

**TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS ABOUT TEFL AT A RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL
UNDER ESCUELA NUEVA MODEL: A CASE STUDY**

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requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Rural schools in Colombia offer rich scenarios where outstanding practices can be developed due to the particularities of their backgrounds regarding history, culture, location, customs and beliefs that belong to each specific area. In this way, the teaching of English as a foreign language process must respond to the surrounding reality according to the needs that schoolchildren in such places demand. Thus, this research project aimed at describing what the teacher perceptions are in terms of rural school and Escuela Nueva methodology as well as the TEFL process itself regarding teaching strategies, time, teacher's role and evaluation which factors were identified and described in the conclusion of this inquiry. The research design relied on a case study as the intention was to show a single object of study to be described in depth. Observations and semi structured interviews were sources of data gathering to fulfill the objective proposed.

Keywords: *teacher's perceptions, TEFL, rural school, Escuela Nueva, case study.*

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1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Rural schools in Colombia face a huge variety of challenges and struggles according to the specific settings of each place. However, the talk must go further if we focus our attention on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL hereafter). One such example of it on my own experience as a student-researcher was a previous project focused on the TEFL classroom practice in rural schools under a narrative design, which allowed me to have close contact with the reality of what a teacher must deal with when carrying out his TEFL process in a rural school in Cúcuta. Likewise, as a pre-service teacher these experiences provided me with insightful information to have in mind when carrying out TEFL processes and to face those challenges according to the characteristics of such contexts.

Thus, along the present study, the discussion focuses on issues that surround the TEFL process within a very a specific target: a rural school in Cúcuta, Colombia. However, this project could not emerge from a single and individual purpose, indeed, the idea to intervene such context has been a major concern for the Semillero de Investigación named “Promotores del saber” from Cau Cúcuta –which has identified the reality of teaching and learning processes in rural schools as a rich scenario to evidence and reduce the existent gap between rural and urban institutions. In the same fashion, the current lack of descriptive and reflexive research in this field in Norte de Santander has promoted the necessity to broaden the opportunities to enact and provide the necessary understanding and intervention to this rural school so it can enhance the different educative processes done there, regarding English Language Teaching. Several authors agree by saying that the absence of any knowledge cannot lead to a solid understanding of what a rural school is for any practical or even political way (Serwood, 2000; Coladarci, 2007 and Bustos

Jimenez, 2011). As a matter of fact, the main purpose of doing research in this specific area was to offer wide and detailed information that can support and lead to new views and updated traits of multigrade classrooms in rural schools. Moreover, the relatable features that shape the development of teaching and learning processes in rural schools can drive to a better manner to enrich the way those processes occur, as stated by Boix (2011):

The autonomy of the students, the paper of the tutorial student in a heterogeneous group, the social micro-system that are developed in a space with as much diversity and pedagogical potential that offers the rural territory, all this within the framework of a school that of constant form must justify the pedagogical value of its practice to confront the supremacy of the ordinary school. (p. 14)

In fact, all that has been previously said exposes the potential offered by rural schools not only for its territory and the relationships managed in there, but also the diversity that makes the difference between rural and urban schools in regards of adapting practices for such realities. Thus, the Semillero promoted a previous research done in a rural school in Cúcuta intended to understand the teacher's narrative towards his TEFL process carried out under the Escuela Nueva pedagogical model. Such project aimed at opening doors for a rural teacher in order to tell the experience of working in this kind of setting under certain types of characteristics such as lack of material and teaching training, among others, but carrying out his practice above all to fulfill National Government expectations and standards for language teaching. Since then, the results showed the strong connection that surrounds the teaching process with all the interactions between the teacher and the school community that take place –both– in and outside the classroom. Although, it is expected that the teacher designs each lesson plan related to the needs and the means offered by the context, it is not fully developed yet. In fact, the struggle faced by the teacher remains since most of them are related to the teacher language domain as well as resources and material that are not evident at school, but he keeps teaching English the way he

thinks it can be the best for their students. Then, a fundamental step to continue the construction of knowledge and describing in this school is to recognize and identify the teacher's perceptions about the process he develops there, inasmuch as all those experiences have shaped his practicum, even though the purpose of this project is not to evidence teacher's weaknesses but providing him a new view of his own to facilitate and look up for the necessary choices to fulfill the National Ministry of Education expected demands.

In this way, the project fits mostly with the guidelines and interests of the research field 2 proposed by the Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera: Inglés program at Universidad Santo Tomás –which stipulates the study of the English Language and its contexts. Thus, the focus of the study relies on the English Teaching process carried out in a very specific setting, indeed, this project is also framed under the purposes and scope of the research subproject 4 that establishes the understanding of English teaching and learning contexts in EFL education, because the target population is mainly conformed by a teacher and his practice within the English field in a rural school in Cúcuta. Furthermore, the recent interest that has emerged from the Semillero has increased the trust between the University and the School not only to promote the study and intervention of rural schools regarding the English field, but also to support the construction of a solid literature under current issues regarding TEFL process in Norte de Santander. Likewise, the previous project done altogether with the Fondo de Investigación (FODEIN) from Universidad Santo Tomás in conjunction with this study of teacher perception can help other students from the licenciatura to strengthen the ongoing process to implement further strategies to enhance the development of teaching and learning processes in rural contexts.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Despite the National Ministry of Education (MEN hereafter) has set important and significant progress regarding Bilingualism policies and creating strategies for rural education such as *English for Colombia* (ECO) that: “*pretende desarrollar las cuatro habilidades básicas de comunicación: escucha, habla, lectura y escritura básica en los estudiantes de nivel A1 a través del uso de un material audiovisual adaptado a las comunidades ubicadas en los lugares más remotos del país*” (MEN, 2014); these do not cover all the Educational Institutions over the country yet. As an illustration, San Agustín de los Pozos Rural Primary School (SAP hereafter) through the previous research done focused on TEFL classroom practice evidenced the existent lack of the implementation of such strategy that was designed to facilitate the development of the TEFL in this rural school.

Moreover, the teacher of SAP is in charge not only of English but all the subjects that make part of the Curriculum from 3rd to 5th grade in primary school, at the same time, he must carry out his teaching process with no professional training in the English field. Consequently, the challenge of not having any knowledge about the pertinent methodology to carry out his teaching practice with methods and didactic material obstructs the achievement of the A.1.2 level expected on the *Estándares básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés* for Primary School which means that students must understand short, easy and illustrated texts about daily, personal and literary topics as well as the commands given by the English teacher (MEN, 2006, p. 21) however, this requirement does not differ between rural and urban schools.

In addition, SAP is one of the schools that belongs to the Camilo Torres Institutional Education, which works under the Monograde-Classroom methodology; nevertheless, since the

Escuela Nueva model aims at responding the educational needs for rural schools and the characteristics of each context, this methodology is applied at SAP because it fits mostly with the reality of the scholar context, then, the teacher must carry out his TEFL regarding the method criteria for multi-grade classrooms. Nevertheless, when the teacher is asked to provide a report about the students' learning process, it must be presented under the monograde classroom criteria as it is proposed by the *Sistema Institucional de Evaluación Educativa* (SIEE) of this rural school.

In the same way, the application of the Escuela Nueva model at SAP becomes another relevant aspect for the English teacher to consider since MEN states that this model was thought to develop students' autonomous work and to promote teacher mediator-role in multi-grade classrooms (n.d.) , which represents that, the teacher must carry out his TEFL with other grades at the same time. Besides, due to the flexibility of this methodology, the teacher can negotiate with students what subjects they want to learn. As a result, the TEFL is not considered within the main interests since the MEN (2014) provides the rural teacher only with Students' Guides for basic subjects such as Maths, Spanish, Social Studies and Sciences. Although there is a weekly hour for English classes in primary school proposed on the *Estándares básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés* (MEN, 2006, p. 31) this suggested schedule goes aside at the rural school, and TEFL remains incomplete.

On the other hand, the teacher of SAP does not have the necessary didactic resources and material that allow the development of his TEFL process. Indeed, he needs to appeal to the use of didactic material that is not-suitable to satisfy English level according to the given grades. Thus, the teacher he carries out his TEFL the way he thinks things can be taught. As a

consequence, by the end of the Primary School, it may be difficult for the students to reach the A 1.2 level expected by the MEN.

Likewise, another characteristic that makes the rural context particular is the variety of formal and informal sources of employment which constitutes a provisional solution to the lack of economic resources in the rural area. Therefore, the rural context gives more possibilities to get income and settle down regarding job and education access not only to the population belonging to the zone but also the ones who arrive and stay for a short time. In fact, this floating population becomes another challenge in terms of students' mobilization and their learning process because the teacher has to make them reach the same learning level that his frequent students have acquired along the primary school since the learning rhythms are varied, thus, the TEFL process must be different regarding the needs and reality that the rural context offers.

Consequently, all those characteristics, challenges and struggles have influenced the way that the teacher of SAP faces his TEFL process. Hence, the lack of professional training has made the teacher adapt his TEFL process based on his perceptions about the manner he can develop such process according to rural context's settings and the Escuela Nueva model features. In the same fashion, the implementation of this model could originate perceptions of how the teacher can deal with the flexibility whether the method permits it, thus, it was essential to know the way it can benefit or challenge his own TEFL.

