

ENGLISH LEARNING AND TEACHING EXPERIENCES

The life-story of a pre-service teacher from 2001-2020, a biographical study

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The life-story of a pre-service teacher from 2001-2020, a biographical study

Abstract

This study aimed to portray the life-story and experiences of an EFL pre-service teacher through her positioning and entrepreneurship of an English private tutor regarding contributions to ELT (English Language Teaching). Although private tutoring in English has been very visible in recent years, there is not enough research that focuses on it. This study follows the perspective of narrative inquiry as a methodology that represents a powerful tool for teachers and learners to gain deeper knowledge and understanding of EFL process and life histories. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interview, journal's reflections and online English classes. I was the main and active participant of this research because I reflected upon my experiences as an English learner and as a private English tutor through a journal, but also, it was included the voice of some of my students who answered a semi-structure interview to gather information. The interpretation and coding of data was done through thematic analysis. The contributions of the study can be seen in terms of the positive impact and empowerment of distance education on EFL pre-service teachers, the development professional skills to position as a teacher through entrepreneurship in covid -19 times.

Keywords: narrative inquiry, EFL Pre-Service Teacher, English Private Tutor, biographical study, life-story and entrepreneurship

Section 1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

This is the contextualization of my research project at the B.A Teaching in English as a Foreign Language at the Universidad Santo Tomás. The research is a biographical study through narrative inquiry. Thus, I am going to focus on my English learning and teaching experiences as telling others my life story from 2001 to 2020. Having that in mind, the core of the study is my voice regarding my experiences with English as a foreign language. I have decided to concentrate on three life episodes. The first episode is about my English learning experience in New York City where I lived, studied and worked for 13 years, from 2001 to 2014. The second episode is the experience that I have had in my home city, Manizales since 2015 until now, where I became an entrepreneur as a private English teacher and started a B.A TEFL program at the University of Santo Tomas after returning from the U.S.A. The third episode is, now in 2020 about my experience of living under the restrictions of covid-19, which have affected my job as a private English teacher.

The first episode started in 2001 and ended up in November 2014. It started when I decided to go to live in New York City looking for better opportunities for my life as a Fine Arts undergraduate student. Once I arrived over there, I realized the importance of learning English as a foreign language to have a rewarding experience in New York City. I did not have any knowledge of English when I arrived there. At the beginning, I was feeling kind of lost in my new life in the city. After a month, I decided to begin studying English as a foreign language. The school I went to was La Guardia Community College located in Queens, New York. There I took three semesters of intensive English as a foreign language. This school has a lot of experience in teaching ESL learners. I had the chance to study with a lot of English students from all over the world. Some of my courses included level 1A to 2B2. They involved learning

the four English skills: Writing, listening, reading and speaking. The first month in the school was a very difficult experience for me because I did not understand any English at all and I did not now know how to face such English classes.

My teachers who were Americans did not understand my native language, Spanish. Besides this, almost all my classmates were foreigners too, who did not speak neither nor Spanish nor English. But later on, I started to feel more comfortable due to the methodology used by the school. The school program facilitated a full-immersion of students in the English language through different activities including some extra-curricular activities where they took us to visit Museums and to engage in a variety of cultural activities throughout Manhattan. Little by little, I started learning vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar, which allowed me to understand my teachers better and I began to interact with my classmates. I started to feel more confident, I lost my fear of speaking English with my classmates and I got familiar with multiple English accents.

After finishing the English as a Second Language program, foreign language for me, though; I took an associate degree in Commercial Photography for two years in the same college. Since I had already taken ESL courses in this school before, I had already fulfilled the basic English courses needed to start this new degree. As part of this new degree, I was required to take just two advanced English courses. They were Composition I ENG. 101 and Writing Through Literature ENG. 102. These were two challenging courses that involved learning English Composition at the college level.

After finishing school, I entered the workplace. My first job in New York City was as a Photographer for the well-known artist called Peter Max where I worked for six years. This environment was very fruitful to me since it enriched my English level related to photography

and the art field. My second job involved working for the Bulova Company, which made watches. I worked in the design department and I oversaw doing dial designs for specialized watches for different companies such as Coca-Cola, Nike, etc. I got this job because of my artistic background in fine Arts, and my newly acquired English language knowledge from the previous years studying at La Guardia Community College, as I mentioned it before. Performing this job, I felt amazingly comfortable with my English level. My working experience in New York City was a great help to practice and to learn more English in a city known to have people from all over the world (the melting pot, as New York City is called) who speak English with many different accents. This also made my interest in continuing learning English much more challenging.

The second episode started when I returned to Colombia in 2014. At that time, I made the decision to become an entrepreneur as a private English teacher because I wanted to continue improving my skills on English as a Foreign Language and a way to support myself economically. Besides, I wanted to be part in helping to fulfill the emerging need in the country to become a bilingual society. Once I started to teach my private English classes in my house, I realized the importance of learning about pedagogical methods to offer the best English teaching quality to my private students. Furthermore, I became aware of the big responsibility I had with my students to teach them English in a way that will meet their learning needs.

Regarding the previous facts, in the first semester of 2015, I decided to start a B.A Teaching in English as a Foreign Language at Universidad Santo Tomás through distance Education. As a student, I have learned about the wide array of skills and tools needed to be a professional English teacher. I am still on a long journey to learn more about ESL learning and

teaching. However, these learning experiences had helped me to understand better my role as a pre-service teacher and to become very trusted by my private students.

To clarify, I have been a private teacher for about five years (2015-2020) and I still find this job incredibly challenging. Every day, I see the need to innovate and fulfill my students' interests in new ways, as well as to meet the challenge of teaching English using methodologies that encourage my students to learn more about the language and enjoy the learning process. My students' ages range between 10 to 32 years and they are 6 girls and 5 boys, but my research project will focus on 6 of them. They come once a week to my house for one hour and a half. Currently, students could learn and practice the four English skills: Reading, writing, listening and speaking. Each class is designed considering his/her needs, talents, learning styles, English level, motivation, interests and personality, or their predominant input channels, whether it is through vision or audition.

The third episode is about my life now in 2020 as an English student at USTA and as a private English teacher, living under the restrictions of covid-19. Definitely, my life in the last months have changed dramatically due to the pandemic covid-19 because it has forced me to change my habits, my daily activities, the way I perform on my job as a private English teacher and pedagogical practices in the B.A program.

As I mentioned before, I had eleven private students who came to my house to have English class, but now with the pandemic situation I had to cancel their classes. Now I only have one of them virtually because the other students are overwhelmed with their school virtual classes and they do not want to have the English class virtually for now. In addition, I was having some students who work in offices but they are now working from their homes online. They are feeling stressed and overloaded with more work. These students have quit for their

English classes because they do not have the time or the energy to focus on learning English virtually. Besides, some of my students are unable for now to continue their classes for now due to the economic crisis brought by this pandemic. Furthermore, I used to be an English tutor for a student who studies in a bilingual private school, but now she has a virtual tutor from her school to help her after she finishes the regular virtual school classes.

As I mentioned it above, this pandemic has brought significant and drastic changes to my life as a student and as a pre-service English tutor entrepreneur. For instance, before the pandemic, I was doing my pedagogical practice in a high school teaching English as a second language to two groups of ninth grade, but the school did not allow me to continue with the pedagogical practice virtually. Thus, my university, Santo Tomas, came out with a contingency plan to continue working on the pedagogical practice but in a different way.

I had to create academic materials, which should be highly creative, interactive, organized, coherent with the topic and easy for students to follow. At the beginning, I was feeling lost and frustrated because I did not know how to create academic materials to teach English online. This was the first I saw the need to do it. Also, I faced the need to learn about computer skills in a new way to take my academic materials to a new professional level, which has been a challenge for me. Nevertheless, this experience has given me the chance as a pre-service teacher to learn and to prepare myself for the changes that the education field is experiencing right now and in the future due to covid-19.

In conclusion, this research aims to reflect on my life experiences as an active participant in the learning and teaching process of EFL through a B.A program and as a private tutor. For this reason, I have chosen a biographical study as the focus of my research through a narrative inquiry. These three episodes named earlier deserve to be the sources of my narrative inquiry

because they shed light on the process of understanding and portraying English learning and teaching experiences.

On this way, this project aligned with the B.A program in TEFL at USTA in conjunction with the second research field that study the English language and its contexts. Thus, my project will be directed by the second macro project that aims to understand and characterize EFL in the LLEI about experiences and phenomena in the pre-service teachers' educational contexts. Since the project is focused on "The voices of the LLEI realities: Life stories and experiences". My experiences narrated hold meaningful aspects of teaching and learning English. It is under a process of a challenging environment with ongoing transformation that I am facing right now as part of the reality of the covid-19 pandemic. My voice is worthy to be heard by our teachers' community as a way of nurturing the teaching process.

Section 2. RESEARCH STATEMENT

I have started a path on a research project about my life experiences in learning and teaching English as a foreign language from 2001 to 2020. The research is a biographical study in which narrative inquiry is the main core and the path for collecting data through my voice as a main participant. It allows me to be the main participant to consider, examine and reflect deeply upon the three episodes that have been fundamental in my process of English learning and teaching. These three episodes portray my life in New York City (2001-2014); studying a B.A TEFL program at Santo Tomas University, being an English private teacher entrepreneur (2015 until now) and living under the restrictions of the covid-19 pandemic (2020).

The main purpose of this research project is to reflect on my own experiences in learning EFL and as a pre-service private English teacher of EFL. Also, it is a great opportunity for me as a student of the Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Inglés to make my voice visible, so that people involved in the educational field can learn from my meaningful experiences in dealing with EFL and entrepreneurship as an English private tutor. Therefore, my project is part of the program of Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Inglés that studies the English language and its contexts. Another significant factor of doing this study is that EFL has been an important part of my personal and professional life. EFL Learning and teaching experiences have brought meaningful moments and lessons to my life. I have met a lot of people from different countries of the world while I was learning English in New York City. I have learned about the culture and the classmates and I have shared the learning process of an EFL with its difficulties and its rewards.

Furthermore, Learning and teaching EFL has been a significant development in my growth as a person and has been pivotal in my job career as an entrepreneur. It has opened new

avenues in my life contributing to enrich my understanding of cultures and my participation in the cultural life of a city like New York as part of my immersion in the learning of the language. The learning of the language has been a long process in my personal development and has been a motivational force in pursuing a career in teaching EFL.

Studying the B.A program has contributed significantly to my process in becoming a pre-service teacher and entrepreneur. I am feeling more confident in the use of the language and have a better understanding about the use of pedagogical methods and didactics in the teaching process of the EFL. I have extended my knowledge of EFL Teaching and Learning and it has given me the opportunity to reflect upon and share all these experiences named above through my narrative. Thus, this life story is a mirror of the positive impact and empowerment that distance education has provided me as the participant of narrative project since my voice makes explicit the professional development of skills that guided me to feel confident enough to be a teacher through entrepreneurship.

Regarding the arguments above, the research question that guides this study is:

RESEARCH QUESTION:

- How do the life-story and experiences of an EFL pre-service teacher portray the positioning and entrepreneurship of an English private tutor regarding contributions to ELT?

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

- To portray the life-story and experiences of an EFL pre-service teacher through her positioning and entrepreneurship of an English private tutor regarding contributions to ELT.

Specific objectives:

- To describe the life-story and experiences of a pre-service teacher around EFL -English as a Foreign Language.
- To evidence the positioning and entrepreneurship of an English private tutor regarding contributions to ELT.

Section 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Since my research project is about my life experiences in learning and teaching English as a foreign language from 2001 to 2020, narrative inquiry is the core to make my voice visible as the main participant. That is why my life-story and experiences as a pre-service teacher allow mirroring the positioning and entrepreneurship of an English teacher and the contribution to English learning and teaching. This project focuses on three important episodes of my life as an English learner and as a private teacher, which are crucial in answering the research question and to fulfill the objectives of this project. After reviewing the literature related to my research project, I have found different research projects, books, articles and English learning and teaching websites. In this literature review, I found some theoretical support about some key topics that are essential and are guidelines in the development of this study. These key topics are the following: 3.1. Life-stories in English learning and teaching, 3.2. Narrative in language education, 3.3. Voices of pre-service teachers, 3.4. Learning to become a foreign language teacher, 3.5. English language teaching as a non-formal educator tutor, 3.6. Sociocultural dimensions of entrepreneurship and 3.7. The impact of Covid-19 on ELT education and entrepreneurship.

