



**UMCE**

Universidad Metropolitana de las Ciencias de la Educación  
Facultad de Historia, Geografía y Letras  
Departamento de Inglés

**Imaginerías and experience of teacher work of English teacher-trainees in Chile: a case  
study**

Tesis para optar al grado y/o título Licenciatura en Educación con mención en Inglés y  
Pedagogía en Inglés

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## **Dedicatorias**

Dedico este logro a:

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## **Abstract**

This piece of research explores the experiences and social representations and imaginaries of a group of Chilean English teacher trainees during their professional practicum. Through a case study approach, it investigates how these trainees perceive their future roles as educators, the challenges they face, and the impact of these experiences on their professional identity formation. The study highlights the complexities of teaching in a neoliberal educational context, where market-driven policies shape the educational landscape. It also examines the implications of such policies on teacher training and the broader educational system in Chile. By delving into the lived experiences of these future teachers, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing teacher retention and the quality of education, offering insights for policy and practice in teacher training.

Key words: teacher-trainees, clinical sociology, professional practicum, imaginaries, lived experiences

Esta investigación explora los imaginarios profesionales y las experiencias subjetivas de los docentes en formación de inglés en Chile durante su práctica final. A través de un enfoque de estudio de caso, investiga cómo estos estudiantes perciben sus roles futuros como educadores, los desafíos que enfrentan y el impacto de estas experiencias en la formación de su identidad profesional. El estudio destaca las complejidades de la enseñanza en un contexto educativo neoliberal, donde las políticas impulsadas por el mercado dan forma al panorama educativo. También examina las implicaciones de tales políticas en la formación docente y el sistema educativo en general en Chile. Al profundizar en las experiencias vividas por estos futuros docentes, la investigación contribuye a una comprensión más profunda de los factores que

influyen en la retención docente y la calidad de la educación, ofreciendo ideas para las políticas y la práctica en la formación docente.

Palabras claves: profesores en práctica, sociología clínica, práctica profesional, imaginarios, vivencias.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

In Chile, the phenomenon of teacher attrition has been growing steadily in the last decades. Such a phenomenon is the result of multiple factors linked to unfavorable work conditions such as low salaries, long working hours and the lack of social recognition (Berrios, 2022). As a result, Chile is by now among the group of countries with the highest rates of teacher drop out (Gaete et al., 2017).

While some experienced educators choose to change their profession after years of service, there is an alarming growing number of teachers who drop out in the initial stage of their career, with little to no intentions to return to the school system. In this regard, currently, one out of four novice teachers quit teaching before their fifth year of professional experience (López, 2015). Furthermore, the current teacher retirement rate of 4.4% is not fully replaced in Chile, which accentuates a persistent loss of professionals from the school system. Adding to this, recent research by Elige Educar (2021) predicts an inevitable shortage of teachers by 2025, estimating a deficit of 26.273 educators, particularly in subjects such as English, Technology, and Music. This alarming situation raises concerns about the sustainability of teacher supply in the educational system as a whole.

In this context, initial teacher training is fundamental in order to introduce future teachers to the reality of the professional activity and its prescriptions. In Chile, this induction process takes the form of clinical experiences or practicums that teacher trainees have in schools at different stages of their training. The significance of the practicum process is seen as a pivotal factor in influencing the decision to stay in the profession (Ávalos and Aylwin, 2007). Regarded as a crucial step, the professional practicum serves as the initial encounter where pedagogy students can immerse themselves in the reality of teacher responsibilities, gaining experience within the context of the Chilean educational system.

In Chile, most teacher training programs offer several practicums throughout the training process which range from one academic semester to six, depending on the university. Consequently, most Chilean teachers have prior school experience before actually starting teaching. This could lead to the assumption that future teachers are familiar with existing teaching conditions at the beginning of their professional lives, and that, therefore, staying in the teaching career depends on other factors.

On the other hand, government efforts have been made to attract new teachers and decrease their drop out. In this respect, various public policies, such as the Carrera Docente law (Ministerio de Educación del Gobierno de Chile, 2021), aim to improve teaching conditions by increasing salaries and reducing teaching loads. However, what has been observed is that the number of student teachers and practicing teachers is decreasing year by year (Elige Educar, 2021).

Considering the importance of the professional internship as a key milestone in the transition between initial training and professional incorporation, as well as its decisive role in the motivation to remain in teaching, the present study explores the subjective experience of a group of trainee English teachers as well as their imaginaries about the final internship process. The aim is to understand how the process of professional practice serves the purpose of induction to the real activity of education and how this is presented as a space where various tensions linked to the distance between the reality of teaching, the prescription of university training, the state regulation mingle, and the trainees' subjective beliefs and imaginaries about teaching are confronted, conforming a particular and situated understanding of teaching.

This study stems from questions regarding the complexities of teaching and its training process. A comprehensive review of the literature on the subject reveals a noticeable lack of research addressing the subjective dimensions of teacher work, such as teacher emotions, life

stories and imaginaries and social representations. Distinguishing itself from previous studies, the motivation guiding this piece of research lies in a genuine curiosity about how teacher trainees form connections and attribute meaning to their experiences during the practicum period. Such a contemplative stance led to the formulation of three key questions: What is the professional practicum process like for teacher trainees? Do they perceive a discernible disparity between the prescribed work and actual work? Could such disparities be a contributing factor to the prevalent issue of high attrition rates?

These reflections culminated into a central and overarching question: What are the imaginaries and representations held by teacher trainees regarding their final practicum and the teaching profession, and how do these align with their lived experiences? This study aims, therefore, to shed light on the perceptions and experiences that may influence the decision making processes of future educators as for staying or not in teaching.

This study adopts a methodological approach grounded in clinical sociology, emphasizing close engagement with the experiences of the actors involved (De Gaulejac, 2019). The research design is structured around a qualitative single case study. To ensure the methodological rigor, a purposive homogeneous sampling technique was utilized, focusing on selecting participants with similar characteristics pertinent to the investigation. In this regard, our case consists of eight fifth-year students from the English Department at Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación who completed their final practicum during the first semester of the year 2023.

This research holds the potential to enhance the understanding of the professional practicum itself, highlighting how this transformative process influences the construction and reconstruction of teachers' imaginaries and representations. Through our investigation we aspire

to uncover the diverse ways in which teacher trainees navigate their new roles as teachers, their future aspirations, and personal and societal challenges within the educational context.

Ultimately, this piece of research has broader implications for initial teacher training and education as well as for the curricular construction of teaching practicums. By shedding light to the intricacies of the practicum experience, we can contribute with relevant data for teacher trainers and curriculum professionals to make evidence-based decisions aiming at the improvement of teacher training and practicum curricula. Furthermore, our findings may contribute to the refinement of curricular frameworks, ensuring that practicums adequately prepare future educators for the demands and the realities of the teaching profession.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The professional practicum is a pivotal experience in the teacher training process. It provides trainee teachers with opportunities to bring personal and pedagogical knowledge into concrete teaching practices. The following literature review delves into the diverse aspects of the professional practicum in education and, in a broader context, into the characteristics of teacher work and the many subjective dimensions of teaching and teacher identity.

This chapter encompasses a recollection of previous contributions to this research topic aiming to aid us to achieve a better grasp on the intricate landscape of our investigation, and provide an extensive and comprehensive synthesis of the precedent works that have shaped the understanding of the professional practicum.

### **2.1 Teacher Work**

This section aims to delineate the characteristics of the work of teachers within three different levels: the social, organizational and subjective.

Initially, it is imperative to define the essence of teacher work. According to Tenti (2007), teacher work has consistently been described as the combination of professionalism and vocation. In this context, vocation is perceived as an indispensable component of high-quality teaching, demanding a moral and ethical commitment, alongside respect, interest, and concern for the learners.

Addressing the role of teachers, Romero et al. (2013) proposed that teachers undertake the role of facilitators within the teaching and learning processes. However, society expects educators to provide their students with tools to face social, economic, political, and cultural issues. To accomplish this, teachers must maximize students' intellectual capabilities and promote meaningful learning that encourages critical and scientific thinking. Consequently, the

work of teachers becomes even more complex and challenging as communities expect them to have knowledge and competencies surpassing their initial training and experiences.

Similarly, Jan (2017) proposed that teacher's work is characterized as complex and demanding due to the essential role of teachers in all societies. The author states that "teachers are the backbone of society" (p.53). Additionally, Jan highlighted that teachers act as facilitators of learning, arguing that their role is to guide and foster knowledge rather than merely provide information. Furthermore, Jan pointed out that in the 21st century, teachers should concentrate on students and their needs as well as preparing their learners to confront future challenges using thinking skills, effective communication, and collaboration, among other essential skills.

Regarding the organizational structure of school systems, Seror (2019) proposed that educational models are not universal; each country has its own way of educating children and adolescents according to specific socio-cultural phenomena. Nonetheless, Anderson-Levitt (2003) affirmed that most countries share curricular similarities, as the elementary curriculum across all countries includes mathematics, language, arts, social and natural sciences, aesthetic education, and physical education. Differences arise in subjects such as religious and moral education, vocational education, and hygiene habits; these subjects are included in certain countries while omitted in others. In Chile, compulsory education is organized into two levels; basic and secondary education, mandatory for students from 6 to 18 years old. Moreover, during high school students can choose between scientific-humanistic or professional technical schools (Ministerio de Educación de Chile, 2017).

In terms of the subjective experience of teacher work, Yin et al. (2016) proposed that teachers often confront high emotional demands in their profession. Teaching affects the teachers' emotional expressions; for instance, teachers are expected to show positive emotions and suppress those regarded as negative, such as anger or sadness (Yin and Lee, 2012, as cited in

Yin et al., 2016). Furthermore, Madigan et al. (2023) found that teachers face medical problems related to their professional activity. These issues mostly stem from stress and the burnout syndrome, defined as a psychological affliction stemming from chronic work-related stress. The authors observed that teacher burnout was associated with frequent somatic complaints, physical illnesses, voice disorders, blunted cortisol responses, inflammation markers, and indicators of heart malfunction.

Moving on to the subjective experience of teachers in Chile, Gaete et al. (2017) indicated that school teachers are generally dissatisfied with their work conditions; they perceive that their work environment is unfavorable, lacking adequate resources, enough support from the school management, and also they perceive a high burden of administrative bureaucracy. Moreover, Cornejo (2009) pointed out that teachers from Santiago perceive their jobs as precarious due to low remuneration despite having a professional degree. Additionally, secondary school teachers work approximately 10 extra hours weekly without compensation, lacking the necessary intervals for rest and disconnection during the workday. Another finding made by Cornejo is that secondary school teachers in Santiago exceed the legally permitted lecturing hours; spending over 85% of their working hours on classroom teaching when the legal amount is 75%. Lastly, Hernández et al. (2017) found a prevailing sense of undervaluation among teachers that comes from society in general and the Chilean State. While teachers positively value their roles, work and contribution to society, they perceive that the social perceptions of teaching goes in the opposite direction, contributing to its social devaluation.

In conclusion, teaching can be depicted as complex and demanding as teachers are expected to prepare youngsters to meet complex and increasingly difficult social expectations. The conditions of teacher work affect the subjective experience of the teacher on an emotional,

psychological and physical level, which, in turn, influence their own perception of the profession.

## **2.2 The School in the neoliberal society**

Neoliberalism is a system based on the premise of the benefits of an extensive market versus a small state. More than merely an economic model, neoliberalism constitutes an extensive discourse that advocates for private property and the capitalist system, rooted in authoritarianism, legitimizing social inequalities in the guise of freedom (Vargas del Carpio Ribert, 2000).

From an educational standpoint, the tenets of neoliberalism manifest in every aspect of education, notably as a process of privatization and commodification of fundamental social rights, as analyzed by Guerrero (2004). This system encompasses endo privatization, where education management adopts the rationale of the private corporate world, considering people merely as consumers rather than citizens or students.

Guerrero et al. (2019) pointed out that neoliberalism in education aims to raise rankings in tests such as PISA and comply with quality standards of international organizations (such as the OECD) and other entities. This trend impacts all educational levels, permeating the subjectivity of teachers, parents, students, and administrative staff. The transformation of schools into "businesses" is oriented towards the "enhancement" of educational quality, in accordance with established quantitative criteria (Laval et al., 2011). Such a transformation is observable in the emergence of a new conception of the actors of the educational process, where directors are labeled as "managers", teachers as "workers", parents as "customers", and educational results as "products". The focus on a "knowledge economy" is highlighted where children are considered "human capital" (Guerrero et al., 2019). Students, by underperforming, pose a threat to the

institution's image, funding and their future prospects in work-centric societies, being perceived as "products" that must be preserved when achieving the necessary success.

As analyzed by several authors, neoliberalism has impacted democracy, social values, and education. Within the educational field, neoliberal influence is characterized by privatization and a corporate mindset, manifesting in the perception of schools as companies, where students are treated as commodities, and business-oriented terminology is adopted. This tendency could dehumanize the educational experience by overlooking the human aspect. Hence, it is necessary to prioritize a holistic perspective that appreciates the human dimension of education, preventing neoliberal policies from reducing students, teachers and administrators to mere participants in a market-driven system.

### ***2.2.1. Public Education vs Private Education***

In Chile, the school system is divided into three types of schools; private, public, and subsidized. Private schools are entirely financed by the parents or guardians of students, while subsidized schools receive partial funding from the state through subsidies, with the remainder covered by guardians through a monthly fee. Public schools, on the other hand, are primarily supported by the state (MINEDUC, n.d). These school types are part of the quasi-market model that rules Chilean education.

As noted by Joiko (2017), it was in the 1980's that the educational quasi-market was introduced. This model aims to enhance educational quality by giving parents the freedom to choose their preferred school. This system is termed a quasi-market because, unlike the economic market, it doesn't always entail a monetary exchange between clients and providers (Maroy, 2008). This author also pointed out that this model was established to encourage the private sector to offer educational services to broader coverage and to decentralize the responsibility of the State. Privatization in education aimed at fostering competitiveness and

quality. Additionally, Bellei (2016) proposed that the market has orientated the Chilean educational system for decades, specifically since the dictatorship, but the students' movements managed to change some aspects. In this regard, the Chilean government has initiated a reform that includes discontinuing public funding for private for-profit schools, making state-funded schools free (public and subsidized schools), prohibiting discriminatory student selection practices, and establishing a public education administration system.

Regarding the distinctions between public and private schools, Castillo et al. (2011) suggested that subsidized schools tailor their educational programs based on socioeconomic levels. The middle and upper-middle classes receive an education program focused on academic excellence, while most lower socioeconomic levels receive an education that lacks a focus on academic excellence. However, public schools tend to be more homogeneous in their educational projects, emphasizing civic education and academic excellence without differentiation between the different socioeconomic status.

### **2.3 Training English Teachers in the Context of a Neoliberal Society: a Complex Process**

Teacher training denotes the process whereby prospective teachers learn to apply their knowledge for the benefit of their students' development (Galindo and Moreno, 2019).

According to the same authors, this process involves activities aimed at enhancing both pedagogical and subject-specific knowledge, contributing to teachers' professional growth.

Maldonado (2018) delineated two types of teacher training: initial and continuous. Continuous training pertains to ongoing professional development and the appreciation of educators' pedagogical experiences, aiming to meet the demands of the contemporary educational society. On the other hand, initial training serves as the starting point for future educators, providing foundational understanding of their roles. This involves promoting attitudes, beliefs and fostering diverse perspectives in education, guiding their professional

performance within the educational systems. Contrastingly, Ripoll-Rivaldo (2021) defined initial teacher training as: A process whose purpose is to develop competences related to didactic knowledge in order to exercise professional practice, trainees must develop a series of skills in the form of didactic proposals, above all, taking into account the needs and interests of the students, transforming theoretical knowledge into practical knowledge. (p. 286)

The author contended that through initial training, future teachers acquire essential skills and competencies, aligning their daily activities with the philosophical goals of the state education system and utilizing tools facilitating the amalgamation of theoretical guidelines with practical applications. Additionally, Ripoll-Rivaldo (2021) identified four fundamental principles supporting educators' continuous development: (a) promoting collaborative and ongoing learning, (b) integrating knowledge with new information, (c) reflecting, both individually and collectively, on practical problem solving, and (d) engaging in formative environments and social interactions.

Hurtado et al. (2019), highlighted that training educators is a significant challenge, extending beyond the mere execution of individual tasks. Instead, it entails a process of professional growth that fosters the advancement of teaching not only within the classroom but also within the educational institution and ultimately, across education systems as a whole.

Furthermore, Owen et al. (2018), emphasized the importance of considering professional-pedagogical practice as an enabling foundational facilitator for reflective, organized, and enriched learning through educational discourse, especially during the initial phase of teacher education. This phase emphasizes the cultivation of well-rounded individuals, with educators assuming a fundamental role in the educational process. Similarly, in defining English language teaching, Bejarano et al. (2020), noted that:

Teaching is any process by which we transmit knowledge, whether common or special, on a given subject. It aims to transmit, by various means, certain knowledge according to a knowledge in accordance with a syllabus to be followed. This concept is more restricted than that of education, since the objective of the latter is the integral formation of the person. (p. 307)

Specifically addressing the teaching of English as a second language, Beltrán (2017), contrasted *learning* and *acquiring* a new language. The author pointed out that although all students start by learning the language, not all completely acquire it. Second language acquisition represents the final phase of learning, enabling the learner to maneuver the second language as fluently as the first. Similarly, Galindo and Moreno (2019) indicated that developing English language skills involves acquiring the communicative skills and abilities in English throughout the educational process. These skills are based on the ability to understand, express and interpret ideas, thoughts, emotions, facts and opinions, both orally and in writing, taking into account social and cultural contexts, as well as the learners' intentions and needs when using the language.

The acquisition of a foreign language, according to the same author, primarily occurs in an academic setting and in an environment where the foreign language is not used in everyday life. Essentially, second language acquisition follows the learning process of one's native language. In line with this, Bejarano et al. (2020), emphasized the integration of the four linguistic or communicative skills -reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing, and speaking- when teaching English as a foreign language.

Several studies highlighted the critical role of comprehensive training for English teachers during their initial preparation in developing essential teaching competencies. The proposed philosophical alignment by Owen et al. (2018) and the integration of language skills as

suggested by Bejarano et al. (2020) significantly contribute to establishing a robust pedagogical framework for English teaching.

However, despite these advancements, there are identified areas for improvement and research gaps that could benefit the development of training English teachers. The lack of a detailed exploration of specific obstacles educators might encounter in the initial training phase stands out as a limitation. Furthermore, the insufficient justification of initial training programs, without focusing on the reality of the educational environment, requires greater attention. Most studies predominantly concentrate on teacher training with students as the focal point, neglecting the necessity to address the classroom's reality. This omission could impede the effective preparation of future teachers to confront contemporary challenges in the educational setting.

### ***2.3.1 ELT Training in Chile: a Brief Retrospective***

Regarding the history of teaching in Chile, Núñez (2007) highlighted that the introduction of schools in Chile occurred during the colonial period. The people responsible for the teaching process were predominantly Ecclesiastes or laypersons, whether voluntary or paid, none of whom possessed formal educational qualifications. Their ability to teach stemmed from their knowledge of reading, writing, basic mathematics and fundamental cultural elements. As the first Republican rulers emerged, they established new educational institutions and recognized the pivotal role of teachers in shaping the country's legislation. The initial regulations outlined three prerequisites for those aspiring to teach: patriotism, catholicism and moral conduct.

The author stated that throughout the establishment of the public education system, teachers continued to lack formal education. Consequently, the Chilean state increased its focus on this matter. In the 1813 regulations, the state stipulated that teachers must possess expertise and aptitude, signaling a shift towards acknowledging the importance of educational qualifications for teachers.

According to Serrano et al. (2012), the origins of English teacher training in Chile can be traced back to the beginnings of the Universidad de Chile in 1842, and later to the founding of the Instituto Pedagógico in 1889, marking the inception of foreign language educator training in the country. According to the same authors, this evolution is attributed to the influence of the German educators Federico Hanseen and Rodolfo Lenz, followed by the Chileans Rodolfo Oroz and Claudio Rosales.

Similarly, Orrego et al. (2022), pointed out that in the first half of the 20th century, Chile bolstered educator training by establishing key educational institutions including:

- Instituto Pedagógico (U. de Chile - UMCE) in 1889
- Universidad de Concepción in 1919
- Escuela de Pedagogía de la Universidad Católica de Chile in 1943
- Instituto Pedagógico Técnico in 1944 (which became part of the Universidad Técnica del Estado in 1947)
- Instituto Pedagógico de la Universidad de Chile en Valparaíso in 1948
- Universidad Católica de Valparaíso in 1949

However, as noted by Serrano et al. (2012), information on how the sociopolitical and disciplinary context influenced English teacher training is limited. The existing focus tends to center on identifying the inception of the career and assessing initial training programs.

Moreover, comprehensive studies addressing the specific preparation of English teachers within the broader scope of education have been largely overlooked.

Citing the same authors, their study titled “Historical Trajectory of the Initial Training of English teachers 1960-2019” (2022), indicated that since the 1960s, the Chilean educational

system has undergone three major reforms. The first reform, implemented in 1965 during Eduardo Frei Montalva's administration, prioritized the expansion of the educational system and introduced technical pedagogical planning methods, following the so-called technological curriculum. According to Nuñez (2007), the expansion of education during this period led to an increased demand for schools and high schools, resulting in the hiring of individuals lacking proper education and training as teachers. A significant issue emerged as teachers were not accorded the recognition of professionals, unlike other degree-holding workers. Both the administrative statute of 1960 and the *Ley de la Carrera Docente* in 1978 failed to acknowledge teachers as professionals.

Subsequently, Orrego et al. (2022) noted that during the civil-military dictatorship, reforms focused on system administration, implementing municipalization, privatization, and financing strategies based on demand-side subsidies. Post-transition to democracy, educational reforms aimed primarily at enhancing quality and equity. The establishment of the *Sistema de Aseguramiento de la Calidad* (SINAC) led to the creation of the *Comisión Nacional de Acreditación* (CNA) through law 20.129 in 2006.

In terms of English teacher training, the authors highlighted efforts to impact professional development by establishing internship and diploma programs abroad. Additionally, the creation of the Programa Inglés Abre Puertas in 2004 aimed to enhance English learning standards for students from 5th grade to 4th grade of high school, offering continuous training strategies for teachers and classroom support (Law Decree N° 3.166, 1980 [with force of law]).

Moreover, Bastías and Gonzalez (2021) emphasized recent policies aimed at strengthening Initial Teacher Education (ITE) to improve education quality, regulate, and retain future educators within the school system. The evolution of university program entry exams was noted, transitioning from the *Prueba de Aptitud Académica* (PAA) in 1967 to the *Prueba de*

*Selección Universitaria* (PSU) in 2003, and most recently, the introduction of the *Prueba de Acceso a la Educación Superior* (PAES) in 2022 (DEMRE, 2022).

The Law NUM. 20.903 (2016) now promotes a gradual increase in the required score (above 550 points in the PAES) for those pursuing pedagogical studies. This measure aims to ensure higher standards for individuals entering teacher training programmes.

Additionally, according to Patricia and Marta Castañeda (2022), quality measures are described as those that bring about changes in students, enhancing their potential through the appropriation of their learning process and bolstering personal responsibility and decision-making skills. Concurrently, evaluation and accreditation processes for institutions offering training programs have been established to ensure relevance, focus on relevant competencies, and adapt to evolving educational and societal needs, as noted by Arellano et al. (2022).

As previously mentioned, the changes and advancements made in the history of education aim to enhance the quality of education provided to students. *According to the Plan de Aseguramiento de la Calidad para la Educación 2020-2023* in Chile presented by MINEDUC (2020) educational quality encompasses equity in access to education, equality of opportunities and the promotion of student participation and learning. For this purpose, the *Comisión Nacional de Acreditación* (CNA) is responsible for ensuring the quality of teacher training programs through the evaluation of six essential criteria:

- Graduation profile: This refers to the competencies and skills that future teachers are expected to develop by the end of their training, encompassing the set of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for teaching.

- Syllabus and outcomes of the training process: This criterion evaluates the structure, content and outcomes of the English teacher training program to ensure it meets established standards and requirements.
- Practical training: This involves the practical experience and supervised teaching practicum prospective teachers receive in classrooms to acquire the necessary skills for effective English language teaching.
- Academic staff: This criterion assesses the quality and competence of the teaching staff responsible for English teacher training, considering their academic background, teaching experience and their ability to guide and support students.
- Governance and resource management: This evaluates the institutional structure, organization of English teacher education, and management of available resources to provide an environment conducive to students' learning and professional development.
- Capacity for self-regulation and continuous improvement: This refers to the institutions' capacity and prospective teachers' ability to evaluate their performance, identify areas for improvement, and take action to enhance the quality of English language teacher education through self-regulation and continuous improvement processes. (CNA, 2022)

The research conducted by Narváez-Cantos (2022) identified the presence of eight significant attributes contributing to the effectiveness of an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher, categorized in four key dimensions. Firstly, organizational and communicative skills encompass the teacher's ability to effectively organize and convey information to learners, including lesson planning, clarity and effective communication with students. Secondly, pedagogical knowledge involves the teacher's understanding of the teaching principles and methodologies for ESL (English as a Second Language), utilizing appropriate strategies,

resources and accurate learner progress assessment. Thirdly, socio-emotional skills pertain to establishing positive relationships, fostering an inclusive learning environment and encouraging active participation. Lastly, English language proficiency refers to the teacher's command of the language, enabling him or her to communicate effectively with students, modeling correct language use, and providing clear examples and explanations. As we can see, all the factors mentioned above by the author are closely related to the quality of the clinical experiences that teacher trainees have during their training process.

### ***2.3.2. Some Challenges and Opportunities in ELT Training in Chile.***

Donoso (2008) and Jimenez (2014) emphasized the multifaceted implications of teacher development in English teacher training. The authors recognized the fundamental importance of utilizing designs and initial training programs to acquire theoretical knowledge competencies alongside the practical skills necessary for proficiently teaching the English language. Similarly, Gomez and Walker (2020) underscored the necessity of updating and enhancing the training of English teachers in Chile. They highlighted the significance of a comprehensive approach that incorporates not only innovative teaching methodologies but also the reinforcement of teachers' linguistic and cultural competence. Moreover, these authors also emphasized the need for continual professional development opportunities for English teachers in Chile, drawing examples from successful teacher training programs in countries such as Finland and Singapore.

Additionally, Gomez and Walker (2020) highlighted that it is also essential to strengthen teachers' teaching skills to meet contemporary classroom challenges and foster meaningful learning. Training in the use of educational technology emerges as a crucial need to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in an increasingly digital educational environment. In addition, the importance of developing socio-emotional skills in teachers is also emphasized to foster a positive learning environment and support students' well-being. Lastly, improving evaluation and

feedback processes in teacher education is imperative to ensure continuous professional development and ultimately enhance the quality of education in Chile.

Furthermore, Aedo and Millafilo (2022) pointed out the importance of fostering opportunities and support for continuous learning, enabling teachers to enhance their knowledge and competencies tailored to diverse contexts. Complementing this perspective, Krainer and Guerra (2016) emphasized the necessity of training teachers in cultural diversity issues and advocating for support and cooperation among educational members to foster interculturality across various educational environments. These dimensions of teacher development are highly associated with the clinical experiences teacher trainees have, since such experiences allow them to have face-to-face contact with real classroom settings and their multiple socio-cultural nuances.

Moreover, Lizasoain (2021) noted that the shortage of teachers across Chilean schools has led to justified criticism. In many cases, unskilled or insufficiently trained teachers are found in front of classrooms. One of the most obvious deficiencies in their training is the limited level of competences they demonstrate upon completing their study programs. This lack of linguistic and pedagogical competence translates into insufficient quality in English classroom interaction, creating a gap between prospective teachers' grasp of the foreign language and their pedagogical preparation to teach it effectively.

On the other hand, there are opportunities for enhancing the quality of English teacher training in Chile, as identified by Seebach (2014). Implementing the “National English Strategy 2014-2030” is one such opportunity aiming to improve English language teaching in the country. Goals within this strategy include certifying 90% of English teachers through the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT) and establishing a B2 level of English for teachers in the semi-private system. Furthermore, Donoso (2008) highlighted the importance of establishing policies and

regulatory frameworks for in-service teacher training in Chile to ensure the quality and relevance of in-service training programs.

