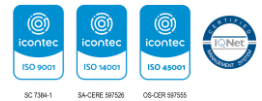




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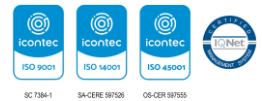
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| 2. <u>Programa de formación docente</u> | <u>Teacher education program</u> |
| 3. <u>Investigación narrativa</u> | <u>Narrative inquiry</u> |
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RESUMEN DEL CONTENIDO: (Máximo 250 palabras)

Esta investigación narrativa tiene como objetivo investigar cómo cinco profesores de inglés construyeron su identidad de investigador al completar un programa a nivel de pregrado y un programa a nivel de maestría. Así como los factores que promovieron y los que dificultaron su formación a partir de las experiencias académicas y profesionales de los participantes. El uso de narrativas, entrevistas, análisis de documentos y artefactos indicó que la construcción de la identidad del investigador implica una transformación a través del tiempo de cómo se perciben a sí mismos como investigadores. Y su formación cambia constantemente como resultado de las interacciones sociales. Los hallazgos indicaron que inicialmente los participantes no pudieron desarrollar su identidad de investigadores ya que no estaban mentalmente maduros para asumir un nuevo rol como investigadores al terminar el pregrado. Del mismo modo, no estaban familiarizados con los principios teóricos y carecían de las herramientas prácticas para dar sentido a las implicaciones de hacer investigación y su papel

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como investigadores. Sin embargo, los cinco participantes experimentaron un cambio conceptual al completar su programa de posgrado, el cual les permitió asumir una nueva identidad como investigadores.

ABSTRACT: (Máximo 250 palabras)

This narrative research aims to investigate how five English language teachers constructed their researcher identity upon completing an undergraduate-level program and a master-level program. Besides, it tackles the factors that promoted and those that hindered its formation as revealed through participants' academic and professional experiences. The use of personal narratives, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and artifacts indicated that the construction of researcher identity entails a transformation over time of how individuals perceive themselves as researchers. Its formation is constantly shifting as a result of social interactions. Findings indicated that initially, participants could not develop their RI since they were not mentally mature to take on a new role as researchers when completing their undergraduate-level program. Similarly, they were not familiar with the theoretical principles and lacked the practical tools to make sense of the implications of doing research and their role as researchers. However, the five participants experienced a conceptual shift as they completed their graduate program that allowed them to take on a new identity as researchers.

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**Understanding the Researcher Identity Construction of Five English Language
Teachers**

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to

Surcolombiana University in partial fulfilment of the requirement

For the master's degree in

English Didactics

by

Jenny Tatiana Quiñones Yáñez

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**Comprendiendo la Construcción de Identidad del Investigador en Cinco Docentes de
Inglés**

Jenny Tatiana Quiñones Yáñez

Tesis de grado presentada como requisito parcial para optar al título de Magister en
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Doctor en Second Language Acquisition and Teaching

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Neiva

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Resumen

Esta investigación narrativa tiene como objetivo investigar cómo cinco profesores de inglés construyeron su identidad de investigador al completar un programa a nivel de pregrado y un programa a nivel de maestría. Así como los factores que promovieron y los que dificultaron su formación a partir de las experiencias académicas y profesionales de los participantes. El uso de narrativas, entrevistas, análisis de documentos y artefactos indicó que la construcción de la identidad del investigador implica una transformación a través del tiempo de cómo se perciben a sí mismos como investigadores. Y su formación cambia constantemente como resultado de las interacciones sociales. Los hallazgos indicaron que inicialmente los participantes no pudieron desarrollar su identidad de investigadores ya que no estaban mentalmente maduros para asumir un nuevo rol como investigadores al terminar el pregrado. Del mismo modo, no estaban familiarizados con los principios teóricos y carecían de las herramientas prácticas para dar sentido a las implicaciones de hacer investigación y su papel como investigadores. Sin embargo, los cinco participantes experimentaron un cambio conceptual al completar su programa de posgrado, el cual les permitió asumir una nueva identidad como investigadores.

Palabras clave: identidad del investigador, programa de formación docente, investigación narrativa.

Abstract

This narrative research aims to investigate how five English language teachers constructed their researcher identity upon completing an undergraduate-level program and a master-level program. **Besides, it tackles** the factors that promoted and those that hindered its formation as revealed through participants' academic and professional experiences. The use of personal narratives, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and artifacts indicated that the construction of researcher identity entails a transformation over time of how individuals perceive themselves as researchers. Its formation is constantly shifting as a result of social interactions. **Findings** indicated that initially, participants could not develop their RI since they were not mentally mature to take on a new role as researchers when completing their undergraduate-level program. Similarly, they were not familiar with the theoretical principles and lacked the practical tools to make sense of the implications of doing research and their role as researchers. However, the five participants experienced a conceptual shift as they completed their graduate program that allowed them to take on a new identity as researchers.