Similarly, since the lack of material makes the teacher to look for his own didactic resources, these choices also influence the need to cover SAP's shortages to develop the TEFL process. Bearing in mind that the teacher's perceptions about the didactic means that suits the most the rural context reality are selected under no specific criteria, they do not ensure the quality and the access to proper strategies for TEFL processes at SAP. Thus, the challenges that surround the

rural context have influenced the choices made in the rural school regarding the way the teacher thinks he must teach and respond to the reality that such context demands.

Therefore, this research project aimed at knowing what the perceptions that the teacher of SAP has built from his own TEFL experience under a case study design. This will allow to know in depth the reality of the teacher perception within the context given to provide insightful information of what might characterize the development of the TEFL process in Cucuta rural areas.

2.1 Research Question

This project aimed at knowing a teacher's perception about teaching English in a rural school, thus, the following research question was formulated:

- What are the teacher's perceptions about the TEFL process at a Rural Primary School under Escuela Nueva model in Cúcuta?

In like manner, to answer the previous question, this study was guided by the following research objective:

2.2 Research Objective

To describe Teacher's perceptions about the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language process carried at a Rural Primary school under Escuela Nueva model.

3. JUSTIFICATION

The MEN through the *Programa de Fortalecimiento de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras* (PFDCLE hereafter) included the strategy ECO that focuses on rural schools. Nonetheless, having in mind that this strategy is not available to cover SAP needs, the teacher becomes the means to develop the TEFL process the way he considers corresponds with the features of the rural school. However, bearing in mind that the MEN also designed the *Currículo sugerido de Inglés* that provides teachers with clear and suggested curricular guidelines to help them improve their pedagogical practices in the classroom, as well as to make students reach the expected level of English in each grade (MEN, 2016), it is expected that, the rural teacher under a curricular autonomy can analyze, adapt and implement each one of the elements within the settings of the TEFL process in the rural school. Besides, in concordance with Gallo & Beckman (2016) “without policies tailored to the unique context of rural schools and communities, ensuring equity of access, resources, and opportunity in schools, becomes a difficult task”. It is therefore that, this research wants to know the teacher’s attitude and viewpoint towards the flexibility that the *Currículo sugerido de Inglés* permits in terms of adaptation for the rural school under the Escuela Nueva model.

Likewise, for this project it is important to know the teacher’s perceptions about the TEFL carried out at SAP since it aims at describing the way the teacher decides to develop his practice, bearing in mind, if the teacher has made it the way he thinks that fits the most the characteristics of the SAP:

Moreover, this project is intended to enrich the previous research done by the Semillero Promotores del Saber under the Narrative research design to consolidate the study of the English Language and its contexts, due to the lack of research in the rural region, mainly, in Norte de

Santander. According to Bonilla Medina & Cruz Arcila (2013) “Most research done in the field of language teacher education is framed by urban contexts”, Thus, this research looks to provide enough information about the TEFL process carried out and the specificities that surrounds the rural school that the teacher must deal with in Norte de Santander.

Besides, this is a descriptive study that seeks to show the way how the context features vary in terms of its formal and informal job opportunities, and they influence the way in which local people get their income and sustain their homes, as well as the floating population which demands the teacher to adjust his TEFL process each time new students arrive and leave. In fact, according to Moulton (2001) cited by (Ramos Holguín , Aguirre Morales, & Hernández, 2012) “while rural schools should not look like urban schools, they must offer the same opportunities as urban schools for children to advance through the school system to higher levels”. In addition, as Lopez (2005) suggested “in order for rural schools to improve their quality, the educational system needs to include the interests of the community”.

Also, this investigation was carried out under a case study design, having in mind that, as stated by Merriam in 2002 (cited in Aguirre Sánchez 2014), it is “an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution or community”. Thus, as this issue focuses on the teacher’s perceptions about his TEFL at SAP, the case study design will allow going deeper on the description of the reality of the context where the TEFL takes place, then, it will support the Subproject 4: Understanding English teaching and learning contexts in EFL Education, because of the interactions that surround the rural school.

Besides, since the aim of this research is to know the teacher’s perceptions; the case study will allow us to describe his reality without manipulating his role in the study; also, this research design will permit to involve the rural context characteristics that might affect the way the

teacher perceives his own practice. Moreover, as stated by Baxter & Jack (2008) “One of the advantages of this approach is the close collaboration between the researcher and the participant, while enabling participants to tell their stories”. Thus, the relationship between researcher and participant and the characteristics of the rural context as well as teacher’s training and the Escuela Nueva model will make the teacher-participant realize the way he has carried out his TEFL choices to reflect upon them.

In addition, this issue raises a personal and academic interest as researcher since the need for understanding in depth rural realities evokes the different characteristics that teachers must face under any circumstances and how the context shapes the way teaching is carried out, either by the variety that this kind of settings offer or the wide range of didactic knowledge that a teacher can build for a strong awareness during the construction of a teacher’s identity. Therefore, as researchers, this study will provide meaningful learning about how to identify issues that teachers face in their daily life in order to analyze them and enhance the way they teach.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the general objective of this research study which aimed at describing the teacher’s perceptions in regards of the TEFL processes carried out at a Cúcuta rural primary school under Escuela Nueva model, it is fundamental to define the constructs that guide this study. Thus, this section deals with the definition and the exploration of previous studies done related to the different aspects that took place in this investigation: *Teacher’s perceptions, Teaching of English as a foreign language, rural school and Escuela Nueva*. Actually, it is

important to highlight that not many studies had been found regarding EFL education in rural schools either in Norte de Santander or Colombia.

4.1 Teacher's Perceptions

In the first place, to establish the viewpoint of this concept for the study, it is convenient to define what is meant by perception. According to Démuth (2013) based on Constructivist theories, perception is defined as:

The end product of the interaction between stimulus and internal hypotheses, expectations and knowledge of the observer, while motivation and emotions play an important role in this process. Perception is thus influenced by a wide range of individual factors that can lead to an inadequate interpretation. (p. 31)

On the one hand, the act of perceiving within the psychology field according to Jordaan & Jordaan (1996) cited by Lewis (2001) has valuable considerations:

Fundamental to perception is that there is an experiencing person or perceiver; secondly, that something is being perceived (either an object, person, situation or relationship); thirdly, there is the context of the situation in which objects, events or persons are perceived and finally, there is the process nature of perception starting with the experiencing of multiple stimuli by the senses and ending with the formation of percepts. (p. 274-275)

Moreover, Lewis (2001, p. 276) defined the “perceiver” following authors such as Randolph and Blackburn (1989, p.87) who identified three factors involved in the act of perceiving: “what the individual has previously learnt, as well as the motivation and the personality of the perceiver”. In like manner, Coren *et al* (1999, p. 532-550) summarized, “gender as well as personality and cognitive differences as contributing to differences in perception”. Finally, Robbins (1991, p.129) “sees the attitudes, interests, motives, experience and expectations of the perceived as having an influence on that which is perceived”.

In contrast, Despaigne (2010, p. 58) following Hume's ideas defined perceptions as "sensations – outward sentiments – and reflections – inward sentiments". Thus, perceptions were focused on knowing the reflection of the choices made by the teacher regarding his TEFL process in a Cúcuta rural primary school, having in mind Despaigne (2010, p. 56) who told us that perceptions "will also depend on our own personal experience(s) with the language and its associated culture(s)" thereupon, it was adequate to take into account the teacher's experience and his relationship with the language taught.

Additionally, the author stated that "Language teaching... involves perceptions that are focused on reflections... this is to say that inward sentiments, which are not always recognized at the conscious level, are the origin of the learners' attitudes towards the language learning process" (Despaigne, 2014, p. 58). In this way, to describe teacher's perception it is fundamental to identify what are the sentiments that at some conscious or unconsciously level teacher has built towards the TEFL process and impact the decisions made within the classroom, similarly, as stated by Seng Swee (2017, p. 29) "perceptions may influence teachers' practices; what they subscribe to may determine what they emphasize in the classroom".

Therefore, in this study teacher's perceptions were seen as the teacher's reflection from a personal view of his TEFL process carried out at SAP, having in mind, the different aspects that involve multi-grade classrooms such as the lack of resources, no professional training, among other challenges faced by the teacher.

On the other hand, Dja'far, Cahyono, & Bashtomi (2016) provided in their study an examination of EFL students' and teachers' motivation of English for specific purposes in Indonesia. This study explored the strategies used by the teachers based on the perceptions of students' motivation. Here, researchers used questionnaires and an achievement test to know

students' motivation. As a conclusion, the authors recommend teachers to apply motivational strategies in classrooms as the strategies bring benefits to the improvement of students' learning achievement.

Besides, Seng Swee (2017) in a study focused on Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Storytelling as a Language Teaching and Learning Resource, showed the perceptions of both sides, teaching –practice- and learning –achievement-, however, the author stated that the link between them is not always conclusive. The instruments used were mainly teachers' and students' questionnaires as well as interviews for participants. Findings suggested that teachers had a positive perception on storytelling, but it does not necessarily mean that they put it into practice. Besides, researcher stated that through discourse analysis applied to the teachers' and students' responses, she concluded that storytelling should be considered by educators as a resource for primary school children.