Similarly, Gomez and Walker (2020) proposed curricular adjustments in teacher training, advocating for comprehensive preparation that prioritizes ingenuity skills for guiding both teachers and students. The authors emphasized the necessity of transitioning from a traditional vision to more integrated and innovative approaches, highlighting that while strengthening linguistic competence is crucial, explicit training in teaching methodology in English is indispensable for effective teacher training.

Finally, research on English teacher training in Chile reveals a scenario characterized by a scarcity of up-to-date data and an insufficient prolonged attention on the subject. Despite English's growing global importance, the available data is limited, and discussions on English teacher training in Chile are often relegated to the background.

### ***2.3.3. Experiencing Teaching Work in its Reality: The Professional Practicum of ELT***

#### ***Trainees in Chile***

The Professional Practicum, referred to as PP hereafter, is a process that systematizes and articulates all the components of initial teacher training. Its goal is to enable students to put into practice professional knowledge and skills, facilitating their successful and critical integration into the educational environment (Aravena et al., 2015). Therefore, the PP has the potential to bridge the expectations of teacher trainees with the reality of being an English teacher in Chile. In this respect, Díaz et al. (2016) suggested that PPs provide opportunities for reflection and improvement of the teachers' pedagogical performance. The authors emphasized that managing group dynamics and classroom norms presents significant challenges during the professional practicum, given its brief duration. It is crucial to acknowledge that a flawed execution of this

process could limit the development of essential elements for pedagogy (Jang et al., 2009; Abdullah & Halim, 2010).

Within this context, various studies, such as those by Sayago and Chacón (2006), Aravena (2013), and Santrock (2014), underscored the importance of teacher trainees reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses, bridging theory with actions. This stage enables trainee teachers to contemplate and self-assess their development within the real educational context (Scrivener, 2011; Prieto, 2008).

On the other hand, Cornejo (2014) challenged the limited concept of "information delivery" in teaching, advocating for the recognition of complexity and continuous skill development. The author noted that current initial training programs approach training practices more as experiences aimed at helping students identify and learn a realistic image of the teaching work environment and the teaching profession itself. The focus is also on ensuring that this process of PP promotes and facilitates the progressive development of professional competencies, mobilizing resources of diverse nature. This is in agreement with the postulates of Gervais and Desrosiers (2005) who emphasized the importance of mobilizing diverse resources during the PP, including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and emotions.

Some national universities provide specific information about the PP process their students undergo on their official websites, such as the Universidad de Santiago de Chile, where the PP aims to project initial training, develop skills and attitudes, consolidate critical and reflective capacities, and integrate trainee teachers into the educational system. In this university, the process consists of two stages: Guided Professional Practicum and Autonomous Professional Practicum, which take place during the ninth and tenth semesters, respectively (Departamento de Educación, n.d). On the other hand, the University Andrés Bello focuses on English Pedagogy professional practicum to contribute to language learning. Students conduct weekly classes,

create teaching materials, administer assessments, and participate in extracurricular activities. The year-long internship process includes supporting students with special educational needs.

In conclusion, the PP process emerges as an opportunity in initial teacher training to reflect on teaching development in a real educational context. While the authors emphasized the benefits of this process, there is a notable point deserving further exploration in the current context. To address the development of skills for trainee teachers, there is a need for ongoing research and implementation strategies that provide complementary support to ensure a more comprehensive integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills. This could enhance the effectiveness of initial teacher training, fostering a stronger and more adaptable generation of educators capable of navigating the complexities of the teaching profession.

#### **2.3.3.1 Some Views on Good Practices in Teachers' Professional Practicums.**

According to Musset (2010), in order to identify good practices in professional teaching practicums, it is important to balance field experience and theoretical knowledge about teacher education. While field experience is valuable, it shouldn't overshadow the theoretical aspect, which is crucial for producing high-quality teachers. The author also highlighted that this approach aims to elevate the teaching profession's status, ensuring quality education and reemphasizing the relevance and efficiency of bringing teacher education back to the classroom.

Similarly, Álvarez (2012) pointed out the need to transform the status quo and establish permanent bridges between knowledge and action in order to promote relationships between theory and practice. Hand in hand with this, Rozada (2007; 2008) proposed to overcome the distance between academic knowledge and teaching by building second-order theories and practices characterized by the renunciation of conventional research and the admission that theory and its properties can raise contradictions instead of simplifying understanding. When referring to “second-order practice and theory”, she stated that it involves reflection, critical

distancing from traditions and a willingness to change them if necessary. This term is defined more as the consideration of problems that are thought about within and outside the classroom than as a set of in-class activities.

Furthermore, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) emphasized the importance of research based on problems and contexts of practice, advocating for collaborative approaches to theorizing, studying, and acting toward optimal learning and living possibilities for students and communities (p. 123). Similarly, Whitehead (2008) highlighted that in terms of teacher training it is necessary to apply a "living theory", defined as an explanation generated by an individual about their educational influence on their own learning, on the learning of others and on the training society in which they live and work.

In conclusion, teacher training needs to go beyond the dichotomy between field experiences and academic studies. The proposals of Álvarez (2012) and Rozada (2007; 2008) pointed to a profound transformation, advocating the construction of second theories and practices that challenge conventions. However, this critical view raises questions about effectively implementing such changes in an educational system rooted in traditions. Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (2009) called for problem-based research underscores the importance of addressing real challenges, but the viability of this perspective in complex educational settings also requires thoughtful evaluation. Ultimately, this amalgamation of critical perspectives demands a deep examination of current educational practices and the real willingness to adopt significant changes in the training of future teachers.

**2.3.3.2 Teacher trainees, tutors and school teachers in the practicum process.** Human relationships are those that are established through treatment and communication between people, playing a crucial role in school institutions (Molina and Pérez, 2006). People who interact in this environment assess students' behaviors, forming opinions and generating feelings

that influence the type of relationships established. García (1997) also highlighted the importance of interpersonal relationships in terms of the positions that people adopt towards others, as well as in the attitudes and network of interactions. These relationships extend beyond student interactions to encompass the relationship between teachers and students, among teachers and with various members of an educational community.

Molina and Pérez (2006) indicated that these relationships can manifest themselves with positive attitudes, such as cooperation, welcoming, autonomy and participation, but negative attitudes may also arise, such as reserve, competitiveness and intolerance. These attitudes influence the desires, aspirations and interests of each individual, at both institutional and personal level.

Regarding the teacher-student relationship, the aforementioned authors emphasized the crucial role teachers play in the classroom environment. Through their work, teachers can create a conducive learning environment, promoting a calm, orderly and learning-oriented atmosphere.

Similarly, Vanegas and Fuentealba (2019) emphasized the importance of professional practicums in fostering reflection among the triadic association (Teacher trainee - Tutor Teacher - Guide Teacher). These actors are influenced by their institutions' sociocultural context, experiences and conceptions of theory and practice, and the interactions generated among them. On the one hand, the tutor guides the student following the university guidelines, while the guiding teacher focuses on school institution practices. Both roles, fundamental in teacher training, rely on practical and theoretical experiences to effectively fulfill their role as trainers of future teachers (p.118).

On the contrary, Gervais (2007) pointed out two approaches the guiding teacher can take: being a model of practice or being a teacher trainer who distances themselves from their own practice to analyze and guide that of another. Regardless of the adopted position, the author

highlighted that supporting teachers in training modifies their perception as educational professionals and, sometimes, they are surprised by the influence of their actions on the development of future colleagues.

Regarding members of the educational community, Flores-Lueg and Turra-Diaz (2019) emphasized that the initial teacher training period is a key curricular space for learning to teach and acquiring pedagogical knowledge in future teachers. Social and educational interactions help teachers in training to experience real scenarios, fundamental for constructing the knowledge base for their professional practice (p.269).

**2.3.3.3 The Professional Practicum at UMCE.** The Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación (UMCE) approaches the professional practicum process from an educational model based on the socio-critical paradigm (Universidad Metropolitana de las Ciencias de la Educación [UMCE], 2023), emphasizing the importance of practical experience in initial teacher training. This approach seeks to develop teachers' professional identity, promote reflective processes and connect teaching practice with research. The "Reglamento de Formación Práctica" (Universidad Metropolitana de las Ciencias de la Educación [UMCE], 2020), states that the professional practicum process is divided into three progressive stages: Initial, Intermediate, and Final, each designed to build and expand the competencies and autonomy of the student.

UMCE students are guided by university tutor teachers and guide teachers in educational centers. These practicums extend beyond traditional educational spaces to non-traditional contexts, fostering a deep understanding of diverse educational environments. This approach is framed within a series of guiding principles, highlighting that professional practicums should be accompanied, articulate, progressive, and conducted in various contexts.

The "Reglamento de Formación Práctica" also establishes clear roles and responsibilities for the actors involved in this formative process, such as the Guide Teacher, Tutor Teacher, and Practicums Coordinator. Each plays a fundamental role in the student training, ensuring effective and meaningful practicum.

Finally, the assessment of these practicums is carried out within the framework of Good Teaching, focusing on reflection, meaningful learning, and pedagogical research. Additionally, the regulations also contemplate special provisions for situations like postponements and equivalencies, providing flexibility and adaptability to the formative process.

#### **2.4. From Role-Playing to Role-Taking: the Transition from University to Work of Novice English Teachers**

Transitioning from a familiar educational institution with a student role to an unfamiliar environment with a distinct role is a complex process (Solís et al., 2016). This transformative journey, it is described as challenging (Escobar, 2007) and unpredictable (Murphy et al. 2010), as it demands neophyte teachers to grapple with the realities of their job, exposing them to a range of difficulty requiring both external and internal resources for resolution (Alliaud, 2004; Marcelo, 2008 and 2009; Veenman, 1984 cited in Solís et al., 2016).

As previously mentioned, novice teachers in their early stages, encounter various challenges linked to class content, student diversity, relationships, physical exhaustion, management, disciplinary matters, and policy effects (Flores, 2008, as cited in Ávalos et al., 2004). This phase is critical for new teachers as they are both learners and teachers simultaneously (Ávalos et al., 2004). Feiman-Nemser (2000) proposed that teacher trainees have to understand how to be teachers within this very limited period of time. Similarly, Corley (1998, cited in Ávalos and Aylwin, 2007) asserted that initial teaching experiences shape one's professional identity. Moreover, Ávalos and Aylwin (2007) underlined the transition's

significance, as “it nurtures a sense of professional belonging” (p. 525). The authors posited that a teacher's decision to remain in the profession often hinges on their interpretation of these initial experiences. As Ávalos and Aylwin (2007) expressed “A challenging encounter may lead educators to reject the profession and leave, whereas a rewarding experience fosters motivation for continuous professional growth” (p. 525).

In Chile, limited research addresses the transition from university to work in the context of pedagogy. Ávalos and Aylwin’s (2007) study in Chile delves into novice teachers’ experiences and their concerns upon entering the workforce. The authors noted that some of their concerns revolved around interactions with colleagues and students’ parents, as well as classroom management, and working conditions. According to Ruffinelli (2014), novice teachers face significant challenges managing student behavior, handling classroom diversity, and working with parents. Correspondingly, Ruffinelli (2013) researched on the challenges that emerge in the first three years of teaching corroborates the need for disciplinary and didactic knowledge in lesson planning and assessment as a primary concern. They also highlighted classroom management, student behavior, addressing diversity and vulnerability, parental involvement and specific job conditions such as institutional status, job instability, time constraints, and workload.

Despite contributing to our comprehension of the intricate transition process from university to the workplace for teachers, significant gaps in knowledge persist. More comprehensive exploration is needed into the challenges and experiences faced by novice teachers in this phase. Novice educators encounter a multitude of complex challenges such as managing students behavior, handling classroom diversity, and collaborating with parents, yet there’s insufficient research into the nature and extent of these challenges.

The transition process for teachers serves as a catalyst for redefining their identity, delving into adaptive and defensive psychological processes, among others. This transformative

phase prompts an exploration of how teachers perceive themselves and adapt to the new role, initiating a complex interplay between internal psychological mechanisms and external professional demands.

Moreover, within the organizational and interactional realm, this transition facilitates not only interaction but also socialization within the fresh work environment. As teachers navigate this period, they navigate varied dimensions of social interaction, recognizing valued teaching practices and how these aspects of socialization within the real work setting influence their preconceived notions of ideal work. This phase encompasses multiple interactions – be it with students, colleagues, or superiors – each interaction contributing to their evolving professional identity.

Simultaneously, the social dimension significantly impacts the teacher's transition experience. Public policies wield a profound influence, particularly in shaping a teacher's initial experience in the workforce. For example, intense competition for contracts and job instability create an environment fostering competition among educators to secure and maintain their positions. Such policies can inadvertently cultivate a hostile atmosphere for new teachers, impacting their professional integration. Additionally, within the educational sphere, neoliberal individualism can influence student perceptions, leading them to view teachers through a transactional, client-focused lens, thus shaping teacher-student dynamics. These societal influences become integral aspects that shape the multifaceted teacher transition process.

These intertwined dimensions highlight the intricate nature of the teacher transition phase, encompassing psychological adaptation, professional integration, and societal influence. Understanding and addressing these complex interplays become essential in not only nurturing teacher development but also in crafting effective teacher training programs and support systems.

In summary, transitioning from training to the professional field presents obstacles for young educators. This journey involves moving from a familiar student role to an unfamiliar professional and high-responsibility role, leading neophyte teachers to encounter a range of difficulties. These challenges encompass class content, student diversity, relationships, fatigue, routine management, discipline, and policy effects, which remain subjects of incomplete exploration. Furthermore, the pivotal role of early teaching experiences in shaping professional identities requires deeper examination particularly regarding its influence on teachers' personal imaginaries, which represents another gap. Consequently, the transition to the workforce influences a sense of belonging and long-term commitment to the profession, a phenomenon that requires further investigation, particularly in the Chilean context. Addressing these knowledge gaps becomes essential in developing comprehensive teacher training programs and effective support systems for educators.

Thus, the teacher practicum process is a multidimensional experience in which future educators, through practical engagement, embody the role of a teacher and confront their beliefs, representations and imaginaries regarding what it means to be a teacher. Consequently, social imaginaries and representations become significant in explaining their lived experience within the teacher practicum process.

#### ***2.4.1 Imaginaries and social representations of teacher work***

There is limited research concerning the significance of imaginaries and social representations of English teachers within the educational system. Imaginaries and social representations can be defined as a shared imaginative construction by a group of individuals in a particular setting (Giust-Desprairies, 2019). As for previous research on imaginaries and representations of teacher work, Blackmore and Thomson's (2004) research, analyzed social imaginaries in Australian print media and their influence on teachers' imaginaries. The study

revealed that representations of head teachers in the media encompass a wide spectrum, ranging from positive and inspiring stories to negative and disheartening narratives. Media portrayals significantly impact how teachers perceive themselves, their profession, and their role within the education system. Moreover, the education represented in media is constructed and influenced by underlying political frames and editorial opinions (Macmillan, 2002).

Within Latin America, research on teachers' imaginaries and experiences is relatively scarce. Ana Charris's research titled "Social Imaginaries and the Professional Identity of English Teachers" (2017), delved into these aspects utilizing various methods, including participant observation, life stories or narratives, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews conducted with English teachers of a private Colombian institution. The findings underscored the significant role that imaginaries and social representations play in shaping the professional identity of English teachers.

The research by Pérez (2021) aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of social responsibility at La Legiosa Educational Institution in Colombia's Huila municipality. The research highlighted three key aspects: how teachers incorporate social responsibility into their personal views, their role through critical reflection and societal engagement, and the influence of past and present societal perceptions on their sense of responsibility. It emphasized teachers' recognition of social responsibility as integral to their roles, extending beyond academics to instill ethical values, human rights awareness, and civic education in students. This highlighted the essential connection between teachers' understanding of social responsibility and their identity as educators, advocating for continuous training, dialogue and collaboration to amplify their societal impact.

Furthermore, Vecina-Marchante and San Román-Gago (2021) research scrutinized social representations of Secondary Education teachers regarding their instructional role and counseling

duties, employing qualitative methods like discourse analysis and discussion groups across ten Spanish autonomous communities. It delineated three ideal teaching function representations: instrumental, emotive-situational, and vital openness, contrasting them with actual teaching roles and the peripheral elements justifying these representations. Findings revealed teachers' negotiation between their perceived ideal and real teaching functions, showcasing disparities and using diverse rhetoric to address societal challenges. Conclusively, these representations serve as tools for teachers to navigate their educational reality, advocating the recognition of internalized diversity in educational policy frameworks for fostering a democratic, inclusive school environment and enhancing teacher awareness, reflection, and professional development.

García's (2017) study centered on university professors' perceptions of education quality at Universidad Simón Bolívar, Barranquilla, Colombia, revealed significant insights. Findings highlighted professors' conception of superior education quality, emphasizing excellence, relevance, innovation, research, and social responsibility. However, inherent contradictions, ambiguities, and limitations surfaced regarding the application of these ideals within their pedagogical practices. Professors' perceptions are notably influenced by external factors such as educational policies, institutional culture, societal context, and labor market demands, leading to a noticeable gap between idealized quality concepts and their practical implementation. These results underscore the complexity of education quality, stressing the necessity for continuous critical reflection among educators regarding their roles, identities, and dedication to student development.

The portrayal of schoolteachers in recent Chilean literary and cinematic works was examined in the study by Acero and Boettinger (2023). Through examining selected novels and audiovisual pieces, the authors identified three prevalent depictions: the fearful teacher worried about job security, the agent of the neoliberal school system, and the educator questioning the

dominant educational model. These representations were seen as symbolic constructs reflecting various viewpoints on education, characterizing the teacher as a distinct symbol of the Chilean schooling system.

Collective perceptions, such as imaginaries and social representations, significantly influence individual motivations to pursue a teaching career. As prior research elucidates, these collective perceptions shape the image and identity for educators, influencing personal aspirations towards the teaching profession (Blackmore & Thomson, 2004; Charris, 2017; Perez, 2021)

#### ***2.4.2. Motivations to become an English teacher in Chile.***

Motivation is understood as a relevant human dimension “[...] because it guides actions and thus becomes a central element that drives what the person does and towards what objectives he or she is directed.” (Naranjo, 2009, p. 153) thereby satisfying the personal needs of the individual, associated with the pleasure of carrying out a certain activity. (Turra-Díaz & Rivas-Valenzuela, 2022).

The motivation to become an English teacher in Chile is grounded in various factors reflecting the country’s educational reality. According to the Centro de Perfeccionamiento, Experimentación e Investigaciones Pedagógicas (CPEIP) (n,d), the significant presence and work of women in Chilean education, representing 73% of the current teaching staff, have been fundamental. This reality, infused with history and the present, serves as inspiration for those aspiring to contribute to educational development and, moreover, accounts for the social connotations of teaching as a profession of care.

Research by Flores et al. (2020) found that the decision to pursue teacher training is propelled by intrinsic motivations such as a passion for teaching, specialization, and a thirst for learning are determining factors. The participants of Flores et al.’s study highlighted “vocation”

as a pivotal explicit motivation, aligning with the pedagogical approach centered on dialogue and recognition, as proposed by Schilling et al. (2019). Additionally, Schilling et al. (2019) stated that the attraction to the English language persists as a motivating factor, despite the presence of computer-assisted learning systems. This underscores the importance of the teacher's role in the teaching-learning dynamic.

In relation to the external motivations of students to choose teaching as a career, Turra-Díaz & Rivas-Valenzuela (2022) pointed out altruistic and intrinsic factors. These include the perceived social value of the teaching profession, personal satisfaction derived from teaching, and interest in a particular school discipline. The authors explained that this choice reflects an idealized view of teaching, seen as an opportunity to contribute to others' well being and thereby achieve personal fulfillment. According to the study carried out by the authors last mentioned, in many cases, those who opt for pedagogy do so from a vocational perspective rooted in the altruistic dimension of teaching.

Delving into the motivation behind becoming an English teacher in Chile unveils a complex interaction of internal and external factors. The significance of motivation in career decision-making is highlighted, alongside the enduring allure of the English language, emerges. Choosing to teach this language is linked not only to its global relevance but also to the perceived substantial contribution to students' academic and professional development (Turra-Díaz & Rivas-Valenzuela, 2022). This understanding of motivational factors not only enriches academic research, but also guides the formulation of educational strategies to bolster the vocation of English teachers in Chile.

The understanding of motivation, as described by Naranjo (2009) and Turra-Díaz & Rivas-Valenzuela (2022), encapsulates the drive towards personal goals rooted in individual needs and the intrinsic pleasure derived from specific activities, such as teaching. This

understanding intertwines with the concept of “Lived experience” (*Vecu*) articulated by Corsale (2019). The lived experience describes the evolving perception shaped by life experiences and unveils how experiences mold individuals perceptions, thereby influencing decision-making and actions.

## Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

This chapter outlines the main theoretical sources used in this piece of research in order to approach the phenomenon of professional teaching practicum in its subjective and social dimensions. Specifically, emphasis is placed on dimensions associated with teacher work, considering it as an activity that grants a sense of purpose for the individual undertaking it (Dujarier, 2006)

### 3.1 Work

The concept of work, as proposed by Dujarier (2006), diverges from the simplistic view of waged activity. It is defined as a process of subjectivation that aims to construct meaningful action. Moreover, Dujarier (2006) asserted that the concept of work is “understood as a bodily and existential experience that confronts an individual with their limits, and the uncertainty of their actions” (p. 22). According to Clot (1999 as cited in Dujarier, 2006) “work can either serve as a source of development for the individual or, alternatively, close in on them, leading towards psychopathology and alienation” (p. 22). In connection with this, Dejours (1995) proposed that the type of work carried out significantly impacts an individual’s psychological and physical well-being. The notion of work encompasses aspects beyond mere production, involving identity, socio-economic status, mind-body interaction in the workplace, personal boundaries, social dynamics, meaning and recognition at work, and physical and mental health (Dujarier, 2006). From a clinical perspective, work is delineated by four distinct aspects: prescribed work (*travail prescrit*), real work (*travail réel*), produced work (*travail réalisé*), and experienced work (*travail vécu*).

#### 3.1.1 Prescribed Work

Prescribed work, as defined by Dujarier (2006), refers to the formally assigned tasks and responsibilities to an employee or worker. Essentially, it constitutes the set of activities expected

from a worker based on their contract, job description, and the norms or procedures designated by their organization. According to the same author, it involves defining the expected outcomes, the procedures to follow, the expected behaviors to adopt, and even the subsequent required subjectivity.

It is important to note the work of Faverge and Ombredane (1955), which consistently showcases the disparity between work prescriptions and the actual reality of work. Moreover, Davezies' (1991, as cited in Dujarier, 2006) proposed that work as the endeavor individuals undertake to address aspects not covered by the predetermined structure of work.

### ***3.1.2 Real Work***

Real work encompasses "everything that is done 'truly' based on, and sometimes despite, the prescribed work." (Dujarier, 2006, p. 59) This includes not only what is achieved but also everything left undone. It covers all drafts, errors, experiments, etc., undertaken to achieve an expected or desired outcome (Dujarier, 2006). Jobert (1999) also explained that real work encapsulates all activities genuinely performed based on, and occasionally in contrast to, the prescribed directives.

### ***3.1.3 Produced Work***

Produced work represents the culmination of efforts, stemming either from the prescribed work or despite it, forming the ultimate outcome of real work (Dujarier, 2006). The author contended that produced work constitutes the most visible aspect of work and, therefore, becomes subject to evaluations and judgments. Here, the author emphasized that "the deviation between prescribed work and produced work is commonly utilized within management approaches to "assess work"" (p. 60). Conversely, Dujarier (2006) explained that "the deviation between real work and produced work allows for distinguishing work as both a process and a

result” (p. 60). The latter deviation is deemed most significant for the individual in the workplace, as it relates to “efficiency and the meaningfulness of one's actions” (p. 60).

### ***3.1.4 Lived / Experienced work (travail vecu)***

Lived work represents how an individual experiences, interprets, and attributes meaning to ongoing work, including periods preceding or following it (Dujarier, 2006). This concept extends beyond mere workplace activity, encompassing the conditions under which the work is performed, its objective status, and its societal perception (Ibid.). It encapsulates the overall interpretation an individual makes, at a given moment in their existence, of the work they engage in, the work they have, and the impact of their work concerning their personal and social history. Dujarier (2006) explained it as a series of interpretative narratives that shift according to the audience whether oneself, a colleague, a novice, an expert, a supervisor, etc., and the context of expression.

Dujarier (2006) suggested that the gap between real work and lived work compels one to consider how the effective work process imposes its meanings upon the individual. Moreover, this concept takes on different forms over time and experiences, constituting an ongoing process of reevaluation and reinterpretation of the work experience.

In summary, as Dujarier (2006) posited, the discrepancy between prescribed work and its actual execution, alongside the divergence between the experienced and lived aspects of work, exemplifies the complexities inherent in professional engagement. According to the same author, these disparities illustrate how formal expectations often diverge from a practical reality, indicating that work surpasses merely directives. Furthermore, individual interpretations of work underscore the importance of considering not only the performed tasks but also the personal significance attributed to these actions within one's life. These gaps challenge conventional

perceptions of work, urging a deeper exploration of its multifaceted nature to grasp its genuine impact on individuals (Dujarier 2006).

### **3.2 Teaching in Neoliberal Times**

Guerrero et al. (2019) analyzed how neoliberalism impacts Chilean education and its community. The authors proposed that this model fosters the development of an education market, turning schools into profit-oriented entities. The school becomes an enterprise, where each person in the school community embodies a specific role; principals are the managers, the parents are their clients, and the teachers function as workers delivering the products aligned with the learning outcomes achievable by students. In this educational framework, teachers are viewed merely as caretakers responsible for assessing students, primarily aiming to compete in the education market. This approach “disregards the necessary teacher-student relationship for the possibility of learning” (Guerrero et al., 2019, p.243), eliminating the social aspect of teacher work. The authors affirmed that teachers, in this neoliberal educational system, are expected to work individually, entrenched in a deeply rooted competitive culture against their colleagues. As a result, teachers solely focus on achieving good results, often disregarding the negative effects not only on the school community but also on themselves. There is a need for systemic change, and through clinical sociology, we can be closer to achieving one. According to Guerrero et al. (2019), clinical sociology provides a path to reconsider the neoliberal system and construct a school where the relationship and connection among the different participants of the school community are a priority. So, in this manner, we will be able to be part of a society, and simultaneously, enhance it.

### ***3.2.1 The school as a neoliberal Organization that Puts the Teacher to the Test***

According to Gaulejac (2019), the commitment and investment of the subject to being part of an organization, such as a school, and to its mission entails understanding of the organization's requirements and the idealization of its values. These requirements and values become integrated into the subject's introjection and projection. The personal ideals of each worker are influenced by the organization's ideals, causing the subjects to perceive the workplace's success as their own. Reflecting on Gaulejac's perspective, it becomes evident that this dynamic may lead to a potential loss of personal meaning at work. The subject's imaginaries, goals, and sense of importance may be shaped by those of the organization, making it challenging for them to understand their own experiences or what they are going through. The problem with this scenario is that the subject's work experience might make them into an instrumentalized person instead of reaffirming their autonomy (Gaulejac, 2019).

Teachers' experiences can be similarly influenced since most teachers often need to set aside their beliefs regarding education to align with their school's values for job stability. Considering that teachers' performance is going to be determined by the context of their workplace (Stramiello & Ferreyro, 2011), teachers' actions and engagement in education are going to be motivated by the school environment. If teachers are able to find that organization, meaning a school, that allows them to evolve, as Stramiello & Ferreyro (2011) expressed, schools can provide the fundamental opportunities to achieve personal, professional, and collective growth of teachers. Nevertheless, this is challenged by the impact of neoliberalism in the educational system where the development of teachers and their experiences are affected by the educational market and the competitive landscape among teachers.

### **3.3 The subjectivity of the teacher at work**

Concerning the notion of subjectivity at work, it refers to the varied perspectives in regard to what *work* represents for each person. According to Dejours (2006), work involves the connection and interaction of people. While *working* is “involving one’s subjectivity in a world that is hierarchical, ordered, constrained, and rife with struggles for domination” (p.56). Furthermore, it is said that *work* is not the aspect in which subjectivity is expressed but rather *working* is. As we can observe, work is the place that gives a job that lets people interact with others, while working is the activities a subject performs in said place, during that performance one can integrate their subjectivity. Therefore, the actions and decisions people make at work are where they have the ability to develop their own personality and the social aspects of their lives. Meanwhile, Billett (2010) stated that the subjectivity of people encompasses a group of beliefs, values, and conceptions that are conscious and non-conscious, which orientate people’s thinking and acting. Having in mind both authors, it is possible to say that a subject’s actions at work are going to be determined by the expression and involvement of their subjectivity.