3.1. Life-stories in English language learning and teaching

The book titled, “Narrative Inquiry in Language Teaching and Learning Research” written by Gary Barkhuizen, Phil Benson and Alice Chik goes in depth with narrative inquiry, methods and data, which embrace stories as data in the field of language learning and teaching. This book offers great guidelines on how I should approach and tell my experiences in learning and teaching English as a foreign language. As the authors say, narrative inquiry is a helpful and supportive tool in fostering language teachers and learners and to have a better understanding

about their learning and teaching experiences. They view narrative as “Relevant to research in our field because it helps us to understand the inner mental words of language teachers and learners and the nature of language teaching and learning as social and educational activity” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 2). Besides, the authors highlight stories as the essential force of narrative inquiry; therefore, the stories people tell about themselves are fundamental in the purpose of a research project that uses narrative inquiry. In my case, my life experiences in learning and teaching English as a foreign language are vital to reflect on my experiences to make them visible and identify meaningful contributions in ELT.

According to Barkhuizen, (2014) “Narrative inquiry brings storytelling and research together either by using stories as research data or by using storytelling as a tool for data analysis or representation of findings” (p. 3). My research project is a biographical study that focuses on my EFL experiences and my stories are the research data. Indeed, stories target meaningful episodes of my life as a language teacher and learner. They involve my life in New York City, studying a B.A TEFL program at Santo Tomas University, being a private English teacher and living under the restrictions of the covid-19 pandemic.

As the authors point out, the importance of considering not only the experiences of the teacher and the learner, but to consider also where the teacher and the learner is situated in a particular historical, cultural and social context. “Narrative inquiry can also view as an especially apt approach to investigate how language teachers and learners are situated in specific social, historical, and cultural contexts, in which the primary context is viewed as the teachers’ and learners’ lives” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 11).

As I start narrating my learning and teaching experiences, cultural, social and historical aspects would emerge as well. For instance, the English learning experience that I had in New

York or the historical moment that we are living right now with the pandemic covid-19. In addition, emotional situations will be part of my biographical study which narrative inquiry allows me to express. “Language learning histories often evoke a wealth of emotions and other effective reactions from the language learner” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 13).

Barkhuizen, (2014) also mentions different forms of written narrative data and how language teachers and learners produce it. These forms are reflective teacher journals, diaries, narrative frames and language learning histories, which let the teacher and learner to record his/her experiences of language learning and teaching. Also, to record past language learning and teaching experiences. One example that the authors bring up to illustrate language-learning histories is the following:

After class, I listened to the cassette for many times in order to memorize the sound of the words. It was a difficult job for me to do. I did so not because I accepted English, but because I did not want to bring shame on myself ...In short when it comes to English, I was fear to speak and I hate to learn. (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 38)

This citation is a great example about how to narrate English learning experiences I had in New York, which have enriched my life in all aspects. Stories encourage learners to overcome obstacles related to learning English, as well as experiences as a private English teacher in Manizales. According to Barkhuizen, (2014) narrative frames “consists of sentence starters followed by blank spaces for the teacher’s responses” (p. 46).

These guidelines help teachers and learners to conduct or to narrate his/her stories. Frames have a beginning, middle and the end to help to structure the story. Even though the authors mention that some teachers and learners do not feel comfortable using narrative frames because they find it difficult to narrate their stories the way they want, I agree with them. It may

restrain my writing and I may not feel free to share my unique experiences, though they elicit punctual information. I consider that language learning histories and reflective journals are tools more suitable for me to gather data for my project. In the author's view “The participants are the central characters in any narrative inquiry.

The study is about them. It is their lived and imaged experiences that researchers share or “restore” in their reports” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 97). Specifically, I am the main participant, the one that portrays experiences to make learning and teaching experiences visible. All in all, narrative inquiry is the best approach that goes with my research project. I believe that stories become more meaningful through the narrative inquiry, since it connects different aspects of lived years as an English learner and private teacher.

As Barkhuizen, (2014) emphasizes that:

Narrative studies can never be replicable, because they are always products of a unique set of data. This also implies that their findings are ultimately the product of the researchers’ subjectivity: something that the researchers have to say about a particular set of data that they have collected. (p. 88)

I want to highlight how relevant and valuable is for narrative inquiry the uniqueness of a life-story regarding research participants. Therefore, narrative inquiry cannot be replicable. Besides, the construction of the life-stories creates a co-construction between the participant, the narrative and other important voices. In other words, this research becomes a co-creation as part of the subjectivity within a dialogical approach with the educational community. Therefore, the creation of the researcher’s subjectivity becomes part of a social process on the ongoing creation of education as a central element of culture. This is seen as part of a mapping of a relational field.

3.2. Narrative in language teaching education

This article titled, “The Transformative Power of Narrative in Second Language Teacher Education,” written by Johnson and Golombek (2011) evidence how the narrative has played a great role in the professional development of second language teaching education. The authors state that, “inquiry into experience enables teachers to act with foresight. It gives them increasing control over their thoughts and actions; grants their experiences enriched, deepened meaning; and enables them to be more thoughtful and mindful of their work” (Johnson, p. 487). There is no doubt that narrative inquiry has acquired a great importance in second language teacher education, supporting and shaping the professional development of second language teachers.

Narrative inquiry is a helpful and nurturing tool for me to become more aware of the learning process of my private students. It is a privilege to be a witness of my private students’ learning process. However, it is a big challenge to be their teacher, but in the end it is worthy. I am convinced that narrative inquiry is the right path that will allow me to be more conscious about my students' learning needs to perform wisely with them. English teacher experience is the sum of many events, good and bad moments, easy and difficult situations that teachers have to face in their teaching career. In this connection with my research project, I believe that the reflection made by teachers’ experiences is the one that gives support or can define an English teaching experience. Also, teaching experiences should inspire us to grow as English teachers. Johnson, (2011) describes narrative as:

A vehicle for inquiry, as is the case in SLTE, it functions as a powerful mediational tool that makes explicit, in teachers’ own words, how, when, and why new understandings emerge, understandings that can lead to transformed conceptualizations of oneself as a teacher and transformed modes of engagement in the activities of teaching. (p. 490)

In addition, when English teachers decide on narrative activities as a means for research, the characteristic of those activities is mainly created by past situations, events or experiences. According to Johnson, (2011) “Asking teachers to write a language learning autobiography requires teachers to reflect on their prior language learning experiences, critically analyze those experiences, and then relate their analysis to their current conceptions of both language learning and language teaching” (p. 493).

As writing my experiences about language learning and teaching, I reflect on my English learning experiences in New York City and Colombia. Narrative allows me to critically investigate those experiences that shaped my life in many ways as a learning immigrant and as a future teacher. Then, I will relate these experiences to the new process of language learning and language teaching and the impact of my prior English learning on my current way of teaching the language; I have become more sensitive to my students’ needs and their challenges in ESL.

This article is important and relevant because it recalls the engagement of narrative activities and it acknowledges the benefits of narrative for their own growth as a professional English teacher. As the authors noted “Teachers educators need to examine their own practices and become strategic in how, when and why they mediate in teacher professional development ” (Johnson, 2011, p. 505).

At the end of the article, the authors highlighted the importance of the teacher's narrative to make visible the professional scenery of language teachers and ELT. Johnson (2011) stated how meaningful and useful narrative has become to achieve changes in teaching a language. Also, they affirm that narrative inquiry is working as a tool of building knowledge to make things different in the field of second language teacher education. Besides, narrative is a tool to cultivate the professional development of the teacher.

3.3. Voices of pre-service teachers

As a student of the B.A Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at Universidad Santo Tomás through distance education, I have taken two pedagogical courses that included fieldwork as a pre-service teacher before becoming a professional teacher. The fieldwork is the practicum, which consists of teaching in a school to gain experience as a teacher as well as to practice the knowledge I acquired in the program. As the research degree work done by Munar (2018) titled, “Experiences and Pedagogical Reflections upon the pedagogical practices of an English Pre-service Teacher,” the formative period is a growing professional process guided by a teacher-educator, and this is one of the experiences that will evidenced in the study” (p. 15).

I agree on the graduated teacher’s view when she describes that pre-service teachers grow professionally because the pedagogical practices allow future teachers to learn a lot as a pre-service teacher from the interaction with primary and high school students. It was a great opportunity for me to acquire knowledge on how to deal, approach and understand students in any situation in the classroom. Also, the practices helped me to assure myself as a teacher; I gained confidence to assume my role as a pre-service English teacher.

The work degree concluded that, “A pre-service teacher has to maintain a strong interaction with his or her students in order to know their needs, their fears or maybe their difficulties to help them in their learning process because sometimes we do not know the different situations that our students live” (2018, p. 40). As studying our students, it is fundamental to be able to succeed as a pre-service teacher. This is what I have learned from my pedagogical practice at USTA and what I am still learning as an English private tutor. That is why, one of the purposes of my research project is to evidence my experiences and reflect upon my positioning as an English private tutor.

Similarly, the article Knowledge, power and identity in Trainer – Trainee Interaction in Pre-service English Language Teacher Education by John Gray and Tom Morton focuses on one area of identity, which compares to knowledge ability or mastery in language teaching. Besides, the authors point out “it is in social interaction in the various contexts of relevance to language teaching that knowledge identities are made visible and work on” (Gray, 2020, p. 4).

I agree with the authors about how social interaction is the main vehicle to expose knowledge identities. Social interaction is where we can show our competences and expertise as pre-service English teachers. It is where we expose our weaknesses and strengths. As Wenger (1998) argues, “acquiring the competence which allows one to recognize oneself, and be recognized, as a fully functioning member of a community of practice, is essentially a question of identity formation” (Gray, 2020, p. 38). Feeling part of a community is essential in the formation of the identity of a pre-service English teacher.

Furthermore, according to Gray:

People position themselves, and each other, in terms of what they know, how they have access to it, and what rights and responsibilities they have for knowing (or not knowing) something. Knowing, or not knowing, is not a neutral affair, as for having or not having access to knowledge. (2020, p. 39)

As carrying out the pedagogical practices, I have noticed that to position myself as an English teacher, the actions of the expertise play a big role in it because the expertise can guide me to choose the right approaches and strategies to meet the learning needs of my students and to find the right resources for my practice. Also, the expertise helps me to believe in myself as a teacher through his/her knowledge and experiences as a teacher.

In addition, the authors remark that “people with epistemic authority can determine ‘how the world is’ but they may also use deontic authority to determine ‘how the world ought to be’ by constraining the possible field of actions of others” (Gray, p 39). The authors asserted, there are some people who build their identity base in their authority because of their expertise and there are other people who position themselves setting up rules about how things should be. Thus, Gray & Morton highlight how knowledge becomes asymmetry due to the inequality of access to knowledge and also the inequality of power to act. This is quite common to see in the pedagogical practice because some expert teachers do not support and value all the efforts that a pre-service teacher is doing in pursuing in the future to be like them and even better.

At the same time, the article about learning to teach and pre-service teacher cognition by Li (2020), I found significant statements about searching teachers’ cognition through social interactions:

1. Teaching is a social practice and interaction is central to effective teaching and learning.
2. Teacher cognition is about teachers’ knowing, understanding, conceptualizing and doing their work in their professional context; it is not a static mental object held by shape and define in situ.
3. Interaction is not a channel for cognition but the action of cognition.
4. Meanings are co-constructed by participants through various interactional strategies.

(p. 4)

Also, this article focuses on pre-service teacher cognition, including their thinking, how they make decisions, their knowledge and understanding of their English learning and teaching process and also being an English teacher.

Besides, Li (2020) states, “pre-service teachers' cognition about pedagogical knowledge often refers to their understanding and knowing about teaching methods and activities”(2020, p. 85). The understanding of the pedagogical methods is also essential in delivering language content. Moreover, the author observes as well “pre-service teacher cognitive development is a reflection of teacher identity” (2020, p. 76). As I mentioned before, all the skills and knowledge that I have acquired at the university have been very relevant and meaningful in my formation as a teacher. Additionally, I have noticed in my process of becoming a teacher that once I have access to knowledge, social interaction, a better understanding of learning and teaching the English language, I have gained identity as a teacher.

