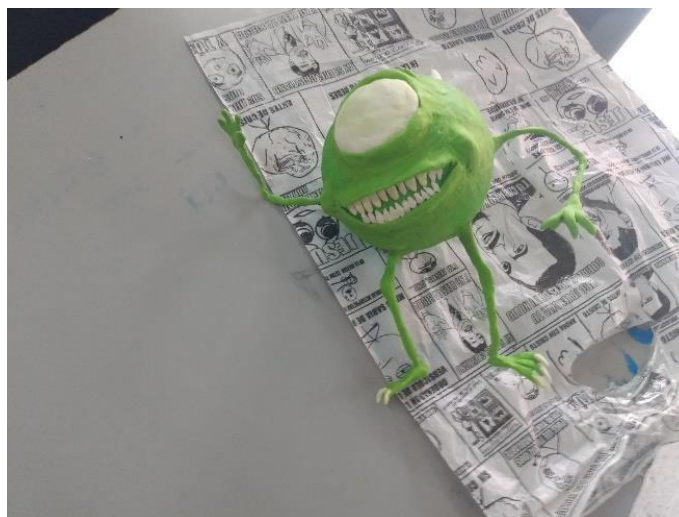
¹ He is a fictional character who appears in Disney/Pixar's *Monsters Inc.* franchise. He is a green one-eyed round monster with two arms, legs, and small horns.

than those I proposed. She likes her project and thinks it is funny and entertaining because it is a project different from usual. She also explains it was difficult to make a sculpture because she is not used to making handicrafts, nevertheless, the final project result is very good and helps to learn new techniques to make more real different parts of the body like the fingers, the nails, and the teeth. She says the project is very related to the lessons and helps to know more about the characters going beyond their physical characteristics as their colors and clothes, until know what *Mike Wazowski* eats.

She can talk about his character sculpture and explain the main physical characteristics it has. She can use vocabulary about physical appearance to describe other characters similar to the one she chose. She also can talk about what kind of food her character eats, and the materials used to make her project. I felt interested in the character she chose because it was not difficult to integrate the different techniques to reach a good result. I also understand that choosing a good character taking into consideration the materials and its difficulty, is something that sometimes we have to measure when we have limited time. However, a result like this makes me feel proud of my experience in both English teaching and sculpture which reflects part of what I have learned studying in the university and by myself as a hobby.

Figure 2.

Mike Wazowsky from the animated movie *Monsters INC.*



Note. It is a character from the movie *Monster Inc.*, his name is Mike Wazowsky and it is made from a Styrofoam sphere and green and white plasticine. The eye was made with an iris printed and we put some Varnish to create a crystal effect.

Participant No. 3

This participant is characterized as a male student of 14 years old. His artistic project was Snorlax². What I saw in the lessons regarding my student's performance was that he had great autonomy, because he was who needed less help by my part. It means, he was autonomous in their project and developed most parts by himself, I remember I only had to tell him about how to smooth the material and how to make Snorlax's jaw, since he already had previous experience with cold porcelain, and he had made other Pokemon before the beginning of the course as a free time activity. He likes his project

² He is a Pokémon species, a type of Pocket Monster, in Nintendo and Game Freak's Pokémon franchise.

because it inspires peace, is cute and he mentions it gets them to feel respect for life. For that reason, he decided to make a Pokemon named Snorlax (Figure 1) and sculpted a baby one and his father.

He says it is very interesting to use cold porcelain to make the characters that he wants and feels accompanied by them in his house. Through his project, he said he was wondering all the time about how to express the techniques learned in English, and the meaning of the actions he made to give shape to his sculpture in English. He also realized he learned new vocabulary about materials and tools. He says it was thrilling to express how he developed his project, what was the funniest part, the materials he used, and talk about the character, because not all people are familiar with Pokemon. I can say that this project was interesting for me, and I realized he appreciated the techniques I taught him to improve his sculpture. Overall, I understand that some students can learn English more easily if they really like a character and know it perfectly. It allows them to go beyond just achieving the requirements for approving their course and create an interest in learning how to say what they know about the character in English.

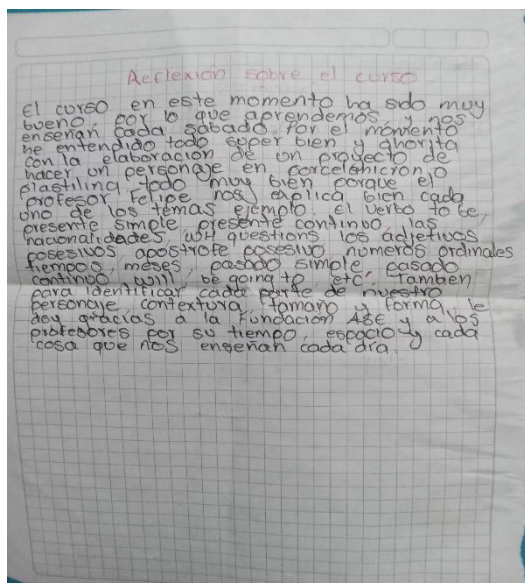


Figure 3.