So, subjectivity is a pivotal element in understanding how people engage in their work and how they react to the demands from the employers and the organization. Besides, subjectivity influences engagement in work, and at the same time, it reshapes the work through its enactment. Work can also impact the sense of self, so subjectivity is conditioned to be altered. That is why, subjectivity is also a determining factor when people intend to give some sense to their work and to how they evolve in it.

#### **3.3.1 Lived experience (*Vecu*)**

The *vecu*, or lived experience in English, encapsulates the continuous perception individuals form based on life encounters, intricately connected to their sense of self (Corsale, 2019). This notion is essential to unravel the bases of behaviors and social phenomena.

According to Corsale (2019), impactful events, whether personal or collective, significantly shape this lived experience, acting as crucial milestones in identity formation. From a phenomenological perspective, lived experience is an ongoing construction, shaped by both conscious and unconscious encounters, which influence our view of the world. The author maintained that previous experiences establish the foundations of identity, considered as a dynamic and complex process that continually develops throughout life, shaped by experiences, contexts and social relationships. Furthermore, the same author explained that new experiences accumulate and acquire meaning in determining their future relevance.

In turn, Fugier (2019) complemented this vision by highlighting the importance of new experiences and how they accumulate and acquire meaning, which is essential to determine their future relevance. This approach highlights the cumulative and evolutionary nature of lived experience, underscoring how each new experience contributes to the ongoing construction of individual identity and reality.

Therefore, the integration of Corsale and Fugier's perspectives offers a holistic understanding of lived experience, highlighting its central role in the formation of individual identity and reality, as well as its importance for clinical sociology in promoting understanding and consensus between diverse life experiences.

### ***3.3.2 Sense and meaning of work***

When referring to the sense of work, Yeoman (2014) affirmed that work is central to giving meaning to our lives. The author posited that it “is a fundamental human need because it satisfies our inescapable interests in being able to experience the constitutive values of autonomy, freedom and dignity:” (p.2), indicating that meaningful work goes beyond mere economic retribution. This implies that having sense at work allows people to fulfill their personal needs beyond the monetary ones. Furthermore, Hanique (2019) proposed that assigning

a sense to one's work is fundamental for people in order to make decisions and evaluate their actions. However, this author also explained that the sense of work can be eroded when "the direction of the action to be taken is literally blurred because it involves multiple requirements that are perceived as contradictory or conflicting (for example, doing things quickly and well, doing more with less...)" (p. 579). This action hampers people's abilities to guide their work effectively. From Yeoman's perspective, the absence of a sense of work impedes people from satisfying necessary human interests, which allows people to feel freedom, autonomy, and dignity. Moreover, meaningless work diminishes peoples' capacity to be participants of social cooperation as it inhibits autonomous actions and weakens the sense of self-esteem, self-worth, and sense of efficacy (2013).

### ***3.3.3 Imaginaries and representations of teacher work***

The concept of "social imaginaries" refers to collective beliefs, images, and symbols shared within communities that influence their perception of reality and social practices (Charris, 2017). Hodge (2017) underscored that the imaginary serves as a framework for understanding that shapes specific practices and self-interpretations. Within the realm of education, social imaginaries play a crucial role in shaping how teachers perceive their roles, their students, and the educational system at large (Charris, 2017).

From a socio-clinical perspective, the notion of the collective imaginary refers to the shared imaginative construction of individuals in a particular situation (Giust-Desprairies, 2019). These constructions emerge from interactions among group members within their environment, aimed at organizing perceptions, emotions and fostering group cohesion. Furthermore, the collective imaginary plays a fundamental role in how the group interprets its reality and its capacity to address challenges and devise solutions. As highlighted by Giust-Desprairies (2019), this process of creating a shared imaginary can strengthen the group's

unity and facilitate collaboration among its members. In our research, we will adopt this definition of the collective imaginary as a fundamental conceptual framework to understand group dynamics and the processes of constructing meaning.

#### ***3.3.4 Teachers' emotions***

According to Vandeveldde-Rougale (2019), an emotion is considered a cognitive psychological process arising from a particular event causing disruption, initiating with the appearance of the emotion and ending with a resolution of it. Furthermore the author mentioned that emotion "...manifests automatically through a psychic effect (pleasure, suffering, etc.), experienced momentarily, in the present moment, and a bodily sensation, potentially expressed through behavioral or physiological expressions that can be perceived by an observer" (p. 230). Additionally, the concept of emotion signifies a distance between the person's expectations and the real events.

Wu and Wei (2022) asserted that emotions are inherently intertwined with the role of a teacher, given that teaching involves service and teachers engage in continual interpersonal interactions with students over extended periods. Within this context, the emotions experienced by teachers are closely linked with their students, colleagues, and the school community as a whole. Therefore, comprehending an emotion is not feasible without considering the external factor that triggers it. Regarding that, Farouk (2012) stated that teachers' emotions are not merely "sensations" confined to themselves but are essential in the interactions with the school community.

Furthermore, emotions play an important role in the learning process. Students not only acquire knowledge from teachers but also respond to the emotions exhibited by teachers (Konishi et al., 2010 as cited in Wang et al., 2019). Adding to this, Wang et al. (2019) expressed that teachers' emotions not only affect themselves, but also their students. Despite teachers often

concealing their emotions to avoid influencing students' learning and development process, these emotions play a substantial role.

**3.3.4.1 Well-being at work.** Well-being is a concept that characterizes the quality of working life, and can be considered a fundamental determinant of productivity at the individual, business and societal levels (Schulte and Vainio, 2010). In this sense, it is essential to recognize that well-being encompasses not only the absence of negative circumstances, such as illness, but also positive aspects such as work quality or life satisfaction.

Consistent with this perspective, Waddell and Burton (2006) proposed a definition that conceptualizes well-being as “the subjective state of being healthy, happy, content, comfortable, and satisfied with one's life” (p. 423), encompassing physical, material, social, emotional (happiness) dimensions, as well as dimensions of development and activity.

**3.3.4.2 Recognition.** Guerrero (2019) explained that recognition is defined as “a psychological and social process that is central to the construction of identity and self-image. However, this process is not solely individual; recognition articulates the social and the psychological, the individual and the collective” (p. 537). Furthermore, the author also expressed that recognition has four main cores:

- Relationship with others as existential recognition;
- Recognition as an assessment of value by a community;
- Recognition, distribution, and the struggle for positions;
- Conditions of recognizability in managerial society. (Guerrero, 2019, p. 537)

From a clinical standpoint, the desire for recognition starts in childhood, where significant people are an important part of socialization (Guerrero, 2019). Moreover, Honneth (2000) established that the recognition of the value of identity is formed within “affective bonds, legal aspects, and social relationships” (p.538). The author explained that intersubjective

recognition has three types; first is primary relationships, in which the recognition takes form of affects and needs that grant the development of self-confidence, secondly is legal relationships where the recognition is seen as moral responsibility, and lastly is relationships with a community of values, in which people can identify the qualities that provide self-esteem.

Guerrero (2019) underscored the connection between recognition and society, emphasizing the need for social positioning and the political struggle for entitlement in society. Additionally, the theory of recognition places significant importance on work, highlighting that questioning one's work equates to questioning one's identity and societal place.

**3.3.4.3 Suffering at work.** Dejours and Gernet (2012) placed suffering in the work context as a critical concept supported by general psychopathology, psychoanalysis and psychosomatics. The authors highlighted that compassionate treatment is insufficient, since suffering is connected to specific work experiences. For this, they categorized the organization of work into three dimensions: a) the division of tasks and the content of work; b) the prescription of gestures and postures, which results in the mode of operation; c) the division of men through hierarchies, modes of communication and relations of subordination that organize relations between workers (p.12).

In relation to this, Hirata and Kergoat (1988) added sexual and moral divisions of work, where men and women are compared in the analysis of social relations in the work context. Similarly, Hughes (1951) addressed the moral division, accentuating distinctions among various professions leading to competition, affecting self-esteem, and resulting in the delegation of socially devalued tasks, which the author defines as "dirty work".

Even though Dejours and Gernet (2012) pointed out these factors influence physical functioning, it also affects the psychological functioning of the subjects. Thus, in the same study, the authors defined suffering as an outcome of the dynamic confrontation of the subjects with the

organization of work, distinguishing suffering from anxiety and focusing on the diversity of psychological processes in work situations.

**3.3.4.4 Socio-psychic defense mechanisms.** When people encounter challenges at work due to the disparity between prescribed and real work, people act displaying a variety of attitudes and behaviors in response to demanding work situations (Dejours and Gernet, 2012). These behaviors are a set of defense mechanisms that people use to manage tensions and problems arising from discrepancies between work expectations and the actual reality of their work experience.

The defense mechanisms represent the psychic processes that intervene between work-related pressures and emergence of psychological imbalances within the workplace (Dejours and Gernet, 2012). According to Dejours and Gernet (2012), these mechanisms develop to counteract suffering, shielding individuals from work-related tensions, and averting psychopathological decompensation. The authors emphasized that suffering at work doesn't solely stem from objective limitations but also from the exhaustion or failure of the defensive resources individuals use to cope with their tasks. Furthermore, they mentioned that these resources can become ineffective when they no longer serve their protective function, leading to a decline in mental well-being.

Dejours and Gernet (2012) noted that defense strategies manifest not only at an individual level but also collectively among workers to deal with work-related suffering. The authors highlighted that the primary function of these defenses, whether individual or collective, is to intervene the individual's relationship with reality, influencing their thoughts and protecting the ego from anxiety. Additionally, it is pointed out that although certain behaviors might appear irrational externally, they hold a significance within subjective rationality and self-preservation amidst work-related suffering (Dejours and Gernet, 2012). The description delves into how

defensive strategies can deviate from their original purpose and transform into a clinical problem when they become rigid, nullifying the ability to reflect on the reality of work.

The individual-level defense mechanisms discussed by Dejours and Gernet (2012) comprise a range of psychological tactics that employees utilize when facing stressful work conditions. These strategies include quickening their speed to fulfill output demands at the expense of thought, suppressing negative job-associated feelings, and mechanically or methodically adjusting to the duties at hand. Additionally, these tactics also include suppressing long-term fantasies or dreams, working excessively without taking breaks for reflection, rationalizing beliefs to prevent discomfort, and adhering to social norms, often at the price of resolving inner conflicts or unresolved guilt. Although these processes provide temporary relief from occupational stressors, they may limit cognitive function and emotional stability, potentially causing long-term negative effects on mental health.

Conversely, the authors' description of collective defensive mechanisms includes a variety of tactics meant to lessen the psychological effects of stressful or dangerous work settings. These defense strategies include conspicuous acts and behaviors including taking risks, acting dangerously, putting on extraordinary physical displays, giving theatrical presentations, using certain language, and playing games at work. Additionally, they entail the denial and suppression of factors associated with the profession, such as physical risks, sicknesses, or injustices, which sustains a climate of secrecy. Mockery and denial take the form of a group rejection of perceived dangers or humiliation, frequently using irony, sarcasm, or denial to minimize difficult circumstances. Furthermore, the "Virile Cynicism" tactic, which is typical of some executive organizations, addresses the psychological danger of losing one's ethical identity by parodying upsetting circumstances and participating in repulsive activities. Another method used by certain social workers is "*Bêtise*" (Foolishness or Ignorance), which entails simulating a

lack of comprehension or knowledge in order to evade unrealistic expectations or shield oneself from work-related stress. Furthermore, in female-dominated occupations such as nursing, tactics entail domesticating vulnerability by confronting rather than completely eliminating the sensation of vulnerability through self-deprecation, humor, or irony. These collective defensive tactics all have the same aim in mind: to sustain emotional stability and collective functionality in a variety of work situations where conditions are difficult or hazardous.

**3.3.4.5 Teacher Stress and Attrition.** Chile, as part of the OECD, shares concerning teacher dropout rates (30-50%), similar to the United States and the United Kingdom (Cooper and Alvarado, 2006). Novice teachers grapple with the duality of teaching and learning, as certain aspects of teaching are mastered through practical experience.

Zamora et al. (2018) noted that the lack of recognition and institutional authority contributes to the low intention to stay in the teaching profession. Their study's diagnosis revealed that the traditional school no longer ensures respect, affecting teacher motivation and increasing attrition. Despite efforts via regulations, policies and initiatives aimed at enhancing working conditions and encouraging student enrollment in teacher training programs, such as the Carrera Docente law or the Sistema de Desarrollo Docente (Ministerio de Educación del Gobierno de Chile, 2020), a study carried out by Elige Educar (2021) showed that from 2004 to 2021, Chile's teacher dropout rate has remained relatively steady, averaging 3%, with no apparent decrease.

Teacher attrition rates in Chile pose a significant problem within the educational system. While acknowledging the challenges that novice teachers face, balancing teaching and learning, the aforementioned studies emphasize the important role of institutional recognition and authority in teachers' permanence in education. Despite the implementation of regulations, policies and initiatives, the persistence of a relatively stable school dropout rate indicates a

potential gap in the effectiveness of current measures. Recognizing the complex interplay of factors that contribute to teacher stress is essential to designing comprehensive strategies that address root causes and foster a more sustainable teaching environment.

### **3.4 Research Problem**

Understanding the social imaginaries and representations of teachers in their final practicum process is of particular scientific and social interest. From one point of view, the literature accounts for the critical role of professional practicums in shaping teaching identities and their perceptions of their roles within the educational system. The relevance of this research lies in the necessity to delve deeper into these elements to gain a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of the influence of imaginaries and experiences in teaching training.

From a scientific perspective, the study of imaginaries and subjective experiences provides insights into how these factors influence the conformation of teachers' identity and their ways of interacting with their context. It enables us to discern how the social representations and personal experiences of teacher trainees shape their conceptions of teaching and learning. This, in turn, aids in designing more effective and tailored training strategies that align the needs and realities of teachers in the process of formation.

Methodologically, the use of the socio-clinical approach provides a comprehensive way to understanding how the practicum is experienced and subjectively signified by teachers. This qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the experiences, perceptions, and mental constructions of teachers in training, offering a holistic and profound insight into their professional development.

In social terms, the insights derived from this research not only enrich the theoretical understanding of teacher education but also hold significant practical implications. The ability to develop curricula and training programs aligned with the needs and realities of future teachers

ensures better preparedness to address challenges within the educational system. Improving the quality contributes to a society better equipped and more capable of addressing the educational challenges, thereby fostering societal progress and development.

Consequently, conducting research on the professional practicum of teacher trainees is highly relevant. It not only allows us to delve deeper into understanding imaginaries and subjective experiences in teacher education, but it also provides scholars and academic programmes with significant information about practicums and clinical experiences in a situated way that would potentially foster curriculum development.

The significance of the Professional Practicum in English teacher training in Chile has been widely acknowledged, emphasizing its role in nurturing pedagogical and linguistic skills among future educators and integrating various aspects of teacher training to facilitate the application of theoretical knowledge in real educational settings (Aravena et al., 2015). However, challenges have been recognized by Diaz et al. (2016), particularly regarding the management of classroom dynamics and norms due to the limited duration of the practicum. Similarly, Sayago and Chacon (2006) emphasized the importance of reflection during this process, aiding future teachers in identifying their strengths and weaknesses for a professional growth within the educational context. Moreover, Cornejo (2014) advocated for transforming teaching practices to focus on developing professional competencies beyond mere information delivery.

Diaz et al. (2016) emphasized how the constrained time frame of the Professional Practicum impacts effective teacher training, echoing the sentiment expressed by Jimenez (2014) regarding the necessity for sufficient time to establish a meaningful connection between teacher trainees and schools, aligning higher education missions with community needs. Similarly, Sayago and Chacon (2006), Aravena (2013), and Santrock (2014) underscored the reflective nature of the Professional Practicum for teacher trainees in constructing their teaching identities.

However, despite this recognition, there remains a paucity of literature elucidating how transformations in teacher identity occur within this framework.

Similarly, the literature reveals the significant influence of social imaginaries and representations on teachers' perceptions and identities (Charris, 2017; Blackmore and Thomson, 2004). These studies emphasize how collective beliefs and media representations shape educators' perception of their roles within education and influence their self-image (Acero & Boettinger, 2023; Garcia, 2017). These findings emphasize the importance of critically understanding how imaginaries and representations influence teaching practices and the formation of professional identities. However, there is a lack of research addressing how these imaginaries and social representations specifically affect teachers in the Professional Practicum process in Chile. The scarcity of comparative research across different cultural contexts limits our understanding of how cultural factors shape these constructions of teacher identity (Perez, 2021; Vecina-Marchante & San-Roman-Gago, 2021). Furthermore, the absence of proposed interventions or strategies based on these teacher imaginaries highlights a significant gap in the literature, emphasizing the need for broader investigations from a socio-clinical perspective.

The transition from university education to the professional context of teaching presents a multifaceted challenge for novice educators in Chile, as highlighted by Ávalos and Aylwin (2007). This transition entails grappling with multiple difficulties, including managing student behavior, classroom diversity, and interactions with parents (Ruffinelli, 2013; Flores, 2014 ). The disparity between prescribed and actual work, as proposed by Dujarier (2006), reveals inherent tensions within the teaching labor context, impacting both the execution of expected tasks and the interpretation of work experience (Corsale, 2019).

As novice teachers enter their professional careers, they face challenges beyond knowledge transmission, as evidenced by research (Ávalos and Aylwin, 2007; Ruffinelli, 2013).

Teaching complexity, defined by Corsale (2019) as subjectivation, encompasses aspects ranging from classroom management to engaging with various educational stakeholders. This complexity is evident in the gap between assigned tasks and practical implementation, shaping teachers' perceptions and meanings of their work (Corsale, 2019; Dujarier, 2006).

The lived experience of teaching work is not confined to assigned tasks but involves the interpretation and significance individuals attribute to their work experiences (Corsale, 2019). This lived experience, influenced by classroom diversity management, parental interaction, and other factors, impacts both work execution and subjective perception. Understanding this disparity between prescribed work expectations and experienced reality is crucial for addressing challenges and providing effective support to novice teachers as they transition into the professional field (Ávalos and Aylwin, 2007; Dujarier, 2006; Ruffinelli., 2013).

Despite significant strides in researching the professional practicum process for English teacher training in Chile, substantial knowledge gaps persist. For instance, there remain significant voids in understanding how this formative experience impacts the identity and perceptions of trainee teachers. These gaps encompass a lack of comprehensive studies delving into the transformative aspects of teacher identity during this critical period, along with a scarcity of research that specifically and thoroughly addresses the complexities and challenges encountered by novice teachers as they transition into the professional context following their university education.

Furthermore, the literature significantly lacks exploration regarding the use of specific methodologies such as socio-clinical research to examine the representation and experiences of teacher trainees during their final practicum. These methodologies present a valuable opportunity to delve more profoundly into the evolving identity and perceptions of these teachers in

practicum, offering a means to address existing gaps in understanding their identity transformations within this particular educational context.

Considering this, is it important to conduct research on the intersection of these three dimensions, as such endeavor will enable us to understand how the process of professional practicum serves as a space where teachers' imaginaries and representations are updated through their initial teaching experiences, living in the double-space of being students themselves yet simultaneously responsible for their own students.

In this context, the question that drives this study is: How can we understand the process of professional practicum of teacher trainees based on their experiences, imaginaries and social representations? This question allows us to contribute to educational knowledge by advancing our comprehension of the imaginaries and experiences that better elucidate teacher training and how these experiences impact the process.

In conclusion, research gaps in the professional practicum for English teacher training in Chile are evident across several key areas. Firstly, there is a notable absence of comprehensive studies examining the transformative aspects of teacher identity during this critical period. Understanding how this practicum phase shapes teacher identity is crucial for the development of effective training programs. Secondly, there is a scarcity of research specifically addressing the complexities and challenges faced by novice teachers as they transition into the professional context after university education, limiting our ability to support these educators effectively. Lastly, there is a significant lack of exploration into methodologies, particularly socio-clinical research, to thoroughly examine trainee teachers' experiences and representations during their practicum. Addressing these gaps is essential for improving teacher preparation strategies, facilitating smoother transitions into professional roles, and enhancing the effectiveness of training programs for future teachers.

### 3.5 Objectives

To address these gaps, this study sets out the following general objective:

- To analyze the social representations, imaginaries and subjective experiences of teachers' work in a sample of Chilean English teacher-trainees in their final practicum.

Furthermore, this research also proposes the following specific objectives:

- To describe and characterize the social imaginaries and social representations of teacher work of a group of teacher trainees in their final practicum.
- To describe and characterize the subjective experience of work of a group of teacher-trainees in their final practicum.
- To relate the imaginaries, social representations of teaching with the lived experiences of teacher work of a group of teacher-trainees.
- To analyse the teaching practicum from a social and subjective perspective.

## **Chapter 4: Methodology**

### **4.1 Approaching Teachers' Professional Practicums from Their Subjective Experience: A Socio-Clinical perspective**

This research study aims to explore the experiences of teacher trainees through the epistemology of clinical sociology. According to De Gaulejac (2019), “clinical sociology proposes to draw on the clinical approach to understand social phenomena, which constitutes a particular way of conducting research and intervention. It involves working closely with the experiences of the actors, both in constructing research objects and in investigation methods” (p. 17). De Gaulejac also mentioned that clinical sociology emphasizes the existential dimension of social connections, investigating organizational and institutional phenomena in their rational, imaginative, instinctual and symbolic aspects and dimensions. The aim is to unravel the complex interplay of social and psychological determinants in individual and collective behaviors (2019). Furthermore, Fritz (2008) conceived clinical sociology as a creative, humanistic, and multidisciplinary field with the objective of improving the life situation of individuals and collectivities (p. 1). In other words, clinical sociology focuses on understanding and addressing social issues through the perspective of the subjects involved.

In the context of our research study, clinical sociology is seen as a suitable approach to investigate our stated objective due to the possibility it provides to understand the trajectories, practices, and the social rapports of the participants. Additionally, it proposes an engaged research-intervention methodology, centered on listening, observation, and deep reflection of the phenomena to be studied (Hamisultane, 2019).

This approach transforms socio-clinical epistemology into a sensitive, human, and comprehensive lens suitable for the exploration of teacher work, particularly its emotional

dimension. De Gaulejac (1997) asserted that a clinical stance is necessary “due to the analysis of social and psychological processes is not entirely “validated” unless there is a real-life experience to which the hypothesis gives meaning and coherence” (p.184). Hence, clinical sociology positions itself as an appropriate approach to examine our specified objective, its unique focus on facilitating change, as De Gaulejac (2019) suggested, offers individuals the possibility to understand the history of their social group, the history of their family and their personal history or trajectory, along with factors that influence and shape a teacher’s identity. It is precisely this emphasis on facilitating change that distinguishes clinical sociology from other forms of sociological practices, and which renders it pertinent and advantageous for our research.

#### ***4.1.1 The Subject from the Perspective of Clinical Sociology***

Sociological clinical practice establishes a distinction between the terms "subject," "social actor," and "individual," as indicated by De Gaulejac (2005), Bourdieu (1980), and Giddens (1997). The concept of "subject" refers to an individual with the ability to act and make conscious decisions, being an active agent who reflects upon and gives meaning to their experiences, considering that the construction of the subject involves social interactions and power structures that affect them. In contrast, the term "social actor" applies to an individual who actively participates in social life and plays a role in the transformation and reproduction of social structures. These social actors contribute to the construction and change of norms, values, and social practices, influencing their environment and society as a whole. Lastly, the term "individual" refers to a singular and autonomous entity, emphasizing individuality and the unique characteristics of each person; the individual is perceived as a separate and distinctive being with their own needs, desires, and capabilities.

Following this line Pierre Roche (2019) established that for sociology to become clinical, the inclusion of the subject is required. According to Rheume (2016), an individual becomes a subject from a socio-historical perspective when they become an active participant in social and collective progress, transcending their individuality. Roche (2019) also postulated that a subject is defined as an individual who, regardless of their economic, cultural, and social position, actively engages in the competition for a place in society. This implies that the subject has fully internalized the rules imposed by society in their context and has developed significant strategic skills (Roche, 2019). This conception is influenced by existential phenomenology, humanistic psychology, and psychoanalysis, which explore the inner life of the individual through reflective consciousness and the confrontation of voluntary activity with external limitations.

According to De Gaulejac (1997), the subject holds a central place in sociology because it is conceived as a collective social actor, a force that emerges from the conflicts shaping society. This perspective recognizes the subject as a form of interaction both at the individual level and within social movements, implying a continuous process of definition and self-regulation (p. 11-12). Furthermore, Rheume (2016) proposed that the subject plays a crucial role in both general sociology and clinical sociology. In the field of sociology, the subject is fundamental to interpret and give meaning to social interactions and the structures that shape social reality. On the other hand, in clinical sociology, the importance of the subject is even more pronounced, due the fact that this approach focuses on understanding the psychosocial dynamics and subjective experiences of individuals in relation to social structures. It recognizes that subjectivity and society are closely intertwined and mutually influence each other. Rheume also proposed that clinical sociology employs methods to explore individuals' subjectivity and understand how social structures and power relationships affect their psychosocial well-being.

De Gaulejac (1997) underscored the centrality of the subject in sociology, conceiving it as a collective social actor that emerges from the conflicts shaping society. This perspective, as highlighted by De Gaulejac, recognizes the subject as a form of interaction at both the individual and social movement levels, implying a continuous process of definition and self-regulation.

Rheume (2016) complemented this idea by emphasizing the fundamental role of the subject in sociology, particularly in clinical sociology. According to the author, the subject acts as the central actor in social and collective life, interpreting and giving meaning to social interactions and the structures that shape social reality. In clinical sociology, the importance of the subject expands, as it focuses on understanding the psychosocial dynamics and subjective experiences of individuals in relation to social structures. Bourdieu et al. (2005) added that the subjectivation of an individual is deeply influenced by their personal and social trajectory. They argued that subjectivity is not an isolated process but is strongly shaped by the individual's position in the social field. Therefore, personal experiences and social conditions such as social class, education, gender, and ethnicity play a crucial role in how the subject perceives the world, their values, beliefs, and behavior

Furthermore, Yzaguirre and Castillo (2013) pointed out that both the social phenomenon and the subject mutually influence each other. The authors suggested that social phenomena impact the individual's experience and subjectivity, and conversely, how an individual interprets and reacts to these phenomena has an impact on the construction of their identity and social reality. This is why it is primordial to acknowledge the role of subjectivation since it is constantly affected by different factors such as social phenomena, personal trajectory, and social trajectory.

### ***4.1.2 Subjectivation***

According to Giust-Ollivier (2019), subjectivation refers to the process each individual undergoes for internal transformation. This process involves the ability to recognize and manage one's impulses while maintaining a meaningful relationship with others. This ongoing work is based on the idea of the radical creativity of the mind and the absolute necessity of the presence of others in an individual's development. Starting in early life, it represents the fundamental goal of psychoanalytic analysis. According to the same author, the notion of subjectivation has gained importance in addressing specific forms of suffering related to people's inability to establish a personal psychic space and maintain the continuity of their identity in relationships with others, whether in the family or in society. This has led to the emergence of new pathologies of subjectivation, such as narcissistic injury, pathologies in interpersonal relationships, and borderline states. Similarly, the author noted that subjectivation is currently considered an essential process of subjective appropriation, although hindered by contemporary identity issues.

In clinical sociology, subjectivation is a fundamental process that enables individuals to undergo internal transformation. This involves the ability to manage impulses and maintain meaningful connections with others, leading to a deeper understanding of the psychological and social lives of individuals.

### ***4.1.3 Life History***

According to Vincent de Gaulejac and Haydee Silva (2002), life history reflects the personal or collective journey that individuals embark on to shape their own narrative, seeking freedom, autonomy, and unleashing their creativity. While history cannot be changed, individuals can alter how it influences them (De Gaulejac and Silva, 2002).

Regarding life history, De Gaulejac and Rodriguez (2006) explained that it is used in clinical sociology to comprehend an individual in their practices and how they negotiate specific

conditions. These authors suggested that the sociologist should position themselves at the intersection of humans and social contexts, culture and action, socio-cultural relationships, and historical dynamics.

The notion of trajectory and life history is linked to the concept of subjectivity, as stated by Laino (2006). Trajectory relates to past events in an individual's life, combining various dimensions such as the subjective, social, corporeal, and cognitive. This, according to De Gaulejac (2008), leads to individuals making decisions within the space of indeterminacy created by the contradictions they encounter.