3.4. Learning to become a foreign language teacher and the impact of distance language education in fostering the entrepreneurship

As a student of the B.A TEFL program, I have learned a lot all these years to become a professional English teacher and to become an entrepreneur. Once I started giving private English classes, I realized and understood the need of learning pedagogical skills to be able to do better as a teacher and to offer teaching quality to my students that meet their learning needs. I knew English, but I did not know how to approach my private students in a professional way. Besides, the big responsibility I have with my students is to fulfill their expectations on learning English through private class. All of these encouraged me to start a path on learning to become a professional second language teacher and to learn more English to advance my entrepreneurship goals.

The article Learning to Become a Second Language Teacher: Identities-in-Practice by Kanno and Stuart (2011) is about how ESL pre-service teachers learn to teach and how their pedagogical practice constructs their identities as a teacher. The researchers followed for one

year two graduate students while they taught for the first time their own ESL classes. Kano and Stuart concluded on this study the importance to include teacher identity development in the program of L2 teacher education in a deeper understanding.

According to Kano “How challenging it can be for student teachers to shed the identity of a student and adopt the identity of a teacher” (2011, p. 236). There is no doubt that there is a long journey and a long process for a student to become a professional teacher and to build his/her own identity as a teacher. At the Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras Ingles, I have acquired knowledge regarding different pedagogical approaches or methods, how to plan a lesson, how to design the right didactic materials for my students and also learning English. I think, I am still learning to continue building my identity as a professional teacher.

Furthermore, the authors state “Beginning language teachers are shocked by the gap between their idealized visions of teaching and the realities of the classroom” (Kanno, 2011, p. 237). I agree with them because when I was doing my pedagogical practice, I learned that being a teacher is not as easy as I thought. Being a second language teacher requires a lot of knowledge about how to address students, how to manage big groups, how to solve problems in the classroom and how to fulfill student’s learning needs. Moreover, being a second language teacher requires a lot of self-confidence and a lot of courage in believing that we are not any more students and that we are ready to assume the role of a professional teacher. Giving that, Kanno in their study “Wanted to know how promising student teachers experience the challenge of teaching their own classes for the first time and how, through that process, they grow into teachers” (2011, p. 241). For sure, the pedagogical practices of the Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Ingles are crucial for students to nature their teachers' identities.

As it was, the pedagogical practices help us to feel more comfortable and confident in our process to become professional teachers and to keep learning English to perform better and to achieve students' learning goals and teachers teaching goals. In conclusion, learning to become a second language teacher is a process that takes time, passion, courage and self-confidence. As the authors observed:

Becoming an L2 teacher is not an experience that takes overnight for novices; rather, it is a prolonged process in which they gradually develop their understanding of what it means to be a language teacher and become increasingly comfortable with that identity. (Kanno, 2011, p. 247)

Likewise, the next article is called Positioning Analysis of ESOL teachers' 'Small stories' about epistemic and expertise in peer touring interactions in research interviews and Gray (2020) point out that English language teachers have professional identities. That is how they position in relation to what they do every day, and the institutional and social contexts including the impact on the professional practices. English teachers must face different social aspects related to the students' backgrounds. In my case, I teach students whose native language is Spanish and they have the need to learn English because they want to have better opportunities in their lives, or have a good job, to travel, to study abroad or to meet new people. Also, they are aware that to be actively part of this globalized world, they need to learn English.

The data analysis of this study focuses on interviews where teachers talk about (ILPs) Individual Learning Plan. Which, "are documents that many ESOL teachers are required to fill in to establish and track individual learner's goals and progress" (Gray, 2020, p. 53). They concentrate on this because it is a way to build the identities of the students and teachers and to select the abilities that are part of the desirable identities. Teachers focus on the individual needs

of their students. As an English private teacher, I have an Individual Learning Plan for each student where I attend their individual learning needs and level of English. Each student is unique and I can't generalize the same lesson for all my students. That is why; it is a private class where I need to focus on the needs of each student, interests, learning style, English level to be able to succeed in his / her goal of learning English. Besides, ILP helps the student and myself to construct our own identities.

On the other hand, the impact of distance language education in fostering the entrepreneurship has been crucial in my formation as a private English tutor entrepreneur.

According to Maureen S. Andrade (2009) states about learning distance that

Autonomous language learners have been identified by such behaviors as the use of cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies, awareness of language learning strategies, the ability to self-diagnose, seeking exposure to English, willingness to be responsible for learning, following course materials, self-reliance, self-management, persistence in solving problems, preparation for tutor sessions, and self-monitoring. (p. 50)

Learning these behaviors stated above that identify distance autonomous language learners have been especially important in my process of becoming an entrepreneur as a private English tutor.

3.5. Addressing ELT as a non-formal education tutor

When I looked at the state of art information about experiences as a pre-service teacher facing private lessons, it was very scarce. I searched for a lot of sources and I found very little about it and none of them were directly related to private English teaching. This is one of the issues that I am going to address in my research project to narrate my experiences as a private teacher and

tutor of English learners. I choose some articles that have some relationship with private English teaching and tutoring.

An English teacher called Kevin Wai-Ho Yung, who is currently searching about out-of-class language learning, English learning motivation, autonomy and learner narrative, wrote the first article. This article is called “Learning English in the shadows: Understanding Chinese Learners’ Experiences of private tutoring. In this study, Yung (2015) focused on fourteen Chinese learners’ reflections about their English learning experiences in private tutoring. The author described that private tutoring is growing worldwide, researchers are interested in knowing more about these phenomena and the implications it has in the education field. “Driven by the hope that investments in private tutoring may help children achieve educational successes and social mobility, enthusiastic parents have made private tutoring a major industry across the globe” (Yung, 2015, p. 708).

On the other hand, Yung points out that there is little study about learners and teachers experiences and reflections in English private learning and teaching. “Despite the vigorously growing popularity and expansion of EPT and its significant impact on the education system around the world EPT is still a “relatively under researched area” (2015, p. 727). However, his study found throughout the narrative reflections of the fourteen students that some of them think that they learn English in EPT (English private tutoring) just to pass the exam to enter the university but they did not learn English for daily communication. Other students think that their tutors just did a gimmick job and they did not teach “real English”. As Yung mentioned:

He encountered a lot of people who were trained well for examinations but could not use English appropriately in various contexts. He believed that EPT could “only increase the

fundamental awareness of the language but not enhance the sense [of using the language].
(2015, p. 719)

The second article that I found is called “The Spread of Private Tutoring in English in Developing societies: Exploring students’ Perceptions” and it was written by M. Obaidul Hamid, Asaduzzaman Khan and M. Monjurul Islam (2017). This article focuses on understanding how PT-E (Private tutoring in English) is conceived in terms of its efficacy and value especially in relation to school instruction. As the first article mentioned that private tutoring has obtained a great visibility lately and that there is little research about it. This article mentioned it as well. Even though, in Bangladesh the Ministry of Education is trying to stop private tutoring because according to them schoolteachers are not providing a high quality in teaching English. Thus, it forces students to pay private classes from the same teachers. PT-E is becoming a lucrative business for private teachers.

As a strategy to circumvent the failure in school English teaching and to give children a competitive edge in education and the job market, parents resort to tutoring in English and in other subjects. This had led to a phenomenal growth of private tutoring all over the country. (Hamid, 2017, p. 872)

On the other hand, Kaye (2014) states how one to one class is so different from teaching groups. Also, the advantages and disadvantages involved in teaching and learning this way. The author also talks about some possible techniques and approaches to provide a better teaching and learning process. The author pointed out how different and challenging teaching one to one is. For example, how the classroom should be set up, where the teacher and student should manage the physical resources. Also, the roles and relationships that differ a lot from having a large group, the student takes the main role in making decisions about the class. As well as the big

responsibility the teacher has just for one student to fulfill his/her expectations. The pressure of the teacher to reach great results and the student may experience the contrary.

Besides, Kaye (2014) talked about the advantages and disadvantages of teaching one to one English lessons. Some of the advantages are: The student has more control over the objectives of the class, materials and the time for activities. The student has more opportunities to engage in real communication and the student can develop a very productive interaction with the teacher. One of the disadvantages is: The student may feel bored if the teacher is not dynamic and do not find the right approach for him/her. Finally, I found this article particularly useful for my research because it gave me ideas and valuable information to take into account to write about my experience as a pre-service English private and tutor. This study found that in the metropolitan area students do not think that PT-E is essential but it has played an important role in their life as English students. On the contrary, students from rural areas consider PT-E essential in learning English because of the poor English school instruction. Moreover, there is a social belief about the efficacy of the private English classes.

The fourth article called Learning to Teach as a Freeway Flyer by Neal Lerner, (2020) states that “The role of literacy as a tool of both oppression and of liberation” (p.3). Nowadays, knowing how to communicate in English is a big advantage to have a better life. People will have more work opportunities anywhere in the world. One of my goals teaching private English classes is to teach students all the skills they need to feel free to communicate in English and not to feel scared of pursuing better jobs in their careers. Moreover, the author writes, “that I have the opportunity to learn at the expense of my students’ learning is certainly nothing to be proud of” (Lerner, 2020, p. 48). In my case, my private students have been the motor for me to become an English teacher. I have learned a lot from them and I am very grateful to them.

As well, Lerner (2020) adds, “that insecurity seems to be a consistent presence” (p.49). Insecurity has been my main companion during these five years of teaching. I always have a doubting attitude towards my knowledge of the English language and I always ask myself if I am fulfilling my students learning expectations properly. Also, Lerner (2020) notes “Connecting to a student’s life and the life of her family to her education is central to success in learning. Too often the model of teaching that is so common is disconnected from a student’s life” (p. 56). It is fundamental to connect the students' life and their families’ life as the author mentions to guarantee the success in their learning process. I have noticed that my private students often tell me about personal and family issues in the class. They feel amazingly comfortable talking about it and I found this to be a great opportunity for them to practice speaking.

The last article, *Epistemic and Expertise in Peer Tutoring Interactions: Co- Constructing Knowledge of Spanish* by Michele Back (2016) mention literally that “Peer tutoring, a method of cooperative learning, is viewed as having multiple benefits for additional language learning” (p. 508). The interaction supported by a cooperative method is crucial in the learning process. Students need the vital support of his/her tutor to reach their learning goals. It is important to establish a great interaction about the knowledge of the target language to follow the learning process of the students.

Alternative, epistemic and expertise are two concepts that identify a tutor. These two concepts are vital in the learning and teaching process. The knowledge interaction is crucial to construct knowledge in a cooperative way. “Epistemic and expertise can be used as frameworks for analyzing the co- construction and mediation of knowledge in peer tutoring sessions” (Back, 2016, p. 509). In my case, I study hard to be prepared to help my students and to make sure they get the knowledge they need to construct more knowledge.

3.6. Sociocultural contributions of ELT entrepreneurship

When I decided to become an EFL private tutor as a way of practicing the English I learned in New York City and to support myself economically, I did not realize at that time that I was going to become an entrepreneur and the contributions that I was going to make to society. First I want to define the concept of entrepreneurship. According to BYJU'S the learning application (2020):

The entrepreneur is defined as someone who has the ability and desire to establish, administer and succeed in a startup venture along with risk entitle to it, to make profits. It can be classified into small or home business to multinational companies. (p. 1)

All these years, I have become an entrepreneur as a private English tutor. My work place is my house where my students used to have the private English classes face-to-face.

Being an entrepreneur requires having certain characteristics to be successful such as: ability to be courageous and risk-taking, leadership quality, innovative, open-minded, flexible and knowledgeable on the concentration area. As Claudia Felix (2017) states “leadership is considered a core component of entrepreneurial process” (p. 14). From my experience, it is very important to have the quality of leadership because you are the only person who can make your business become successful. Furthermore, Felix (2017) points out:

Leadership and entrepreneurship play an essential role in economic and social development...Leadership and entrepreneurship research has encompassed factors such as personality, traits, knowledge, skills, and behaviors. These elements are shaped by the sociocultural environment. (p. 6)

As an EFL private tutor and entrepreneur I couldn't be part of a social development that embraces the elements that shape a sociocultural environment.