Pokémon Snorlax and its baby.



Note. This is one of the artworks my students developed through one semester, and it is made in coldporcelain and some dyes to give it a colorful blue.

Participant No. 4

This participant is characterized as a female student of 39 years old. His artistic project was pencil holders. During the course, I observed an improvement in the way she pronounced the vocabulary learned during the course and the connection between words to create grammatically correct sentences. I also witnessed her way of using different tenses in the same writing exercise. She says this project was a good way to think and come up with an idea that is useful for recycling and is ecological. She felt interested in her project because she saw it useful to save the planet, and at the same time work on a handcraft. She also felt happy with her project since I allowed her to make an artwork

different from the other ones. Therefore, she used different materials not malleable and created several pencil holders with toilet paper rolls. She says that she understands many times the order of the words in the sentences and the differences between past tenses and present tenses. She also improved especially her writing skills, due to her strength, and most of the activities during the course were about writing. She talks about how she improves her speaking, even her fluency, and practices new vocabulary pronunciation thanks to the oral presentations, she made during the lessons. I have to be flexible with her and her project because she told me that she felt frustrated with malleable materials and that she prefers other ones.

Sometimes she used material different from the ones I provided her for the lessons, a book about grammar, and I felt that maybe they needed a material like that for the course. However, learning English is not just about grammar, and for that reason, I understand is important to guide our students through new and innovative methodologies.

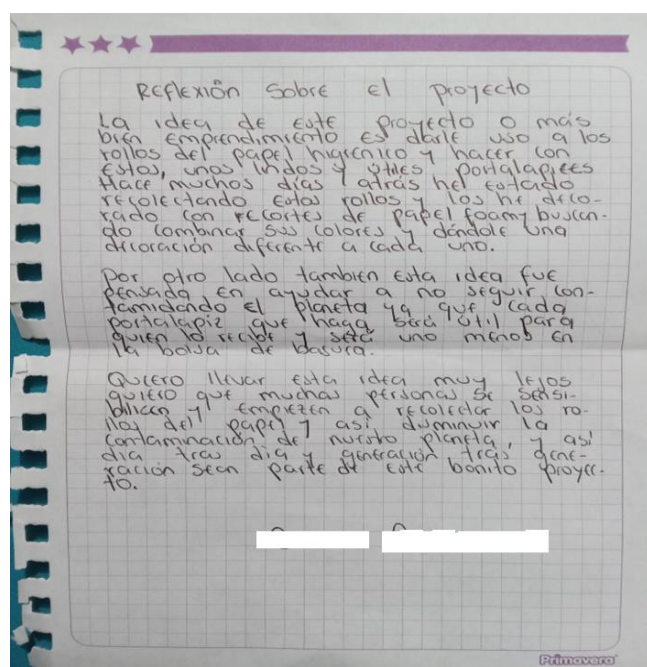


Figure 4.

Fantasy character



Note. Another example of an artwork made by my students this time in black plasticine.

Figure 5.

Pencil Holders



Note. This is another kind of sculpture made this time with toilet paper rolls.

5.2 Narrative Analysis of Student Experiences

This narrative analysis delves into the various experiences collected during the categorization process, providing insights into students' perceptions of their art projects and English language learning and how art cause an impact in the construction of their identity. To analyze I read the different journals from the students, and I compared them with mine. Then, from Marcias' paradigm theory in relation with the data collected in the instrument points at the answer of the research question which portrays the construction of the identity of students when working on art projects. During the analysis, the following categories emerged: Category No. 1- Self Concept and Self Discovery, Category No. 2- Interests and personal passions and Category No. 3- Social Relationships and Cultural Relevance.

Category No. 1 - Self-Concept and Self-Discovery:

In the description of participant No. 1, we observe how he recognizes his interests and preferences both in language learning and art. For example, he mentions his liking for English but not so much for sculpture, suggesting a self-assessment of his abilities and preferences. Additionally, he expresses gratitude for the learning and understanding gained during the course, reflecting a process of self-discovery in his ability to acquire knowledge and skills.

In the case of participant No. 3, his autonomy in the project and personal connection with the chosen character (Snorlax) are highlighted, indicating a process of

self-concept in terms of his artistic abilities and identification with certain themes or characters that reflect his personal values and tastes.