Keywords: Researcher identity, teacher education program, narrative inquiry.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Teacher research engagement has become an increasingly central focus in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) in the last few decades. Engaging in research allows language teachers to improve their practices, gain a sense of empowerment, and strive for professional development (Taylor, 2017; Trent, 2012; Wyatt, 2010). Research also holds a privileged position in many educational institutions worldwide, especially in higher education institutions (Nana & Jing, 2017) and research achievements are currently part of the criteria for teacher recruitment and promotion in several contexts (Bai & Millwater, 2011). In spite of the significant role of research in language teachers' professional lives, research into their identity as researchers is limited (Norton & Early, 2011). Nana & Jing (2017) highlight that “understanding researcher identity is important in the sense that how language teachers see themselves as researchers strongly affects their exercise of agency, development of autonomy, and professional development” (p. 372).

Higher education programs in Colombia are expected to develop strategies to ensure research preparation and training for future graduates **Decreto 1330 (2019)**. **In this vein**, undergraduate and graduate students are encouraged to gain research competencies and develop an interest in research as a means to improve their practices and grow professionally. Cárdenas (2004) claims that teachers as researchers get empowered to reflect critically, take actions to transform their teaching, and link theory and practice. Viáfara and Largo (2018) noted that teachers enrolled as graduate students in a master's program acknowledged their acquisition of research knowledge and skills. However, they

raised various limitations in their exercise of research such as lack of time and lack of resources to conduct their projects.

Additionally, anecdotal evidence suggests that many teachers who complete their higher education studies limit their research engagement to fulfilling the requirements of the higher education programs, but they do not feel fully empowered to lead research processes on their own and overcome contextual obstacles. It remains unclear how language teachers view themselves when assuming a researcher identity, and how that researcher identity influences their research engagement and their teacher professional development. Considering a poststructuralist view of identity as multiple, contradictory, and dynamic instead of a singular and static construct immune to external influences (Miller, 2009; Norton Pierce, 1995; Varghese et al., 2005), the present study aimed to analyze the perspectives of five English language teachers about their researcher identity construction process. Specifically, this study sought to determine what participants' narratives revealed about their researcher identity construction process upon completing an undergraduate-level program, and upon finishing a master-level program. The study also aimed to describe the factors that promoted and hindered participants' researcher identity construction through their higher education and professional experiences.

Rationale and statement of the problem

Although there is a significant amount of studies in the area of teacher identity (Liu & Xu, 2011; Trent, 2011, 2014; Trent & Lim, 2010; Tsui, 2007; Xu, 2012) the issue of researcher identity remains underexplored in the field of language teacher education and development. In this regard, Hamilton et al., (2012) argue that very little empirical work focusing directly on the experiences of teachers in their transformation as researchers has

been undertaken. Castelló et al. (2020) examined 38 empirical articles in peer-reviewed journals to identify the theoretical basis of researcher identity. The authors concluded that the articles did not provide enough insights concerning the theoretical foundation of Researcher Identity (RI) construction. **On the other hand**, Edwards (2020) acknowledges the benefits of research engagement **as a way to** continue professional development. In this sense, RI is negotiated as individuals enact research allowing them to develop their theoretical and practical knowledge for teaching, change perceptions or beliefs about research and develop their research skills (Burns, 2014; Edwards 2020). Although research engagement has a long history in education, it was only after the 1980s that this issue became popular in language teaching (Burns, 2005). However, there has been no cohesive or holistic review of research on the various forms of development in terms of RI construction (Edwards, 2020).

Cárdenas's (2004) study on the nature of English teachers' research as part of a teacher education program reinforced the need of helping teachers see themselves as agents of change through research. Nevertheless, teachers felt less confident with the idea of conducting research as they believed they lacked training. The previous reaction seemed understandable, since it derives from traditional generalizations and beliefs about what research is and how it should be done (Fandiño, 2010). Likewise, "when seeing or hearing the phrase 'teachers as researchers' most classroom practitioners dismiss the idea as something they might do in the future, but for which they have no time at present" (LoCastro, 2000, p. 1). The aforementioned seems to reinforce the idea that many teachers limit their research engagement to meeting the requirements of their higher education programs and once they have accomplished their academic goals, they do not pursue further research opportunities. **Apart from that**, Giddens (1984) claims that although constraining

factors at teachers' workplaces have a significant impact on their commitment to do research, teachers may be able to maintain their claimed identities or construct their desired identities, including a researcher identity, by exercising agency to act upon external conditions.