#### ***4.1.4 The Socio-Psychic Bond***

According to De Gaulejac (2019), the notion of the socio-psychic bond in clinical sociology refers to a complex system that establishes lasting connections between an individual's psychological apparatus and an organization, whether it's an institution, company, association, the school in the case of teachers. This system exhibits a noteworthy degree of stability; consequently, any modification to one of its components sets off a cascade of alterations in the others. As per Castillo (2016), the modification of elements within the socio-psychological system can result in significant impacts on the configuration of the psyche and subjectivity. Furthermore, Castillo proposed that alterations in the socio-psychological system have the potential to influence the manner in which individuals perceive and experience their social and psychological environment.

De Gaulejac (2019) proposed that achieving self-realization through accomplishment in the organization creates a unique connection between the individual and the organization, where the company assumes a portrayal of unlimited power and authority, embodying a sense of omnipotence. Such a perception makes the work organization an omnipotent imaginary entity from which love, recognition, and protection are expected (Gaulejac, 2019). In terms of fantasy,

it is attributed to the ability to provide everything, but also to take everything away, generating anxiety about possible abandonment. This leads people to invest excessively in their work as a defense against anxiety. Together, these processes form a socio-psychic system in which there is a constant interaction between the contradictions inherent to the organization and the contradictions experienced by individuals in their relationship with it. Gaulejac also mentioned that this “organizational anthropomorphism” results from the interaction between the psychological and the social dimensions. It involves considering the company as a human entity, attributing emotions, intentions, and the ability to care for people, showing affection and concern for their well-being. As Bourdieu (1989) stated, this is equivalent to seeing the institution made human.

The notion of the socio-psychic bond is at the core of French clinical sociology when addressing how individuals establish lasting relationships with organizations and institutions. This concept demonstrates the influence of internal processes, such as subjectivation, on the formation of strong links between the psychological and the social, which is crucial for understanding how people relate to the organizational environment.

#### ***4.1.5 Co-construction of Knowledge***

Co-construction is a fundamental concept which involves collaboration between researchers and participants in clinical research (Vandeveld-Rougale, 2019). It helps researchers balance their involvement in the study subject while maintaining necessary objectivity (Vandeveld-Rougale, 2019). As noted by De Gaulejac (1987), co-construction requires a continuous interchange between attempts at conceptualization and the attentive listening to lived experiences. In addition, according to Vandeveld-Rougale (2011), “At the intersection of the researcher’s history and empirical and theoretical encounters, it makes research possible; in the

dialogue, it provides access to new experiential knowledge; through writing, it allows new questions” (p.126)

Furthermore, it is important to mention that according to Vandeveldel-Rougale (2019) the co-construction is not solely an approach or a stance but a dynamic process that evolves over time in conjunction with reflections about the collected information. The author added that, “it is a posture that involves mind, psyche, body and emotions of the researcher and the participants of the research” and also that, “is a process embedded in time where the analysis and writing allows a change of perspective about the collected material to open a new space for elaboration”. (p. 126).

Co-construction emerges as a key element in guiding researchers in the exploration of experiential knowledge. This collaborative approach which embraces the dynamics between researchers and participants, introduces new forms for the understanding of human experiences and interconnections. As we analyze the complexities of co-construction, we become aware of its irrevocable tie with clinical listening, a tool that extends beyond traditional data collection and revolves around the idea of valuing both subjectivity and human interactions.

#### ***4.1.6 Clinical Listening***

Clinical listening involves the interaction between the researcher and the participants, allowing for a deep understanding of the experiences (Mairesse, 2019). As Porter (1973, as cited in Mairesse, 2019) suggested, listening encompasses diverse attitudes that influence individual responses and the quality of the collected information, prompting various interview techniques and listening approaches, ranging from descriptive objectivity to the incorporation of the interviewer’s subjectivity (Mairesse, 2019). In this context, clinical listening, as elucidated by Fugier (2010), blends sociological understanding with clinical perspectives, actively engaging with interviewees to gain deeper insights into their thoughts and beliefs. Regarding that,

Mairesse (2019) pointed out that clinical listening highlights the value of the researcher's subjectivity and interaction with the participants. The aim of clinical listening is to seize the interactions between psychological and social conflicts, addressing unresolved contradictions (p. 221). It involves actively engaging with interviewees to foster a deeper understanding of their thoughts and beliefs. It involves both listening to people's experiences and linking these experiences to issues of socialization and the evolution of social systems. As Fugier (2010) noted, it seeks to find the most relevant questions based on the interviewee's responses rather than relying on a predetermined script, encouraging a reflective exploration of their views. To achieve this, clinical sociologists must create an open environment for individuals to express their personal experiences and then collaboratively analyze how the psychological and social aspects intertwine, influence each other, and support or dissociate from each other. Fugier (2010) stated that this approach may incorporate mediation tools like family trees or visual narratives to uncover hidden aspects of interviewees' experiences.

According to Mairesse (2019), they employ different elements in their listening and the relationship they establish with the individuals they work with. There are five key dimensions in this approach: attention, availability, co-creation of meaning, dialogue and acceptance of uncertainty. Throughout the interaction these dimensions intertwine, allowing for a deeper understanding of experiences and their connection to society (Mairesse, 2019), focusing on collaborative knowledge creation through interactive engagement and reflection (Fugier, 2010).

To conclude, clinical listening fosters and highlights the role of the researcher's subjectivity and their interactions with the participants as means to co-construct meaning and analysis, addressing social conflicts, contradictions and connecting personal narratives to broader societal issues. In the same matter, Action research shares a familiar dedication towards resolving discrepancies and encouraging social changes.

**4.1.6.1 Researcher Implication.** The researcher's involvement or implication is an essential component of the socio-clinical approach to methodology (Massa, 2019). In this perspective, it is recognized that the researcher's subjectivity plays a fundamental role in knowledge construction. As Pagès (2007) stated, involvement is not merely about participation in the research but about reflecting on one's own reactions and emotions during the process. The focus of clinical methodology differs from the more traditional approaches that seek to eliminate personal influences and discover general patterns. Instead, the uniqueness of each situation studied is valued. To achieve this, involvement is used as a tool that enables "the transition from immersion in the experience with the other to its analysis" (Pages, 2007).

According to Massa (2019), the clinical methodology also relies on psychoanalytic concepts like transference and countertransference. These concepts aid in exploring how the unconscious can influence the relationship among the researcher and the object of study. According to Giust-Desprairies (2004), "The relationship with the other's enigma characterizes the transference modes that specify the clinical approach. The latter is indeed based on a relationship defined as a process of subjectivation whose stake is work on otherness" (p. 120-121).

According to Massa (2019), "the question of otherness involves issues of imaginary capture of the other"(p. 354.). As Favret-Saada (1977 cited in Massa, 2019, p. 354) stated that "Who am I for the other?, Who is the other for me?" are fundamental questions for clinical research as they run through the relationship between the researcher and the object. Massa also explained that these discourses elaborated in this relationship are spoken expressions and, therefore, "are shaped by the imaginary representation of the other to whom they are addressed" (p. 354), thus constituting an intersubjective production.

It is given to the importance of implication in clinical methodology that this concept closely intertwines with the fundamental notion of co-construction, as in clinical sociology it is described as the process of constructing knowledge *with* another, in this sense, researcher and participant/s become equally indispensable.

#### **4.2 Arts-Based Research and Clinical Sociology**

Clinical sociology, with its aim to access social knowledge through the subjectivity of the actors, advocates using research tools that tap into those subjective dimensions with a more symbolic or unconscious nature (Fugier, 2010). From this standpoint, clinical sociology incorporates various artistic devices such as drawings, images, films, and more. Therefore, the present study utilizes methodological tools rooted in art-based approaches to research, aligning with the socio-clinical perspective of sensitive listening and co-construction of knowledge.

Arts-based research is defined as an inquiry method that incorporates creative arts elements, including the making of art by the researcher to comprehend the significance of what we do within our practice (McNiff, 1998). This approach describes an “epistemological foundation for human inquiry that utilizes artful ways of understanding and representing the worlds in which research is constructed and can explore multiple, new, and diverse ways of understanding and living the world” (Finley, 2008 as cited in Knowles and Cole, 2008, p.79). Finley (2008, as cited in Knowles and Cole, 2008, p. 72) also stated that “arts-based research makes the use of emotive, affective experiences, senses, and bodies, and imagination and emotion as well as intellect, as ways of knowing and responding to the world”. This view is shared by Susanne Langer (1951, as cited in Finley, 2008), who suggested that “interdisciplinarity among the arts would expand human intellect and bring about more complex, more imaginative ways of understanding human experience” (p. 77).

The use of this type of research approach suits our study since Barone and Eisner (2006, as cited in Green et al., 2006) suggested that it is capable of persuading “the percipient to see educational phenomena in new ways, and to entertain questions about them that might have otherwise been left unasked” (p. 301), and it constitutes a different method for perceiving diverse perspectives.

This approach benefits from the use of non linguistic techniques which may include painting, photography, collage, music, video, sculpture, film and even dance (Barone and Eisner as cited in Green et al., 2006). The arts-based research and clinical sociology are linked in a sense both approaches focus on intervention where arts-based inquiry creates a place where epistemological standpoints of artists and social science workers collide, coalesce and restructure to originate something new and unique among research practices. Our participants are not artists, but through art they can depict a part of their imaginaries and unconscious, which serves later on for socio-psychic co-interpretations.

#### ***4.2.1 Visual Elicitation Methodologies***

According to Glaw et al. (2017), “visual elicitation methodologies are a collection of methods used to understand and interpret images” (p. 1). This art-based research method involves the use of visual materials including photography, film, video, painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, artwork, graffiti, advertising, and cartoons (Barbour, 2014, as cited in Glaw et al., 2017), to elicit more conscious content and deeper dimensions.

In the case of our research study, we have utilized drawings as a visual elicitation methodology, also known as graphic elicitation. As Varga-Atkins and M. O’Brien (2009) stated, this technique is used to direct interviewee’s attention on the given topic or unveil additional meaning not covered as part of the interview. Regarding the visual stimuli, visual images (drawings) elicit deeper dimensions of human consciousness than words do (Harper, 2002 as

cited in Glaw et al., 2017). Moreover, Pauwels (2019) established that the visual stimuli might trigger the participants in the moment they speak about their profound feelings or past experiences (p.3). The author emphasized that utilizing visual materials enhances the ease of engaging the respondents in an interview, and these tend to feel less intimidated in the research and they can freely express their thoughts (p.4).

Furthermore, Pauwels (2019) addressed that “the visual material often evokes spontaneous and unpredictable answers from respondents” (p.119), which may not present in other methods. An author named Segers exemplified this methodology by comparing it with the verbal interview which is “often characterized by a typical role differentiation between interviewer and interviewee” (Segers, 1983 as cited in Pauwels, 2015, p. 119). According to Pauwels, in a visual interview the roles are exchanged, the respondents assume the role of an expert which encourages them to speak more openly (2015).

This methodology is useful for our study, for both interviewees and researchers since through art materials, allow research participants to make sense of lived experiences and feelings, especially the ones that are unintelligible or unconscious to them. This process can also transform the research participants’ understanding of the phenomena and start to re-imagine other possibilities, and this can capture more detail and a different kind of data than verbal and written methods.

## **4.3 Research Design**

### ***4.3.1 Qualitative Single Case Study***

Considering that the objective of this piece of research is to deepen our comprehension and examine what teacher-trainees experience during their practicum process, we needed to analyze both imaginaries and representations and lived experiences of teacher-trainees of English Pedagogy during their final practicum, in order to develop an understanding of the educational

contexts, barriers and challenges teacher-trainees are faced with as they assume the role of a teacher in a setting that closely mirrors real-life scenarios before they venture into their professional lives. To achieve this, we used a qualitative case study research design (Stake, 1995).

Qualitative research as defined by Ketokivi and Choi (2014) is a “research approach that examines concepts in terms of their meaning and interpretation in specific contexts of inquiry” (p. 233). According to Leavy (2017), the use of a qualitative approach in our research enables a more profound exploration of an individual’s subjective experiences. Through the application of a single case study, we are able to focus on a specific case, in this instance involving a group of individuals of our interest. Our aim with this approach is to discern the differences that make each subject unique, as well as the points of convergence in the group that make them similar, thus to understand them and their experiences (Stake, 1995. p. 12).

According to Baškarada (2014), employing a case study is appropriate for an in-depth comprehension and analysis of social phenomena. Therefore, the decision to select a case study is relevant and pertinent to our research, since our objective is to understand how teacher-trainees live their practicum process and examine how these experiences align or diverge from their preconceived views of teaching.

### ***4.3.2 Sampling Strategy***

**4.3.2.1 Case.** To select the case and participants of this study, we utilized a purposive homogeneous sampling technique, which consists in focusing on possible participants that have similar characteristics that would work best for the research (Etikan et al., 2016). Furthermore, Etikan et al. proposed that in a homogeneous sampling the participants shared aspects, such as age, cultures, our life experiences, and it is used with the purpose of concentrating these characteristics and their relation with the topic of investigation (2016). For Patton (as cited in

Palinkas et al., 2013) this technique is broadly used in qualitative research to select cases that can give us valuable and useful information in order to use limited resources in an exceedingly efficient manner.

We chose this sampling technique because it allows us the ease to focus our data collection on people who have the required characteristics needed in order to be part of our case study; for this research the experiences of English teacher-trainees. Furthermore, as English teacher-trainees is an extensive population, narrowing it to only a small number of cases brings efficacy into this research since it permits swiftness in obtaining both the approval of the participants to be subjects of investigation and the needed material for the data analysis. Simultaneously, as this research is considered a case study, having the participants be from the same university helps us to have a consistent focus group with similar educational contexts.

These conditions make this sampling technique suitable for the objective set forth in our study in the sense that fosters the identification of what the teacher-trainees lived during the final practicum and how their imaginaries were affected -or not- by their real experiences in the classroom.

In this respect previously mentioned, the unit of study for this research is the cohort of teacher-trainees currently coursing their fifth year of English Pedagogy at Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación (UMCE) who have successfully completed the process of their final practicum. The case consists of eight participants, all of whom are 23 to 24 years old on average. The specific particularities of the group include a significant predominance of female participants with six out of eight being women, leaving only two male participants. Sociodemographically, a significant majority of the participants self declare as middle socioeconomic status (75%) and 25% self declare as working class. Furthermore, most of the participants did their practicum in subsidized schools, notably in high schools (7th to 12th

grade). None of the participants undertook their final practicum in private schools. Additionally, all participants finished their final practicum during the first semester of 2023.

Despite notable variations within the group, such as gender, age range, socioeconomic status, and diverse practicum experiences, these differences do not undermine the homogeneity of the case. The shared context of educational activities and experiences forms a cohesive foundation that allows for meaningful analysis and interpretation. The unity of the group in its commitment to educational practices overcomes individual distinctions, ensuring a consistent framework for examination and understanding within the specific context.

Being able to dive into the experiences of Chilean teacher-trainees allows us to compare and contrast previously constructed ideas of ideal teaching in the classroom and the reality of an educator after performing the role of a teacher for a period of four months in different schools of the country, specifically Santiago and its surrounding areas. This decision to select our cohort out of students who have concluded their final practicum stems from the aim of getting the closest student's experiences to real-world classroom environments, teaching methods that work best according to the diverse needs and backgrounds of students, relationships within the school community and tensions that affect the teacher's practices. In this regard, previous teaching practicum curricular activities are focused on observations and slight interactions in the classroom, while final practicums serve as transformative experiences that give teacher-trainees an insight and prepare them for the complex journey of becoming efficient educators, allowing them to evolve into the professionals they aspire to be. Hence, we lead our investigation on fifth-year students that have freshly fulfilled their final practicum and will provide quality data focused on our project's purpose.

**4.3.2.2 Participants.** As we chose an intentional sampling strategy to collect our data, one of our principal motivations was the sample availability that this provided us. We decided to

collect our data from English teacher-trainees of UMCE due to the accessibility of gathering participation from the institution in our research, considering the fact that we, the researchers, are also students at the same University. We were able to easily contact our possible subjects of investigation to ask for their participation in our project. Furthermore, having this sample disposition allows us to conveniently obtain the information on our topic of research from a reliable and trustworthy source that we are familiar with and knew they would not be indifferent to our request and be open to act as our subjects of investigation. The participation of the students was fundamental for our project as we needed to grasp their first-hand experiences during their final practicums.

**4.3.2.2.1 Participant Selection.** In order to select the participants for this research, the researchers contacted the students who met the predefined requirements: be enrolled at UMCE and currently coursing their fifth year pursuing a degree in English pedagogy, who had recently concluded their professional and final practice. This contact was initiated through their institutional emails. A total of 14 students fulfilled the criteria and were considered eligible to be part of our study. Formal communication was initiated with these students soliciting cooperation and involvement in the process of our individual in-depth interviews. Amongst the entirety of the cohort, eight students consented to participate and join our investigation as interview subjects. Upon their confirmation, further communication was established and the participants were afforded the opportunity to select a convenient time slot from the prearranged schedules set by the main interviewers.

#### **4.3.3 Strategy for Co-construction of Clinical Hypotheses**

In clinical sociology, the process referred to as data collection is understood as an encounter between subjects. Therefore, it is seen as a negotiation of meanings among subjects -in this particular case the participants and researchers - who bring different life trajectories and may

perceive the world differently or similarly. In this way, information becomes a co-construction with the purpose of discussing and sharing views and meanings regarding specific social practices. According to Vandeveld-Rougale (2019), this strategy permits collaboration between the participants of our study and us, the researchers, taking into account the emotions, body, psyche, and mind of both groups. In our research design, we use the strategy of co-construction of sociological hypotheses to gather the information needed. This tool helps us to achieve a balance between our involvement with the participants and the fundamental level of objectivity in order to understand human experiences and interconnections.

The strategy we chose to implement in our research was a methodological device that consisted of in-depth socio-clinical interviews with visual elicitation (Fugier, 2010; Schubring et al. 2019) alongside an implication analysis with the purpose of being able to co-construct clinical hypotheses. This strategy was selected to identify the aspects present in the lives of our participants that can be helpful to comprehend the experiences, ideals and representations of teacher work of trainee-teachers in Chile.

**4.3.3.1 In-depth Clinical Interviews with Visual Elicitation.** According to Fugier (2010) clinical interviews, unlike other interviews, do not reduce the interviewees' narratives to mere representations or answers, but recognizes them as a form of knowledge, as engaging with subjects in clinical interviews is not solely based on inquiring them “about their opinions but because they possess valuable knowledge that the investigators do not have” (Kaufmann, as cited in Fugier, 2010). During this exchange both the interviewer and interviewee engage in a reflective process, out of the formality of the interviewer maintaining an impartial stance, and the participants take on the role of analyzers rather than just informants.

According to Constantini (2019), clinical interviews can help us collect information provided by the subjects in its “complexity and singularity” (p.244). As this type of interview

allows us a complete comprehension of the growth and development of a subject while obtaining their individual experiences and representations.

This type of interview differs from other qualitative interviews since it seeks to construct meanings among subjects rather than simply collecting information. This process is known as a co-production of knowledge that departs from the neutrality principles of traditional interviews and its goal is not to just collect explicit knowledge but to co-produce new insights through the interactions.

For this study, clinical interviews were semi-structured. Adams W. (2015) described semi-structured interviews as “a blend of closed- and open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up *why* or *how* questions. The dialogue can meander around the topics on the agenda [...] and may delve into totally unforeseen issues.” (p. 493). For this reason, semi-structured interviews proposed the most appropriate manner of comprehension of specific knowledge shared by our participants, their experiences, inside thoughts and feelings surrounding their English teaching education, development of their teacher identity and teacher work, without the process of the interview being overly constructed and allowing participants to delve into whichever areas they want to discuss. With semi-structured clinical interviews, participants can freely elaborate their responses being as detailed as they prefer (Leavy, 2017).

On the part of the interviewers, they must be able to facilitate a safe development of the participants' sharings while guiding them with flexibility and no judgment and should be able to create a genuine atmosphere where they can grant an emotional listening (Constantini, 2019). Hence, interviews were planned to be carried out in Spanish, as well as being implemented at the English Department at UMCE with the intention of providing a familiar setting and a comfortable and unthreatening space for our participants to make possible the co-construction of knowledge.

In this study we have complemented the clinical interview with a visual elicitation device. In this regard, Fugier (2010) proposed that the clinical approaches use various reflective supports to conduct clinical interviews, some of these include; family trees, life lines, writing tables, narrative sequencing and the one which calls our attention, visual elicitation. These types of tools serve as mediators to induce conversation, allowing the participants to delve into their unconscious influences and realities, eliciting them in a symbolic form and providing them with meaning. Thus, the selection of visual elicitation techniques in our study is considered a tool that will foster the emergence of symbolic elements to the elaboration of the discourse of the participants.

In conclusion, the use of clinical interviews, particularly in a semi-structured format, play a crucial role in capturing the depth and complexity of the subjects' knowledge and experiences (Fugier, 2010; Constantini, 2019). This approach, accompanied with the intentional use of reflective supports, such as visual elicitation (drawings), proves adequate in understanding the intricate aspects of English teaching education, teacher identity, and the challenges of the final practicum for novice teachers, and provides us with the opportunity of enriching the study with detailed perceptions. In essence, this holistic approach to clinical interviews does not only broaden the understanding of the subject matter but also paves the way for the creation of new insights through collaborative interactions, achieving the process of co-production of knowledge.

**4.3.3.1.1 Visual Elicitation.** As described previously, our clinical interviews were conducted alongside a strategy of visual elicitation. Since our study revolves around understanding the experiences of teacher-trainees during their practicum and exploring their pre-existing perspectives on pedagogy, we decided to ask our participants to convey these elements through visual elicitation. Our choice to use this research approach stems from the purpose to let our participants express themselves and their inner thoughts in a unique manner,

along with the typical narrative approach through oral discourse. As Leitch (2006) stated “Not all aspects of experience are [...] readily available to awareness; many emotional, sensory and embodied dimensions of experience lie below the threshold of consciousness and are thus often impossible to articulate in words.” (p. 551). In this sense, the method to approach these lived experiences with visual elicitations will allow for the participants to become aware of the subconscious aspects that have left strong reactions in them during their professional practicum, which with other conventional methods of investigation will not fully or adequately capture the essence of the experienced embodied knowledge in the way that an image, a poem, a sculpture or theatrical performance will (Leitch, 2006). In the same way that allows the interviewers to gain access to analyze these hidden features in the participants. This strategy assumed crucial significance during the course of conducting the in-depth clinical interviews, as each query derived from the final product of two portrayals, a fundamental basis for our reflection and knowledge construction process.

Our in-depth interviews consisted of two distinct sections, each starting with the development of a visual portrait (drawing) and followed by questions aiming at the elaboration of the graphic representations created by the interviewee. In the first instance, the participants were prompted to create a visual illustration associated with their conceptualization of *ideal* English teaching. This process proposed the participants to position themselves in the most effective, productive and perfect conditions for teaching, consequently entailing the personal visions of each individual. In contrast, the subsequent task attempted for the participants to develop an illustration that most faithfully represents their personal and real experience throughout the progression of their final professional practicum. On this occasion, the visual material aspired to disclose the overall experiential aspect of their engagement in the role of a teacher and including a broad assessment of their newly taken pedagogical responsibilities. This

portrayal sought to capture the essence of the encountered experiences, potentially measuring these outcomes as positive, negative or even expected.

Naturally, the afterwards analysis of these portrayals is sourced from the participants themselves. This occurs during the inquiry section of the interview; the participants have the opportunity to expand on the meaning of their artistic compositions, elucidating the most important elements of their drawing and defining their significance. Moreover, within the verbal discourse part of the interviews, implicit cues can be present for the interviewers to grasp, such as the participants' choice to elaborate on certain elements and their disregard for others, the utilization of diverse colors, unique shapes and distinct characters within their creation, adding further layers for interpretation and discussion.

**4.3.3.2 Analysis of Researcher Implication.** The implication analysis of researchers is closely related to clinical interviews and considers the researchers' subjectivity present during the whole research process (Constantini, 2019). When referring to an analysis of implication, Massa (2019) proposed that being able to analyze how the researchers involve themselves with the topic of their research is a manner to advocate for scientific rigor since it helps to emphasize how the researchers are going to manifest their input on the knowledge that is being produced and to neutralize it. In this way, being able to analyze the perspective of the researcher serves to locate how we can contribute to the construction of our topic.

Following this line of methodological precision, Watkins (as cited in Sprinkle, 1985) introduced the concept of psychological resonance to assess psychological procedures. This concept is defined as the inner experience within an observer where they co-feel and co-understand with their participant, although not in a completely immersive level. This model, according to Sprinkle (1985), facilitates mutual exploration, incorporating procedures such as relaxation, awareness of inner states, activation of mental imagery towards goals, and

collaborative evaluation of the effects or changes in attitudes and activities. In this sense, psychological resonance serves as a means to generate empathy and involvement between the participants' emotions and/or experiences with those of the researcher, while being mindful that their sharings continue to be external. The goal is to understand and share the participants' sentiments without becoming entangled in them.

In this regard, to recognize our degree of attachment towards our participants' narratives we considered that an implication analysis will contribute to articulate our thoughts and perceptions after the interviews are performed. Through this implication analysis we were provided with the possibility to fully express and testify every aspect we resonated with during the interview process, while taking into consideration our participation and experiences as interviewers.

The analysis of implication strategy allows for the authors of the study to undertake an interpretation of personal resonances with the interview, including dimensions that extend into our existential and historical identities, as much as in our professional engagement in the research process. Moreover, it brings a special light on how our individual subjectivities might interfere with the course of the research process. This is precisely the reason an analysis of implication is needed for the researchers to openly communicate their perspectives and personal experiences, to understand the degree of our involvement with the object of study, both to safeguard validity and to maintain a healthy distance from what participants express. This visibility is crucial in order for these subjectivities to not occupy a hidden influence during our co-construction of hypotheses.

The implication analysis in our study consists of individual audio recordings done by the participating researchers in the interview process and only recorded after each interview is conducted. This is done in a space that fosters an adequate and comfortable atmosphere for each

researcher. These recordings can span a duration of how long the author deems necessary to convey their personal reflections and final impressions in the aftermath of the interviews. These reports include but are not limited to the following aspects:

- a) Emotions experienced during the course of the interviews: feelings of sadness, happiness, nostalgia, guilt, nervousness, empathy, amongst others.
- b) Notable aspects that gathered our attention regarding the topics of the research.
- c) Observations made concerning the interviewee: cues from their body language, the closing off to certain topics, overall disposition and demeanor, etc.
- d) Association to the interviewee's experiences: entwining their personal history with the participants' individual history, practicum experiences, similar worldviews, etc.
- e) Engagement with the interview: the fulfillment of their specific role, satisfaction with the final product, their subjective evaluation on the quality of the data, etc.

Moreover, as researchers we also met the requirement to give our insight regarding the experiences of teacher-trainees during the practicum. That is why, in order to get a deep understanding of what trainee-teachers experience during their final practicum, we decided to gather information from our own exposure to teacher work as students.

During our practicum we decided to register our path throughout this challenging experience of our final practicum through weekly written reflections that encased our feelings on three levels; emotional, physical, and mental, regarding both our professional practicum as well as thesis progress. These reflections allow us to go back on how we lived the teaching experience as university students, and be able to resonate and connect with the personal and professional life stories of the participants of our research.

As researchers we have access to theory and experiences, which allows us to look at certain situations from different perspectives and examine the significance of particular actions or feelings that might lead to other circumstances. In regards to our participants' narratives, our knowledge contributes to a deeper understanding of what they have lived before, during, and after their pedagogical practice and the impact of this process in their personal and professional identities.

#### **4.4 Procedures**

##### ***4.4.1 The Interview Process: A Socio-Clinical Encounter***

**4.4.1.1 Context of Interviews.** To conduct the socio-clinical interviews, we set a specific place with our participants; we selected the meeting room of the UMCE English Department to ensure their comfort as it is where they study and spend a considerable amount of time. To do this, we communicated via email with the Director of the English Department to request the allowable use and availability of the room to which we got full permission and support.

Our itinerary scheduled different time slots during the period of two weeks; 11:30 AM to 13:00 PM and 14:30 PM to 16:00 PM, from Tuesday to Thursday with two interviews per day. It is important to mention that we had more time slots than needed for the participants to choose from a bigger variety of days and weeks convenient for their disposal.