Likewise, Hernández Méndez & Reyes Cruz (2012) in their descriptive study developed in a Mexican university was intended to identify the perceptions of instructors of English as a foreign language about corrective feedback and their practice in classroom. With this in mind, a semi structured interview and a questionnaire were used by the researchers to collect the data. Findings showed that teachers had a positive perception of oral corrective feedback; however, the study found that some of them considered it as optional since instructors are concerned with students' feelings and emotions. The researchers also suggested that corrective feedback provided by the teacher is preferred that the one provided by peers.

Furthermore, authors such as Elmas & Aydin (2017) and Şener & Çokçalışkan (2017) reported studies regarding Pre and In-service teachers' perceptions towards their research skills and professional development respectively. Both studies were developed under a qualitative

design. On the one hand, the results showed that research activities develop EFL pre-service teachers' skills regarding language content and research knowledge, while they perceived several problems during the process. The study suggested that research skills should be a 'must' course in pre- and in-service teacher education programs. On the other hand, authors found that teachers were aware of the significance and necessity of professional development and saw it as a process which helped them to be more knowledgeable and experienced.

In addition, Chen (2018) developed a research design under a narrative approach that aimed at describing the perceptions of EFL college students towards collaborative learning. In the study, data collection was developed through interview questions in which the researcher observed, took notes, and recorded interview responses from each participant. Findings reported showed that students easily realized that they were able to solve problems as a group that they would not be able to solve as individuals; besides, the study concluded that when students do work together, they bring effective strategies into the classroom activity.

4.2 Teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL)

To talk about TEFL it is good to start by saying that nowadays teaching a foreign language had become a mandatory right all over the country (MEN, 1994), however, English is not used for communication purposes in Colombia, thus, it was relevant for this project to comprehend and highlight the definition of the foreign language and its teaching process. In this way, according to Richards, Platt, and Platt (1992) cited by Graham (2011):

EFL refers to "the role of English in countries where it is used as a subject in schools but not used as a medium of instruction in education nor as a language of communication (e.g., government, business, industry) within the country". (p. 8-9)

Likewise, the MEN (2005, p.5) considers that a foreign language is the one that is not spoken within immediate and local environment, since daily social conditions do not require its permanent use for communication, however, TEFL in Colombia is seen as the process that aims to have citizens capable of communicating in English, with internationally comparable standards as stated on the *Estándares básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés* (MEN, 2005).

Moreover, inasmuch as TEFL process is evidenced through the student-teacher relationship, the activities developed, the topics taught, and the didactic resources and materials used in classroom they all constitute aspects that are intrinsically involved when developing the TEFL process. Therefore, in this study TEFL was understood as a process that responds to the 21st century global demands, especially the necessity and the reality of rural schools; in which the national government has provided opportunities to develop bilingualism processes to offer a better and qualified education in Colombia.

Indeed, authors such as Gualteros Duque & Gómez Plata (2013) reported on their study an exploration of teachers' conceptions about TEFL in Pereira's rural area. In this study, researchers used observations and students' and teachers' interviews in order to compare the teachers' practices and their discourse. Findings suggested that there is underestimation of the rural students' capacity, whilst participating teachers' conceptions do privilege receptive activities above the productive ones; likewise, the authors found that there is a divergence between teachers' practice observed and their discourse. The study concluded that the teachers' conception has to do with students' low interest in learning English in rural areas; consequently, they do not see it necessary for their future.

Otherwise, Aguirre Sánchez (2014) within his project explored the beliefs of a group of pre-service teachers; the project aimed to know the teacher's role in some general pedagogical and emotional aspects inside the classroom. As the study was carried out under a case study methodology such design was used in order to get “an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution or community” (Aguirre Sánchez, 2014, p.34). This methodology was considered by the author because its main purpose of it was to observe the participants' natural behavior in their place of teaching practices.

Additionally, Escobar Alméciga (2013) concluded in his research that:

English language teaching policies in Colombia are rife with discursive practices that systematically shape the identities of those they address to strategically introduce procedures which seek to benefit specific social groups, thus broadening the gap between social groups by providing unequal and disingenuous opportunities rather than making appropriate language education truly available to all, as it falsely purports to do. (p. 58)

4.3 Rural School

Rural schools differ according to the specific characteristics of the context that surround the educational institution; hence, it was crucial for this project to establish the view of rural school that fitted with the purpose of the study. Based on Ábos, Torres & Fuquet (2017) authors believe that it is complex to define rural school due to the many and different ‘rural’ realities that occur as a result of the accelerated changes of today's society. In like manner, the author stated that “the proximity of rural environments to large population centers, the labor conditions of teachers, the sociocultural level of the population, material resources, infrastructures and communications, etc., are aspects that must be considered when studying said realities”. (Ábos, Torres & Fuquet 2017, p. 3).

Nevertheless, as there are a huge variety and definitions of rural school, in this study, the view that supported this construct is the one established by (Boix, 2004):

“Entendemos por escuela rural esa escuela unitaria y/o cíclica que tiene como soporte el medio y la cultura rural, con una estructura pedagógico-didáctica basada en la heterogeneidad y multinivelaridad de grupos de distintas edades, capacidades, competencias curriculares y niveles de escolarización, y con una estructura organizativa y administrativa singular, adaptada a las características y necesidades inherentes al contexto donde se encuentra ubicada”. (p. 13)

The previous statement says that the rural school includes a rural culture with a didactic and pedagogical structure that may vary according to the different ages, capacities and scholar levels inherently adapted to the characteristics and needs where it is located.

Likewise, Bustos Jimenez (2011) cited by Olleta Alcalá (2013, p.11) affirmed that rural school has been able to overcome numerous barriers throughout its history, "becoming in many cases in places for innovation, experimentation and the development of outstanding educational practices". Besides, Bonilla & Cruz-Arcila (2014, p.118) stated that “in Colombia there is a great historic gap between rural and urban systems of education”.

In addition, following García Perez & Marín Gómez (2015) suggestion, in Colombia rural teachers’ training haven’t been into spotlight throughout its history and the work of those who have focused on it hasn’t been enough, hence, it is fundamental to train pre-service teachers since the concern for providing professionals who attend rural challenges is still limited.

Thus, in this study, the rural school was understood as a rich scenario that provides the opportunity to connect the culture and the school all along with the different aspects that surround the reality of the context and its participants within a singular and inherent relation, furthermore, it is pertinent to highlight that in many rural classrooms including SAP work under

Escuela Nueva model and represent for teachers a methodological challenge to have in mind when developing their TEFL processes, hence, this methodology represent also a construct that help us to describe clearly the educational reality of rural schools.

On the other hand, Ramos Holguín, Aguirre Morales, & Hernández (2012, p. 136) shared a pedagogical experience which was carried out in a rural school. Its main purpose was to integrate eleventh graders' rural context through the design of curricular units. The authors concluded that "rural education highlights the need to take into account the specificities in rural education which need to be included in the curriculum". Otherwise, "teachers should see their students as individuals with specific needs and diverse backgrounds that belong to certain social groups, more than seeing students as equal members with the same characteristics, needs, and interests in society".

Moreover, Bonilla & Cruz-Arcila (2014) and (2013) reported two studies done with five English Language Teachers in Colombian rural areas. The purpose of those studies was to characterize the socio-cultural features of the teaching of a foreign language in rural areas in Colombia. This study relied under an emergent research design; the data collected was mostly textual in nature, their focus on the participants' views of the phenomenon and the findings were reached following an interpretative process. These characteristics made the study qualitative. The authors emphasized that:

"This article attempts to reach an understanding of the ways in which the foreign language teaching profession is being conceived by teachers who work in the difficult conditions of rural areas and whose agenda does not seem to be well enough appreciated in the national plans". (p. 128)

4.4 Escuela Nueva

Since the Escuela Nueva was the methodology established at SAP, it was necessary to comprehend what the definition of such model is. Based on Escuela Nueva webpage definition the model's approach is "child-centered, community-based education led by teachers who are facilitators for active, participatory and cooperative learning" (n.d.).

Expanding the previous definition, Gómez (2010) stated:

"Escuela Nueva model for Colombian rural schools, active from 1975, that offers 5 years of primary school with one or two teachers. Its purpose is to offer a rural primary education complete, low cost, through a self-learning active and flexible system, based on ... flexible student promotion processes from one grade level to another". (p. 282)

In concordance, MEN (n.d.) mentions that Escuela Nueva is intended also "to develop students' autonomous work and promoting teacher mediator-role in multi-grade classrooms". In like manner, it is also appropriated to define what a multi-grade classroom is. According to Bustos (2006) cited by Herrera Torres & Buitrago Bonilla (2015) described:

"Multi-grade classrooms present a series of positive values such as the strengthening of social relationships, the poor presence of aggressive attitudes, the increment of tolerance thanks to the existence of flexible groups conformed by heterogeneous ages, the positive coexistence, the quality of interpersonal relationships and not age-grade relation".(p. 175)

Besides, Posada Ortiz (2014, p.128) described the theoretical principles of the research component in a Bachelor's Program. The author emphasized that "the case is a unit, entity, or phenomenon with defined boundaries that the researcher can demarcate or "fence in", she also described that there are three types of case studies. That is to say, the descriptive case study fitted most with the research purpose.