Teacher's role is changing from a traditional perspective to a modern one. In this sense, Fandiño (2010) states that "teachers are supposed to be the author and source of the theoretical basis for their own practices. They are supposed to be researchers within the territory of their own classrooms" (p. 121). According to Hall & Burns (2009), "to move from being a teacher to being a researcher ... constitutes a major change in occupational role and requires an accompanying change in professional priorities" (p. 53). **Considering the previous insights**, The Colombian Ministry of Education (**Decreto 1001, 2006**) indicates that it is essential for master-level programs to contribute to the apprehension, production of knowledge while guiding participants to innovate and update their knowledge base in the context of the scientific developments of their discipline. Graduate students in Colombia are usually required to develop a research project to obtain their degree as established by the ministry of education (Decreto, 1330, 2019), which leads to a compulsory encounter with research. Pineda and Clavijo (2003) determined through a project developed in a public university in Colombia that graduate teachers are prone to quit their master's program in the last semester. As the authors analyzed the factors that influenced the dropout rates, they found that graduate teachers "left the program before completing the thesis requirement due mainly to the difficulties and challenges that doing research implies" (Pineda & Clavijo, 2003, p. 68). Moreover, graduate teachers in the same study claimed they were not able to bridge the theory and practice divide when required to conduct their own research projects. Despite the benefits of conducting research, teacher-researchers are

often reluctant to engage in this process due to their lack of knowledge and involvement in research (Cárdenas et al., 2009). In the same line of thought, Worrall (2004) recognizes that teacher-researchers do not have enough abilities to do research **since they consider this process a complex one; thus**, “the idea of undertaking a research project seems to be reserved for those considered experts or professional researchers” (Pham, 2006, p. 2).

On the other hand, **graduate programs** are primarily designed to prepare students to autonomously guide academic and research processes in a specific discipline (Decreto, 1330, 2019). Once teachers enter master or doctoral programs, they will be influenced by models of identity as they engage in research processes and gain theoretical and practical insights about research. **Therefore, the research instruction received within those programs grant teacher researchers the abilities to conduct research and take on a new identity as researchers.**

Research Questions

General Questions

What do participants’ narratives reveal about their researcher identity construction process upon completing an undergraduate-level program?

What do participants’ narratives reveal about their researcher identity construction process upon **earning a master’s degree?**

Specific Questions

What factors promoted participants’ researcher identity construction throughout their higher education and professional experiences?

What factors hindered participants’ researcher identity construction throughout their higher education and professional experiences?

Research Objectives

General Objective

To examine participants' narratives about their researcher identity construction process upon completing an undergraduate-level program.

To examine participants' narratives about their researcher identity construction process upon concluding a master-level program.

Specific Objectives

Identify the factors that promoted participants' researcher identity construction throughout their higher education and professional experiences.

Determine the factors that hindered participants' researcher identity construction throughout their higher education and professional experiences.

Possible contributions of the Study

Researcher identity construction is an ongoing process that is embedded in the social, since it is not solely about how individuals define themselves but also about how they are positioned and defined by the people around them (Gee, 2016). In the context of the present study, the experiences that participants lived **as they completed** the undergraduate and graduate programs may shed light on the construction of their researcher selves. First, the present research study is likely to contribute to filling in the existing gap in the literature to better understand the process of teacher-researcher identity construction. Second, the findings of the study may help teacher educators and research instructors to design strategies to support and engage teacher-researchers in the research processes. Finally, the findings of the present research study could be useful for undergraduate-level

teacher education programs to address and respond to the factors that hindered the researcher identity construction process.

Structure and Organization of Study

The present document constitutes the report of the research study and has been organized as follows: Chapter Two will introduce the theoretical framework of the study, the constructs of teacher identity, researcher identity, and the lenses (ecological and poststructuralist) that facilitated my understanding of researcher identity. Chapter Three will offer a brief review of previous studies on the construction of teacher-researcher identity. Chapter Four will describe the research design, criteria for participant selection, the procedures for collecting and analyzing data, the researcher's positionality, and participants' trajectories. Chapter Five will unfold the findings of the research study. In this regard, I will initially describe how the process of RI construction occurred for the five participants upon completing undergraduate and graduate level programs. Then, I will provide an account of the factors that promoted and hindered participants' RI construction. Finally, chapter Six will present the discussions and conclusions, suggestions for further research, and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

In this section, I present the theoretical underpinnings that helped me unveil participants' perspectives regarding their researcher identity construction process. First, I define the construct of teacher identity as an umbrella term to which researcher identity is ascribed. Second, I introduce the concept of researcher identity construction. Third, I refer to features associated with ecological and postructuralist perspectives which serve to theoretically frame the current study. My goal is to make a case for how these two perspectives helped me to better understand the process of teacher-researcher identity construction.