This process was not exempt from some obstacles out of our control. We had to reschedule several interviews as a result of complications in both personal conflicts of our participants with the time accorded and weather issues that made it impossible for us to carry out the interviews in the space we had intended to do so. Which led us to designate new dates and times that better suited the participants' agendas. For one of these cases the only change that occurred was the week but keeping the same time slot, meanwhile for the additional cases we

were required to arrange these interviews in different times out of our initial established ones, one of them at 10:00 AM and the other at 16:00 PM.

As previously mentioned, we had a total of 8 participants. Each of the interviews provided a diverse experience in regards to the overall climate of the conversation, while some interviews maintained a calm, composed and easy-going atmosphere, others evolved into heavily emotional ones through the course of the interview, in a particular instance one of the interviewees became visibly emotional and cried while recounting their personal experience in their practicum which made for a heartfelt moment between the people present in the room. Contrastingly, some interviewees displayed excitement while discussing their ideals of teaching and their interactions with students.

In regards to us as interviewers, we intended to make the conversations as laid-back and comfortable as possible. But, there were factors that altered our relaxed mood and changed our dynamic towards the development of the interview, especially during interviews programmed at 14.30 PM or after that time slot. Some of these factors were tiredness, nervousness, hunger, sleeplessness, boredom, outside noise, hotness, amongst others. Nonetheless, we tried our best to complete and accomplish our primary objective, that was retrieving the information needed for our research.

**4.4.1.2 Interview Guidelines.** Our primary objective, considering the qualitative essence of this research, was to facilitate a comfortable, secure, and personal interaction with our participants, providing them with the environment to develop their thoughts, feel in control of the conversation, and freely express their perspectives. By adopting this approach, we made sure to gather information with meticulous attention to detail. As we engaged with the procedure of semi-structured clinical interviews and with participants who are shaped by their own experiences, the conversations were not heavily structured or directed by a series of guidelines.

For that matter, even with established guide questions, our exchanges were supported with additional queries that might arise in relation to the diverse imaginaries, experiences, lived events and other aspects the participants shared with us, the interviewers. It is pertinent to mention that, with the voluntary and openness of the participants' sharings, the interviewers had the responsibility of steering the conversation towards the focal point of the investigation.

The procedure of these individual interviews was carefully planned; there was a path to follow in each interview which consisted of some fundamental steps. The interview procedures were checked and validated through expert judgment, meaning that two experts approved the questions and the manner in which the interviews were going to be carried out. At the beginning of the interviews we greeted the participants and explained the roles of each one of the researchers present during this process, we explained the objective of our research and what we are trying to achieve with our clinical interviews, along with this, the main interviewer of the research had to clarify the formal aspects of the interview; the structure, the total amount of time to conduct it, as well as elucidating that the interview would be voice recorded and that their personal information would remain anonymous. Before the interview began, the participants signed an informed consent to give us their written agreement to use their sharings and information.

After each drawing the main interviewer asked the previously established questions planned for the development and guidance of the conversation.

The questions after each drawing were the following:

- ¿Nos puedes hablar sobre los elementos de tu dibujo y su significado?
- ¿Qué elementos del dibujo dan cuenta del profesor/a?
- ¿Cómo es el trabajo de ese profesor/a?
- ¿Cómo se siente ese profesor/a?

- ¿Qué hace regularmente ese profesor/a?
- ¿Cómo es visto/a por la comunidad escolar?
- ¿Cómo es vista por la sociedad?
- ¿Cómo esto que nos comentas se vincula con tus expectativas y creencias sobre la

pedagogía? (Only for the first drawing)

These questions were intertwined with the depictions provided by the participants on their artistic compositions. Furthermore, they facilitated the creation of a hypothetical third-person teacher. In the initial illustration, the interviewees were prompted to formulate a life narrative for this fictional educator, while in the second instance, they were encouraged to mirror these same aspects but from the point of their own real-life experiences.

The latter segment of the interviews primarily encompassed inquiries pertaining to the life narratives of the interviewees, previously established views on pedagogy and the interviewee's future prospects within the realm of education. This line of questioning was aimed at procuring a more profound comprehension of the trajectory that culminated in their engagement with English pedagogy, insights into their aspirations and goals, as well as eliciting their firsthand perspectives on the viewpoints of their family members and acquaintances and how these might have affected them or not.

The questions for the last segment were the following:

- ¿Cómo se vinculan ambos dibujos?
  - Menciona las similitudes y diferencias.
- ¿Cómo esto que nos comentas se vincula con tu vivencia del trabajo como profesor?
  - En tres aspectos: individual, en la escuela, y en la sociedad.

- ¿Cómo tus ideas iniciales sobre la docencia han cambiado debido a tu práctica real de la docencia?
  - ¿Cómo te sientes con eso? (emocionalmente, personalmente y profesionalmente)
- Cuéntanos sobre tu historia. ¿Cómo llegaste a la pedagogía?
  - Dentro de tu familia, ¿cómo es el vínculo con la educación/pedagogía?
- ¿Cómo proyectas tu carrera como profesor/a en los próximos años?
  - En tres aspectos: individual, en la escuela, y en la sociedad.
- Si pudieses escoger nuevamente de carrera, ¿volverías a estudiar pedagogía?

However, the interviews were not solely confined to the aforementioned questions. As during the course of the conversation, the main interviewers possessed the competence to add in-depth questions with the intent to further develop the ideas of the interviewees. This entailed instances where notions were not clear enough due to ambiguity, instances where an in-depth exploration was needed, or when answers were either overly concise or too broad.

The main focus was set in order to obtain profound insights from the interviewees experiences as teacher-trainees during their final practicum and to comprehend the interconnections of their life stories, emotions, and identities. By doing so, it allowed us to attain quality insights to analyze, correlate and contrast, not only between the interviewees' imaginaries and experiences but also with those of the researchers.

So as to make sure the subjectivities of the participants are not affected by our own experiences and remain true to the interviewees, our information comes from two sources. One comes directly from the participants of the research collected through the interviews, and the other comes from us, the researchers, through reflections of our own practicum along with our implication analysis. As we have experienced first-hand what being an English teacher-trainee in Chile is like, we contributed with our experiences. Nevertheless, in order to maintain both

narratives isolated, we created a separate section to illustrate what we lived as teacher-trainees and our views on teaching. In this way we avoid the amalgamation of the author's lived experiences with those of the participants. As well as, clarifying that during the interviews we cannot interfere or manipulate what the participants state, share or conclude.

#### ***4.4.2 Analysis of Researcher Implication***

Regarding the analysis of implication, every researcher took a few minutes after each one of the interviews to do the clinical report so we could reflect on what emerged from the conversation, how we felt, our connection with the participants sharings, our internal tensions, and more. This followed the same aspects mentioned before, focusing specifically on what we went through at a mental, physical, and emotional level. Each of these aspects collectively contribute to a profound understanding of the dynamics that underlie the research process from the perspective of the researchers.

The clinical report was firstly audio recorded to later be transcribed. After this process was completed we uploaded the transcripts on a file hosting and synchronization service designed by Google, and we continued with qualitative analysis of the transcriptions.

### **4.5 Information processing and analysis strategy**

#### ***4.5.1 Information Processing Procedures***

As Constantini (2019) described, the analysis of clinical interviews seeks to give interpretations to what is being said rather than to test something. In this opportunity, as we were seeking to interpret the sharings of the participants, we were very careful with the information delivered by them. After the interviews were successfully conducted, and in order to test our pre-stated hypotheses, we proceeded with a verbatim transcription of all the interviews. With this type of transcription we aim to be truthful to what the participants expressed, and how they did it -pauses, body language, coughs, etc.

The transcription of the interviews was in charge of three members of the research team, who used their computers to complete the process. Using Google Drive, we created a folder and then individual Google documents for each interview transcription. We used a Google extension called “PinPoint”, which is an artificial intelligence that automatically transcribes audio with the purpose of making the process less complicated. Nonetheless, this tool sometimes did not understand the words that the interviewees said, and transcribed them into something that was not correct. Specifically, the program had issues deciphering Chilean slang, hence we had to pay extra attention to those expressions. Moreover, we had to read the transcriptions that the software provided us several times so we could correct and rewrite the proper words. Nevertheless, sometimes it was difficult to understand the words the participants expressed due to some participants hesitated, lowered their voice volume, and lost track of their ideas. Therefore, we had to listen to that part over again a few times, until we were able to find the proper word. For this reason, transcribing the interviews took longer than expected, approximately it took 3 weeks to complete them. The process was tedious, since each interview required considerable time to transcribe; approximately 3 to 4 days per interview and each transcription varied in length from 1 to 1 hour and half.

The transcription process was a stressful and exhausting one considering the difficulties of the software used to transcribe and the time it took to do it. On the other hand, this process of our research work taught us to manage our patience and perseverance. After this, with the verbatim transcription completed, we continued with the analysis of the information obtained through an open codification and a thematic grouping (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

#### ***4.5.2 Analysis Strategy: Thematic Analysis***

We decided to use thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017) since it allows us to identify and interpret a variety of meanings, guided by our main research question. This type of analysis

helped us focus on the main themes that were central for the topic of our study, in this way, we were able to focus on the specific information that presented a profound link to what is being investigated.

To carry out this thematic analysis, we worked with two phases of codification. To implement the codification process we used a qualitative software named atlas.ti®, which allowed us to synthesize, interpret, and group the main ideas from the participants' sayings. In the first phase of codification we did an open codification, where we assigned individual codes to every important piece of information shared by the interviewees. Once this process was accomplished, we assembled the codified interviews to begin the next step. In the second phase, we conducted a thematic grouping, where the codes obtained in the first phase were put together in different code groups according to their topic similarity. In order to put the codes into groups, we work together to create the themes according to the individual codes, the codes groups were made as new meanings were emerging. This second codification phase was the key process to identify the main themes of the interviews. These main themes are presented in chapter 5: Results.

## Chapter 5: Results

The present study endeavors to delve into the imaginaries, social representations and lived experiences of teacher-trainees during their final teacher practicum. To achieve this, a qualitative case study has been conducted involving clinical interviews with visual elicitation, followed by thematic analysis. The present chapter unveils the outcomes derived from the information analysis process. Its structure is as follows: an initial presentation of the overall results, followed by the results of the open coding phase and thematic grouping. Subsequently, there's an explanation of the categorization of the main themes, socio-psychic levels, subthemes, and illustrative examples.

Given that this study operates within the realm of sociology, we have opted to present the results and analysis of this study according to three levels of sociological analysis, namely: macro, meso and micro, as proposed by Serpa and Ferreira (2019). These levels of analysis epitomize a metatheory where social phenomena are situated and visualized according to patterns of social interaction. More specifically, this theory proposes that, within sociological theory, “minimum and maximum units of analysis can be recognised. Between these extremes, several intermediate levels (meso) can be conceived” (Sell, 2016, p. 326, as cited in Ferreira & Serpa, 2019, p. 121). Within this social structure theory, the micro level addresses “the study of human behavior in contexts of everyday interaction” (Giddens, 1997, p. 883), while the macro level refers to the dimensions of society and culture as a whole (Hartman, 2017, as cited in Serpa & Ferreira, 2019). Finally, the meso level refers to organizations and groups (Hartman, 2017, as cited in Ferreira & Serpa, 2019), and it can be understood as the articulation of the levels below and above (Ferreira & Serpa, 2019).

In the context of this study, the macro level signifies the social level represented by the larger societal organization and its institutions, such as governmental bodies and socio-economic frameworks of action that take place at such level. On the other hand, the meso level is understood as the school, functioning as an organization wherein we can find social actors, including teachers, school administrators, parents, students, and student teachers; as well as the interactions and the social rapports established amongst them. Finally, the micro level encapsulates the subjects and their interactions. In this respect, since this study uses a socio-clinical approach, the individual at the macro level is conceived as a subject (Roche, 2019), since they are considered as an individual who carries their personal trajectory and their desire of individuation to their activity, experiences and interactions.

After the open coding process a total of 1779 individual codes were identified and subsequently thematically grouped into 50 distinct code groups, hereafter referred to as subthemes. These individual codes and subthemes were instrumental in discerning four primary or major themes that emerged from the participants' narratives, each allocated to three levels (macro, meso and micro), providing a framework for the participants' discussions, descriptions, and critiques.

### **5.1 Overall results: Imaginaries and Social Representations, Lived Experiences, Suffering and Well-being**

The thematic analysis resulted in the identification of four major themes: imaginaries and social representations, lived experiences (referred to as “vecus” or “vivencias”), suffering, and well-being. The first theme consists of the diverse views and thoughts articulated by the participants during the interviews, reflecting their perspectives on the practicum process, pedagogy, teacher work, and more. The second theme, lived experiences, consists of the subjective experiences and encounters of the teacher-trainees during the practicum, including

aspects such as relationships, workload, emotions, etc. The third theme, suffering, encapsulates the challenges faced by the participants throughout the practicum process. Lastly, the well-being theme includes those aspects of the practicum that were fulfilling, rewarding or positively significant for the participants.

The thematic category of imaginaries and social representations includes, as mentioned above, the diverse opinions, viewpoints and assumptions expressed by the participants concerning various facets of their educational and professional journey. This spans from their perspectives on the educational system to considerations about their future workplace preferences. It also involves their visions regarding teacher work, the acquisition and application of English language skills, and how others perceive teacher-trainees. On the other hand, the theme of lived experiences delves into the firsthand encounters of teacher-trainees during their practicum, including both external and internal aspects of their school environments. This theme encompasses the spectrum of positive and negative experiences, characteristics of their practicum schools, interactions with the school community, and delves into the participants' self perception and their emotional responses to these experiences. Simultaneously, the theme of suffering comprises the challenges encountered by participants during their practicum process. This includes establishing boundaries with students, the insecurities confronted by the teacher-trainees when faced with the realities of a classroom, and the adjustment from university setting to work environment, navigating the duality of being both students and teachers in training. Lastly, the theme of well-being encompasses those experiences that positively influenced the participants, deemed gratifying or valuable during and after the practicum. This includes recognition from the students or colleagues, affirming their place among professionals.

### 5.1.1 Theme Dynamics

Regarding the interconnection among these themes, they intricately intertwine in various ways, illustrating the complexities inherent in the social phenomenon of the teaching practicum. In this regard, the social imaginaries of teacher-trainees are closely linked to the lived experiences of the participants, establishing a dynamic connection between them.

Delving deeper into this dynamic, the imaginaries and representation significantly influence the way we navigate our real experiences during the practicum. This influence may manifest as predispositions or unwillingness to certain aspects based on our preconceived notions. Similarly, as we experience the process of working as teachers, our ideals and representations may undergo a transformation in response to acquired knowledge and confrontation with reality. These aspects are inherently interconnected, and their dynamic cannot be considered in isolation as they are in a constant state of co-construction, co-modification and re-signification.

As imaginaries and representations often refer to ideal notions of what something “should be” and, on the other hand, lived experiences are the real, incarnated experience of something, these two dimensions (ideal and real) might (not all the time) coincide creating a gap that is subjectively experienced as either pleasure (well-being) or displeasure (suffering). The themes of suffering and well-being center on the existing gap between these two realms, establishing a connection to both.

Examining the relationship between the imaginaries, social representations and suffering, it becomes possible to suggest that the suffering theme contains categories related to the way in which the social representations and imaginaries are signified as posing a challenge for teacher trainees. Similarly, exploring the relationship between the lived experiences and the suffering, is it possible to postulate that the suffering theme contains categories tied to the lived experiences

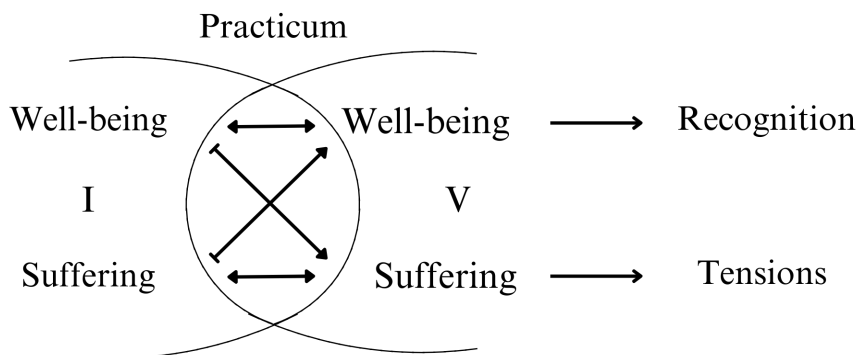
of teacher-trainees, representing constraints, difficulties, impossibilities or limits encountered during the real context of the teachers' practicum.

Well-being emerges when the imaginaries and social representations, initially perceived as negative expectations for the upcoming process, are contradicted by the lived experiences in the practicum. Similarly, the same happens when positive expectations are endorsed by the lived experiences. However, well-being is not solely connected to imaginaries and representations; it requires the lived experiences to contrast from negative to positive or reinforce from positive to positive. Moreover, well-being can be directly linked to the lived experiences theme, as positive experiences, even if they do not align with the imaginaries, contribute to a sense of well-being.

Ultimately, the interplay between these four themes can be understood as the distance and proximity between reality and ideals. It is from this distance and proximity that suffering and well-being arise. To illustrate this dynamic, Figure 1 visually depicts the connection between the main themes.

**Figure 1.**

*Four themes dynamic.*

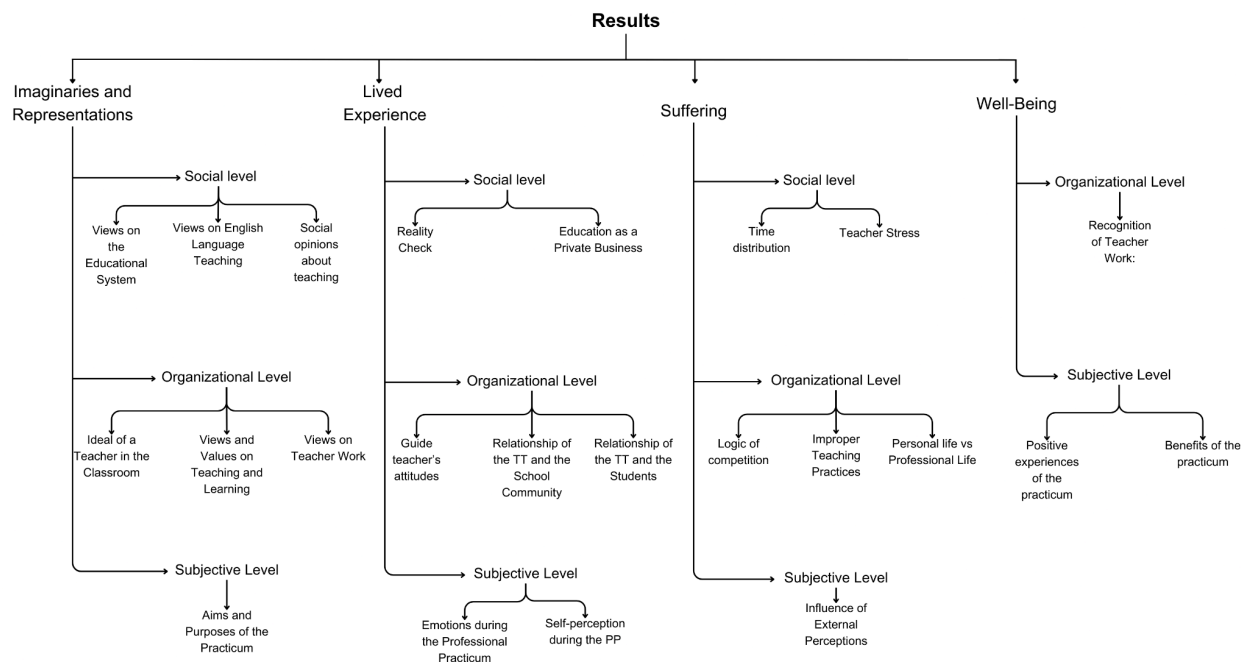


### 5.1.2 Macro, Meso and Micro Levels of Analysis

As previously mentioned, the analysis involved three sociological levels of analysis; macro, meso and micro. At the macro level, corresponding to the Social dimension, we explored themes associated with the educational system. This includes dimensions related to its structure, operational principles, and opinions from both the teacher-trainees and society at large. Moving to the meso level, the Organizational dimension, it delves into aspects concerning the school as an organization. This includes teaching practices, school life, relationships within the school community involving other teachers, students, parents, among others. Lastly, at the micro level, the Subjective dimension, focuses on themes related to the subjective dimensions of teacher-trainees. This level revolves around the teacher-trainees in their practicum, exploring their perceptions on themselves, how they self-assess their work, their emotions and their lived experiences during the practicum process. Within each level, we present selected sub themes along with direct quotes from the participants (figure 2).

**Figure 2.**

*Levels of analysis.*



## 5.2 Imaginaries and Representations

The first theme we will explore is titled “Imaginaries and Representations of Teacher-Trainees”. As implied by the title, this theme encompasses the imaginaries and representations held by participants, exploring their symbolic conceptualizations of teaching, educators, society, and more related aspects. It consists of 19 sub themes aimed at gathering the perception of the interviewees.

### *a) The Social Level: Educational System*

**Views on the Educational System:** This sub theme encapsulates the opinions expressed by participants sharing their own perspective about the educational system, encompassing critiques or descriptions of its functioning within our country. Within this sub theme, references

are made to neoliberal education, teacher overwork, and the misconception of perceiving teachers as caretakers. For instance, as this participant expressed:

“no me cabe en la cabeza por qué los padres o los tutores, eh... ven a los profesores o a los centros educativos en general como un chiste, porque al final eso es como un chiste, como que yo te llevo a mi niño, a mi niña, a mi hijo o hija, no sé, eh... y te lo dejo ahí y tú edúcalo, pero si te mandas alguna cagada, te voy a reclamar y te voy a no sé, hacer como la vida imposible, qué es lo que pasa con muchos apoderados en los colegios.” (Woman, 23)

This quote reflects a particular conception about the education system as a social institution primarily responsible for childcare. It also highlights the participant’s interpretation of parental attitudes towards the school system and the teachers, emphasizing the perception of parents dropping off their children at schools, assuming teachers to take responsibility for them and expecting to do their work perfectly.

**Views on English Language Teaching:** This sub theme refers to participant’s perceptions regarding the English language, its use, associated opportunities, or prevalent misconceptions people have about it. Participants shared their opinions and views about this topic, and how they think about the English language. Through this sub theme, diverse perceptions of teaching English as a second language emerge, particularly concerning the benefit students gain from English. Regarding this, one of the participants said:

“Porque al final hay gente acá que estudió Pedagogía en Inglés, eh... pero que realmente no quieren ser profesor entonces el inglés te abre puertas a que quizás no sé por si queris’ ser

traductor, si querís' irte del país, si fuiste profesor pero el sistema te cargó tanto emocionalmente y tu eliges no ser profesor, más tienes otra opciones también” (Woman, 23).

This interviewee states that the ELT career can offer English language professionals a wide variety of professional opportunities in case teaching is too emotionally demanding. It is perceived as a tool that unlocks various career paths, facilitating a diversified professional life.

At this social level, we can also encounter opinions of people not directly involved in education, but people that have an external and detached view towards education, and that participants decided to express.

**Social opinions about teaching:** Regarding this sub theme, participants allude to what most people think teaching is, the roles of the teacher, and the social recognition of the profession. This sub theme emerged from the participants’ responses to the question related to how society views or thinks about teachers and their work. The majority of responses conveyed a common sentiment: society holds a diminished opinion about teachers. Here is an example from one of the participants:

“Pensarían que (el profesor) se queja mucho, que es fácil estar ahí enfrente de los estudiantes, que prácticamente es cuidarlos solamente y no es tan grande el trabajo” (Woman, 24).

This participant mentions that society believes that teachers’ work is effortless, that they only give lessons and take care of students. Consequently, this sub theme underscores the lack of social recognition afforded to the teaching profession.

***b) The Organizational Level: The School***

**Ideal of a Teacher in the Classroom:** This sub theme delves into participants' ideals concerning teaching English in the school context, such as the perfect classroom, students, working conditions, and what being a perfect teacher means for them. When participants were asked to describe their ideal teacher, most of the interviewees connected their ideal to what they aspired to become. For instance, one participant described their conceptualization and said what their ideal teacher is:

“Regularmente en la sala de clases, yo digo que es una profesora que está de pie, que ayuda a sus estudiantes con sus dudas, que logra alcanzar objetivos, que tiene los materiales necesarios para hacer distintas dinámicas de clase, que sus estudiantes tienen un espacio cómodo, que no se lleva trabajo para la casa, que no tienen que hacer otras cosas y puede dedicarse a organizar este tipo de clases y no tiene que adecuarse como a algo más precario.” (Woman, 24).

This participant contrasts their ideal with the reality, highlighting deficiencies in materials, space, and workload for real teachers. Thus, participants' ideal teaching practices are shaped by their views on the best approaches or techniques for teaching and learning, alongside teacher work conditions.

**Views and Values on Teaching and Learning:** In this sub theme, the participants shared their opinion about what they consider the best way to teach, and how the students learn best. When answering, most of the interviewees talked about how both the learning and teaching are improved when there is a good connection between students and teachers. Furthermore, they described the importance of teaching in a way that is engaging for students, thus making their learning more meaningful. One of the participants makes this clear by saying that:

“si uno no conecta, siento que no hay educación, no se llega a enseñar, porque es fácil ver un vídeo en youtube y aprender alguna cosa, pero no logras tener ese mismo feeling con el que podría personalizar un profe, sabiendo las vivencias de un niño, sabiendo la... lo ideal que tiene un niño, es súper fácil conectar e intentar aprender según las necesidades que tenga el niño. Entonces si uno no conecta, si uno no tiene, no tiene la llegada necesaria, quizá no se va a aprender.” (Man, 23).

This participant points out the importance of establishing a personal bond in education, suggesting that without this connection, true teaching cannot take place. For this participant, a teacher who organizes the learning experience based on their students' needs creates a unique and valuable connection towards effective learning.

Alongside the previous sub themes we can find another set of views related to the aspects of being a teacher, what is their job to do and their obligations as educators.

**Views on Teacher Work:** In this sub theme, participants offered insights into their perceptions of the organizational aspects of teaching, describing the tasks, challenges and responsibilities of the profession. One participant reflected on the multifaceted nature of teacher work, stating:

“no solamente es cómo enseñar y planificar, sino que como... responder a dirección, responder a UTP, responder a apoderados, y... y en la práctica responder a profe guía.” (Man, 23)

This participant reflects on their experience as a proper teacher, noting that the workload of a teacher goes beyond just delivering classes or planning them. There are many other essential

aspects of teacher work. Their practicum made them aware of the work outside the classroom and how it is linked to the other actors of the school community.

**c) The Subjective Level: The Teacher Trainee**

**Aims and Purposes of the Practicum:** This sub theme refers to the goals set by the participants to complete during their professional practicum or their purpose and expected results for their professional life. This can be show through one of the participants sharing:

“Mi expectativa como profe siempre ha sido como el querer ser esta persona guía, esta persona que... que quiere ayudar a los demás... y que cuando te pregunten “¿por qué lo haces? ¿Por qué te gusta hacer esto?”, no necesito una razón. Ayudar a la gente es lo que... puede ser la razón. Es como... es como paradójico, “ ¿por qué ayudas a la gente sin una razón aparente? Porque me gusta ayudar.”, pero eso también se convierte en una razón.” (Man, 23)

This participant expressed that their goal as a teacher has always been to be a guiding figure and someone who helps others out of any other specific reasons. The act of helping someone else becomes reason enough for them.

This sub theme can be connected and related to the visions that participants have for their future selves.

**Visions for the Future:** Participants shared their expectations for their future selves, with one expressing apprehension about the longevity of their teaching career. In consideration to this, one of the participants expressed that:

“siento que tal vez duraría poco creo yo, pero no quiero. Tengo miedo de durar poco, pero si no creo que este tanto tiempo tal vez después haría otra cosa, pero no me gustaría siento eso

como pena antes de empezar, como no no quiero durar un poco porque no me gusta así me veo.” (Woman, 24)

This participant expresses uncertainty about their longevity as a teacher, anticipating that it might not be a long term commitment. They feel hesitant to start and later discover that it is not for them, as they do not want to experience that disappointment or failure.

### **5.3 Lived Experience.**

The next main theme was named lived experience of teacher trainees, it consists of around 26 subthemes. This theme encapsulates the actual lived experiences of the participants as teacher-trainees during their final practicum.