Authors like Panzachi Heredia & Luchini (2015) and Mesa Villa (2017) also agree in their projects that a Case Study design provides detailed information in order to understand a phenomenon by examining it in depth.

5. RESEARCH DESIGN

5.1 Type of study

Research in educational settings vary depending on the view each participant has regarding the studied phenomena, moreover, as this investigation aimed at describing the teacher's perceptions; such aspect made this research a descriptive study, that, as pointed out by Harwell (2001, p. 148) “seeks to understand the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of participants”—which means that, observations and interviews were the kind of sources of data collection for such studies.

In like manner, one of the most common methods used in social science research is Case study—which— according to Yin (2009, p.18) “is an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when boundaries between such aspects are not evident”. Hence, since this research had to do with the TEFL process carried out at SAP, the methodology relied under a descriptive tradition that “emphasizes the need to understand phenomena in their cultural and social contexts” (Ellis, 2012, p.42) whilst the research design corresponded to case study which looks up at developing “an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution or community” (Merriam, 2002, p.8) in which the phenomenon studied is also called the ‘case’.

In addition, in a case study, the researcher played the role of observer of the characteristics of a student, a class or a school —also known as the unit of analysis— in order to make generalizations about such population. (Nunan, 1995)

Otherwise, inasmuch as this study was intended to know what the teacher's perceptions within a rural school in Cúcuta regarding his TEFL process are, having in mind the aspects that surround the school context all along with its demands and challenges and to describe them, such

purposes fitted with the Research Subproject 4: Understanding English teaching and learning contexts in EFL education that—along with the case study design, aimed at understand from a deep and holistic analysis of the data, how the rural context took part in English language teaching process. Therefore, this study researched on a social situation that was seen through the reflection made by teacher towards his perceptions about TEFL process carried out at SAP.

5.2 Context

The present study was conducted in a rural school located in Cucuta, Colombia. Initially, the desire of describing the teacher's perceptions emerged from a previous study developed in the same educational institution last year which attempted to understand the teacher's classroom practice under a narrative design. Thus, the permission of using the 'SAP' name during this project was due to a signed agreement between both, Universidad Santo Tomás and the head of the educational institution.

Besides, SAP is a rural school that belongs to Camilo Torres Educational institution; its location is one of the farthest surroundings of Corregimiento Buena Esperanza that is about two hours far from Cúcuta. The main purpose of SAP is to provide rural elementary education to students living nearby the school. On the one hand, the school infrastructure is little, it includes four classrooms in whole but two of them are unoccupied, the school also has a bio-healthy park, a scholar lunchroom since the school is included within the feeding school program belonging to the Cúcuta municipality, finally, two teachers work there, one in charge of pre-school to 2nd grade and the other one for 3rd to 5th grade.

On the other hand, the economic activities in the area are mostly developed in two different scenarios, agriculture and employers of two companies that are settled in the surroundings. The first one are the most representative labor activity of any rural context in Colombia, in this sense,

rice and plantain farming are the main incomes from inhabitants at SAP, in addition, two companies —due to their business responsibility— provide job for those who belong to Buena Esperanza surroundings. Additionally, it is important to mention that thanks to the previous research, it is pertinent to state that the community of the rural school is empowered of the educational and infrastructure development of the school since it is something that differs from urban areas.

5.3 Participants

In this study the participant was a male teacher from a Rural Primary School in Cúcuta rural area inasmuch as he was the same one that participated in the previous research project developed by the Semillero Promotores del Saber, besides, throughout this study his name would be referred as the Teacher to protect his real identity. Moreover, the criteria to select the participant some features were needed:

- To hold a bachelor's degree in any elementary subject such as Maths, Sciences or Spanish.
- To have had experience of working in rural areas with no less than three years under the Escuela Nueva methodology.
- To have no knowledge or training in TEFL.

5.4 Data Collection Instruments

This section starts by saying that, as Merriam (1998) suggests “any and all methods of gathering data from testing to interviewing can be used in a case study”. Thus, according to the research design, the instruments selected during this study were direct observation and semi-structured interviews which were indispensable during the research process inasmuch as they provided the vital information to answer the research question.

5.4.1 Direct Observation

In Sabino's view (1992) cited by Ruiz Medina, Borboa Quintero , & Rodríguez Valdez (2013, p.16) the observation “puede definirse, como el uso sistemático de nuestros sentidos en la búsqueda de los datos que necesitamos para resolver un problema de investigación”. Such technique implies an interaction between the researcher and any social group. The use of this instrument is based on the idea that the researcher's personal coexistence —with the setting he studies on— can lead to have access to the group's activities, allowing to understand easier the target population performances, their experiences and mental processes.

Direct observation, thus, helps to obtain from individuals their definitions about reality and the constructs that they have built on their own, which in this case for this research project, those constructs are related to the TEFL and rural school.

It is also pertinent to state that Direct Observation developed during this study was also classified as Non-participant; following Ruiz Medina, Borboa Quinter , & Rodríguez Valdez ideas (2013):

“Cuando el observador no pertenece al grupo y sólo se hace presente con el propósito de obtener la información, la observación, recibe el nombre de no participante. La observación permite conocer la realidad mediante la percepción directa de los objetos y fenómenos”. (p. 17)

This instrument was used three times during the study. Its main purpose was to identify the way teacher develops his TEFL process carried out at SAP under the Escuela Nueva model. In this instrument the focus was mostly regarding aspects such teacher's role, student's role and evaluation as well as including item such as timing, resources, among others. In order to provide a sample of the instrument, check the template that the researcher used as a guide during this data collection procedure (See appendix 1).

In addition, the innovations and changes within a certain school setting can be observed from inside out to know how those changes are being incorporated as well as the barriers and results related to them. This technique implied three stages (Goetz and Lecompte, 1991):

1. Access to the scenario: during this stage it was important to get the visibility, and accessibility not only to the context and the teacher's willingness to participate along the study.
2. Stay on stage: in this phase it was essential to consider three additional aspects to keep the study's fluency: the social dynamic between the participant and researcher as well as the rural institution and its context and how to proceed in there. The relationships and support from both sides were crucial to the development of the study.
3. Withdrawal from stage: at this point, the collection of data and the integration and analysis process had been already done in such a way, that relevant and understandable theories were revealed. Thus, it was appropriated to take certain distance from the setting to avoid conflicts with the results and final considerations of the knowledge emerged.

Therefore, during the development of this instrument, a format was used to take notes (See Annex 1), having as a final purpose to register the events observed in there, as well as further information or the description of any incident that the researcher considered relevant for the study. Likewise, personal views that may have had relation with calls of attention that the researcher made about some aspects to have in mind for further observations in there.

5.4.2 Semi-structured Interviews

The interview, according to Dörnyei (2007, p. 134) is a process which "has a structure and a purpose to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the

meaning of the described phenomena”. In like manner, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009:1) cited by Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, (2014, p. 16) agree by saying that interviewing “attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ points of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations”.

In this way, the interview for this study consisted of a colloquial dialogue between the researcher and the participant (teacher), with the intention of discovering opinions and perceptions and facilitating the expression of his experiences and personality. This instrument was recorded and transcript for its usage during the analysis process.

This instrument was also used twice during the research and its main purpose was to know what the teacher’s perceptions regarding the TEFL process carried under Escuela Nueva model are, including the aspects that surround the reality of the rural school and its challenges, as well as the teacher training, his thoughts and opinions towards the language along with his experience in such contexts. Furthermore, as the teacher did not have language domain, these instruments were designed in Spanish to avoid misunderstandings for the participants (See appendix 2). Later on, for data analysis, some fragments that were considered fundamental for the process were translated by the researcher.

Indeed, during data collection process the implementation of this instrument was followed by Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik (2017, p. 17) whom states that in semi-structured interviews “researchers use interview guides as resources to direct the interviews, but at the same time, the questions are usually open-ended to allow participants to elaborate and researchers to pursue developing themes”. In that sense, this instrument was oriented in a very subtle way into two semi structured interviews, with no time lapses defined due to the nature of the moment itself and with the purpose of framing it within a process of flexibility and opening, making emphasis

on the interest of the research, reducing formalities and improving the memory of the participant, at the same time, allowing all topics to be treated, reducing confusion about the research topic as well as helping the participant to explore, recognize and accept his needs with respect to the pedagogical practice of a rural teacher and the knowledge of English as a foreign language and its sociocultural reality as support of the educational act. (See Annex 2)

6. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Methodology

The present study was immersed within a descriptive tradition, referred as “the need to understand phenomena in their cultural and social contexts” (Ellis, 2012, p.42), nevertheless, to achieve that, it was necessary to appeal to an interpretive process of the information provided by the participant.

That is to say, what is observed and its meaning, obeys to the previous formation of the investigation, the current representations, the values, the dogmas, among others. In this way, Martínez (2011, p. 26) pointed out that within this interpretation knowledge is “fruto o resultado de una interacción, de una dialéctica o dialogo entre el conocedor y el objeto conocido”.