Besides, the article called Learning to Teach as a Freeway Flyer by Neal Lerner, who points out that “teaching might offer the creative outlet and opportunity to make a social contribution” (Lerner, 2020, p. 3). Here I feel myself connected to this statement because besides teaching English grammar, I am teaching my private students’ topics and behaviors that are particularly useful in their lives. Topics that will help my students to become aware of important issues that are going on in the world and to understand them, which later in their lives will help them to make better choices and to be active participants of the sociocultural environment in their communities. I consider that I am contributing to my students to be better people in our society.

3.7. The impact of covid-19 on ELT education and entrepreneurship

Life has changed dramatically due to the pandemic Covid-19. It forced me to change my habits, activities and the way I perform in my job and studies. As a pre-service teacher doing my second pedagogical practice at the Colegio de Nuestra Señora del Rosario of Manizales, I was not the exception. I did not have contact anymore with this private school because I was not allowed to continue my pedagogical practice virtually. Thus, my university, Santo Tomas, came out with a contingency plan to continue working on the pedagogical practice but in a different way. I had to create academic materials on an online platform to make it public to my invisible students. Through creating academic materials, I have learned new tools to be up to date with the new challenges that I am facing now as part of the educational world. I found some articles related to covid-19 and education that will help me to process these big changes in my job as a teacher.

The article “Education and Covid-19 Pandemic” written by Daniel (2020) talks about the big challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic represents to the educational system worldwide. It

aids the educational community on facing the crisis. It answers the question regarding the preparations institutions should make in the short time to respond to student's needs by level and field of study. According to him, it is important to provide reassurance to parents and students as part of the institutional response to this crisis. Taking advantage of asynchronous learning is crucial for schools and colleges to increase capacity to teach through digital formats. In addition to the normal classroom subjects, teaching should address a variety of assignments and work considering the importance of placing covid-19 in a global and historical content. This point of view also suggests flexible ways to repair after the pandemic finishes the damage it has caused to students' learning process and teachers' teaching process.

Some of the guidelines that Daniel (2020) suggests to teachers, school administrators and government officials who must manage the educational consequences of the pandemic include: "Preparations that systems could make, needs of students at different levels and stages, reassurance to students and parents, simple approaches to remote learning, curricula, assessment, after COVID-19, useful resources," (p.2). Students, parents and teachers face a lot of anxiety now with the covid-19 pandemic and the uncertainty about the future makes it more difficult. Even though institutions are making the required changes to teach in different ways, the highest priority should be to reassure students and parents with targeted communication.

Another article that is related to my study is the "12 tips for teaching an unforgettable online English class" by Cambridge English. Cambridge asks, "Have you suddenly found yourself teaching online? You are certainly not alone. English teachers all around the world are in the same position – and it can be hard to know where to start" (2020). My answer is yes and I am not alone on this as well. Under these circumstances right now, I am in a situation of exploring how to continue being an entrepreneur and how to position my private English classes

online. This has been a big change in my life as a private English tutor because my students used to come to my house to have the English class face to face and this interaction was a key in their process of learning English as a second language and my role as a teacher.

Fortunately, there is a lot of information out there on the Internet about platforms, digital tools, websites that can help me to position my entrepreneurship as a private English tutor online. According to Cambridge it is especially important to choose the right platform and the right teaching tools. For example, Cambridge recommends Google classroom because it is free, we can share files and facilitate creativity. Besides Cambridge points out that visual resources contribute to personalize the classroom into spontaneous learning scenarios. From that, I realize that I should prepare my classes and myself before each online class to make sure everything goes well and to make sure to achieve the goals set up for each class. It is fundamental that my private students and I feel comfortable and enthusiastic in learning and teaching English online. Finally, I am working hard to have my online entrepreneurship as successful as it was face-to-face.

Section 4. RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1. Narrative inquiry as a methodology:

The study follows the perspective of narrative inquiry focused on my life experiences in learning and teaching English as a foreign language from 2001 to 2020. Clandinin, (2006) who were the first ones in using narrative inquiry as a methodology, make a clear definition of narrative inquiry:

People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story in the current idiom is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular view of experience as phenomenon under study. (p. 375)

Also, narrative inquiry comes from several disciplines but there is not a single discipline that has developed it. This approach has been combined with other research methods. In practice one disadvantage of this method is the lack of being put together by a single discipline. Narrative inquiry is aimed at being thorough in studying the subject, while other methods are less comprehensive.

On the other hand, according to Webster, (2007) narrative method can be defined as: Studies problems as forms of storytelling involving characters with both personal and social stories. It requires going beyond the use of narrative as a rhetorical structure, to an analytic examination of the underlying insights and assumptions that the story illustrates.

A key contribution of narrative to research resides in the way it frames the study of human experience. (p. 4)

Thus, I chose this method because the purpose is not just to tell a story but also to analyze the real issues underneath the experiences of my experiences of English learning and teaching to be able to make a meaningful contribution to the educational field. In other words, this method goes beyond being a rhetorical structure. Moreover, Webster notes that:

If narrative is fundamental to communication, then the use of narrative as a research method may, for instance, give us a better understanding of teaching, learning and performance in a wide range of environments and may assist in generating more appropriate teaching tools and techniques. (2007, p. 16)

Narrative inquiry as a methodology represents a powerful tool to empower teachers and learners to gain deeper knowledge and understanding of their resources available to innovate in the praxis of their profession. The use of narrative helps us to become more aware of the process of teaching and learning and therefore, we can deliver better teaching tools.

Lastly, Barkhuizen, (2014) emphasize on the argument that “narrative inquiry is the only methodology that provides access to language teaching and learning as lived experiences that take place over long periods of time and in multiple settings and contexts” (p. 12). In my case, since 2001 I have been on the path to learn English as a foreign language and then from 2015 on the path to become an English teacher while also being a private English teacher until now. This research design allows researchers to gather experiences, as the one of this *microproject* that involves life-experiences, as well as teaching and learning landmarks within the timeline from 2001 to 2020. They have taken place in different environments, contexts and situations that have enriched my learning and teaching experience.

4.2. Data collection instruments:

According to Barkhuizen, (2014), “We deal separately with three major approaches to collecting data for narrative studies through oral, written and multimodal forms, p. 13). The data collection instruments chart summarizes instruments from the authors cited.

Table 1

Data collection instruments and purposes

INSTRUMENTS	TECHNIQUE	PURPOSE
Oral narratives “In narrative inquiry, interviews are mainly used to elicit oral accounts of language learning and teaching experiences” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 2).	Semi-structured interview: “Researchers use interview guides as resources to direct the interview, but at the same time, the questions are usually open-ended to allow participants to elaborate and researchers to pursue developing themes” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 17).	“Pre-service and in-service English teachers are interviewed to elicit their language teaching and/ or learning experiences” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 16). The purpose of using semi-structured interviews on my research project is to know the English learning experiences my private students have had with me as his/her private teacher.
Written narrative through reflections Emerging reflections related to the language learning story and EFL experiences.	Journal’s reflections: “Written reflections on teachers’ practices, teaching contexts, emotions, development, and language learning” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p 40). A journal and frames elicit English and pedagogical learning experiences, likewise Language Learning and Teaching Histories which are “retrospective accounts of past learning,” (Barkhuizen, 2014, p 37).	-To include in the journal my learning experience at the University of Santo Tomas as a student of the Licenciatura en lengua extranjera Inglés. -To involve experiences as a private English teacher and the challenges covid-19 brought to my life as a private English teacher.
Multimodal narratives “Betty (2010) defines multimedia texts as texts that include several media types; e. g., text, images, sound, or video. (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 53).	Online English classes through video recordings that allow the researcher to interpret and to reflect on ELT experiences.	To reflect on my teaching experiences as a private English teacher entrepreneur.

Note: Adapted from Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik (2014)

4.3. Trustworthiness:

According to Barkhuizen, (2014) *trustworthiness* “refers to the rather complex questions of the relationship between the findings of narrative inquiry studies and the underlying “realities” they purport to represent” (p. 90). It refers to how reliable and objective is the data collection and the data analysis in narrative inquiry. According to the authors above mentioned, it is difficult to know if narrative researchers are telling the stories exactly as they happened, or the researchers are creating stories that are far from their real context. Therefore, sometimes researchers have been criticized for the lack of transparency on the interpretation of the events. Below, I establish the criteria for trustworthiness:

- To do narrative research under the criteria established by the subproject Voices of the LLEI and the research tutor.
- To reduce subjectivity by involving not only my voice, but also, the voice of my learners through semi-structured interviews.
- To contrast emerging narratives and data with the principles and theoretical perspective of other researchers, experts on the field of narrative inquiry.
- To apply different sources for data collection in order to focus on specific information coherently with the research question and objectives.

Gao (2010) states that narratives can be used as a source of data to shed light on the real experiences of independent learning. This is because of the complexity to do research on the process of learning over a long period of time by using other means. We cannot assure that the descriptions of researchers are always factual representations since these accounts can be influenced by their social and political views now when they were written. The second level of trust is related to the relationship between the researcher and the participants who supply the data for narrative studies. This is not the issue when we are dealing with autobiographical studies

because of the level of trust given to researchers to tell the story. When we are involved with the biographical or third person studies, the level of trust becomes more complicated as Barkhuizen, (2014) “where there is always a risk that the original storyteller’s intentions and meanings will be distorted in re-telling for the purposes of research” (p. 91).

4.4. Participants:

I am the main and active participant of this research project because I narrate and reflect upon my experiences as an English learner and as a private English tutor through a journal. However, my private students will participate in answering a semi-structured interview to help me to gather information and avoid subjectivity as it was previously stated. Besides, I will record my private online classes to have a better knowledge of my teaching process and the learning process of my private students. Therefore, I will present to the participants a written consent explaining to them why I will record their English classes and why they need to answer a semi-structured interview. It will be part of a research project that is being carried out as a fundamental part of the B.A TEFL program.

Section 5. DATA ANALYSIS

Since the study aims to portray the positioning and entrepreneurship of an English tutor and emerging contributions to ELT through the life-story and experiences of a pre-service teacher, the data analysis will be framed through the approach of thematic analysis defined from Barkhuizen, (2014), which “is essentially a qualitative approach to analyzing narrative data. It is an effective way of linking data extracts to more abstract categories and concepts and of re-arranging them in support of theoretical arguments” (p. 80 - 81).

The narrative, collected through data collection instruments, (a) semi-structured interviews; (b) journal’s reflections and © online English classes, will be analyzed in conjunction with the main themes from which emerging sub-themes arose as evidence of the findings and the triangulation of information as it is presented below in the table:

- To describe the life-story and experiences of a pre-service teacher around EFL -English as a Foreign Language.
- To evidence the positioning and entrepreneurship of an English private teaching tutor and an English Language teacher and her emerging contributions to ELT

Triangulation of information was carried out taking as reference the process of open coding, from which the two main themes in conjunction with the research objectives. Then data was coded to establish categories interpreted and established as sub-themes. To establish a relationship with the perspective of narrative inquiry, the emerging categories (sub-themes) responded to conditions (factors intertwined with the life-story and experiences) regarding “contextual conditions and specific situational factors” (Creswell, 2006, p. 65) that give an account on findings evidenced through the narrative and the story time-line.

Table 2

Triangulation of research objectives with instruments and main themes

Research objectives	Data collection instruments	Main themes
To describe the life-story and experiences of a pre-service teacher around EFL- English as a Foreign Language.	Pre-service teacher's journal	The life-story and experiences of a pre-service teacher around EFL.
To evidence the positioning and entrepreneurship of an English private tutor regarding contributions to ELT.	-Semi-structured interviews -Recordings of the online English classes -Pre-service teacher's journal	Positioning as a non-formal education English teacher.

Note: This table shows the objectives, instruments and main themes.