#### ***a) The Social Level: The Educational System***

**“Reality Check”:** This sub theme refers to the sudden shift or reinforcement of the participants’ views about the educational system upon facing the realities of teaching. In this sub theme, we put every situation where the participants faced a “reality check” during their process of professional practicum. An example of this is the following:

“decirles “no! El inglés sirve porque abre puertas”, es mentira. Es mentira, yo tengo estudiantes que son secos en inglés pero que son súper pobres y probablemente les cueste mucho tener buenas oportunidades solamente porque saben inglés.” (Woman, 23)

After their experience in their practicum, this participant disagrees with the notion that English automatically will open doors to better opportunities, suggesting a critical perspective on the impact of English skills on work opportunities. Moreover, in this case there is a realization that what is being taught might not be useful to the ultimate educational purpose: to give tools

and opportunities to the students that could help and guide them when facing real life outside the classroom. This problem can be damaging to teachers, causing them to go through a grieving stage, since there is an essential part of who they are and what they do that is missing.

Another sub theme to mention in the social level of lived experiences is how education is being used and implemented, according to the participants.

**Education as a Private Business:** This sub theme explores the perception of education as a consumer good rather than a fundamental right. In this consumerist view of education, the main focus is neither teaching nor learning, instead, there is a perception that schools function more as private companies, prioritizing profit based on the number of enrolled students. There is an example in which a participant makes reference to this:

“en donde estoy yo hay como 20 colegios dentro de un sector así (señala con sus manos que es un sector pequeño), y yo digo ‘¿cómo hay tantos colegios si no hay tantos niñitos?’ Entonces, me da... como esa extrañeza de por qué están dando tanta plata para acá, si no sé si será tanto para educar, [...] debe ser esa idea como solamente prefiero poner un docente para cuidar a los niños, no como para que aprendan. Y está la cuestión de los bonos que dan por asistencia, que muchas veces también en los colegios municipales se borran la inasistencia de los colegios, entonces igual es feo eso. Al final sí me da la idea de que es por la plata y no por la educación.” (Man, 23).

The participant questions the educational system’s motives, suggesting that profit rather than educational outcomes drives decision-making. They express skepticism about the effectiveness and integrity of an education system motivated primarily by financial gain.

***b) The Organizational Level: The School***

**Guide teacher's attitudes (positive/negative):** This sub theme reflected on their experiences with guide teachers, dividing them into positive and negative interactions. The positive one indicates how the support and help from the guide teacher can influence the actions and decisions of the teacher trainee (TT) in order to improve their performance in the practicum. One of the interviewees shared that:

“Me gustaba mi profesora de octavo, que ella siempre me marcaba, ‘mejora la voz’, ‘muévete por la sala’, ‘no te quedes estático’ [...]. Son consejos que sirven, y son consejos que le ayudan a mejorar a uno, porque obviamente, porque para eso voy yo a mi proceso de práctica.” (Man, 23).

This participant shares their appreciation for their guide teacher, who gave them constructive feedback. They acknowledged that the advice they received on their part were beneficial and contributed to their improvement as a teacher during the practicum process, meaning that this practice signifies a shaping of teaching, guidance, and learning from an experienced teacher.

Conversely, negative experiences shared by participants involved attitudes and behaviors the guide teachers had towards them and how these affected their work as teacher trainees. For this, one of the participants expressed that:

“con el otro curso, con esa profesora con la que tuve como... temas más complicados, eh... no fue así po (suspira). Entonces sentía como... de repente, me interrumpía las clases, que decía una explicación porque según los estudiantes no estaban entendiendo, o porque había un estudiante conversando o un estudiante sacando punta y a ella le molestaba y paraba mi clase.

Entonces, como que en este... lado, con el octavo, si sentí como que... se generó este cambio en el aula, más que nada porque estaba esta persona controlando todo.” (Woman, 22)

For this participant, the experience regarding the relationship with their guide teacher proved to be difficult. They express their frustration as the guide teacher would continuously interrupt their classes, taking away opportunities for their development as a teacher and generating a heavily controlled space.

As we can see, the relationship between TT and their guide teachers in the context of the teacher practicum can boost or hinder the learning of the student, depending on their attitudes towards one another, how they communicate with each other, their points of views regarding teaching practices, etc.

Diving more into the relationships of the TT with other participants of the school, we have the general sub theme of the relationship of TT among the school community and students.

**Relationship of the TT and the School Community:** This sub theme alludes to the relationships the teacher trainee experienced with the community of the school where they carried out their practicum. These experiences are mainly focused on the exchanges between the teacher trainees and their fellow co-workers. In this sub theme we can find both positive and negative experiences, in case of the first one, one of the participants said that:

“los profes siempre van y me conversan y me dan consejos o incluso hasta yo terminé dándole consejos a alguno que otro profe y ellos me lo aceptaban encantados. Esas son cosas que te hacen sentir como que... no eres profe practicante. Por estos cuatro meses de práctica, tú eres

un profe al igual que todos los demás profesores de este colegio. Y eso es lo que me gustó bastante, eso fue lo que también hizo mucho más ameno este proceso para mí.” (Man, 23)

This participant shares and highlights their positive experience on their exchanges with other teachers and how they approached him. For this participant, this interest made them feel like a proper teacher alongside the rest of the colleagues. The support in this atmosphere contributed to making the practicum process an enjoyable one.

On the other hand, we have participants who had a negative experience within the school community, this participant shared that:

“no voy a decir que todo el mundo siempre te va a tratar mal y te vai a encontrar malas pegas, no es así, eh mmm, pero a mi me tocó la mala suerte de que eh, no me trataron muy bien y me dejaron un poco botada en el proceso, (...) porque yo sabía que iba a ser desgastante trabajar de la forma en la que yo quería trabajar pero, eh, esperaba quizás ese apoyo que no estuvo, que por el contrario, como me dijeron desde un comienzo no lo hagas, no hagas esto, no hagas lo otro y vieron que yo lo hice y me dijeron como ‘tu te lo buscaste, ahora arréglatela sola’.”  
(Woman, 22)

This participant shares a challenging experience, indicating that they did not receive the support they were expecting. Even if their ideas would require more work, they hoped they would have help. Instead, this participant was discouraged and criticized by others, making them feel abandoned and guilty over their professional decisions.

As we explore the relationships of the interviewees within the schools during the practicum, the next sub theme is essential, as it aims to understand their relationships with the

people they have to teach. The way teacher-trainees connect with the rest of the school community is going to affect the development of the practicum, making it easier or more complicated for them to experience their practicum..

**Relationship of the TT and the Students:** This sub theme explores description regarding the relationship between the participant and their students during their practicum experiences. We gather those sharings in which the participants describe their dynamics with students, if they were able to create a connection, or if those situations meant something, either positive or negative, for both the students and the teacher-trainee. When describing the relationship with their students, one of the participants mentioned that:

“Fue como de hartas subidas y bajadas. Yo había tenido experiencia con otro curso conflictivo el año pasado, que de hecho el tipo de práctica fue prácticamente muy parecida también fue de todo el semestre. Entonces ya tenía conocimiento de estar como meses con un curso que yo decía así como, habían días que literal decía ‘los odio, los odio’. Ya, con este no fue tan así, porque igual habían algunos días buenos, días malos y eran un poco más grandes, entonces uno igual podía conversar de repente con ellos [...] trabajo fue arduo, con días buenos y días malos, eso.” (Woman, 27)

This participant’s relationship with their students was characterized by variability with moments of connection interspersed with challenges. Their current experience was not as intense as a previous one, as they had some interactions and conversations, but the overall process to connect with them was difficult, which is emotionally marked.

As seen, the relationship with the students can be good and unpleasant at the same time, it is not something unchangeable or set. This relationship can fluctuate depending on the day and the mood of both the students and the teacher, and it can be described as a rollercoaster with ups, downs, and unexpected turns. As not every student acts the same, there will be the ones who make the teacher's work more tough while others will make it more bearable. Just like the relationship with the rest of the school community or even more important, the interactions a teacher establishes with the students will influence the practicum process.

*c) The Subjective Level: The Teacher Trainee*

**Emotions during the Professional Practicum (PP):** This sub theme encompasses the emotional experiences shared by participants, encompassing a range of feelings related to their teaching journey inside and outside school. For example, one of them shared:

“Me sentía triste, sentía pena, sentía impotencia. Pero no con los estudiantes, conmigo mismo, porque como yo podía haber estado haciendo una clase tanto tiempo y que saliera así de mal. Eso fue lo que me dió pena.” (Man, 23)

This participant in particular expressed their emotions of sadness, disappointment and helplessness. Though they are not triggered by the students but by themselves and what they feel is their inability to conduct an effective class, leading to a sense of disappointment and making them shed tears. On the contrary, another participant experienced a total different situation during their practicum:

“pese a todo, se sintió feliz, yo me sentí muy feliz en la práctica, me di cuenta que era algo que sí quería hacer que si me quería dedicar a la pedagogía. [...] me sentía bien de haber elegido

algo y que al final si me hubiera gustado, eh, y por otra parte no sé, puedo escuchar a los alumnos decir, ‘ay, así estoy aprendiendo el inglés’ o ‘ésta actividad está buena’ o planear una actividad y ver que los alumnos la están haciendo felices, eso era así como... me hacía feliz en el corazoncito.” (Woman, 23)

This participant, despite some challenges, felt happy during their practicum, as they realized that teaching was something they genuinely enjoyed. Additionally, witnessing the students’ development through the process brought them happiness and a sense of fulfillment.

Alongside the emotions the participants experienced, we identified occasions where the participants talked about how they perceive themselves. For this, we created the next sub theme.

**Self-Perception During the PP:** This sub theme is about how the teacher trainees perceived themselves in certain situations during their practicum or in general. The interviewees shared those moments in which they did not perceive themselves capable of doing something, as well as those occasions in which they considered themselves able to be a guide inside the classroom, also the times when they saw themselves as efficient and competent after facing a challenge, and more. As one of the participants shared:

“espero que la vean como una persona... optimista, también como una persona que a pesar de todo lo que le sucedió logró salir adelante, una persona más con... más resiliente, aunque hubieran muchos comentarios negativos en contra de esta persona o de sus creencias educativas, de lo que quería enseñarle a los estudiantes, que aún así lo logró y terminó... bien.” (Woman, 22)

This participant talks about themselves in third person, both describing themselves and hopefully how others would see them. First, as a person who, despite facing challenges, managed to overcome them. Moreover, as someone who persevered over negative comments. Ultimately, as someone recognized for successfully completing their professional journey.

#### **5.4 Suffering**

Regarding the third theme, suffering. Having an amount of 11 code groups, this theme draws attention to the conflicts experienced by the participants, specifically those between the teacher as a subject and the teacher as a professional and how these conflicts posed a challenge during their training.

##### ***a) The Social Level: The Educational System***

**Time Distribution:** This sub theme collects the complications described by the participants in relation to time management. We group those codes where the participants saw themselves wavering on how to use their time properly, either if working doing activities related to the practicum or having leisure time to spend it in hobbies. There were many instances in which the interviewees described being unsure on how to distribute their time, an example of this is the following:

“había veces que sí tenía que hacer cosas relacionadas a la práctica, sobre todo si tenía que pasar un texto entonces lo tenía que ir a imprimir y después cortarlo dejarlo así por lo menos bonito, o si no alcanzaba a buscar un vídeo que a mí me me pareciera bueno para mostrar en una clase sí, llegaba a mi casa y buscaba más. Emm... yo siento que igual no tuve mucho tiempo para hacer cosas que me gustaban, pero más que nada porque cuando estoy como enfocada en algo como que me siento mal cuando hago otra cosa, entonces pasé mucho tiempo

no sé... sin ver series, quería ver una serie y era como 'no, estoy en la práctica' entonces no la veré hasta terminarla." (Woman, 23).

This participant describes how in their practicum process they had to engage in many tasks related to teaching. They felt their personal time was focused on these aspects and despite wanting to enjoy their leisure time, they decided to refrain as they were solely focused on their practicum.

In a similar way, we have the next sub theme, this goes hand in hand with the previous one since dedicating all your time to working can cause a big health issue which is,

**Teacher Stress:** This sub theme points out the emotional burden teachers carry in general in their workplace, the participants allude to how the stress, the overwhelming work and the sense of being unsupported can affect them in a psychological manner. Here is an example:

“hubieron hartas tardes de pensar, de conversar, es como... ya, ¿y sí lo dejo? ¿Y si me titulo no más y chao? y yo dije bueno, está dentro de las posibilidades también. [...] tú deci ya pues ‘¿vale la pena todo este esfuerzo?, ¿vale la pena si yo sé que esta es como solo una pequeña parte?’, y que por ejemplo en algún momento tuve dos cursos y aún así fue súper agotador, imagínate cuando tenga nueve, entonces yo decía así como ‘me voy a querer matar’ (se ríe).

E: ¿Y eso te llevó como al replanteamiento, se podría decir, de la carrera?

P: El agotamiento me hizo cuestionarme. El cansancio.” (Woman, 23)

This participant reflects on the various instances contemplating the idea of quitting the teacher training programme due to the exhaustion they experienced in their practicum, weighting, in the end, all their efforts and fatigue against the worth of those actions.

In addition to this, we have a participant who makes reference to how the work of a teacher never stops, they reported:

“Siempre te van a mandar a reemplazar a alguien y entonces se te quita tiempo de lo que tú tienes que hacer, tienes que terminar haciendo el otro día. Al final se te acumulan cosas y después tienes que andar peleando con otros profes porque necesito el libro de clases para pasar las notas, no sé es imposible y encima después en las vacaciones te mandan hacer talleres, capacitaciones, entonces no te dejan tranquilo, vamos a volver y nunca terminas de descansar. El trabajo de profesor no para.” (Woman, 24)

This participant expresses the challenges of being a teacher, highlighting the various demands that disrupt their schedules and accumulate tasks, mentioning also the neverending responsibilities they are required to do, even on vacation, emphasizing the restlessness of the educators.

***b) The Organizational Level: The School***

**Logic of Competition:** This sub theme is related to the environment of competition among teachers for recognition, where individual achievements are prioritized over collective success. In the context of the practicum, some teacher-trainees mentioned how they implemented innovative ideas and they were not supported, due to those ideas being seen as “threats” for other teachers. As the following example shows:

“yo hacía las cosas porque yo no le debo nada a nadie [...] pero estos colegas tienen familia, tienen hijos que alimentar, tienen deudas que pagar, entonces, que yo haya estado haciendo las cosas bien significaba que algunos de ellos podrían perder sus trabajos.” (Woman, 22).

This participant pinpoints that while they personally did not owe anything to anyone, other teachers have bigger responsibilities and needs. In this context, the implementation of their creative ideas may potentially lead to job losses of other colleagues and that generates an atmosphere of individualism. In other words, the instability of teacher work prompts competition between teachers, resulting in a negative work space.

**Improper Teaching Practices:** This sub theme gathers the quotes in which the participants expressed what they consider to be improper teaching practices. These opinions emerged from the previous experiences of teacher-trainees, and alludes to what they do not want to be or do as teachers. A participant talked about a situation involving the guide teacher, they shared that:

“bueno, aquí están los estudiantes con caras tristes mientras la profesora, que era mi profesora guía los retaba siempre. En este caso le dice que son el peor curso, pero igual a veces les decía cosas peores. Eh, por ejemplo una vez un niño, después de una prueba donde les fue mal porque según ella son muy tontos y tenemos que bajarle el nivel a cuarto básico, aunque ellos fueran de octavos. Los niños estaban así como tristes, entonces uno le preguntó ‘profe y usted nos quiere?’ y ella les dijo que no. Dijo ‘no, yo no, no los quiero, pero tal vez estimo algunos que se portan bien y algunos que los conozco hace rato, pero no, no los quiero’ entonces yo vi sus caras estaban así como (demuestra rostro de decepción) y después los retó [...] Entonces ese tipo de comportamiento yo creo que no ayuda nada a estos niños, que encima no es la única profe que los trata así siempre [...] la profesora no dejaba levantarse ni para ir a sonarse la nariz, si me decían ‘puedo ir...?’, ella ‘no, no, no, siéntate’ y les gritaba siempre, entonces yo me sentía ahí como impotente sin poder hacer nada porque tampoco podía llegar y decirle la profe “cómo se le ocurre?” en frente de todo el mundo.” (Woman, 24)

In this case, the participant is first describing their practicum experience through the visual elicitation and continues to share the attitude and actions of their guide teacher towards the students. These situations caused a negative environment, where students are constantly belittled. This participant felt powerless by this behavior, recognizing that it was not healthy or supportive for teaching.

*c) The Subjective Level: The Teacher Trainee*

**Personal Life vs Professional Life:** In regards to this sub theme, participants refer to the struggles between a teacher's personal and professional life. Here, the teacher-trainees expressed their internal dilemmas during the practicum process. An interview contributed with their following experience:

“El desligarse de ciertos sentimientos o de generar conexiones tan personales con niños como que... me lleguen a contar toda su vida... intenso. Entonces, yo creo que es un trabajo constante que tiene que tener el profesor, el trabajar su emocionalidad y el saber desligarse de que... no son los hijos de uno.

I: ¿Tú lo lograste?

P: No, hasta el día de hoy no.” (Man, 23)

This participant discussed the difficulty of maintaining professional boundaries and not overstepping to personal connections with the students. This participant highlights the emotional aspect and admits to struggling with separating these emotions from their students' lives and as something they have yet to achieve. We can interpret teacher work as imminently emotional work since the emotions of teachers are unavoidable.

**Influence of External Perceptions:** This sub theme points out how opinions from other people, such as family or colleagues, influence the participants, their work, their decisions, their ideas, etc. In this sub theme we gather those instances where the participants expressed their doubts and worries due to external comments. To illustrate this, a participant stated:

“me daba cosa porque como te digo, veo tantas cosas negativas que otros profes dicen y digo, “quizás voy a durar dos años y ahí quedé”, no me gusta esa sensación” (Woman, 24).

This participant expressed a concern that due to negative opinions from teachers and the difficult work environment, they have contemplated the possibility of not lasting long in the profession. These ongoing comments of various unfavorable aspects for educators pose an influence on other peoples’ perceptions and make them doubt.

## **5.5 Well-being**

Regarding the concluding theme, well-being encapsulates situations that evoke a positive experience within the teacher-trainee during or as a consequence of the practicum. Despite having only 8 sub themes that are divided across only two sociological levels, well-being holds equal significance as it helps us understand positive experiences of the practicum process and how these affected the teacher-trainees.

### ***b) The Organizational Level: The School***

**Recognition of Teacher Work:** This sub theme incorporates those instances where the participants make reference to their work as teacher-trainees being acknowledged by other actors of the school community or society in general, and how they felt about it. Moreover, it also combines their general perspective about the recognition of teacher work or the lack of it. The majority of the participants experienced said recognition mainly from their students, having

positive responses from them in regards to their work. One of the participants shared their thoughts on the importance of having recognition as teacher-trainees, they expressed the following:

“sentirte validado dentro del aula, sobre todo en un proceso súper importante como la práctica profesional... -porque hay gente que en la práctica dice... como ‘wow! Esto no es para mí’, ‘Creo que el aula, la docencia, la básica o la media, no es para mí’- Entonces dentro de la práctica, yo siento que es súper importante que te digan ‘lo estás haciendo súper bien’.” (Man, 23)

This participant expressed the significance of the recognition of their work in the classroom, specially in a crucial process like professional practicum. This participant emphasizes that some teacher-trainees may question their fit for teaching during the practicum, and in those moments receiving positive feedback becomes extremely important for one’s confidence and sense of belonging.

On the contrary, another participant described how they did not get recognition or acknowledgement for the work they were doing, in this case from their family. This participants expressed the following:

“De repente me tocaba, no sé gente X o gente de mi familia, que yo llegaba a la casa súper cansada porque igual era agotador y me decían ‘ya, pero ¿de qué estás tan cansada?’ o la gente me decía ‘ah ya, pero si tú no eres profe’ y yo como... ya. No me calentaba la cabeza, pero igual era fome de recibir esos comentarios (...) me daba lata que no... un poco de lata que no

me valoraran tanto sobre todo como mi núcleo familiar, eso era lo que me generaba como mucho... no sé, me daba pena en verdad, pero... nada que hacer.” (Woman, 23)

This participant mentioned how the lack of recognition and validation affected them negatively since their family did not consider them a teacher yet. Despite the efforts and fatigue accumulated by his work, he encountered derogatory and minimizing comments from his family, who belittled his work during his practicum, not recognizing him as an educator. This situation generated feelings of sadness and devaluation, which highlights the importance of support and understanding from the family in recognizing individual achievements and contributions, especially in non-traditional professional contexts or in early career stages.

*c) The Subjective Level: The Teacher-trainee*

**Positive Experiences of the Practicum:** This sub theme includes the experiences deemed as fulfilling and successful by the TTs. Some of these positive experiences may include a healthy relationship with colleagues, being able to connect with their students and improve their learning experience, overcome obstacles and challenges, succeed in their proposed goals, gaining knowledge from inside the classroom and with administrative workload, etc.. Like the following quote:

“Fue un proceso... en cuanto al colegio y a los niños y a la profe guía también, súper agradable. Super ameno. Eh... Yo lo pasé bien, a los chiquillos les tengo harto cariño, incluso hoy los iba a ir a ver al colegio y no se pudo, eh... La profesora fue un siete todo el rato, al principio me daba un poco de miedo, sí, pero ella es súper simpática y fue un 7 al fin y al cabo.  
“ (Woman, 23)

This participant described their experience and relationship with the school, the students and the supervising teacher and defines the experience as enjoyable and pleasant and one that made them feel good.

Following the positive experiences, we have another sub theme that goes hand in hand with it since it refers to the benefits obtained during the practicum process.

**Benefits of the Practicum:** This sub theme pertains to the knowledge acquired during the practicum process and the advantages this knowledge provides for the future, and how the participants plan to integrate this newfound knowledge and techniques to their own coursework.

As this participant shared:

“son experiencias que me van a idear... como, son experiencias que me llevaron a crear o decir ‘voy a hacer esto cuando tenga mi propio curso’. Es eso también... fue más que nada con la experiencia positiva. Llevarme bien con los estudiantes, tratar de hacerlo, tratar también de mantener ese margen de... estudiante-profesor, que no se pase de eso” (Man, 23)

This participant expressed how the valuable experiences gained on their practicum have inspired them to generate ideas in creating or determining how they will approach teaching in their future courses.

Similarly to what other participant expressed when talking about their process:

“Ha sido como... eye-opening. Como profesionalmente he tenido que estar cambiando un poco, como el jefe del departamento inglés (themselves)... de que claro, hay cosas que tampoco se pueden llegar y cambiar tan así como así, y que sí sirve un poco ocupar el libro, porque de

repente no tienes tantas ideas. Entonces profesionalmente creo que me ha ayudado como a ser más organizado.” (Man, 23)

This participant highlights the professional growth they have undergone in their practicum. They emphasize the realization that not all aspects can be easily changed and acknowledge the use of textbooks. Overall the experience has helped them discover and understand aspects they had not considered before, thus gaining valuable knowledge for future application.

The result obtained from the implementation of the strategy of co-construction and posterior thematic analysis allows us to identify four main themes: imaginaries and social representation, lived experiences or *vecus*, suffering and well-being. There is a connection between every theme, offering a bigger picture of how the practicum is lived by the participants and the possibility to understand the internal processes they went through. These results will be further examined and interpreted during Chapter 6: Discussion.

## **Chapter 6: Discussion**

This chapter undertakes a thorough analysis of the results obtained in the information co-construction process detailed in Chapter 6. The implications of these findings and their contextual relevance will be explored, establishing connections with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

### **6.1 Overall Results: The Distance Between Prescribed and Real Work Lived During the Practicum Process**

The main objective of this study was to explore the lived experiences, imaginaries and social representations of a group of student teachers undergoing their professional teaching practicum. After analyzing the results obtained we can postulate that the professional practicum constitutes a complex process (Solís et al., 2016) that is traversed by various dimensions ranging from aspects linked to teacher trainees' beliefs about education to situated dimensions linked to the practice of teaching. In this regard, Aravena et al. (2015) and Díaz et al. (2016) highlighted that the professional practicum is an essential component in teacher training, which allows future teachers to apply their knowledge and skills in a real and situated educational context. This practicum serves as a bridge between the formal university training and the reality of the work the future teachers will actually do, as Aravena et al. (2015) expressed, this process helps students to put into practice their professional knowledge so they can enter the educational environment successfully.

The professional practicum converges the imaginary and social representational dimensions of trainees' perceptions of teacher role, as well as beliefs about education that are rooted in their subjective experiences as learners at the school and, later on, at the university. Furthermore, Blackmore and Thomson (2004), Charris (2017), and Perez (2021) pointed out the

impact of students' perceptions of the educational system on the formation of educators' professional identities, thereby influencing their career aspirations. Additionally, Maldonado (2018) stated that the practicum process involves the encouragement of attitudinal aspects, beliefs, and diverse perspectives on education, shaping the professional performance within the educational system.

On the other hand, the professional practicum brings together the situated dimensions of teacher work. In this regard, Aravena et al. (2015) stated that the practicum's objective of translating theoretical knowledge into real educational settings, wherein trainees observe the real work of teachers with its requirements and its particular conditions and characteristics of interaction between colleagues who work in a highly demanding and undervalued labor market. Cornejo (2009) and Gaete et al. (2017) echoed this sentiment, highlighting the precarious nature of teaching conditions in Chile and teachers' critical outlook on their working environment. In this context, the process of professional practicum can be seen as a "reality check" process, in which the teacher trainees experience the distances and proximities between the imaginaries of teaching and its real practice. To support this, Aravena et al. (2015) claimed that the practicum bridges the gap between trainees' expectations and the realities of teaching, thereby offering a nuanced understanding of the profession's possibilities, constraints and ramifications.

This "reality check" process can be analyzed following the three levels of sociological analysis; macro, meso, and micro, proposed by Serpa and Ferreira (2019), as outlined in Chapter 5.

The macro-social level refers to the level of the prescriptions of the education system and of work as a whole, and as well as the dimensions of society and culture stated by Hartman (2017, as cited in Ferreira & Serpa, 2019). The meso-social level refers to the organizations and groups, in the case of education is the educational organizations where they work (schools,

university), and the level of the interactions that the trainees establish with the relevant actors in the system (e.g. school's principal, guiding teachers, students and parents), or as Ferreira & Serpa (2019) explained, is the union of the levels below and above. Finally, the micro level refers to the experiences, emotions and subjective meaning making process of the teacher-trainees and as Giddens (1997) addressed is the analysis of the human behavior in everyday interactions.

In this respect, at the macro-social level, the trainees report an educational system highlighted by neoliberalism, which they observe in an organization of work marked by requirements of accountability, clientelism, and a conception of education as a consumer good. Likewise, at the labor market level, the trainees observe the precariousness of employment, a characteristic of the labor market under the principles of neoliberal competition. Neoliberalism has brought a new vision of the education system, in which schools are considered daycare centers. Guerrero et al. (2019) stated that the educational system is perceived as a company in which the parents are the customers, and the academic results of the students are the products.

At the organizational and interactional level, the trainees report organizations marked by both positive and negative social rapports among colleagues and where there are good and bad practices, according to their discourse, observed between colleagues and with students. As stated by the participants, they are faced with competition between them and the school teachers since the teacher-trainees represent uncertainty and the possibility of losing the job in the school becomes a reality for other teachers. On the opposite, a positive factor is the collaboration that can exist between teachers, having as a priority the students' development.

Similarly, the relationship with the students is seen as the most important element for the teacher-trainees, as most of the time is spent inside the classroom having direct interaction with them. The work of a teacher is going to be reflected in their students, a work that goes beyond the class content since it also consists in forming the students value-wise and to be an integral

part of society, as Perez (2021) shared, teachers feel they have a social responsibility that extends beyond academic pursuits. Establishing relationships during the practicum is inevitable, and they are going to be a great factor in how the teacher-trainees live this process, whether improving it or making it more difficult.

On the other hand, at the subjective level, the trainees' suffering can be observed as the tensions experienced during the practicum, where the struggles of teacher-trainees were present. Dejours and Gernet (2012) stated that suffering is the result of the confrontation between the subjects and the organization of work.

Alternatively, according to Waddell and Burton (2006), the state of well being can be understood as being content and satisfied with one's life, and in the case of teacher trainees, it is observed that wellbeing is very related to recognition at work, especially in situations where the trainees have lived challenging experiences and have overcome different obstacles.