Likewise, referring to the process aforementioned Martínez (2011) stated:

“Se trata de identificar, básicamente, la naturaleza profunda de las realidades, su estructura dinámica, aquella que da razón plena de su comportamiento y manifestaciones. De aquí que lo cualitativo (que es el todo integrado) no se opone a ninguna forma de lo cuantitativo (que es solamente un aspecto), sino que lo implica e integra, especialmente donde sea importante”. (p. 66)

It implies the study of an integrated whole that forms or constitutes primarily, a unit of analysis and makes something what it really is. Therefore, the guidelines to set a methodological

orientation should start from the outline of a view that allows seeing the reality from different perspectives. Then, that is understood as a dialectical style, considering so, a dialectical relation between the subject and the object of study.

In the same way, thematic analysis was proposed as the path to process all the information collected. Through thematic analysis, the study could set “an effective way of linking data extracts to more abstract categories and concepts and of re-arranging them in support of theoretical arguments” (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014, p. 80-81). That means organizing data by themes (also called ‘categories’) and sub-themes (sub-categories), indeed, all the codification and selection of the teacher’s discourse was driven under the design of different categorization phases described later on this paper.

Besides, within the thematic analysis approach, there were two key characteristics: “iterative” and “interpretive” which — based on Dörnyei (2007, p. 72-73) shaped the data analysis strategies used in this study. Then, the analysis became “iterative” due to the continuous process of codification of data collected; in the same fashion, the re-arrangement of the category system and the different stages developed helped the researcher to modify the themes “categories” which answered the research question by following the participant’s narrative. Finally, since the focus was centered on the study of the context phenomena, the findings emerged from the interpretation of the different realities seen and discussed between theory and the teacher’s experience from the researcher’s own analysis.

Last, the research design also corresponded to include field work —which based on Yuni y Urbano (2011, p. 122) stated that in field work the researcher “debe planificar y adoptar una serie de previsiones antes de entrar al campo. Estas decisiones orientan las fases iniciales y van modificándose en el terreno”. In fact, prior to the data collection process, many fixes were made

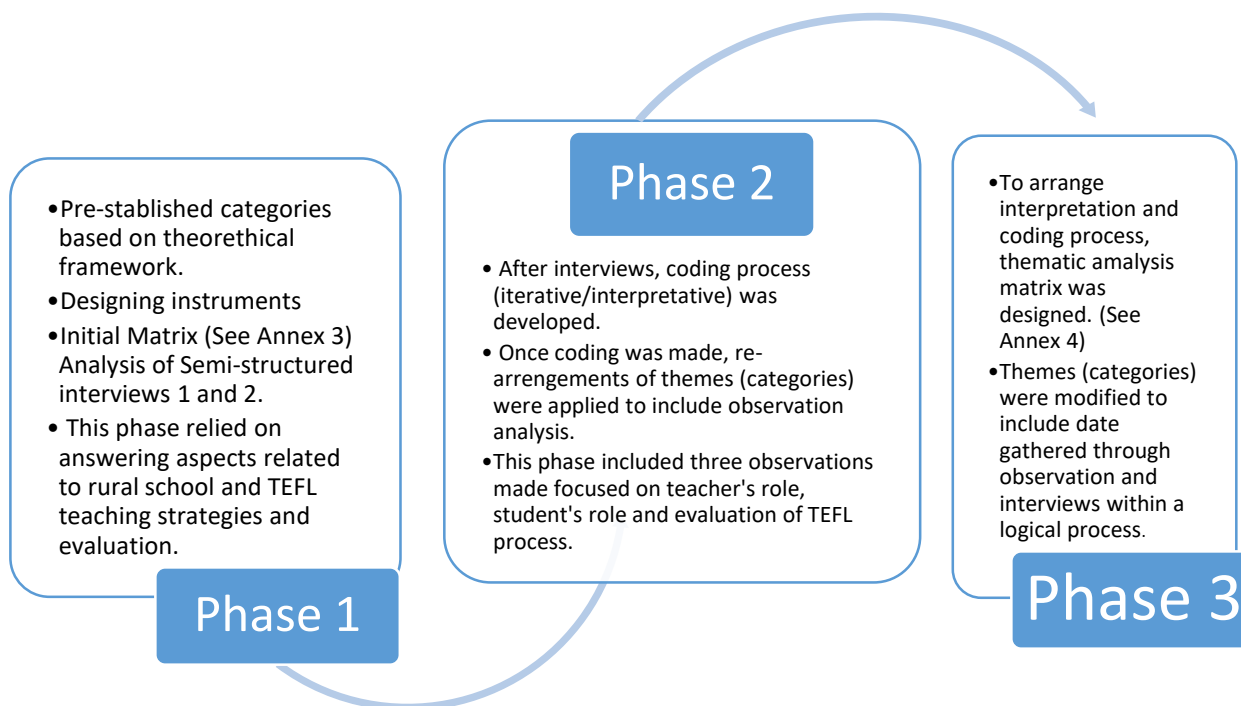
to the instruments, in order to elicit specific information from the object of study. Those arrangements were consulted and replaced based on the application of “pilot instruments” which provided new ideas about the possible struggles to avoid misunderstandings and lack of trustworthiness of the final results. Besides, the changes involved formulation of new questions and the design of the templates for the collection process as well as adjustments to the matrixes of analysis. Therefore, field work is a research situation that provides to include the advancement of manageable and multiple techniques that were thought to reach information through a wide range of procedures.

6.2 Categorization

Since knowing involves relating information, possessing competences and proceeding with them, carrying out such processes allow to solve problems and make decisions. Hence, it is fundamental to point out that connections and proper relationships were organized with the participant with the aim to establish a process of sharing information that served as the basis for the construction of knowledge emerged from this study.

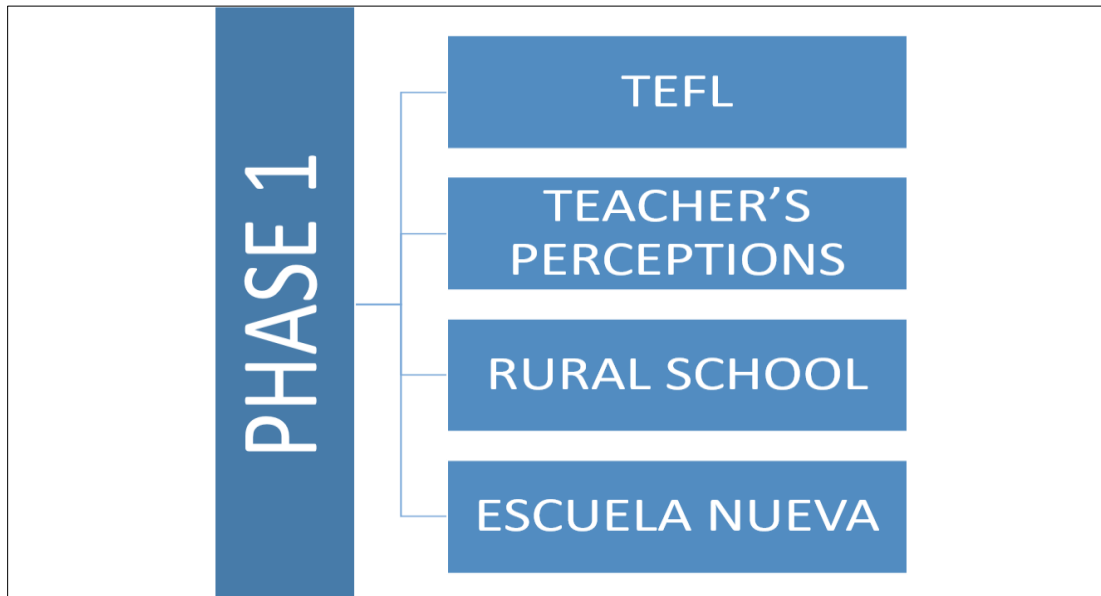
Consequently, it is pertinent to demonstrate the evidences that defined the foundations of the pedagogical praxis of the teacher in the rural context focused on the knowledge of English. In this manner, the findings correspond to the TEFL process that was developed at SAP rural school; selecting the teacher from primary school with no training in English.

Figure 1. Analysis Process



Once data was gathered; recordings made by the researcher were transcript and located into an initial a matrix of analysis (See Annex 3) which was designed and organized by questions according to a set of pre-established categories that relied on the constructs that shaped the theoretical framework of this study. Thus, the initial phase was proposed earlier during the analysis process based on the prior idea of pre-established categories right after the semi structured interviews were applied. Once these categories were established, they were constituted in order to have the necessary basis for the reconstruction of the teacher's practice in the rural context.

Figure 2. Categorization Phase 1.