After analyzing the oral and written narrative in conjunction with the descriptions of the online English classes captured through recordings, the main themes are analyzed by including significant excerpts from the pre-service teacher's story and findings in relation to my positioning as an English private teaching tutor and an English Language teacher, for then go in depth with contributions to ELT. The first theme corresponds to the narrative collected through the journal that gathers biographical information based on my story around EFL. From that, emerging sub-themes arose as part of the research findings:

Table 3

Themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis

Main themes	Narrative excerpts	Emerging sub-themes
1. The life-story and experiences of a pre-service teacher around EFL.	<i>"After a couple of weeks in New York, I understood that learning English was a priority and I needed to start learning English as soon as possible to be able to interact with American people and to go around the city by myself. Thus, the fall season started and I began studying English as a second language at La Guardia Community College." (Journal)</i> <i>"I used to take art classes at night, at the Metropolitan Museum. Over there I met interesting artists and it helped me to learn vocabulary related to art as well." (Journal)</i>	1.1 English learning was a priority to live, interact and go beyond my culture.

	<i>"I think these two interviews were a big test for what I have learned as an immigrant learning English as a foreign language. I proved to myself that the time, hard work, money, and effort that I had invested in learning English were worthy. Even though I was so scared in these interviews, I was able to manage to speak proper English to get the job. The next day I was working in my own studio and meeting my new coworkers." (Journal)</i> <i>"We visited the Metropolitan museum and central park with my native teachers. This was a great opportunity for me to interact with my classmates and teachers in places that I love. It encouraged me to talk more in English." (Journal)</i> <i>"My teacher was from the Philippines, who was chosen as the best ESL teacher in New York at that time. Thus, it was a privilege for me to learn more English with him. He shared with us his experiences as an immigrant to become an English teacher in N.Y. City to motivate and encourage us to study English hard to be able to reach our dreams in the United States. I consider this experience with him very meaningful in my life. I realized that if I would learn the English language, I would have many great opportunities in N.Y." (Journal)</i> <i>"The teacher very often behaved like an actor trying to teach grammar and basic vocabulary to help us to understand English." (Journal)</i> <i>"Instead of words, the book uses a lot of visual materials like graphics and photographs to teach concepts...we used to go to the English lab and practice listening and pronunciation skills through songs." (Journal)</i> <i>"In this class we use a mirror to see ourselves the way we were pronouncing and the movement of the speech organs." (Journal)</i> <i>"We read two books that I enjoyed a lot, The Pearl by John Steinbeck and The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho" (Journal)</i> <i>"In the composition class, I learned how to write essays about different topics. The teacher used to say, write for twenty minutes about the given topic." (Journal)</i> <i>"Once I started to teach private English classes in my house, I realized the importance of learning about different pedagogical methods to be able to offer the best English teaching to my private students. Furthermore, I became aware of the big responsibility I had with my students to teach them English in a way that would meet their learning needs and their expectations. So, in the first semester of 2015, I decided to start a B.A Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Inglés at</i>	1.2 Learning English with native and non-native teachers has been equally meaningful and enriching in my learning process. 1.3 Effective ELT helped me achieve goals to learn English. 1.4 To become a private English tutor and demands deep pedagogical skills and didactic knowledge in ELT.
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	<i>Universidad Santo Tomas through distance Education.” (Journal)</i> <i>“She learns very slowly and she likes to take time in understanding the parts of the speech very well. When she started with me her English level was a beginner and she was very afraid and shy to speak in English. But little by little she learned a lot in my private classes. She is very visual and learns easily through images and she loves to do a lot of exercise about grammar. Besides, she asks me to give her a lot of homework to do at home. Now, she can have a conversation in English and write short paragraphs. Also, she is not any more afraid to talk in English.” (Journal)</i> <i>“I prepared for reading and comprehending Barack Obama’s Democratic National Convention speech because she loves to read speeches from presidents.” (Journal)</i> <i>“Definitely, submitting a lesson plan every week was very tough but was worth it. I learned a lot on how to design a lesson plan and I felt more confident about it. I will not forget all the stages I should follow on a lesson plan to be able to reach the objectives with my students. Besides, the lesson plans helped me to be organized and coherent with each lesson, which allowed me to do a better job as a pre-service teacher who is still in the process of learning.” (Journal)</i> <i>“As a pre-service teacher, I am learning that I need to have an open mind to be able to overcome hard times and that it was very important to listen and follow the instructions and advice my pedagogical teacher has been giving me to reach the goals of this pedagogical practice. I am feeling very grateful from what I have achieved in this learning process as a pre-service teacher. Certainly, I have gained meaningful language teaching.” (Journal)</i> <i>“My students come to class eager to learn and enjoy throughout the learning process, our learning process. All these important aspects have forged my identity as a teacher and continue being part of my search for excellence in teaching.” (Journal)</i>	1.5 Building the identity of a pre-service teacher.
2. Positioning and entrepreneurship of an English private tutor.	<i>“Isa and Simon, they wanted to try private English classes because they deserted from Colombo Americano where they did not feel comfortable and they did not like its teaching methodology...Simon is very creative, imaginative, sociable and independent. He gets bored easily in regular schooling. He learns very easily and is quick to grasp concepts. He feels very comfortable with spatial and abstract concepts. Each class for him should be very dynamic and attractive to be interesting”(Journal)</i>	2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of teaching private English classes.

	<i>“He likes to draw and write words on the board to tell me a short story invented by him using the topic of the class. For example, when I taught him the parts of the body, he drew a person on the board and wrote the parts of the body while he was telling me a story related to it.” (Journal)</i> <i>“You are a person that is very close to students and you are able to establish strong connections with students in a short period of time. One feels in a trusting environment and I think that as a teacher it is very important. This way you are able to provide a better teaching experience. One is able to reach the objectives of the class through your own interests. This is very important. With you, you see your teacher more like a friend than a teacher with whom you feel the authority. But with you one feels respect. I should say that with you I have had a very rewarding experience and I have seen the results. You are an excellent teacher.” (Interview)</i> <i>“Besides being his/her teacher, I have become his/her confidant. They talk to me about their school, jobs, friends and family issues. Also, with my underage students, I am very much in contact with their parents and they sometimes ask me to teach them certain behaviors or customs that their daughter or son needs to enhance their learning and improve their self-esteem.” (Journal)</i> <i>“My challenge is to design very creative activities for my students to go beyond the established standards for their current English level. Students expect from me very dynamic classes that keep them very motivated to learn English”(Journal)</i> <i>“Moreover, the stages of my lesson plans were enough, clear and interesting because I have learned that to teach children it is necessary to have several activities for each lesson. Also, these activities should be creative, dynamic and enjoyable for students, otherwise, they will get bored and they will have difficulties in understanding the topics. Furthermore, the stages of my lesson plans were a guide for each class in an organized way. Now, I know how fundamental it is to plan each class following each stage to be able to succeed in class and to design each class taking into account student’s contexts.” (Journal)</i> <i>“They had a listening exercise about the importance of saying thank you and they had to answer questions from the audio. This was a nice moment for them because each of them had the opportunity to express gratitude to each other. For instance, Luci said thanks to Jero for being a nice and supportive brother to her.” (Journal)</i> <i>“We closed the class with the reading of “Prayer for Self-Love”. When he finished reading the prayer he said “Beautiful</i>	2.2 Social interaction as a fundamental aspect of the learning and teaching process and contributing to a meaningful sociocultural environment. 2.3 Knowledge and expertise empower the teacher and the learner.
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	<i>prayer to love ourselves”, he loved it. (Journal)</i> <i>“I am in the situation of exploring how to position my private English classes online as an entrepreneur. This has been a big change in my life as a private teacher because my students used to come to my house to have the English class face to face and this interaction was a key player in their process of learning English as a foreign language and my role as a teacher.”(Journal)</i> <i>“Some weeks ago, not knowing much about how to create academic activities using digital tools was my big limitation and frustration in preparing my private classes”(Journal)</i> <i>“I call Google document, “our board”. Also, it becomes my students’ notebooks as well” (Journal)</i> <i>“In person, I will always prefer all the classes that are taught because it is a way of really living with the subject, with the class without any alternative distractions and really studying online in many areas has already become somehow more tedious. However English classes never got tedious because they really were dynamic.” (Interview)</i> <i>“One reaches the goal of learning English in a leisurely way according to your own interests. It has been talking about the themes that I find interesting in my life” (interview)</i>	2.4 positioning and entrepreneurship through my private English classes in covid-19 times.
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Note: This table shows the information to be analyzed.

5.1. THEME 1: The life-story and experiences of a pre-service teacher around EFL

This theme is defined based on Barkhuizen, (2014) “Narrative inquiry brings storytelling and research together either by using stories as research data or by using storytelling as a tool for data analysis or representation of findings” (p. 3). My research project focuses on my EFL experiences, which are the research data to be analyzed. My stories represent significant episodes of my life, which emerged from my reflections as an EFL English teacher and learner. In addition, the theme emerged from my experience when studying English became a high priority in my life while living in New York City to the process of becoming an English teacher in Colombia. Moreover, the authors highlight stories as the fundamental force of narrative inquiry;

thus, my stories tell about my EFL experiences, which are essential for the purpose of this research project that uses narrative inquiry. My life-story and experiences as a pre-service teacher in learning and teaching English as a foreign language are key to make them visible. Besides, the reflections on my EFL experiences will make a meaningful contribution to ELT.

As carrying out the process of data collection, significant excerpts are taken from the narrative evidenced in the journal's reflections on my life story episode in New York, where I became aware of the necessity of learning English:

The first sub-theme that emerges from the first theme is the following:

5.1.1 English learning is a priority to live, interact and go beyond my culture.

In Living in an English-speaking country like the United States, it is fundamental to learn English as a means to make a living, to be part as an active member of a society and participate in the cultural and political life of the country and the city or place of living. In addition, it is an essential element to work and to move up on the social ladder of the country. Moreover, the interaction and participation in the cultural life allow me to go beyond my culture and transform my ideas of what a culture is and the same ideas of what was possible in my life. This interaction created new avenues of thought that shaped in many ways my life interests and motivated me to learn English. The language emerged as a vehicle of transformation in many aspects of my life.

The immediate context in learning a new language was the USA and in particular the city of New York with its historical, cultural and social context that was very different in many ways from my native city, Manizales. The new experiences in this new context shaped greatly my need to learn the language as a vital part in the process of living, interacting and going beyond

my culture. That is why Barkhuizen, (2014) point out “how language teachers and learners are situated in specific social, historical, and cultural contexts, in which the primary context is viewed as the teachers’ and learners’ lives (p.11). As we can read it below from the journal: *“After a couple of weeks in New York, I understood that learning English was a priority and I needed to start learning English as soon as possible to be able to interact with American people and to go around the city by myself. Thus, the fall season started and I began studying English as a second language at La Guardia Community College.” (Journal). I used to take art classes at night, at the Metropolitan Museum. Over there I met interesting artists and it helped me to learn vocabulary related to art as well. Besides, I took art classes at the Art Students League of New York where I drew live models.” (Journal). “I think these two interviews were a big test for what I have learned as an immigrant learning English as a foreign language. I proved to myself that the time, hard work, money, and effort that I had invested in learning English were worthy. Even though I was so scared in these interviews, I was able to manage to speak proper English to get the job. The next day I was working in my own studio and meeting my new coworkers.”(Journal).*

The need to learn the language was a priority to fulfill other needs as well. For Example, the need to be independent, the need to socialize and communicate, the need to understand and participate in the culture and the need to belong to the new social group that became the center of my life.

5.1.2 Learning English with native and non-native teachers has been equally meaningful and enriching in my learning process.

Before learning English, I used to have the idea that learning English with a native

teacher would be better than studying with a non-native teacher. But I was wrong because the experiences that I had learning English in New York City showed me that both are equally trustable in the process of learning English. As Moussu (2010) concludes “a good teacher will no longer be identified by the obsolete and ill-defined native / nonnative model but rather-and only-as a person who has mastered a combination of linguistic and pedagogical skill” (p. 18). My native and nonnative English teachers were very well prepared to approach and help immigrants like me to learn the foreign language. These teachers were an essential part of my learning process and also as mentors that guided me to overcome difficulties that arose when you do not know the language of the country where you are living.