To sum up, the distances and proximities of the practicum process can be analyzed from a subjective perspective into experiences of suffering and well-being, as previously mentioned. The experiences of suffering refer to the difficulties and negative experiences; the high levels of stress, the logic of competition among teachers, improper teaching practices from the guide teachers, among others. To endure the suffering, Dejours and Gernet (2012) pointed out that the defense mechanisms function as shields that the teacher trainees can use to protect themselves from the tensions experienced at work. On the other hand, the experiences of well-being refer to the good experiences such as receiving recognition and appreciation, having healthy relationships with colleagues, connecting with their students, overcoming obstacles, succeeding on their goals, etc.

Thus, the process of professional practice can be seen as a process of "reality check" between the real and ideal dimensions of work. As García (2017) explained, the practicum

exposes a distance between ideals and realities. This reality check serves the purpose of socializing the trainees with the real dimensions of their activity. In this process, the teacher trainees realize about the possibilities they have to do their work as they thought they would or not. This complex process leads them to ponder whether to continue or not in teaching.

The following subsections discuss in detail the results according to the main themes observed in the results: imaginaries and social representations, lived experiences, suffering, and well-being.

## **6.2 Imaginaries and Social Representations**

The imaginaries and social representation of teacher trainees are of great importance for comprehending how future teachers navigate the practicum process. Through interviews, we discerned a spectrum of both positive and negative imaginaries and representations encapsulating preconceived notions about various aspects of teaching, such as classroom activities, the teacher's role, relationship with students, the practicum, the overall educational system, among others, that were later confirmed or proved incorrect.

When delving into perceptions of the educational system, participants expressed that education is perceived as a neoliberal system in which teachers are overworked and undervalued. Participants consider that students' parents and the society as a whole regard teacher work as easy and effortless. The perception of a market-oriented education stems from the influence of neoliberalism, which is pervasive throughout the educational system. This influence is observable in the privatization of schools, as well as in the modification of essential social rights (Guerrero, 2004). Furthermore, as Guerrero et al. (2019) suggested, the educational system is viewed as a corporate organization, where the roles and language employed to refer to the members of an educational entity change; directors are labeled as "managers", parents as "customers", and educational results as "products". Teachers are also labeled as workers who

deliver products aligned with the learning outcomes achievable by the students, minimizing the teacher-student relationship and eradicating the social aspect of teacher work. In this context, the authors suggested that teachers are perceived as caretakers responsible for assessing students, which aligns with the vision of the interviewees who also perceive that schools are seen as merely childcare institutions rather than educational organizations. It can be suggested that seeing education as a neoliberal system is widespread among those involved in different areas of education, regardless whether you are a researcher or a teacher. This perception, deeply ingrained in our society, stems from direct experiences and societal norms, shaping the expectations and understandings of even novice teachers who are just beginning to experience a teacher's life, allowing them to discern its consequences.

We can say that schools are seen as an enterprise instead of educational institutions, where teachers lose their role as educators and are just considered caretakers; with this system of education there is also a difference in how the rest of the society perceive teachers. It is due to the idea of education as a neoliberal service that parents expect teachers to comply with their needs, which according to studies and the participants is just to take care of their children.

We can take into consideration that this issue can impact teachers' perception of their own work, potentially leading them down two different paths: either overworking themselves in pursuit of recognition or simply doing the bare minimum. The matter is that we cannot actually consider that everyone has the same opinions and expectations about what the work of teachers should be focused on, fulfilling a society standard is unreasonable, trying to do so can be detrimental and negatively affect teachers' performance. This is because their focus may shift from their actual work to conforming to others' opinions, rather than focusing on their professional responsibilities.

Moreover, connected to this neoliberal influence on education, where it is highlighted that society undervalues teachers' real work, the devaluation of teacher work increases. In relation to that, interviewees expressed that being a teacher valued by society or educational institutions is a continuous challenge. They also stated that people perceive teacher work as simplistic, merely involving taking care of the students. In light of this, we can say that the results corroborate the prior research by Hernández et al. (2017), which indicates a sense of devaluation among teachers, primarily by the Chilean state and societal representations. Additionally, Ávalos and Aylwin (2007) posited that the practicum not only nurtures a sense of belonging to the profession but also plays a crucial role in the decision to remain in the profession, being influenced by their interpretation of their initial experiences. Considering the results and the previous literature, we can conclude that due to the impact of neoliberal influences in education and society, the devaluation of teacher work becomes increasingly evident as teachers perceive that their work is minimized and undervalued by society, institutions, and the state. The devaluation of teacher work could potentially have adverse effects on novice teachers, impacting their motivation to continue in the profession and pursue professional growth. This struggle for recognition, continuously emphasized by interviewees, is exacerbated by prevailing misconceptions that teaching is a straightforward task centered solely on student care. Such oversimplifications disregard the intricate efforts required in planning and executing lessons. Furthermore, Guerrero (2019) pointed out that recognition and society are connected; questioning people's work equates to questioning their identity and their place in society. In conclusion, the intertwined dynamics of devaluation, recognition challenges and misconceptions underscore the complex landscape that teachers navigate, particularly affecting those in early stages of their careers.

Regarding the perspective of teacher work among teacher-trainees, the participants declare that the work of teachers extends beyond teaching in a classroom. Specifically, teachers are viewed as guiding figures or role models that help their students to learn values. In this respect, Jan (2017) contended that teacher work is an essential element in all societies, making it complex and demanding. This assertion is rooted in the expectation that teachers, in the 21st century, must prioritize students' needs and prepare them to confront future personal challenges. Moreover, Romero et al. (2013) affirmed that teacher work is challenging as society expects teachers to have competencies not covered in their initial training, such as fostering meaningful learning that promotes critical and scientific thinking. In addition, Perez (2021) discovered that teachers also identify a social responsibility as fundamental to their professional roles, extending beyond academic pursuits to impart ethical values, promote awareness of human rights, and foster civic education among students. Consequently, when teacher-trainees involve themselves in the classroom and in the process of teaching they should do so with social consciousness since they are in constant communication with their students. In this context, the participants' responses align with societal beliefs about effective teaching, which emphasize the importance of educators' ability to go beyond lesson content and strengthen students' values, critical thinking skills, and societal engagement. This presents a challenge for teacher-trainees, given the significant responsibility placed upon them by society; it extends beyond mere lesson planning, teaching English, and classroom management. This discussion leads to reflection on the limitations of teacher work, and how their beliefs and ideals influence the dynamic of the classroom.

Regarding the ideal teacher, which encompasses aspects such as classroom management, students, working conditions, among others, as we previously mentioned in the results section, the participants explained that their ideal teacher is one who stands alongside students while

delivering dynamic and engaging lessons. In terms of the ideal working conditions, participants emphasized the importance of greater social appreciation for the teaching profession and enhancements in the work environment, including adequate resources and sufficient time for lesson planning to foster genuine connections with students. These findings contrast with the observations of Cornejo (2009), who noted that teachers in Santiago exceed legally permitted working hours, dedicating over 85% of their hours to classroom teaching, when the legal amount is 75%. Additionally, the author found that secondary school teachers work approximately 10 extra hours weekly without compensation. Moreover, Gaete et al. (2017) affirmed that Chilean teachers perceive their working environment as unsatisfactory, lacking necessary resources and support. According to this, we can conclude that there is a distance between the ideal and real working conditions, with participants acknowledging the challenges in achieving ideal standards.

When asked about their views and values on teaching and learning, most participants emphasized the importance of meaningful connections between students and teachers, as well as the necessity of engaging teaching methods to facilitate meaningful learning experiences. However, as proposed by Guerrero et al. (2019), neoliberalism eliminates the social dimension of teaching, dismissing the important relationship between teachers and students, which the results of this study suggest is necessary for effective learning. Additionally, Molina and Pérez (2006) underscored the pivotal role of teachers in creating an ideal learning environment characterized by a calm, well-organized, and education-focused atmosphere. Consequently, the task of establishing meaningful connections with students proved complex for teacher-trainees in this study, as neoliberalism reduces opportunities for teachers to uphold their values and instead emphasizes providing a service to students without fostering meaningful relationships.

This inevitably impacts students' learning processes and simultaneously poses challenges for teachers in facilitating meaningful learning experiences.

Concerning the aims and purposes of the practicum, the participants emphasized the fundamental importance of aiding their students, which is translated as being a guiding figure, and someone who helps others. Within this context, the professional practicum provides opportunities for reflection and growth in that direction, as proposed by Diaz et al. (2016). Highlighting the need to support students, Perez (2021) underscored the social responsibility that is essential for their roles, extending beyond academic pursuits to encompass values, human rights, civic education, etc. We can conclude that for the participants of this study, it is essential to foster holistic development of their students, viewing them not just as learners but as individuals on a journey towards self-realization.

When focusing on visions for the future, participants expressed their concerns about their longevity in the teaching career, fearing they may not endure in the long term. They are reluctant to start the process and then realize that teaching may not be for them, as they prefer to avoid the sense of failure and disappointment.

Regarding the transition from university to work, Murphy et al. (2010) characterized this phase as a challenging and unpredictable journey. Besides, Corley (1998, as cited in Ávalos and Aylwin, 2007) claimed that the initial teaching experience is essential in shaping a teacher's professional identity. Furthermore, Ávalos and Aylwin (2007) shared that this transition fosters a sense of belonging, with many teachers basing their decision to continue in the profession on their initial experiences. We can suggest that the participants' concerns about their future as teachers are not isolated incidents, given the complexity and uncertainty inherent in transitioning from students to educators. The professional practicum serves as a pivotal moment for most teacher-trainees to ascertain their suitability for the teaching profession, providing a preview of the realities of teaching.

### **6.3 Lived Experiences**

According to the results, the lived experiences of the participants are profoundly influenced by the realities of teacher work encountered during the practicum. This experience often entails a confrontation between idealized perceptions and the practical realities of teaching, prompting participants to either confirm or revise their preconceived notions about the educational system, school community, and teacher roles, among others. Examining the lived experiences of teacher-trainees provides a nuanced and authentic understanding of how the practicum process shapes their perceptions and experiences of teacher work.

Participants mentioned instances where they encountered real and concrete situations that prompted them to reconsider or reaffirm previous beliefs. For instance, they reflected on the social significance of learning English for students with limited resources, or facing the fact that teachers speak more Spanish than English in classes, etc. The “reality check” that teacher trainees face can stem from the difference of seeing and living education as students rather than as teachers, and since teacher trainees are still living their process as university students, facing the reality of work may be a challenge for them. As proposed by Ávalos et al. (2004), this process is critical for teacher trainees, who must navigate the dual roles of students and teachers at the same time. Additionally, Solis et al. (2016) expressed that transitioning from a student role in a familiar setting to a teacher role in an unknown environment is a difficult process. In this aspect, we can suggest that this difficulty comes from facing a new scenario where the teacher trainees do not know what to really expect from it. Although the change from student to teacher is lived as a difficult transition, the participants are aware and value the learning opportunities they have during the practicum as they allow them to compare pedagogical theory and the situated reality of a classroom.

Additionally, when referring to the lived experiences of teacher-trainees during the practicum, we must consider their relationships with the school community of their school. Participants expressed that the relationship a teacher-trainee has with the school community is essential since it can influence their performance during their process. As the participants declared, having a good relationship with the rest of the community can make the practicum experience more enjoyable, and when there is an unpleasant relationship or no relation at all, negative feelings are present. Molina and Pérez (2006) stated that in the workplace we can encounter different types of relationships both positive and negative, in which we can find welcoming and cooperative people or deal with competitive and uncooperative people. In this regard, the authors expressed that the attitudes of other people can influence a teacher-trainee, both personally and professionally. Moreover, García (1997) stated that interpersonal relationships are important regarding the dynamics among people, as well as in terms of the attitudes and interactions. We can suggest that the relationship teacher-trainees establish with the school community are vital to shape the overall experience of the practicum. Every interaction can make the process either pleasant or arduous, whereas a teacher-trainee can have the best of dispositions to interact and involve themselves with their colleagues, students, or authority figures as the school's administration or guide teacher, these relationships will grow and develop from the commitment and disposition of both sides. So, having a hard time interacting with other people and not being able to maintain healthy meaningful relationships with the school community can directly influence how teacher-trainees lived their practicum.

An important part of the practicum experience is the emotional and mental engagement of teacher trainees. According to the participants, the practicum process is a mix of emotions where happiness, sadness, fulfillment, disappointment, pride, exhaustion, etc. As for the emotions experienced in the practicum, the participants made reference to instances where they felt happy

due to the good results obtained and their positive performance, and also how the stress made their work challenging leading to difficult emotions. Most of the time, when referring to the emotions they went through, they were associating them with particular moments or interactions they had during the practicum, whether with family, students, or the rest of the school community. Farouk (2012) stated that the emotions felt by teachers carry great importance when establishing relationships with the rest of the school. Additionally, Wu and Wei (2022) expressed that a teachers' emotions are connected with the entire school community, so we cannot consider these emotions without taking into account the external factors that might influence them. According to this, we can suggest that the emotions a teacher-trainees feel are going to be influenced by their environment and their interactions with the community of the school.

Regarding their self-perception, the participants conveyed that on some occasions, they doubted their abilities to complete certain tasks, yet also experienced moments of competence after overcoming challenges. Additionally, participants described themselves as people who managed to overcome the difficulties, persisting despite encountering negative comments. In this regard, Sayago and Chacón (2006), Aravena (2013), and Santrock (2014) agreed with the idea that a teacher's reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses acquire a significant importance for their development, and allow them to link theory with practice. We can say that, the way in which teacher-trainees perceive themselves can impact on how they feel and vice versa. Teachers' self perception can influence their performance inside the classroom since it is related to their emotions and mood. Alongside this, the action of reflecting on oneself, who one is and what one does, helps teachers to improve on a personal and professional level, leading to the improvement of social skills, teaching style, and emotional management, among others.

Inside the lived experience of the teacher trainees, two different types of experiences emerged: suffering and well-being. Negative experiences, challenges, and difficulties

encountered during the practicum, brought suffering to the trainees. Conversely, positive experiences improved their well-being during this process.

#### **6.4 Suffering**

In this section, we delve into the subjective malaise experienced by participants due to the challenges encountered within the pedagogical context of practicum. According to what the participants shared, they expressed how suffering manifested across various areas during their practicum experience, touching upon conflicts arising from balancing the roles of teacher as a professional and as a subject, navigating boundaries with students, confronting insecurities amidst classroom realities, and transitioning from university to a professional environment. Their narratives encapsulated perceptions regarding time distribution, teacher stress, improper teaching practices, influence of external perceptions, and other related concepts.

Moving on to teacher stress, participants of this study communicated that they experienced heightened exhaustion during the practicum, even with one participant that contemplated quitting the teaching profession. Participants also highlighted the multitude of responsibilities placed on teachers, paradoxically, noting that teachers often do not experience rest during holidays. In regards to this, Madigan et al. (2023) expressed that the burnout syndrome is caused by work-related stress that affects both psychological and physical health. In this regard, Cooper and Alvarado (2006) stated that novice teachers struggle with their job since they are teaching and learning at the same time. The same authors state that, in the long run, prolonged stress leads to teacher dropout, which in Chile is around 30-50% within their first five years of teacher experience (ibid.). Thus, we can suggest that the stress experienced by teacher trainees can be linked to thoughts of desertion, as the exhaustion can strongly affect their mental and physical health, dampening motivation and sense of purpose.

When it comes to the logic of competition, participants reported that a competitive environment is perceivable among teachers, where “innovative” ideas proposed by teacher trainees are perceived as a threat or as a problem by the school teachers because they break the scheme imposed by the school teachers. This could mean they could lose their jobs since original and forward thinking ideas suggested by teacher-trainees could attract more attention from the students. According to the authors Guerrero et al. (2019), in the context of this neoliberal education system, teachers are expected to work in isolation, immersed in a deep culture of competition among educators. Teachers are challenged to compete against each other due to the current educational system imposed in Chile.

As for improper teaching practices, the participants noted that during their practicum some behaviors of the school teachers could be considered as inappropriate teaching practices since they aimed at making the students feel bad. The participants expressed their concern and how they would not act the same way as their guide teacher, and how that kind of environment was not supportive nor healthy for students. In relation to the time distribution, the participants communicated difficulties in managing their time appropriately, facing the decision of whether to dedicate it to working on tasks related to PP or use it in leisure activities. However, participants chose to focus their time and attention on activities and tasks related to PP. These situations in which teachers have a bad reaction with students or do not have free time can also be linked to the neoliberal system and its effects. In this regard, Gaete et al. (2017) mentioned that teachers are dissatisfied with their work conditions, the school organization and management, the lack of resources, the limited support by the school administration and more. This type of environment could affect teachers in plenty of ways, one of them is how time is not well distributed for them, the bad conditions prejudice teachers to work in their houses when they should not be. According to Tenti (2007), the combination of professionalism and vocation together is at the heart of

teacher work. Vocation is what predominates in teachers who have ethical and moral commitment, along with respect, concern, and interest for students. Nevertheless, in this case, vocation fades out when teachers work in environments that exploit workers, leading to work dissatisfaction and malpractices. This may be related to how teachers treat students, if they are exposed to this condition, the stress may influence their reactions. We can perceive that this system impacts teachers in several areas both in their professional and personal life, the lack of time and the stress from work clearly affects them, especially how teachers react in view of this.

With respect to personal life vs professional life, participants struggled to separate these domains due to their emotional investment in their role as teachers. In relation to this, Wu and Wei (2022) affirmed that emotions are naturally related to teacher work, due to teachers being in constant interaction with their students for long periods of time. This emotional part is demanding for teachers. On the other hand, as Dejours and Gernet (2012) stated, people use defense mechanisms when they encounter stressful situations at work, which are caused by the distance between prescribed and real work. For that reason, we can suggest that the issues linked to the detachment between private and work life can be associated with the learning on the part of the new teachers to manage the demands of work in their emotional dimension. To this, the new teachers learn how to use defense mechanisms affiliated with emotional dissociation, so they can maintain an emotional distance from their students. However, this was difficult to achieve by the participants since the emotional involvement they had was significant, therefore they could not deactivate their teacher role when they were outside the school. The interviewed teacher trainees mentioned that they were not able to stop thinking about the students' problems, and this was due to the high stress levels or the interest on the personal lives of the students. Being a teacher who is concerned about their students is important, but this is comprehensible to a certain degree. It affects when overtaking the teachers' personal lives, and this happened to the

participants since they believed that caring deeply about students' feelings is doing a good teacher's job, nevertheless, this results in physical and emotional exhaustion due to the overtaking of the settled boundaries.

In reference to the influence of external perceptions, the participants of this study expressed how the opinion of other people affects their own perception, impacting their self-perception and career prospects. For instance, one interviewee commented that the negative opinion that society has of teachers made them question their permanence in the teaching profession. As Hernández et al. (2017) proposed, Chilean teachers do not feel valued by society, and the perceptions that people have about teaching might lead to the social devaluation of the profession. Regarding the impact of these external perceptions, Charris (2017) suggested that social imaginaries have a deep influence on the shape of the professional identity of English teachers. Furthermore, Charris, as well as Blackmore and Thomson (2004) agreed that social imaginaries impact the identity of teachers and their perceptions about their job. Therefore, we can see how society's opinion has a huge influence on teachers, whether in their identity as professionals or the perceptions of their work. Since society does not recognize properly the effort teachers put in their work, teachers do not feel appreciated and this can discourage teachers, in extreme cases teachers even contemplate quitting their job.

## **6.5 Well-being**

As part of the distance and proximity between the imaginaries and experiences, well-being acts as the opposite of the suffering originated in the professional practicum. In this part of the results, the participants of the study pointed out positive aspects when facing the reality of teaching in Chile, juxtaposed with their preconceived expectations.

The participants accentuated the importance of recognition and appreciation from the school community towards teacher-trainees. They specially highlighted the support and

recognition from students, colleagues and schools' managers during their practicum. The participants also pointed out that this recognition is reflected in the respect, trust and inclusion of future teachers in school activities and decisions, which contributes significantly to their professional development and well-being. In this sense, Guerrero (2019) defined recognition as a psychological and social process central to the construction of identity and self-image, which articulates the social and the psychological, the individual and the collective, and in turn points out the theory of recognition, which indicates that when people question our work, they are actually questioning our identity and our place in society. Hand in hand with this, Honneth (2000) proposed that the recognition of the value of identity is formed within "affective ties, legal aspects and social relationships." (p.538). The recognition and appreciation of the work of English pedagogy students in the educational context is a crucial factor for their professional development and well-being. As pointed out by the authors, such recognition, which includes respect, trust and participation in school activities, not only benefits the individual, but also strengthens their identity and self-image.

Additionally, the participants mentioned positive experiences that contributed to their well-being, including forming healthy relationships with colleagues and students, a sense of making a difference in students' lives, and overcoming personal and professional challenges. They also referenced the acquisition of practical knowledge and skills that they consider valuable for their future as teachers. The participants highlighted these experiences as providing them with a sense of accomplishment and personal growth. In relation to the formation of relationships with the educational community, Garcia (1997) highlighted the importance of this type of relationships in terms of the different positions that people adopt towards others, as well as in the attitudes and network of interactions they maintain. Molina and Perez (2006) supported this by indicating that these relationships can manifest themselves with positive attitudes, such as

cooperation, welcoming, autonomy and participation, but negative attitudes can also arise, such as reserve, competitiveness and intolerance.

Finally, the professional practicum serves as the bridge where English pedagogy students translate theoretical knowledge into practical application. Flores-Lueg and Turra-Diaz (2019) underscored how social and educational interactions in real scenarios are pivotal for students to construct their knowledge base, crucial for their professional development. Similarly, Aravena et al. (2015) emphasized the objective of this process: to enable students to effectively integrate their professional knowledge and skills into real educational settings. To conclude, it is necessary to point out the relevance of the personal and professional development of English pedagogy students during their professional practice. Both the authors and participants of this study highlighted the contribution of positive subjective experiences to well-being. Moreover, the acquisition of practical skills and relevant knowledge to their career is highlighted, emphasizing the importance of social and educational interactions in real contexts for the construction of knowledge, preparing students for successful and critical performance in the educational field.

After analyzing the results of this research in conjunction with the research carried out by various authors regarding professional practice in the English pedagogy career in Chile, we have identified key aspects in the training of teachers. These include the importance of the practicum in bridging from theory with practice, the organizational challenges and the subjective dimensions faced by practitioners.

When juxtaposed with prior research, the findings unveil significant parallels and disparities. For example, the balance between expectations and reality, the perception of the teaching role in society and the challenge of developing a professional identity, resonate with the observations of authors such as Aravena et al. (2015) and Díaz et al. (2016). However, the

findings provide a more nuanced view of these issues, highlighting the complexity and diversity of experiences in the Chilean educational context.

The perceptions and representations of the teaching role, analyzed in this study, align and sometimes diverge from what was reported by Guerrero (2019) and García (2017), reflecting the changing dynamics and unique challenges of the educational environment in Chile. Furthermore, the analysis of the subjective dimension of professional practicum offers a fresh and detailed perspective that complements existing studies, highlighting the importance of reflective practice and the construction of teaching identity.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

The present chapter has the objective to close this study, sharing the main conclusions and findings obtained, the benefits of the study, acknowledging its limitations, and providing recommendations for future research. As the main finding of this study, intended to analyze and comprehend the imaginaries and social representation of a group of English teacher-trainees alongside their lived experiences during the practicum, it was established that this formative process is a complex, characterized by the encounter of ideal dimensions of teaching and its situated reality.

The complexity of the practicum arises from the constant encounter of the teacher-trainees' ideals and imaginaries with the real experience of teacher work, both inside and outside the classroom. As the practicum offers a space to demonstrate the teacher-trainees' knowledge and competences in a real educational context, it becomes imperative for future teacher training programs to confront and align the ideals of teacher work with the realities of the profession. Moreover, this is the space where teacher-trainees engage with experienced educators, collaborate with colleagues from diverse educational backgrounds, and observe firsthand the challenging, undervalued, and precarious conditions in which many teachers operate. As they grapple with these realities, the practicum serves as a "reality check" for teacher-trainees, prompting them to reassess and reconcile their preconceived notions of teaching with the actual experiences of being a teacher.

The process of "reality check" was analyzed in its macro, meso, and micro levels corresponding to the social, organizational, and subjective aspects of the practicum. The macro or social level alludes to the system of education and the general aspects of teacher work, focusing on the society's opinions and the teacher-trainees' beliefs. In this level, it is reported that the educational system is influenced by neoliberal ideology viewing education as a

commodity and schools as businesses, resulting in a lack of recognition and appreciation for teachers' work.

The meso or organizational level refers to how pedagogy and teacher work is lived in educational organizations, particularly in schools, remarking the interactions between the teacher-trainees and the school community. In regards to the relationships established in the schools, those with colleagues and students were reported as the main ones. Concerning interactions with colleagues, there is said to exist a notable atmosphere of competition surrounding the interaction between them and teacher-trainees caused by the influence of neoliberalism, wherein working as teacher becomes uncertain amidst a prominent fear of being replaced by someone new. However, collaboration is also present, aimed at enhancing the educational context in which the students learn and to boost teachers' teaching practices. As for interactions with students, these hold great significance due to the impact they can have in the teacher-trainees' experiences of the practicum along with the teachers' influence in the lives of the students.

The micro or subjective level regards the aspects related to the inner experiences of teacher-trainees, such as their emotions, self-perception, thoughts, etc., all of these in regards to the interactions established during the practicum process. In this matter, it was discovered that the struggles of teacher-trainees comes from tensions encountered in the practicum which caused their suffering, meanwhile their recognition is related to their success, both personal and professional, which leads them to a state of well-being in the practicum. An important factor to notice is that in order to face the suffering, teacher trainees can adopt defense mechanisms to protect themselves from detrimental situations that might hurt them physically or mentally.

The suffering and well-being are correlated with the distances and proximities between ideal and real experiences of the practicum process. Is in these aspects that seeing the practicum

as a “reality check” serves for socializing the trainees with the reality of teacher work, enabling them to recognize the genuine opportunities and challenges of teaching, and promoting reflection on whether to continue in this profession.

The research shed light into participants' imaginaries regarding the educational system, teacher work, the ideal of teaching, future aspirations, etc. The perception of the education system as neoliberal is deeply integrated in this society, even novice teachers are capable of recognizing its consequences. Moreover, due to this neoliberal impact the devaluation of teachers increases, and this could have serious effects on novice teachers' motivation to continue in the profession. Teachers' landscape is complicated because of the problems of recognition, devaluation, and misconceptions. Nevertheless, participants have the disposition to teach beyond class content, focusing on improving the students' critical thinking, values, and societal engagement. At the same time, putting into practice their beliefs and values was complex for the participants, as neoliberalism has reduced the possibility of connecting with students. However, realizing these beliefs and values proves challenging due to the constraints imposed by neoliberalism, which hampers genuine connections with students and increases teacher workload, deviating from ideal notions of teacher work that do not include excessive demands. Despite apprehensions about their future in the teaching profession, participants recognize the value of English as a means to access broader employment opportunities.

In the case of the teacher trainees' lived experiences, this is part of facing the reality of being an educator, as well as the alignment of their ideals with the real experience and either affirming or rejecting their preconceived notions regarding the educational system, teacher work, the school community and more. During their practicum, teacher-trainees experienced the difficulty of facing new situations, which made them realize about the real aspects of the pedagogy inside and outside the classroom. The school community had an essential role in

shaping their practicum experience, and the relationship with colleagues can have a positive or negative impact in the process. Interactions within the school community and its environment impacted the teacher trainees' emotions. This leads us to the emotions and self-perception of themselves ranging from sadness and helplessness to happiness and satisfaction with their process doing the practicum. These lived experiences highlight the complexity of professional practicum, influencing the professional and personal training of future teachers.

There are conflicts experienced by the participants during their professional practicum process that made them suffer. Teacher trainees encountered issues such as thoughts of desertion produced by exhaustion and stress. This problem affects the teacher profession as a whole and produces the question if the teachers' overwhelm is constantly justified by the vocation they should have. Thoughts of quitting can also come from the disregard of society towards teachers and their work, not feeling recognized or valued by others makes teachers feel discouraged with what they do and leads them to abandon their job. Another issue is the competition with other teachers, driven by the neoliberal influence on education. It also posed challenges, with the teacher's value coming from their good results and being better than the rest. Due to this, teachers pursue good results with a misguided goal in mind affecting their well-being and the school community. Moreover, there is also the conflict of separating the professional life with the personal one, as sometimes it is hard for teachers to detach themselves from the school and its members which leads them to always be emotionally involved in their work. To endure these conflicts and issues, teacher trainees can adopt defense mechanisms that would help them with the management of their emotions.