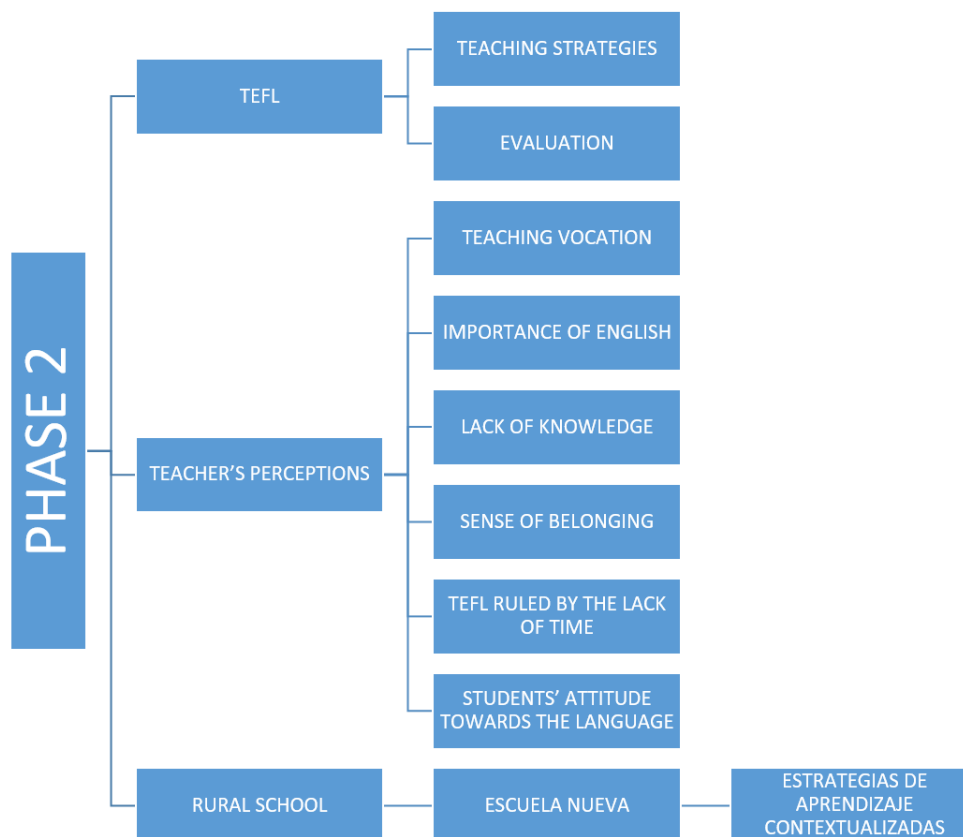
As shown in Figure 1, pre-established categories had a close relationship with the topics of the interviews (See Annex 2) as well as the constructs from the theory selected, which, allowed the recognition of the object of study; likewise, all emphasis was placed on the teacher's practice in the rural context along with its interaction with the English language as within the development of the educational act.

Moreover, this information was organized following steps proposed by Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, (2014, p. 75) which “involves repeated reading of the data, coding and categorization of data extracts, and their reorganization under thematic headings”.

Despite the fact that the participant provided a whole narrative of his experience about his praxis and the relation with the context and personal thoughts and sentiments towards them; this process of codification demanded the researcher the re-arrangement of the pre-established categories that were placed on the initial matrix of analysis (See Annex 3) into a more complex

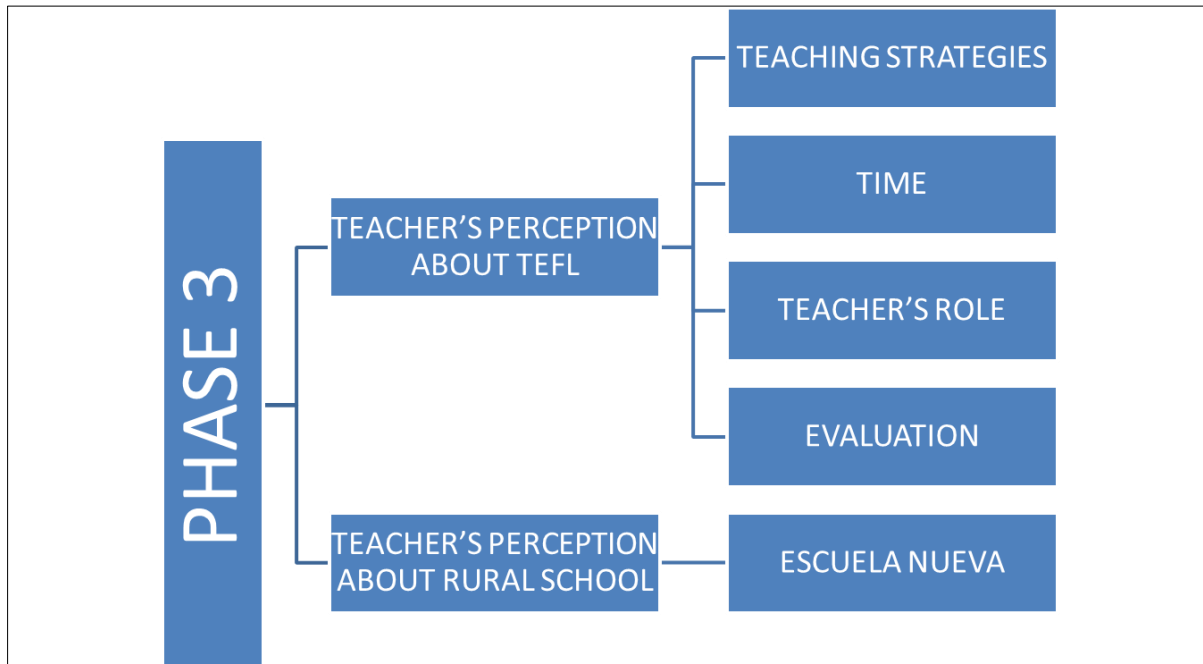
categorization phase that could include a wide range of aspects found on the earlier stages of data collection for further analysis process helping the researcher to fulfill the main objective.

Figure 3 Categorization Phase 2.



Later on, once the interviews and observations were organized with the different choices made in order to appeal for feasible and solid categories that responded to the research objective, a third and final category system was proposed to guide and consolidate the whole interpretative process built towards the findings that was developed through the thematic analysis design (See Annex 4). In addition, it is proper to state that the whole process was modified not as a personal view of the researcher but based on the teacher's narrative itself that required to be classified on such a flexible way.

Figure 4 Categorization Phase 3.



6.3 Findings

As previously mentioned, there was a continuous arrangement and modification process of the categories that led to the organization of the data collected, thus, this section deals with the question and evidences that emerged from this study guided by the description of a teacher's perceptions in the Teaching of English within the context of SAP rural school under Escuela Nueva model and considering the features that surrounds the teacher's practice.

6.3.1 Teacher's perceptions about rural school.

Rural school may be a mean to potentiate the goodness's that such environment can offer to the students' learning itself, and how those elements are integrated to help the teacher make remarkable achievements within his teaching practice. Indeed, the teacher's interactions with the context do influence the way the teacher develops and improves his own practice, in this way,

the participant shows a solid and evident relationship with the community that promotes dialogue and participation.

“Aquí la ventaja de que conoce el medio y uno sabe con qué cuenta en el medio para trabajar, porque lo conozco, porque me lo camino, porque me lo pateo pa’ todas partes, sé con qué... qué puedo encontrar aquí en el contexto de la comunidad”.

Q7 – Interview 1

Nevertheless, the chances to open such spaces to encourage the participation of the different actors have been insufficient which makes him feel that his role as mediator is interrupted. Similarly, it is noteworthy that there is not a major teacher integration with the community in order to take advantage of all the potential that the rural environment offers as seen during the observations:

Datos Transversales
 El docente mantiene una actitud cordial con la comunidad perteneciente a externo a la escuela que se acercan al aula de clase a dialogar con él en horas de clase. Aunque la atención es breve es una situación que se aprecia constantemente.

Observation 1

Moreover, the process of bringing his pedagogical practice closer to the reality that schoolchildren in this community are experiencing, in which they can form, based on their experiences, to really achieve a meaningful learning is yet not fully included on his daily work. In addition, the teaching process seen from the teacher own reflection is framed by a commonwealth between culture and knowledge and an active interaction with all educative actors —teacher, students, and community— involved where TEFL occurs.

“Eso es maravilloso, porque, por ejemplo, el niño haga el croquis rural y ubique sus quebradas, si hay ríos, si hay montañas... porque el niño está tocando y palpando su medio

ambiente, lo que él tiene... entonces se le facilita el conocimiento, porque le están tocando lo suyo, lo de él, donde él vive, donde se mueve, donde ha crecido, lo que observa todos los días”.

Q7- Interview 1

Indeed, his perception about the rural school promotes learnings that allow students to give sense to the surrounding situations in order to consider their own experiences to overcome any difficulty.

6.3.1.2 Escuela Nueva

Another significant aspect has to do with the methodology proposed for this specific setting, in this way, the participant teacher does recognize the relevance that Escuela Nueva represents on the construction of outstanding practices in rural schools.

“La escuela nueva en su concepto ideal, diría yo, es como lo más novedoso...es enmarcada dentro de la ruralidad del país, por la misma condición en que vive el estudiante, sin embargo, todavía hay que hacerles unas adaptaciones a las circunstancias del contexto vital”.

Q7 – Interview 1

In the previous extract he mentions what he thinks is and reflects upon the potential that such methodology provides to rural schools as a summary. Likewise, this reflection made by the participant shows the recognition of the value that Escuela Nueva gives both — teaching and learning processes for such places. However, his perception about it, on the contrary, differs from the reality since there was no clear evidence to show a solid and strong foundation of this methodology implementation within the context of SAP. In addition, the teacher believes that the struggles this methodology faces rely on the lack of interest and importance that the model should have to carry it out properly, in this manner the participant states:

“Las mismas falencias que ha tenido el poco aprecio, ha desvirtuado el concepto inicial de lo que es escuela nueva... porque yo acostumbro a decir, es lo mejor que hay, pero la realidad

desvirtúa lo que yo estoy diciendo, porque de ese concepto a la realidad, pues... no hay coherencia”.