My nonnative teacher from Philippines played a big role in my decision of studying Commercial Photography at La Guardia Community College and helped me to understand the importance of learning English to reach my goals in a foreign country. This nonnative teacher not only had the experience as a language learner but he also had the experience of being and immigrant who had to face a lot of cultural and social barriers to adjust to the new country like me. As we can read it below from the journal:

“My teacher was from the Philippines, who was chosen as the best ESL teacher in New York at that time. Thus, it was a privilege for me to learn more English with him. He shared with us his experiences as an immigrant to become an English teacher in N.Y. City to motivate and encourage us to study English hard to be able to reach our dreams in the United States. I consider this experience with him very meaningful in my life. I realized that if I would learn the English language, I would have many great opportunities in N.Y.”(Journal).

The native English teachers introduced me to their culture context and they made me feel part of the country. Besides, their pedagogical and language knowledge were pivotal in my

learning progress. They were supportive in my process and very curious of learning about my culture as well. As we can see it below from the journal:

“We visited the Metropolitan museum and central park with my native teachers. This was a great opportunity for me to interact with my classmates and teachers in places that I love. It encouraged me to talk more in English.”(Journal). Native and nonnative English teachers are equally important in the process of learning a foreign language when both have acquired pedagogical knowledge and language skills. Both have meaningful experiences and knowledge to contribute with English learners.

5.1.3 Effective ELT helped me achieve goals to learn English.

There is no doubt that a productive English language teaching methodology contributes the learner to pursue his/her objectives of learning the target language. When I wrote about my language learning experience that I had in N.Y City, I realized how significant and crucial was the methodology and strategies my teacher used to teach me. This experience has influenced me in the way I become a non-formal English teacher mirroring it on my students to learn English the way I did it. According to Johnson, (2011) “Asking teachers to write a language learning autobiography requires teachers to reflect on their prior language learning experiences, critically analyze those experiences, and then relate their analysis to their current conceptions of both language learning and language teaching” (p. 493). Some of the methodologies and strategies that defined the success of my English learning process are the followings as I mentioned in the journal: *“The teacher very often behaved like an actor trying to teach grammar and basic vocabulary to help us to understand English. Instead of words, the book uses a lot of visual materials like graphics and photographs to teach concepts.” (Journal).* It was a great tool for me

to learn English through visual means given the fact that I had trouble understanding written or spoken explanations from the book and the teacher.

Another methodology that secured my path of learning English was listening to songs. As we can read it from the journal: *"We used to go to the English lab and practice listening and pronunciation skills through songs."* (Journal). I still remember the first song that I learned in that lab. It was "I will always love you" by Michael Bolton. We got a worksheet with the song and we had to fill up the missing words. We listened to this song many times to get familiar with the different sounds and it was very hard for me to understand it. Listening to songs allowed me to develop my listening skills.

Besides, in the pronunciation class we used a mirror as I mentioned in the journal: *"In this class we use a mirror to see ourselves the way we were pronouncing and the movement of the speech organs."* (Journal). I liked this activity a lot because I gained awareness of my speech habits and I started losing the fear of speaking and I dared to speak more often in class, with my classmates and my new American friends. In addition, literature and composition classes were essential in my process of learning English as well. For this reason, I got the skill of writing fluently in English. This is the skill, which I feel more comfortable and confident to express myself and has helped me to have a great performance studying La Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Inglés. Also, through literature I learned a lot of vocabulary, grammar structures of the sentences and writing English styles. As I described in the journal: *"We read two books that I enjoyed a lot, The Pearl by John Steinbeck and The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho."* (Journal). *"In the composition class, I learned how to write essays about different topics. The teacher used to say, write for 20 minutes about the given topic. I think it was a good way to prepare us to be able to write about any topic in a short period of time. I also learned from this experience that I had*

to be informed about important issues concerning the world and to write my own opinions or ideas.” (Journal)

5.1.4 To become a private English tutor demands deep pedagogical skills and didactic knowledge in ELT.

As a private English teacher for more than five years I have found this job incredibly challenging, rewarding and in high demand. My students and parents have trusted me to achieve their goals in learning English as a foreign language. Therefore, it is a big responsibility and a challenge to fulfill and foster their expectations on their process of learning English. As I mentioned in the journal: *“Once I started to teach private English classes in my house, I realized the importance of learning about different pedagogical methods to be able to offer the best English teaching to my private students. Furthermore, I became aware of the big responsibility I had with my students to teach them English in a way that would meet their learning needs and their expectations. So, in the first semester of 2015, I decided to start a B.A Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Inglés at Universidad Santo Tomas through distance Education.” (Journal).*

Studying to become an English teacher has been pivotal because I have learned different approaches and didactics that have helped me in my job as a private English tutor. It is not just having knowledge of the target language but knowledge of how to approach and teach the learner context. Following is an example taken from the journal: *“She learns very slowly and she likes to take time in understanding the parts of the speech very well. When she started with me her English level was a beginner and she was very afraid and shy to speak in English. But little by little she learned a lot in my private classes. She is very visual and learns easily through images and she loves to do a lot of exercise about grammar. Besides, she asks me to give her a*

lot of homework to do at home. Now, she can have a conversation in English and write short paragraphs. Also, she is not any more afraid to talk in English.” (Journal). As a private English tutor I have seen the improvement in the acquisition of the English as a foreign language for my students. There are some students that in their English class at their school have an outstanding performance in the use of the English language compared to their classmates who do not take private English classes.

Indeed, approaching my students with the methodology and the didactic materials that best suit to each student has contributed greatly to their English learning acquisition and to stand out amount their peers in their schools. As Back (2016) states “Training tutors in cooperative learning methods, in which they actively adopt a role of facilitator rather than language expert, thus opening the door to more opportunities to negotiate meaning on an equal level with their learners” (p. 518). I always try to do my best with my students. Proof of that is that I still have one student since 2015 and I can see her big progress. She always says to me that she is very thankful with me because the English she knows it is because of me. I always want the private classes to be different from traditional teaching, but sometimes it is difficult to get rid of those traditional schemes.

Clearly, what I have learned these five years of teaching is just follow what the student wants. I just go by his/her rhythm, likes, interests and learning style. I want students to feel free, comfortable and confident in the English classes. Here I want to highlight that dialogue is very important between my private students and me. Through dialogue my students feel free to express themselves, to talk about their dreams, goals, needs or their favorite topics. Dialogue is the main vehicle for the teacher to connect to students and to reach the desired aims.

Besides, Gray and Morton points out that “but also allowing for her students’ and her own agency as they negotiate what goes into the ILPs” (2020, p. 64). I think it is crucial to negotiate with the student what topics they need or want to be included in the ILP (Individual Learning plan). Being flexible about it, students will get motivated to learn English focusing on topics they love or are interested in. This is why I design ILP for each of my private students. *“I prepared for reading and comprehension Barack Obama’s Democratic National Convention speech because she loves to read speeches from presidents.” (Journal).* Furthermore, Li Li (2020) states, “pre-service teachers' cognition about pedagogical knowledge often refers to their understanding and knowing about teaching methods and activities” (p.85). The comprehension of the pedagogical methods is fundamental in delivering language content.

In my case, if for any reason I cannot plan any of my private classes, I will feel lost and with lack of confidence. Besides, it will be very disrespectful for my students on my part to improvise in the classes. Sometimes even though I have prepared the class, the class can go in a different way from what I have planned. But it is because students found a topic very interesting and they want to share their thinking or experiences about the new topic. Therefore, I give space to them to express themselves. In addition, sometimes my students feel tired or down and I have to make adjustments to the planned activities to allow them to feel better and comfortable in the class.

5.1.5 Building the identity of a pre-service teacher.

I believe Knowledge and experience are essential elements for me to feel confident with my students and to construct my identity as a teacher. Building my identity as a teacher is very important for me because it helped me to position myself as a pre-service teacher and as a private

English tutor. As we can read it from the journal: *“Definitely, submitting a lesson plan every week was very tough but was worth it. I learned a lot on how to design a lesson plan and I felt more confident about it. I will not forget all the stages I should follow on a lesson plan to be able to reach the objectives with my students. Besides, the lesson plans helped me to be organized and coherent with each lesson, which allowed me to do a better job as a pre-service teacher who is still in the process of learning. (Journal)”* As the author Li Li (2020) observes “pre-service teacher cognitive development is a reflection of teacher identity” (p. 76).

According to Li Li nurturing and shaping up pre-service teachers’ knowledge is crucial in learning how to teach because it offers the opportunity to pre-service teachers to interact with their colleagues, students, tutors and expert teachers. Which allows pre-service teachers to observe, reflect and gain more knowledge about pedagogical issues and English language. The knowledge of the English language I think is essential for pre-service teachers because it can empower their identity. But, if the pre-service teachers are having problems learning the English language, it could restrain the development of their identity. Also, they will have less opportunity to position themselves as an English teacher.

Moreover, what I have learned at the program of the Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Ingles are the fundamental basis to start understanding and assimilating what it means to be a teacher, which contribute to my own growth. Also, it prepares me to face many challenges that a pedagogical practice brings. As I mentioned in the journal: *“As a pre-service teacher, I am learning that I need to have an open mind to be able to overcome hard times and that it was very important to listen and follow the instructions and advice my pedagogical teacher has been giving me to reach the goals of this pedagogical practice. I am feeling very grateful from what I*

have achieved in this learning process as a pre-service teacher. Certainly, I have gained meaningful language teaching skills.” (Journal)

The pedagogical practice let me implement or practice what I have learned so far in the program of the Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Ingles in a real context. This is why it is so fundamental that a pre-service teacher develops the pedagogical practice in the program to be able to understand better his/her role as a teacher. Also, it will help the pre-service teacher to develop his/her own skills as a teacher and to overcome the lack of identity as a teacher. When I was a beginner in teaching private English classes, I was feeling some lack of self-worth as a teacher. Then as I entered and advanced into the B.A TEFL program I started building my self-esteem as a teacher. This has allowed me to teach in new and dynamic ways, which have brought more satisfaction on my path to be a teacher. As we can read it below from the journal:

“My students come to class eager to learn and enjoy throughout the learning process, our learning process. All these important aspects have forged my identity as a teacher and continue being part of my search for excellence in teaching.” (Journal)

Definitely, learning to become a second language teacher is a process that takes time, passion, courage and self-confidence. As Kanno & Stuart, (2011) describe. Becoming an L2 teacher is not an experience that takes overnight for novices; rather, it is a prolonged process in which they gradually develop their understanding of what it means to be a language teacher and become increasingly comfortable with that identity. (p. 247)

Sometimes pre-service teachers struggle a lot to be recognized as professional teachers in their learning process. It is a long and sometimes painful journey that a pre-service teacher has to go through. Sometimes, when the pre-service teacher doesn't empathize with the expertise, the experience will be harder. But sometimes we can find expert teachers that are aware of our

process since they went through the same experience as well. Thus, they become big supporters in the learning teaching process of a pre-service teacher.

As Wenger (1998) argues, “acquiring the competence which allows one to recognize oneself, and be recognized, as a fully functioning member of a community of practice, is essentially a question of identity formation” (Gray, 2020, p. 38). Definitely, feeling part of a community is essential in the formation of the identity of a pre-service English teacher proved of that is the experiences that I had in my pedagogical practice. For instance, in the first educational institution where I did my first pedagogical practice, I felt miserable and mistreated. The English teacher supervisor I got, belittled me because of her great experience in teaching English. But, my second experience in my pedagogical class was awesome. I felt at home, the teachers were very nice and supported. They treated me like one of them without any discrimination because I was a pre-service teacher without any experience in a school as an English teacher and needed support. The confidence as a teacher comes back.

The experience in this school was very fruitful for me. I felt a lot of respect and value towards my knowledge as a pre-service teacher. After all, the environment and the educational community support is fundamental for a pre-service teacher to believe in himself / herself. The dominants of knowledge power to belittle a pre-service teacher I think is unethical from the experts and painful for the pre-service teacher. These unfortunate experiences limit or create obstacles and traumas for the pre-service teacher to construct his / her own identity as an English teacher. Finally, developing my identity as a second language teacher and positioning myself, as a teacher has been a long process, which has involved challenging and fruitful experiences. The first sub-theme that emerges from the second theme is the following:

5.2. THEME 2: Positioning and entrepreneurship of an English private tutor.

As a private English tutor for five years, I have found this job very challenging and at the same time very rewarding and in high demand as well. Fortunately, I have positioned well my private English classes in Manizales City face-to-face and virtually. Now a lot of people know me as a private English tutor and some of my students and student's parents have recommended me to other students and parents. Thus, the voice or network that I am a private English teacher has growth in my community. Sometimes, I have told new students to wait until next semester to get a space in my schedule for them. My students and parents have trusted me to achieve their goals in learning English. For instance, I have some students that have truly clear in their minds the importance of learning English for their future or their current jobs and they concentrate and enjoy my English classes. But there are other students that come to my classes because their parents are the ones who know how useful will be for their kids to learn English or because they are not doing well in the bilingual schools. Therefore, it is a big responsibility for me to help them to achieve their goals in learning English as a foreign language.