In contrast to the challenges faced during the practicum, teacher trainees also shared positive experiences that significantly contributed to their well-being. Well-being acts as the opposite of the suffering originated in and from the practicum. The recognition and appreciation

of the work of English pedagogy students in the educational context emerge as crucial factors for their professional development and well-being. This recognition, encompassing elements such as respect, trust, and active participation in school activities, not only benefits the individual but also strengthens their identity and self-image. Establishing meaningful connections with colleagues and students, coupled with the gratification derived from positively influencing students' lives, emerged as significant contributors to their sense of fulfillment. Overcoming obstacles, both personal and professional, further reinforced their resilience and dedication to the teaching profession. The acquisition of practical knowledge and skills added a layer of practicality to their academic pursuits, enriching their preparation for future challenges as educators. Given the pivotal role of relationships in shaping individuals' attitudes and interactions within the educational community, fostering positive connections has profound implications for collaboration, autonomy, and overall participation. In essence, the positive experiences reported by teacher trainees act as a counterbalance to the challenges faced, providing motivation and encouragement in their professional journey, ultimately contributing to a supportive and enriching educational environment.

After the analysis, the identification was obtained that the alignment or misalignment between imaginaries and lived experiences leads to different emotional states, such as suffering or well-being. These emotional states emerge based on the nature of the teacher trainees' pre-established imaginaries, whether positive or negative, and how these manifest in the actual experience of the practicum. Four possible scenarios were identified:

1. When social imaginaries and representations have a positive connotation and are close to or similar to real experience, well-being emerges.
2. If social imaginaries and representations have a negative connotation, but differ from real experience, well-being emerges.

3. If social imaginaries and representations have a negative connotation and resemble real experience, suffering emerges.
4. If social imaginaries and representations are positive but differ from real experience, suffering emerges.

This emotional dynamic is a fundamental component in teacher training, since it directly affects their perception of the educational process and their professional development. It is imperative that teacher training programs address these aspects, offering appropriate strategies and support to manage discrepancies between imaginaries and real experiences.

In regards to the hypotheses that emerged previously to the investigation and the analysis, it is confirmed that there exists a gap between real work and what is expected from teachers, also that prescribed work includes formative, experiential, and imaginative aspects. Moreover, it is verified that the real work achieved by teachers encompasses organizational, social, and subjective levels. Finally, the last hypothesis corroborated is that the practicum is perceived as a personal development journey that comprises the ideal, real, and experiential dimensions of work.

This research study has significant implications for teacher practitioners, former teachers, and even freshman students, illuminating the complexity of the teacher training process. The recognition and management of emotions linked to the expectations and realities of the practicum are essential for developing resilient, adaptive and, above all, effective teachers in their educational work. This holistic understanding of the training process not only benefits practitioners but also enriches the quality of education they will provide to their future students. Thanks to this investigation, students who decide to enter to the English pedagogy career, will know more in depth the process of the professional practicum, its complexity in several areas and also to receive support from universities and how these could implement more courses to support

and help students to understand various aspects of the practicum, among them, to learn how to be an optimus head teacher, how to deal with emotions, how to manage classroom situations and more.

### **Limitations to the study and future research recommendations**

The present study had some limitations. For instance, a single case study was implemented, which led to focus the investigation around participants with shared or similar characteristics, in this case, UMCE students from the English department in their fifth year with the professional practicum concluded. This meant that generalizations could not be made beyond the contexts of the participants. In order to contrast this limitation, a deep literature review was conducted alongside data saturation, meaning that the main themes of the study were intensely examined using different authors and articles, and that the necessary information was gathered from the participants of the study in order to obtain those sharing that would best benefit the investigation and its conclusions.

Another limitation was that few participants were selected for this study since homogeneous intentional sampling was implemented where the focus was on a small group of participants with shared characteristics. This means that the findings of this study apply only to the subjects under study. To contrast this limitation, data saturation also served as a solution next to a data triangulation with the purpose of having different sources of information to analyze. In this case, the participants sharings and the researchers' insights.

Lastly, another limitation, that was balanced in the same manner than the rest, is that this is a qualitative study with an epistemology in clinical sociology which means that it is representative only to the sample that was taken. Nevertheless, to obtain coherent results that show the interactions with the participants, the methodology was applied in the best way

possible. As observed every limitation is related to the little generalization allowed which is why they are stabilized in a similar manner.

In this context, it is recommended for future research to conduct mixed-method quantitative studies on larger populations to assess the replicability or generalizability of the results obtained in this study. Also, as the epistemology of clinical sociology was applied, it is suggested to approach this study's problematization from a different epistemology that might complement the results reported here. Additionally, it is advisable to replicate the same study with diverse groups of teachers from different disciplines, countries or regions.

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¿Interrogations?

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Interview consent sample.

#### CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA ESTUDIANTES MAYORES DE EDAD

(Entrevista - Estudiantes de Pedagogía en Inglés de la Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación que estén cursando su quinto años de carrera y hayan finalizado su práctica profesional durante el primer semestre del 2023 )

Mi nombre es Gabriela Vergara Villagra y mi trabajo consiste en investigar “Imaginary and experience of teacher work of English teacher-trainees in Chile: a case study”, con el propósito de conocer las vivencias e historias de vida de profesores en formación durante el proceso de práctica final y las implicaciones de estas mismas en su identidad docente.

Te invitamos a participar de esta investigación. Puedes elegir si participar o no. Si no deseas tomar parte en ella, no tienes que hacerlo. Incluso, estando ya en la investigación, puedes retirarte en cualquier momento, sin dar ninguna explicación, y sin que esto signifique alguna consecuencia negativa para ti.

En esta investigación le pediremos responder una entrevista semiestructurada individual, en la cual se le pedirá elaborar unos dibujos relacionado a vivencias relacionadas a su práctica profesional y construcción de su identidad docente, también responder preguntas con la finalidad de conocer sus experiencias, emociones, e historias asociadas a la docencia la que será realizada en una sesión con una duración de una hora a una hora y media.

Toda la información que nos entregues será confidencial (no será identificado tu nombre), usada únicamente para los fines de esta investigación, estará protegida y resguardada en una carpeta de Google Drive. Solo los investigadores pueden acceder a ella, el custodio de la información Yuliza Muñoz Araneda guardará los datos personales relacionados por 5 años una vez terminada la investigación, posteriormente se destruirá.

Independiente de la autorización del Director(a) del Establecimiento, la participación es libre y voluntaria y puede negarse a participar.

Si tienes alguna duda sobre la investigación o sobre tu participación, tanto la investigadora principal, como el Comité de Ética de la Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación, estarán disponibles para aclarar tus consultas.

Para ello puedes contactar al investigador principal Gabriela Vergara Villagra, en el teléfono 997162285 y en el correo electrónico [gabriela.vergara2019@umce.cl](mailto:gabriela.vergara2019@umce.cl)

Para cualquier duda que se presente o si se vulneran sus derechos puede contactarse con el Dr. Jairo Vanegas López, Presidente del Comité de Ética de la Universidad de Santiago de Chile, CEI-USACH, al teléfono 2-2-7180293 o al correo electrónico [comitedeetica@usach.cl](mailto:comitedeetica@usach.cl). También puede solicitar más información sobre la ética del proyecto con el Dr. Pedro Canales Tapia, representante del Comité UMCE en el teléfono 22-322-9193 y en el correo electrónico [evaluacion.etica@umce.cl](mailto:evaluacion.etica@umce.cl)

Si decides participar recibirás una copia de este documento.

Acepto participar en el presente estudio

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(Nombre, Firma y/o Huella Digital)

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
                  Ciudad                   Día                   Mes                   Año

---

Nombre y Firma Investigador (a) Principal

## **Appendix B: Participants' questionnaire sample.**

Question to ask after the drawings:

- Can you tell us about the elements of your drawing and their meaning?
- What elements are related to the teacher?
- How is the work of that teacher?
- How does the teacher feel?
- What does the teacher do regularly?
- How does the school community see the teacher?
- How does society see the teacher?
- How can you relate what you just told us to your experiences and beliefs about pedagogy? (Only for the first drawing)

Follow-up questions:

1. How are both drawings linked?
  - What are the similarities and differences?
2. How is it [what you mentioned] linked to your experiences of teacher work?
  - Individually, at school, and in society.
3. How have your initial thoughts about teaching changed according to your real experience of teaching?
  - How do you feel about that? [Either if it has changed or not] (emotionally, personally, and professionally.)
4. Tell us about your history. How did you get into pedagogy?
5. How do you visualize your career as a teacher in the next few years?

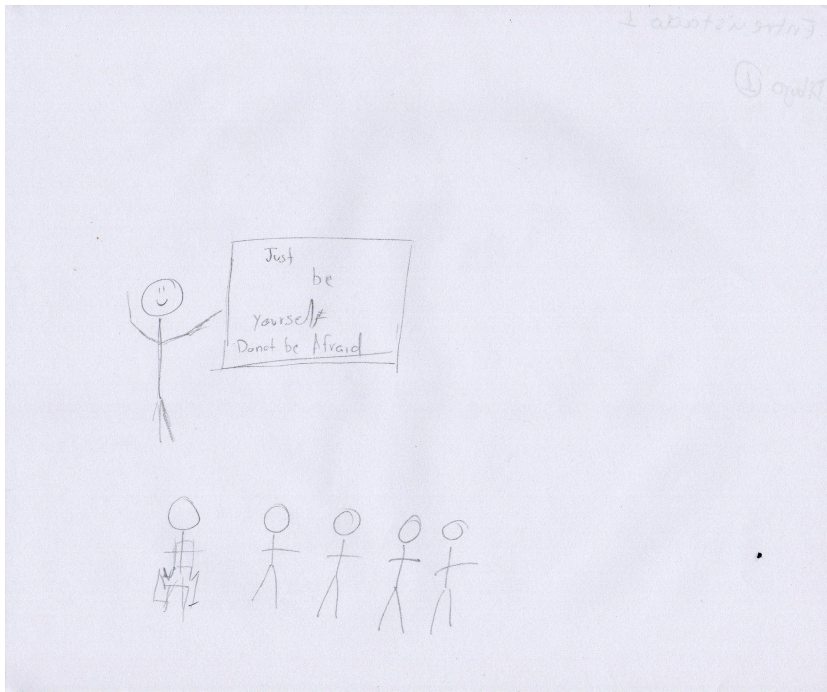
- Individually, at school, and in society.

6. If you can choose a career path again, would you choose pedagogy once more?

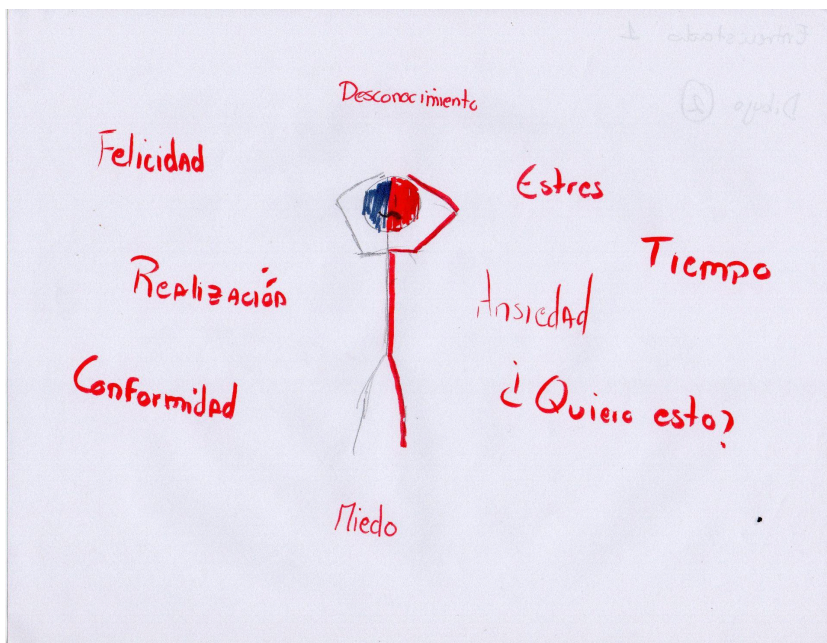
## Appendix C: Participants' drawings.

Interview n° 1.

Drawing n° 1.



Drawing n° 2.



Interview n° 2.

Drawing n° 1.

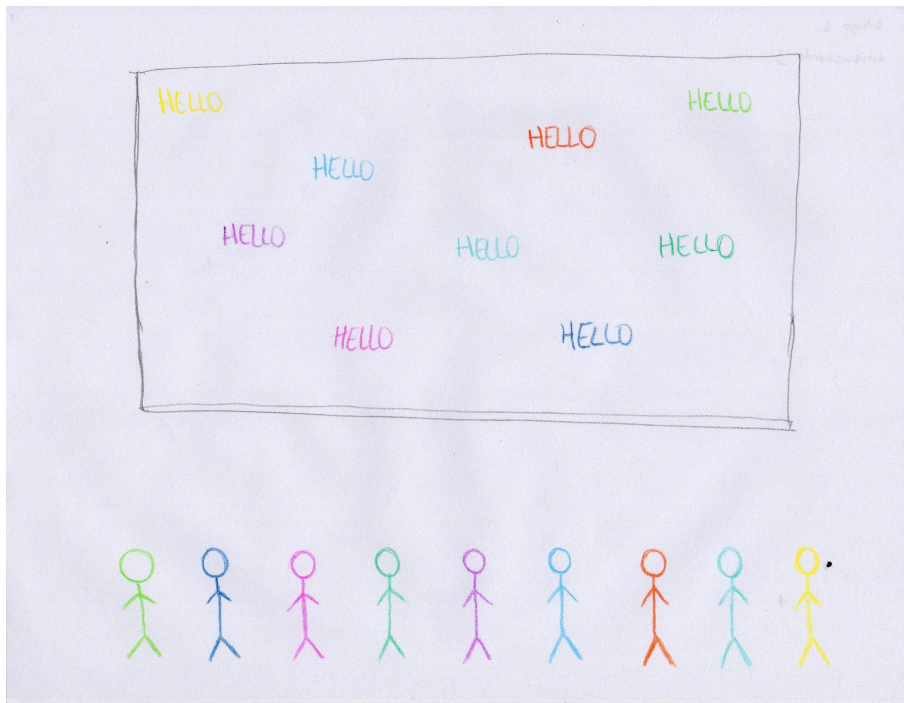


Drawing n° 2.

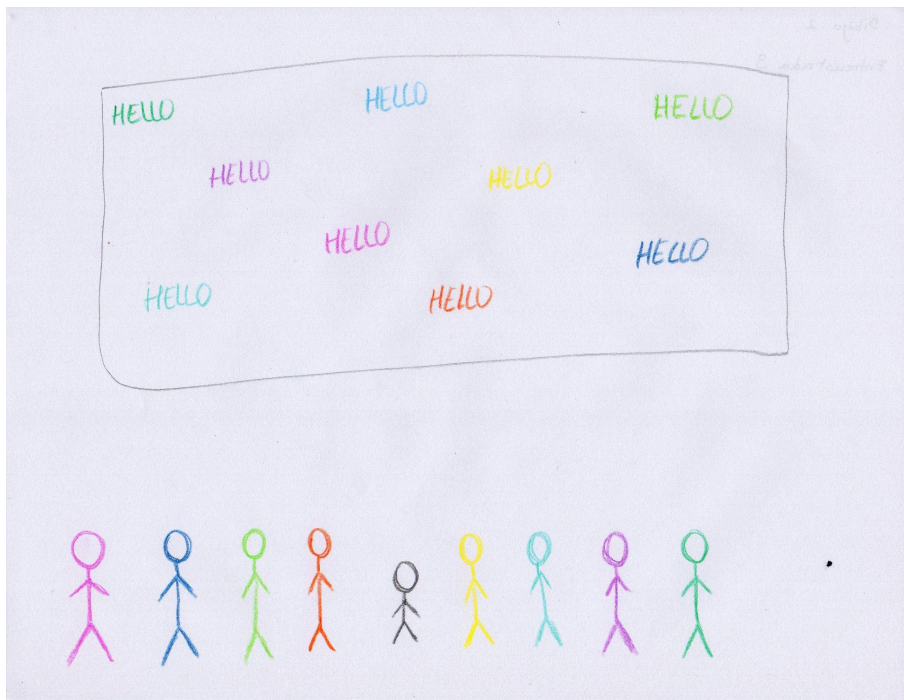


Interview n° 3.

Drawing n° 1.

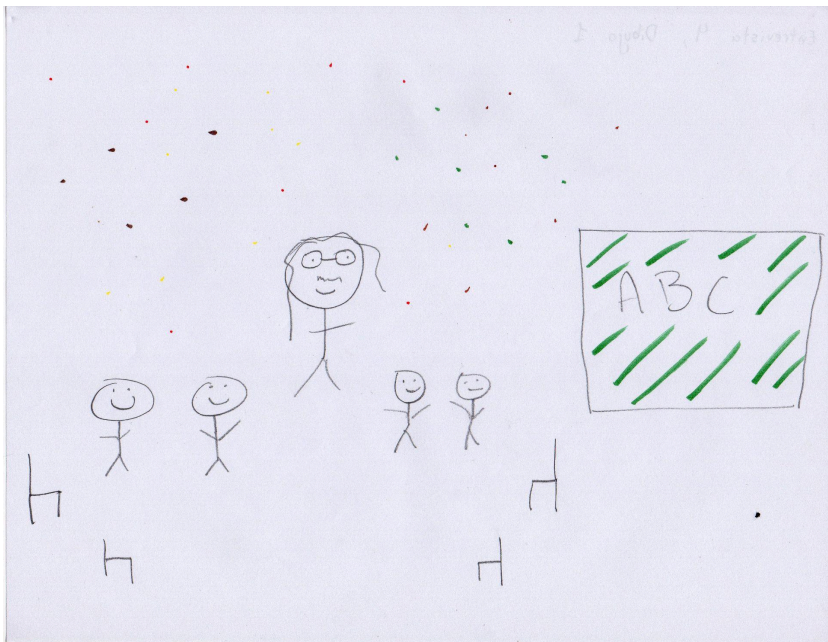


Drawing n° 2.

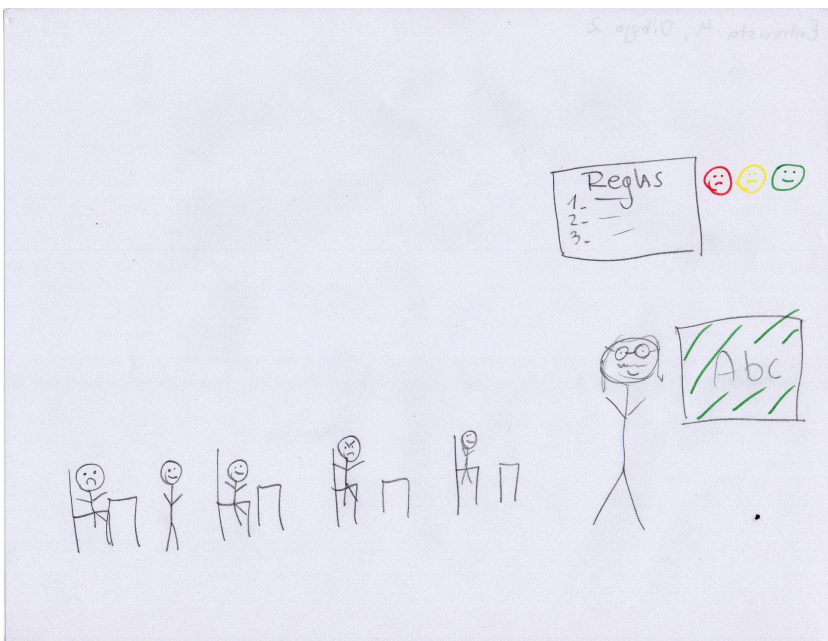


Interview n° 4.

Drawing n° 1.

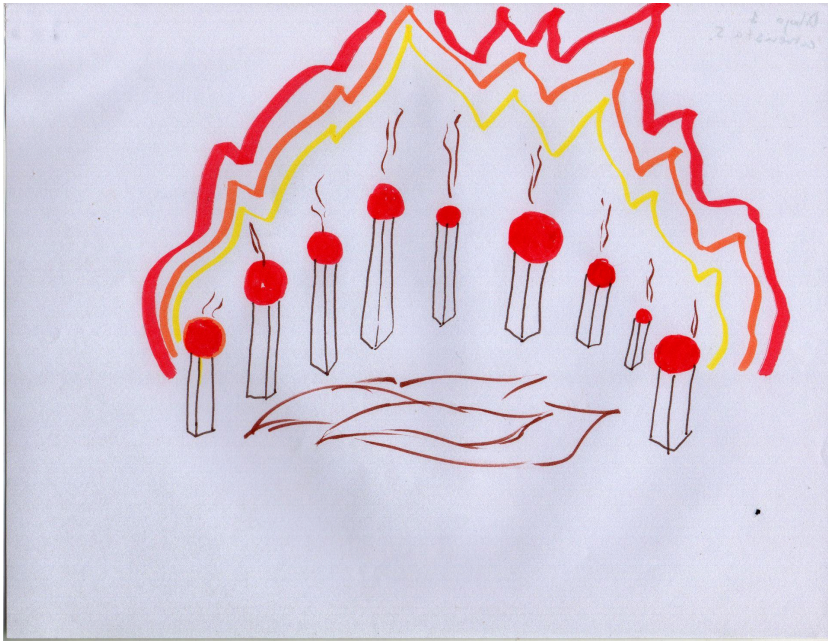


Drawing n° 2.



Interview n° 5.

Drawing n° 1.



Drawing n° 2.

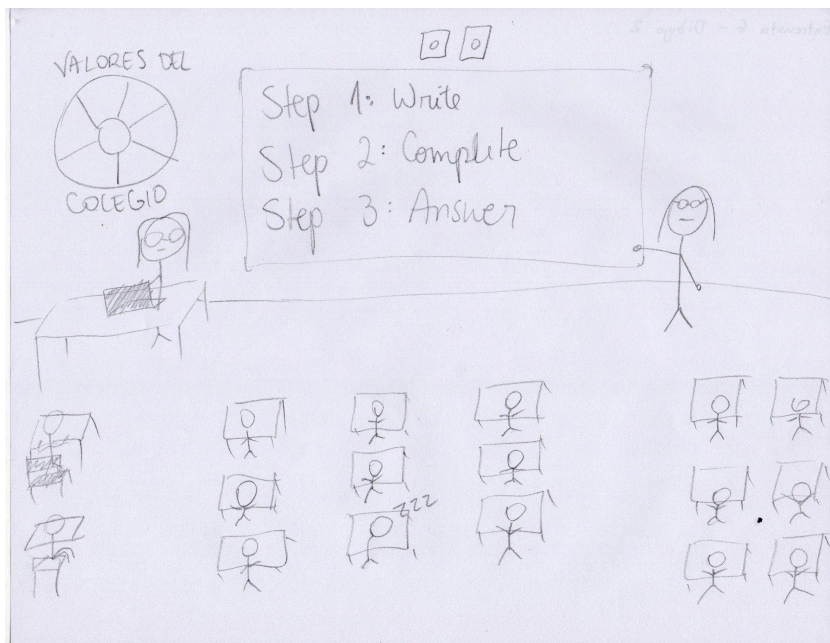


Interview n° 6.

Drawing n° 1.

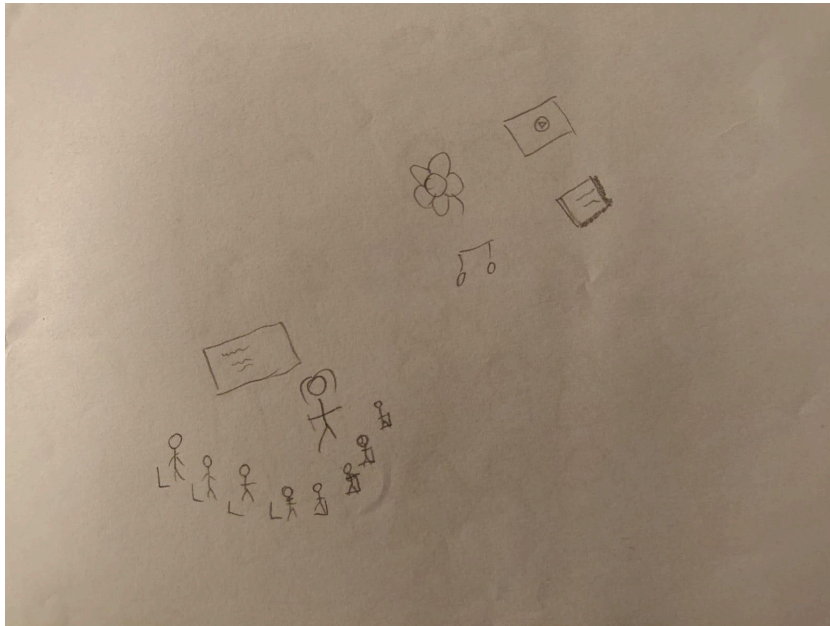


Drawing n° 2.

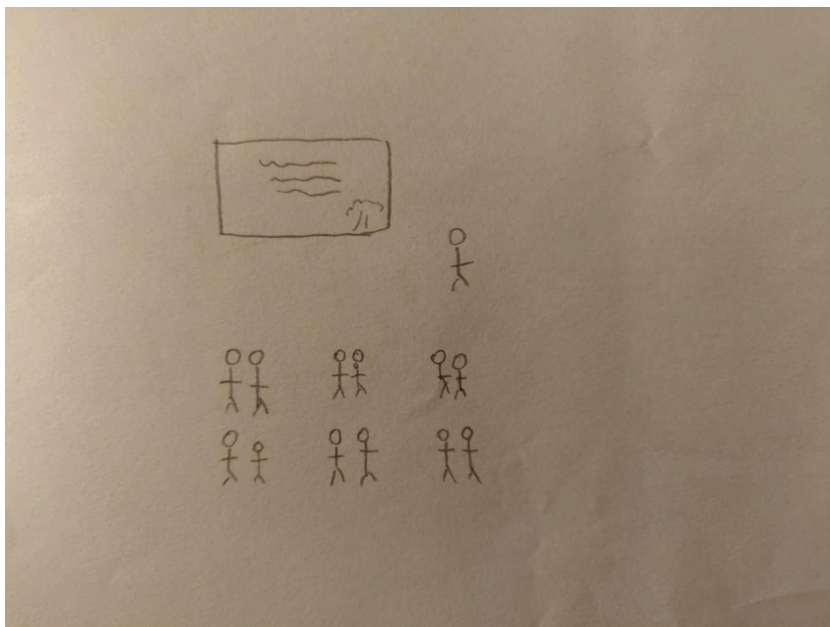


Interview n° 7.

Drawing n° 1.

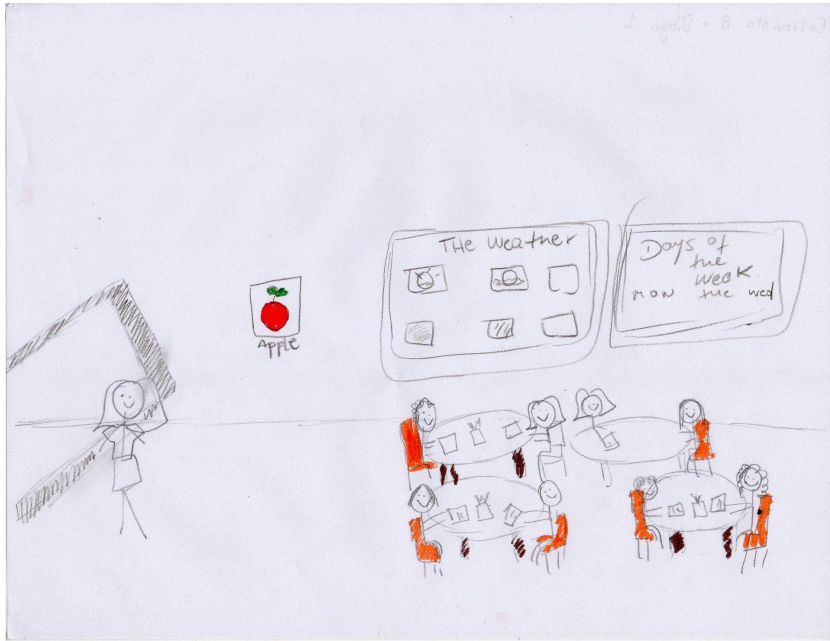


Drawing n° 2.



Interview n° 8.

Drawing n° 1.



Drawing n° 2.