Q7 – Interview 1

The teacher makes a reflexive and conscious statement in which— although he considers Escuela Nueva a remarkable model to be implemented in such realities, there is not a complete commitment from the State entities to ensure the success of the educational act.

6.3.2 Teacher’s Perceptions about TEFL

The development of the TEFL process in rural schools mostly differs from other realities due to the possibilities and different features that these kinds of settings offer from their culture, history, tradition and beliefs. Nevertheless, the teacher at SAP adapts his teaching practice to the low resources availability to teach the language and at the same time recognizes the students’ weaknesses from his own lack of abilities and language domain to carry out the TEFL process as pertinent as he can. In this way, the perceptions about TEFL are related to the subcategories emerged during the data analysis: 7.2.1. Teaching Strategies, 7.2.2. Time, 7.2.3. Teacher’s Role and 7.2.4. Evaluation.

6.3.2.1 Teaching Strategies

Many aspects demand to be considered when talking about teaching strategies, even more if we do refer mainly to rural environments —which require wider dispositions to carry out the educational act in regards of inherent characteristics that shape the teaching process.

Indeed, the teacher at SAP is restricted to follow a school curriculum whose design is based on urban schools’ standards, consequently, the TEFL process does not reflect a relevance to children with different backgrounds. Besides, it is evident that the National Curriculum does not fit the particularities of the rural school either, or to the peculiarities of these students, becoming

the learning process far from reality. In fact, this influences the quality of the students' learning, since the achievements they get have to do with the generality of what is proposed by that curriculum. Hence, it is evident that the educational function of the school and the different educational actors could be fulfilling the development of some competences of the students; albeit, it leaves asides the significant experiences that schoolchildren can have when they do not articulate the curricular contents with the richness of the rural environment.

“...Porque no se trata de que, ese es el número one, two, tree, four, no, vamos a dibujar el número, vamos a hacer que lo coloree, que lo pronuncie... cositas, así como para ser un poquito más simpático, no solo como para hacer la clase tan tediosa...”

Q1 – Interview 2

“Porque es... es lo rápido que yo puedo tener a la mano para tomarle fotocopia, y, tome, entregarles...ya ahí viene incluso... una, viene, la palabra en ingles en español y viene casi una pronunciación... Muy aproximada pero no es muy exacta porque entre otra cosa uno habla con un gringo y tú puedes ser licenciado en inglés, pero ese inglés no es igual”.

Q1 – Interview 2

In the previous extract the teacher exemplifies what he thinks that helps him to keep students engaged and maintain attention on the matter, however, the narrative shows the lack of specific didactic knowledge and the implementation of one or several teaching strategies according to theory for TEFL (Brown, 2007). Likewise, the shortages of didactic material and resources that may be provided by the National Government are not available on this rural school making teacher work even more difficult. In fact, the little material used within the English classes is bought by the teacher or created by him which reflects his own practice more remarkable and autodidact. In this way, it would be pertinent to invite the people who design the national curriculum to live the experience of approaching rural schools within their proposals inasmuch

as they haven't had into account the rural actors for the designing of those materials, opening so the possibility to hear not only his but also other rural voices.

6.3.2.2 Time

The teacher thinks that the TEFL development is ruled mostly by the time over any other feature. Hence, time is perceived as one of the aspects that provoke failures and deficiencies on the matter of English as a foreign language. However, this perception can be taken from two perspectives, first, in a methodological way since the schedule is ruled by Escuela Nueva which takes students' interests prior to formality, or the teacher's personal motivation to teach the language inasmuch as he gives priority to basic Sciences, Maths and Spanish over the language. The aforementioned reduces his narrative to the lack of willingness to potentiate all the struggles instead of strengthening a more solid TEFL process.

“El tiempo aquí es el enemigo... En el caso del inglés, yo pienso que no le dedico el tiempo suficiente, porque aquí de forma inmediata no es importante, pero si tiene su importancia”.

Q5 – Interview 2

The previous extract shows the teacher's perception of the uselessness of the language within the rural context, because of the abandonment felt from the educative entities and the relegation of the rural richness and the significance of the peasant knowledge when teaching English.

6.3.2.3 Teacher's Role

The characteristics of a rural school configures the pedagogical choices of each teacher since they base their comprehension on time and space to bring harmony within the educational act. In this way, the teacher's role is perceived within a responsibility that is not limited only to the fulfillment of a curriculum but also external duties in regards of the social context where interactions occur, the culture and the essential meanings to inquire the reflexive teacher's

performance. Consequently, the teacher's role at SAP must be taken into account from two aspects, the teacher's sense of belonging and his teacher vocation, these two aspects were considered along the study and can be evidenced through the following extract:

“El docente que trabaje con escuela nueva debe tener una especial tendencia por el campo, una especial estimación y una valoración por el campo, por lo rural, que se sienta que está en el ambiente donde pueda trabajar. Quizá a mí se me ha facilitado eso porque, es que, ¡Yo nací en el campo! ¡Me crié en el campo! ... Y aquí la ventaja de que conoce el medio y uno sabe con qué cuenta en el medio para trabajar, porque lo conozco, porque me lo camino, porque me lo pateo pa' todas partes, sé con qué... qué puedo encontrar aquí en el contexto de la comunidad”.

Q7 – Interview 1

6.3.2.4 Evaluation

Within the development of the TEFL process, the evaluation becomes the mean to measure what the teacher has done and what the students have achieved. In this way, it is essential to state that the teacher must follow the criteria ruled by the urban school standards and to adapt it to the immediate context, however, this process is interrupted since the teaching process remains incomplete as a consequence of time, didactic resources and material as well as teacher's lack of knowledge and his own perception towards the use of language in rural environments, then, an effective evaluative process is not evident and the grades emerge as a requirement from the school administrators and MEN but they do not measure the students' proficiency level according to their needs and reality. Indeed, the teacher assumes the figure of performing his praxis based on standards and policies that leave aside the characteristics of the context where he focuses on. Therefore, the rural schools fulfill its function of social, cultural and economic reproduction thanks to the government with any determination of the value of teaching English in rural schools under the needs of such realities.

Indeed, the construction of knowledge should spin around actions that permit transform the given reality with the school community in order to create history and culture, allowing the establishment of relations with the English language and the dialogue of context and peasant knowledge which will have an impact on the comprehensive education of schoolchildren, as a result of the achievement of meaningful learning and with them, the formation of a critical conscience.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The intention of the study was focused on the teacher's perceptions about the TEFL process carried out at SAP under Escuela Nueva model following a case study design in which the perspectives showed a real life experience that was essential for the fulfillment of this inquiry. Thus, during the process of gathering data that included interviews and observation instruments used to describe in detail the teacher's opinions and view, the participant was able to reflect about his feelings and thoughts towards the development of his own teaching practice at SAP.

After collecting, coding and analyzing data, the study was conducted to give an answer to the main objective of the study, focusing it from two categories which are: first, the teacher's perceptions about TEFL including aspects related like teaching strategies, evaluation and second the teacher's perceptions about rural school including Escuela Nueva model. Indeed, during the role of researcher, being objective was the basis for carrying out such process that led to reach the study's reliability and trustworthiness.

In this way, I can conclude that the teacher has a strong vision of what the importance of his teaching practice within the rural setting is regarding the academic and social role that as teacher in certain settings require, not only for the students' achievement but also for the construction of his own teaching identity. Likewise, the increment of joining in such contexts must center the attention on the implementation of new strategies that help rural teachers to reduce the gap of the national government's requirements.

Thus, although the teacher does not count with the necessary tools to make students reach the A.1 level demanded on the *Estándares básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras: Inglés*, he tries to adapt his TEFL process as much as the rural context allows him, including several aspects such as: its economic sources, the relationships that surround the rural school, and the

TEFL aspects that are supposed to be adopted at SAP to offer the right of education equally for all schools in Colombia.

Indeed, the perceptions of the teacher show that the rural school has been abandoned in several aspects such as EFL teacher training, didactic resources and evaluation of the TEFL process to ensure the quality of the education in rural areas. From the teacher's voice, rural schools have been forced to guide the educational act under MEN guidelines framed by urban surroundings that are disconnected from the non-urban areas. In fact, the teacher feels the gap and demands the attention in order to fulfill and develop the requirements according to their contexts so they guide the school functioning the way it is demanded to be.

Moreover, although from the teacher's view young students at Elementary schools are more likely to be interested and engaged with the language, the English expectation remains low from the teacher's perception since the amenities and facilities have not been fitted to the school environment, making difficult for students to practice and improve the foreign language within the school. Hence, the teacher perceives a lack of pertinence from the *Estandares Básicos de Aprendizaje* and the *Curriculo Sugerido* because the school is a monolingual context where English is not the primary language and neither a priority for his own practice in spite of its growing interest within the 21st century demands.