From my experience as a private English teacher, I would say that most of my students prefer to learn English in an enjoyable and relaxing environment where they are alone with the tutor because they feel more comfortable and have more opportunities to interact in English in topics they like or are useful for their daily life. Sometimes I ask them what topics they are learning in their English school course and if they need help with them and they usually do not like to talk about because they say that it's a boring topic. I believe that the core of a private English class is to offer to the student the English knowledge he/she needs to use in real life, in any situation and in any context and also to use it in his or her jobs.

5.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of learning and teaching through private English Classes.

Teaching private English classes has many advantages. Since my private classes are designed for each particular student, the methodology used takes into account the unique characteristics of each student like talents, personality, interests, learning style, and predominant ways of receiving information whether it is visual or through audition. Students usually learn quickly and with pleasure. They feel very motivated, creative and eager to come to class and learn. In addition, the personal interaction and friendship that I created with the student facilitates the process of learning and teaching. As we can read it below from the journal:

“Isa and Simon, they wanted to try private English classes because they deserted from Colombo Americano where they did not feel comfortable and they did not like its teaching methodology...Simon is very creative, imaginative, sociable and independent. He gets bored easily in regular schooling. He learns very easily and is quick to grasp concepts. He feels very comfortable with spatial and abstract concepts. Each class for him should be very dynamic and attractive to be interesting” (Journal)

According to Kaye (2014) some of the advantages are: The student has more control over the objectives of the class, materials and the time for activities. The student has more opportunities to engage in real communication and the student can develop a very productive interaction with the teacher. Following is an example taken from the journal: *“He likes to draw and write words on the board to tell me a short story invented by him using the topic of the class. For example, when I taught him the parts of the body, he drew a person on the board and wrote the parts of the body while he was telling me a story related to it.” (Journal)*

Definitely, private classes help students to develop their unique talents as well as their identity and also, I learn a lot from them. They usually ended up loving my classes because they discover that they can be themselves with me and since I do not put any pressure on them to learn, they discover that they can learn English at their own pace and in an enjoyable way. One of the disadvantages that Kaye (2014) mentions in the learning process is that the student may feel bored if the teacher is not dynamic and do not find the right approach for him/her. I can say that my commitment with my students is very high. I am constantly studying and looking for topics of their interest. Also, I want them to learn in a fun and creative way to avoid boredom. In addition, some disadvantages of private teaching also include the used of many resources to a limited population who has the economic power to pay for it. It also has some socio-economic and political implications in terms of providing access to a high-quality education only to the well to do people or those who can afford it. I think, it may result in creating inequality in the use of providing the best education for all. As Hamid, Khan & Islam (2017) “As a strategy to circumvent the failure in school English teaching and to give children a competitive edge in education and the job market, parents resort to tutoring in English and in other subjects. This had led to a phenomenal growth of private tutoring all over the country. (p. 872)

5.2.2. Social interaction as a fundamental aspect of the learning and teaching process and contributing to a meaningful sociocultural environment

Social interaction is a vital process of teaching since it helps to provide a nourishing sociocultural environment that facilitates the learning and contributes to the formation of my students to become responsible citizens. Teaching involves not just teaching a language. It also involves reaching out to a learner who has many other important needs as a human being. They are needs that should be met as well as part of a holistic approach towards the learning process.

Some of these needs that I strive to fulfill for my students through the learning process, and have been met throughout it, include the need for understanding, empathy, for belonging, acceptance of them where they are at the moment in their learning process and life, stimulation, respect, a nourishing emotional environment, friendship, patience, freedom and a deep belief in their potential as learners and human beings. In answering one of the questions on the interview, one of my students, Isa, described very clearly the power of social interaction in the learning process. *“You are a person that is very close to students and you are able to establish strong connections with students in a short period of time. One feels in a trusting environment and I think that as a teacher it is very important. This way you are able to provide a better teaching experience. One is able to reach the objectives of the class through your own interests. This is very important. With you, you see your teacher more like a friend than a teacher with whom you feel the authority. But with you one feels respect. I should say that with you I have had a very rewarding experience and I have seen the results. You are an excellent teacher.” (Interview).*

Social interaction is also part of the co-creation of meaning in the relationship with the student and in building a sociocultural environment to shape responsible citizens. It allows me and students to engage in the construction of ourselves to expand our own identities. Besides, social interaction is the vehicle to expose knowledge, expertise and competence as a teacher where I can work on my weaknesses and to reinforce my strengths. As Gray, (2020) observe “it is in social interaction in the various contexts of relevance to language teaching that knowledge identities are made visible and work on” (p.4). Moreover, social interaction is also a great tool to learn about the feelings, fears, expectations, blocks to learning or circumstances that favor or interfere with the learning process of the learner and therefore, it greatly nurtures the learning and teaching experience. I have a great connection with my students. I listen to them and I give

them some advice if they are having difficulties or I encourage them to do things that they are afraid to do.

Certainly, the social interaction in my classes is a key because it helps my students to learn in a friendly environment and to feel comfortable, spontaneous and free to speak in English. Besides, the social interaction I have with my students contributes to build a trusting environment and to share with them my knowledge as an English teacher. It makes me feel that I am an important part of their lives in their learning process and that they enjoy learning with me. Furthermore, Lerner (2020), “connecting to a student’s life and the life of her family to her education is central to success in learning. Too often the model of teaching that is so common is disconnected from a student’s life” (p.56).

As I mentioned in the journal: *“Besides being his/her teacher, I have become his/her confidant. They talk to me about their school, jobs, friends and family issues. Also, with my underage students, I am very much in contact with their parents and they sometimes ask me to teach them certain behaviors or customs that their daughter or son needs to enhance their learning and improve their self-esteem.”* (Journal) In conclusion, I interact a lot with my students and we talk about different topics related to their school, jobs, family, the world current issues or any book that we are reading in class. This interaction helps me to have a better understanding of them as a learner and as a person in their own context and family and to get a clear view of what to plan for their classes to meet their needs.

5.2.3. Knowledge and expertise empower the teacher and the learner.

As a private English tutor, I have found this job very challenging but very worthy. In fact, I am greatly indebted with my students for all the learning I have experienced in teaching

them. They have contributed to find my soul as a teacher and to appreciate the big rewards of their progress, changes and discovery of his/her talents in an environment that supports what they are, their talents, interests, pace, capacity for learning and wonder. Even though, every day I see the need to innovate and fulfill my students' interests in new ways, I understand the challenge of teaching English using methodologies that encourage my students to learn more about the language and enjoy the learning process in meaningful ways. As I described in the journal: *"My challenge is to design very creative activities for my students to go beyond the established standards for their current English level. Students expect from me very dynamic classes that keep them very motivated to learn English"* (Journal)

Becoming aware of the learning processes of my private students has been as great tool in designing the classes to provide a nurturing environment. The solid teaching education that I have engaged with in New York City and at the University of Santo Tomas, in conjunction with my pre-service teaching practice experiences have enabled and empowered me, as well as my students. As we can read it below from the journal: *"Moreover, the stages of my lesson plans were enough, clear and interesting because I have learned that to teach children it is necessary to have several activities for each lesson. Also, these activities should be creative, dynamic and enjoyable for students, otherwise, they will get bored and they will have difficulties in understanding the topics. Furthermore, the stages of my lesson plans were a guide for each class in an organized way. Now, I know how fundamental it is to plan each class following each stage to be able to succeed in class and to design each class taking into account the student's context"* (Journal). These elements present in my teaching experience have empowered my students and me to be eager to learn and become resourceful. This empowerment is reflected in the quality of education we create together as teacher and learner, having me as a leader in designing and

implementing strategies for learning that are meaningful, holistic, effective in reaching their learning goals and enjoyable. It is a co- creation of knowledge that transforms us, as teachers and learners, and our communities and makes a social contribution through the empowerment of students that it is reflective on the good quality of education and they have received and the achievements they have shown. It contributes to awaken our potential and increase our self-esteem to reach higher into the realms of knowledge and human existence, as we can read it below from the journal:

“They had a listening exercise about the importance of saying thank you and they had to answer questions from the audio. This was a nice moment for them because each of them had the opportunity to express gratitude to each other. For instance, Luci said thanks to Jero for being a nice and supportive brother to her.” (Journal)

Teaching English the way I do it helps to transform student’s lives. Also, I want my students to become agents of social change, to think critically and have self-empowerment to participate in transforming society. In addition, Knowledge, expertise and sensitivity have been great assets in learning how to provide a meaningful environment for my students where they feel free to learn, experiment and feel empowered to discover by them the path towards knowledge. It is about learning the English language and about life and themselves along the process as well.

“We closed the class with the reading of “Prayer for Self-Love”. When he finished reading the prayer he said “Beautiful prayer to love ourselves”, he loved it. (journal)

By these means, I help them to trust themselves and feel empowered to discover some of their own means for learning. Social interaction, having a good understanding of the pedagogical methods, which is also essential in delivering a language content, and designing

materials that encourage them to learn and discover their best way to learn has also been part of building a trusting environment for them that results in their empowerment.

I also believe that Knowledge and expertise are means to reach empowerment and position the teacher in society and learners as well. Increasing our knowledge and expertise and sharing in a way that empowers the learners is a political act as well conducive to the creation of a participatory democracy. It is also a way of assuming our responsibility for knowing, as Gray, (2020) describe it: People position themselves, and each other, in terms of what they know, how they have access to it, and what rights and responsibilities they have for knowing (or not knowing) something. Knowing, or not knowing, is not a neutral affair, as for having or not having access to knowledge. (p. 39)

5.2.4. Positioning and entrepreneurship through my private English classes in covid-19 times

As a private English tutor and entrepreneur, I also got affected due to the pandemic covid-19 because I had already positioned the face-to-face classes and now I had started over to position the English classes virtually. Before, I had eleven private students who came to my house to have private English classes, but on March 13 due to the pandemic situation I had to cancel their face-to-face classes. During the months of April, May, June and July I only had one of my students virtually. The other students are overwhelmed with their school virtual classes and they do not want to have the English class virtually for now. In addition, I was having some students who work in offices but they are now working online from their homes. They are feeling stressed and overloaded with more work. These students had to quit for their English classes as well because they do not have the time or the energy to focus on learning English virtually. Besides, some of

my students were unable to continue their classes for now due to the economic crisis brought by this pandemic. Thus, my situation as a private English tutor and entrepreneur at the beginning of the pandemic has changed a lot as I mentioned in the journal: *“I am in the situation of exploring how to position my private English classes online as an entrepreneur. This has been a big change in my life as a private teacher because my students used to come to my house to have the English class face to face and this interaction was a key player in their process of learning English as a foreign language and my role as a teacher.”* (Journal)

I believe that the educational community is facing a hard time with the pandemic and a new society is emerging in many ways as a result of it. At the same time, I believe that this is a great opportunity to build a new and a better educational approach which will allow students and teachers to be more creative and successfully adapt to the new changes and challenges in the educational field. As Cambridge (2020) asks, “Have you suddenly found yourself teaching online? You’re certainly not alone. English teachers all around the world are in the same position – and it can be hard to know where to start.” *“Some weeks ago, not knowing much about how to create academic activities using digital tools was my big limitation and frustration in preparing my virtual private classes”* (Journal) Without a doubt, I am not alone in these uncertain times, but it has been a wake-up call for me to motivate myself to learn a lot about digital tools and interactive academic materials.

Furthermore, to position myself as a private English tutor and entrepreneur under the new life brought by the pandemic, I have taken several steps that have contributed to keep my entrepreneurship and get new students. First, I have learned how to create interactive academic materials. Second, I have learned how to use Google meet and Zoom platforms to teach my classes, which have been very useful and have made my transition of teaching face-to-face to

virtually less stressful. Third, I joined some seminars with Zoom where I learned about the right posture and attitude that I should show and have with my students and how to set up my computer where my students can see me clearly.