Category No. 2- Interests and Personal Passions:

Participant No. 2 chooses a project based on her interest in crafts and her fondness for the character of Mike Wazowski. She describes how she finds the project entertaining and fun, suggesting a personal connection with the theme and the experience of artistic creation.

Participant No. 4 shows interest in projects that have a social and ecological impact, indicating a personal connection with broader themes beyond art and language. Her choice to create recycled pencil holders demonstrates a commitment to her personal values and environmental concerns.

Category No. 3- Social Relationships and Cultural Relevance:

In the descriptions of the participants, social interactions related to the project are mentioned, such as discussions about the selected characters. For example, participant No. 3 mentions that not everyone is familiar with Pokémon, suggesting a social interaction around his project and cultural interests.

Additionally, cultural and personal connections can be observed in the choice of characters and how participants interact with them. For instance, participant No. 3 chooses a Pokémon that reflects his sense of peace and respect for life, suggesting a personal and cultural connection with the theme.

6. Conclusions

This research study has yielded various findings regarding personal identity, particularly in the exploration and commitment dimensions, as evidenced by the students' projects throughout the course. In terms of exploration, students demonstrated diverse goals and preferences through their project choices. Some aimed for complexity, selecting science fiction characters that aligned with their interests, while others opted for simpler projects, such as animal sculptures. These choices offer insights into students' interests and aspirations, showcasing how individual identities manifest in their project decisions.

In terms of the English language learning process through art projects, the commitment dimension revealed aspects of students' personalities and values. For instance, one participant's decision to sculpt a Pokémon character reflects a fondness for animals and a sense of respect for life. Others chose to work with recycled materials, highlighting their concern for environmental conservation. These decisions underscore how even small actions and choices can reveal significant aspects of personal identity.

The reflections provided by students further enriched our understanding of their projects and personal identities. For example, Participant No. 1's reflection emphasized the prioritization of English learning over project completion, indicating a strong commitment to language improvement.

In the realm of students' interests reflecting identity, efforts were made to enhance engagement through creative means despite limitations in learning resources. Flashcards featuring familiar characters from popular media were introduced to create a more engaging learning environment. This approach aimed to foster familiarity and facilitate language learning through relatable content, encouraging students to create stories and examples using the characters. Adaptability proved crucial in accommodating students' preferences and learning styles. Participant No. 4's reluctance to engage in traditional sculpting led to the exploration of alternative materials, such as toilet paper rolls, demonstrating the importance of aligning learning experiences with students' artistic interests.

Finally, this research project focused on portraying the personal identity of a preservice student-teacher and a group of his students based on the art and language lived experiences. It is evident that sculptural projects served as a means of facilitating English language learning and personal identity co-construction by fostering interaction with diverse materials and encouraging social engagement. The study created immersive experiences that integrated artistic preferences with language acquisition. This approach not only enriched students' learning experiences but also provided valuable insights into the complex interplay between personal identity, artistic expression, and language learning.

6.1 Limitations and further research

Although learning resources were limited during the lessons, I endeavored to infuse creativity by printing amusing flashcards featuring characters from popular media such as the Naruto TV series, movies like Monster Inc, Star Wars, and Nickelodeon TV series. My goal was to create a familiar environment for the students, integrating these images with examples to establish a context that was both memorable and conducive to language learning. Moreover, these flashcards were strategically incorporated into the warm-up stage, allowing students to engage with grammar topics and vocabulary in a more dynamic manner. They were encouraged to propose new examples using the same characters and, if inclined, to craft narratives employing various tenses.

It is imperative to have a contingency plan in place in the event that students are resistant to the proposed approach and to adapt to their preferences. Recognizing that students learn at different paces and possess diverse interests in visual arts or other didactic resources used in English lessons is essential. This flexibility was evident in the case of participant No. 4, who opted to work with toilet paper rolls to create pencil holders as an alternative to the sculpting project. This adaptation ensured that the learning

experience corresponded with the students' artistic inclinations, contributing to the co-construction of their personal identities.

This research project primarily focuses on sculptures as a means to provide a tangible, real-life experience conducive to learning English through visual arts and to co-construct the students' personal identities through interaction. Interaction with diverse materials and social engagement is pivotal, especially in the context of second language acquisition. It fosters compelling life experiences wherein students' preferences for different materials and characters facilitate the exchange of knowledge in both artistic and English learning domains.

These sculptures represent a different form of handicraft that allows for the expression of vibrant ideas in decorative shapes suitable for pencil holders, serving as practical tools for organizing our sculpting materials.

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