Consequently, it is helpful for teachers to feel more connected socially with the English language if they receive the necessary training regarding language skills and didactic knowledge and also the equipment of necessary tools to offer a real scenario for outstanding practices in rural schools. Likewise, it is essential to promote awareness for all the teachers to implement properly the use of the time expected for the TEFL process since it is not only mandatory but fundamental to ensure its development. Besides, the delivered contribution through the

development of this research project in this context is to share the views from a rural teacher that deals with several characteristics that belongs to a specific context, thus this reflection may enhance the way the teacher carries out the TEFL process within high quality standards he is supposed to develop as he does with basic subjects such as math and science.

Therefore, this study showed that teachers' perceptions are essential to be studied closely since this includes what they think about the foreign language education, the effect of English in their lives as well as knowledge and experience for them to bring an impact in the teaching process where the students are exposed and also the construction of better practices. Finally, from this paper the participant teacher's discourse corresponds to the interpretations of teacher's world that constitutes the senses, reflections, feelings and emotions that helps to build specific meaning related to language interaction within rural schools in Norte de Santander, Colombia, although normally what they think seem to be divergent when compared with what they actually do on their teaching practices.

7.1 Limitations of the study

The accessibility to the rural school was sometimes affected by external factors related to security because the zone is ruled by some armed groups outside the law that control the area and as a researcher I had to be careful to spend only the necessary time there. On the other hand, the rural school offers primary education but the teacher from pre-school to 2nd grade does not teach the language which impeded the integration of more than just one participant along this study. In addition, some aspects such as video recording the observations would have provided a better approach to some aspects dismissed during data gathering but based on the prior idea of security at SAP, it was not possible to use the technological devices required to do so.

7.2 Implications for further research

Questioning and investigating rural education and its relationship with the English language should be considered a great area of interest and relevance in order to impact the teaching practices that are being carried out in the TEFL. Having in mind the influence that our perceptions may have in our teaching practices, especially on the field of rural education and its ever-growing development that could emerge new investigations with the aim of transforming the national educational system. Since this study did not only focus on the teachers in the rural area, it is pertinent to consider the observation of teachers who labor in both contexts, rural and urban, in order to know if the methodologies employed vary according to the context they are in or not.

Likewise, it is important to propose studies that look up to know the perceptions of pre-service teachers who are graduating from teachers training programs, especially at Universidad Santo Tomás in order to see if those programs respond to the surrounded reality of the regions where the institution makes part.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1. Direct observation templates.

Format N° ____
Direct Observation

Research Objective: To identify students' role during an English AFL class at SAP.

Name: _____ **Date:** __/__/____ **Hour:** __:____ **Time:** _____

Place: _____

Students' Role	Notes
Teaching strategies	Notes
Timing	Notes
Didactic Material and Resources	Notes
Use of English	Notes
Others	Notes

Datos Transversales

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Format N° ____
Direct Observation

Research Objective: To identify the English teacher's role during an English AFL class at SAP.

Name: _____ **Date:** __/__/____ **Hour:** __:____ **Time:** _____
Place: _____

Teacher's Role	Notes
Teaching strategies	Notes
Timing	Notes
Didactic Material and Resources	Notes

Use of English	Notes
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Others	Notes
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Datos Transversales

Format N° ____
Direct Observation

Research Objective: To describe the process of evaluation in an English class at SAP.

Name: _____ **Date:** __/__/____ **Hour:** __:__ **Time:** _____

Place: _____

Evaluation	Notes
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Teaching strategies	Notes
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Timing	Notes
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Didactic Material and Resources	Notes
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Use of English	Notes
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Others	Notes
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Datos Transversales

Annex 2. Semi-structured interviews scripts.**Entrevista Semi estructurada****N° 1**

Research Objective: To describe Teacher's perceptions about the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language process carried out in San Agustín de los Pozos Rural Primary school under Escuela Nueva model.

Nombre: _____ **Fecha:** _____

Lugar: _____ **Tiempo:** _____

1. Para usted, ¿qué significa ser un profesor de escuela rural?
2. En su opinión, ¿qué características debe tener un docente de inglés? (¿qué tipo de conocimientos y habilidades?)
3. ¿Cuál es su opinión sobre enseñar un idioma extranjero en la sede rural?
4. ¿Cómo es su rol como docente de inglés en el contexto en el que estamos?
5. En su opinión, ¿cuál es la diferencia enseñar inglés en la escuela rural y la escuela urbana?
6. Describa las oportunidades que tienen los estudiantes de la escuela urbana y la escuela rural en términos de aprender inglés.
7. Para usted, ¿qué es la escuela nueva?
8. ¿Cuál es su motivación para enseñar acá?

Entrevista Semi estructurada

N° 2

Research Objective: To describe Teacher's perceptions about the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language process carried out in San Agustín de los Pozos Rural Primary school under Escuela Nueva model.

Nombre: _____ **Fecha:** _____

Lugar: _____ **Tiempo:** _____

1. Describame cómo usted desarrolla su clase de inglés (habilidades/actividades/tiempo) y ¿qué materiales y recursos didácticos utiliza para su enseñanza?
2. ¿Qué materiales o recursos didácticos se encuentran en la escuela para la enseñanza del inglés?
3. ¿Cómo elige o diseña los materiales que utiliza para las clases de inglés? (bajo qué criterio)
4. ¿Qué uso del inglés hace en las clases?
5. ¿Utiliza el inglés para trabajar en otras asignaturas? ¿Por qué?
6. ¿Cómo evalúa el proceso de enseñanza del inglés con los estudiantes que tiene a su cargo? (alguna guía/actividad y cada cuánto?)
7. ¿Qué habilidad considera usted que sus estudiantes deben desarrollar? ¿Por qué?
8. ¿Cómo son sus estudiantes en las clases de inglés? ¿Cree que lo usen en un futuro?
9. ¿Hay alguna actividad que les guste en particular a sus estudiantes? (¿La tiene en cuenta para su clase? ¿Cada cuánto la utiliza?)
10. ¿Cuál es el acompañamiento de las directivas de la institución en el proceso de enseñanza del inglés?

Annex. 3 Initial Matrix of Analysis Sample

MATRIX OF ANALYSIS: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW 1

Pregunta 1: Para usted, ¿qué significa ser un profesor de escuela rural? (Rural school)

Corpus of the Interview	Inference	Category
<p>Pues aparte de, de la... realización personal, sí, porque en definitiva pues, esto es lo que me ha gustado siempre, siempre me soñé desde muy niño que yo iba a ser sacerdote o iba a ser profesor. Yo jugaba cosas dos cosas. Y ya pues la vida, me, me regalo esta oportunidad de desempeñarme como docente en casi treinta años. Eso ha significado para mí mucho, ¿por qué? Porque, por una parte, me ha generado la, un trabajo que sirve para mi manutención, y la de mi familia, por otra parte, me llevo la satisfacción de que estoy haciendo lo que me ha gustado siempre. Eso a mí me llena. Porque en definitiva cuando uno tiene vocación, y o logra rescatar eso, yo pienso que... eso contribuye mucho con el estado de ánimo, la autoestima, la misma formación profesional, yo me la paso metido en los libros, yo soy muy, muy dado a leer. me gusta eso, es lo que, es como la recreación mía, yo me recreo en eso, y uno logra, uno logra, eh, alcanzar, eh, ese... como ese estatus donde lee uno ya por placer, porque hay un tipo de lectura que me gusta, tengo esa tendencia, no... Entonces, soy dado a leer todo lo que tenga que ver con, con mi trabajo, si... porque es un deber, y lo otro, yo soy muy dado a la lectura de tipo espiritual, entonces, eso significa para mí, como, la vida misma. Significa mi realización, significa mi manutención, eh, significa, mis alegrías, sí, porque al fin y al cabo esto es lo que me hace sentir bien. ¡Es lo que creo que sé hacer! Desde luego que en treinta años pues he cometido errores, ¡claro!, es muy propio del ser humano, quién sabe cuántos, y de los que me he dado cuenta los voy corrigiendo, entonces eso ha sido mi realización. Gracias a Dios por eso. No sé hasta cuándo Dios me regale fuerza y vigor, y paciencia para seguir trabajando, pero, todavía la ley me permite estar otros años ahí...</p>	<p>Se evidencia la relación de complementariedad con las perspectivas vocacionales y las distinciones de oportunidades que se le han presentado en la experiencia docente la cual es 30 años. Comprende las finalidades del ejercicio docente desde la satisfacción personal y como elemento económico para su retribución a su trabajo diario.</p> <p>El contexto rural, promueve una satisfacción en el desarrollo de su profesión, no se desmarca de la lectura y la coloca con mucha relevancia promoviendo la motivación, en virtud de las actividades que promuevan la espiritualidad y a su vez reconciliación en las fallas o errores cometidos ya sea actores educativos o comunitarios.</p> <p>Otro aspecto que se evidencia es la precisión de seguir en la enseñanza por un tiempo más.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realización profesional • Imaginario profesional y de significado consolidado. • Vocación. • Autoestima • Reconocimiento a la experiencia .

Annex. 4 Thematic Analysis Matrix Template.



CATEGORÍA:
SUBCATEGORÍA:

CORPUS DE LA ENTREVISTA	INFERENCIA DE LA ENTREVISTA	INFERENCIA DE LA OBSERVACION	INTERPRETACION