I think all of these are very important to take into account to be able to deliver an excellent impression and environment to my students. Next, I have a Google document for each student where I prepare each class and I share it with each of them. Therefore, they can write, do the exercises and I can correct, write more examples or explain something for them. As I wrote in the journal: *“I call Google document, “our board”. Also, it becomes my students’ notebooks as well” (Journal)*

In addition, the creative design of very interactive visual resources for my online classes has been very instrumental in positioning myself as an entrepreneur private English tutor under covid-19. As “Cambridge points out that visual resources contribute to personalize the classroom into spontaneous learning scenarios.” The pandemic has brought us the urgent need to provide students with online tools for autonomous learning that enhances their creativity. Thus, innovating is another strength that I have built up through my distance language education learning to be able to do a better job as an entrepreneur private English tutor. Nevertheless, I think the interaction that I got face-to-face with my students before was more dynamic and spontaneous because I see that they are more outgoing, active and creative. But I have noticed that students can get distracted easily with the virtual classes because they can be doing other things with their hands and I cannot see it. Thus, it is incredibly challenging to keep them up for an hour and a half motivated and paying attention to the class.

This is why I try to keep the online classes very interesting and interactive with activities like songs, videos, worksheets, games and reading topics of their own interest. As Caro and Isa

mentioned in their interviews: *“In person, I will always prefer all the classes that are taught because it is a way of really living with the subject, with the class without any alternative distractions and really studying online in many areas has already become somehow more tedious. However English classes never got tedious because they really were dynamic.”*

(Interview). “One reaches the goal of learning English in a leisurely way according to your own interests. It has been talking about the themes that I find interesting in my life” (interview).

Lastly, my students have expressed to me how much they have learned and enjoyed the virtual classes even though their first preference is the face-to face classes. I believe students will learn to adapt and cope with the new way of learning. Definitely, I will help them to become more aware with all the changes the educational field is having.

Section 5. CONCLUSIONS

My contributions to the Licenciatura en Lengua Extranjera Ingles and the subproject the voices of the LLEI realities: life stories and experiences are done through a narrative study. What follows below shows them.

From my experience of learning English in New York city the language emerged as a vehicle of transformation in many aspects of my life and little by little became a strong force that has contributed to my becoming a private English tutor entrepreneur who has been involved in the co-creation of knowledge with my learners.

Also, I learned that native and nonnative English teachers are equally important in the process of learning a foreign language when both have acquired pedagogical knowledge and language skills. This process of learning English with native and non-native teachers has been an enriching contribution to my learning process. As Moussu (2010) concludes that being native or nonnative is not the most important tool in learning English but to master a combination of linguistic and pedagogical skills.

Learning English through visual means was very relevant to learn quickly given the fact that I had trouble understanding written or spoken explanations from the book and the teacher. Besides being surrounded by non-Spanish speakers was a very crucial frame of reference to emerge myself in learning English.

My life-story and experiences of learning and teaching EFL are not only concentrated on the narrative of pedagogical issues, but it has an underlining development of leadership and entrepreneurship which mirror my positioning as a private English tutor. My contribution goes beyond being a pre-service teacher since I have become a private English tutor, which creates an impact in distance language education.

The impact of distance language education helped me to develop very important skills such as learning different approaches and didactics that enable me to develop the proper teaching methods to meet the learning needs of my private students according to their individual learning styles. It is not just having knowledge of the target language but knowledge of how to approach and teach the learner context adopting the role of a facilitator or mediator to empower the learner.

Another impact of distance language education has been the successful fostering of entrepreneurship in my formation as a private English tutor. As part of this process I have also become more autonomous and responsible with my learning process, developed leadership skills, self-management and innovation in creating interactive academic materials to teach online. These aspects have also enable me to build my identity as a pre-service teacher and as a private English tutor.

As a result of my private English tutor connected to my entrepreneurship, I have seen the improvement in the acquisition of the English as a foreign language on my students. There are some students that in their English class at their school have an outstanding performance in the use of the English language compared to their classmates who do not take private English classes. Indeed, approaching my students with the methodology and the didactic materials that best suit each student has contributed greatly to their English learning acquisition and to stand out among their peers in their schools.

Clearly, one of the most important things that I have learned these five years of teaching is to just follow what the student wants. I just go by his/her rhythm, likes, interests and learning style. This has empowered my students to enjoy the learning process, being eager to learn and

discover by themselves how they learn best. The dialogue that I have developed between my private students and their families has been a great tool to enhance their learning process.

To position myself as a private English tutor and entrepreneur under the new life brought by the pandemic covid-19, I have taken several steps that have contributed to keep my entrepreneurship and get new students. First, I have learned how to create interactive academic materials. Second, I have learned how to use different platforms to teach my classes, which have been very useful and have made my transition of teaching face-to-face to virtually less stressful. My students have expressed to me how much they have learned and enjoyed the virtual classes even though their first preference is the face-to face classes.

Some of the contributions to society as part of my entrepreneurship in the role of a private English tutor include: the learning environment I create for my students, which is conducive to support the growth of my students and life in different ways and forms. The lasting relationship with my students with appreciation and trusting of their ability to discover their own path towards co-creating, between teacher and learner, English knowledge and transforming themselves as members of a community.

Besides teaching English grammar, I am teaching my private students topics and behaviors that help them to cope with their lives. Topics that will create consciousness on my students on relevant issues on society which will help them to make better choices and to be active participants of the sociocultural environment in their communities.

Finally, I encountered a limitation on my study. It was the lack of literature regarding being a private English tutor. I did not find any research focused on private English classes, even though, private classes are very demanding right now everywhere. For this reason this study has

created the interest to do more research about private English classes and the very important role it has in learning English as a foreign language.

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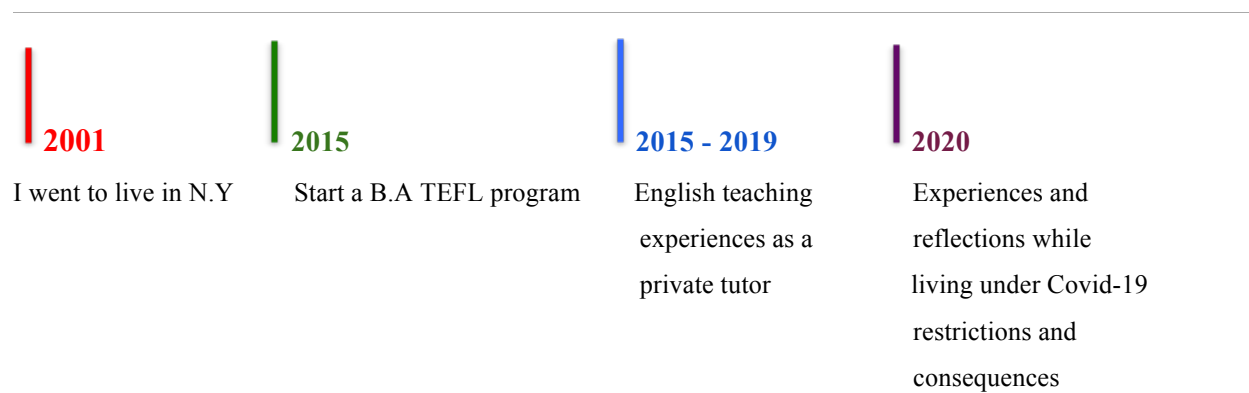
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APPENDIXES

Appendix A: Life-experiences from 2001 to 2020

Insert time-Line

Time-Line: English Learning and Teaching Experiences Through my Life.



Appendix B: Pre-service teacher's journal:



English Learning and
Teaching
Experiences from
2001 to 2020

Below is the link to read the journal:

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/JNQKKA3G0Isuv/>

Appendix C: Semi-structured interviews:

ENGLISH PRIVATE CLASSES

TUTOR: Cielo Arango

Date: 19/Noviembre/2020

Student's name: Julián Andrés González

Via email

1. ¿Cómo describe la experiencia de aprender Inglés en mis clases privadas de Inglés?

A pesar de que no pude asistir a las clases de forma presencial como me hubiera gustado, siento que avancé muchísimo en la forma de expresarme con el inglés, siento también que a pesar de que no abarcó todo este contexto, entiendo una parte de ello. Para ser sincero, antes no entendía casi nada y pues con sus clases privadas percibo que me ayudó muchísimo a crecer como estudiante y como persona en general.

2. ¿Cuáles son sus intereses en aprender Inglés?

Más allá de que se necesite tener dominio del inglés para poder obtener un buen desempeño profesional, también quisiera aprender el inglés en su totalidad porque en algún momento de mi vida quisiera viajar a otros países, a conocer lugares, personas, etc... Entonces pues tengo entendido que el inglés es casi como si fuera un lenguaje universal, es indispensable en nuestras vidas y más si queremos llegar a ser alguien en la vida. No nos podemos quedar estancados siempre en lo mismo, hay que tratar de ir enriqueciendo nuestros conocimientos conforme pasen los años.

3. ¿Prefiere aprender Inglés online o en forma presencial? ¿Por qué?

Prefiero 100% la forma presencial, porque siento que se tiene más conexión con la persona que nos está aportando conocimiento, también porque se hace mucho más fácil a la hora de resolver dudas. Se tiene un seguimiento más detallado del estudiante y viceversa. Por este tipo de razones prefiero las clases de inglés presenciales. Aunque en este caso siento que con la profesora de inglés se dio muy buena interacción, me nutrí de bastantes conocimientos.

4. Describame por favor como tutora privada de Ingles.

Siento que es una excelente persona y docente en lo poco que pude conocerla, siento también que tiene mucha paciencia con los estudiantes, es extrovertida, es carismática. Hace que las horas de la clase se vayan muy rápido de lo entretenida y lúdica que es la clase, esto último es muy importante porque hace que la clase no se vuelva tan monótona y a la larga aburrida. Siento que le va ir muy bien en su carrera profesional, muchas gracias por querer compartirme su conocimiento.

Date: Noviembre/16/2020

Student's name: Luis Alvares	Via email
1. ¿Cómo describe la experiencia de aprender inglés en mis clases privadas de inglés? Las clases son personalizadas y son preparadas muy bien, de tal manera que se hace buen uso del tiempo. - Los temas de las clases son relevantes a mis necesidades y gustos, y son variados. - Tengo buenas oportunidades de conversación ya que yo se inglés y quiero mantener mi nivel o mejorarlo. - Las clases son diseñadas con un buen profesionalismo y contribuyen a mejorar mi nivel de inglés y mantenerme motivado en clase ya que se tratan temas que me apasionan particularmente. - Cielo presenta un buen nivel de capacitación, ella tiene carisma, paciencia, entusiasmo y una buena motivación para hacer su trabajo de profesora de inglés. 2. ¿Cuáles son sus intereses en aprender Inglés? Mis objetivos en aprender inglés o intereses, son mejorar mi nivel de inglés a nivel de conversación, escritura y gramática 3. ¿Prefiere aprender Inglés online o en forma presencial? ¿Por qué? Prefiero aprender inglés en forma presencial ya que me siento más conectado con la profesora y más relajado. 4. Describame por favor como tutora privada de Ingles. Cielo es muy dedicada a su trabajo, comprometida en enseñar con muy buena calidad. Es disciplinada, muy motivada, tiene carisma, entusiasmo y profesionalismo en la enseñanza del inglés. Está bien capacitada para enfrentar los retos que implica ser profesora y entiende con claridad su papel. Prepara sus clases con dedicación y teniendo en cuenta los intereses del alumno	

Audio: Caro's interview

Videos: Isa's interview

Below is the link to see the interviews.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mcNAkpNApnyL1c3LsXCuVVDZavtJU9nS?usp=sharing>

Appendix D: Recordings of the online English private classes

Below is the link to see the online English private classes:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/14KSmoOxI7Mh5IeJ5dMqXyZXINtpEQXK6?usp=sharing>

Appendix E: Participants' consent

You may get access to the participants' consent in the link below:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pVyAOcyT5XyJotbJiIo0j2HIDo5FSxUA?usp=sharing>