Teacher Identity.

The concept of teacher identity stands at the core of the teaching profession since it provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of how to be a teacher, how to act within the classroom, and how to understand their work and their place in society (Sachs, 2005). Teacher identity is an ongoing process that is seen as individual and social. It follows that teacher identity represents how the teachers view themselves and how other people see them as professionals (Danielewicz, 2001; Sachs, 2005; Clarke, 2008). Similarly, the term identity refers to how an individual understands her or his relationship to the world and how it is mediated across time and social interactions (Norton, 2013).

Learning to teach does not just involve a process of acquiring skills and strategies, but it entails the development and adoption of a whole new identity, 'a teacher identity', that takes place within society, therefore, "teaching is a state of being, not merely ways of acting or behaving" (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 3). In other words, TI is "being" rather than playing a role. This concept has been conceptualized in various manners, however **scholars** (Jorgensen et al., 2015; Sachs, 2005; Danielewicz, 2001; Clarke, 2009) conclude that its formation is the result of the social interactions in which student-teachers are involved and it is built as part of the process of learning to teach. Cooper and Olson (2010) state that "teacher identity involves teacher beliefs, values, and emotions about many facets of teaching and being and becoming teachers. It is continually informed, formed and reformed over time and with experience" (p.168). The previous idea entails that TI is in constant flux and it is mediated as teachers interact with social actors reshaping their understanding of who they are and who they want to become as they learn how to teach.

Teacher identity "involve[s] the complex interplay between personal experience and cultural, social institutional and environmental contexts" (Goodnough, 2010, p. 168). The previous stance implies that becoming an educator is connected to the settings where the individual is building that identity. Likewise, teacher identities are "cognitive, social, emotional, ideological and historical; they are both inside the teacher and outside in the social, material and technological world" (Barkhuizen, 2016, p. 4). Thus, Barkhuizen recognizes that TIs are multiple, which acknowledges the existence of various identities. Through continuous interactions with contexts, teachers construct multiple identities with different degrees of importance at different times (Norton, 1995). Considering the above, a person does not possess only one 'self' but several 'selves', each activated in certain

situations (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Luk and Lin (2007) equally believe that people have diverse identities within them, stressing the fact that their identities are not predetermined, fixed, and static but are “sometimes incoherent, fragmented, multiple, and conflicting” (p. 50). Likewise, “identities are never unified, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different discourses and practices” (Hall, 1996, p. 17). Put differently, the process of taking on a new identity, implies a constant transformation mediated through social interactions.

TI is characterized by being social since “creating identities is not an individual undertaking, but involves others, especially groups or collectives connected to social institutions as well as the discourses associated with them” (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 35). Considering the social aspect as crucial when shaping teacher identity, Day et al. (2006) claim that identities are constructed from “the interaction between the personal experiences of teachers and the social, cultural, and institutional environment in which they function on a daily basis” (p. 603). In this regard, student-teachers integrate models of being as they collaborate and interact with the teacher community and former professors. The same authors then add that “the culture of the school, its internal dynamics and organization, enable or constrain the achievement of 'satisfaction', 'commitment' and 'motivation', and impact upon teachers' constructions of their teacher identities” (p. 606). Furthermore, student-teachers shape their teacher identity as they become members of a community of practice where their understanding of who they are as teachers, happens in social interactions (Wenger, 1998). In this sense, the process of becoming and being a teacher is an ongoing process that requires participation in social practices. Likewise, teacher identity is argued to be developed as part of the process of learning to teach (Britzman, 2001), since

teacher education programs and the act of teaching provide student-teachers with opportunities to gain the theoretical and practical tools to make sense of their TI.

On the other hand, it is relevant to consider the tensions when constructing teacher identity. Tensions are considered to be internal struggles between the teacher as a person and the teacher as a professional. Tensions challenge student teachers' identities, allowing them to question themselves and their beliefs (Smagorinsky et al. (2004). In this sense, the change of roles from student to teacher and the conflicting conceptions of learning to teach are opportunities that force teachers to take action and transform those experiences into a tool for teacher learning. Even though teacher identity tensions are accompanied by negative feelings such as frustration, helplessness, and anger, those have positive consequences for professional development (Pillen et al., 2013). In the same line of thought, Villegas et al., (2020) affirm that the construction of teacher identity can start with some conflicts that prospective teachers face in the process of learning to teach. Nevertheless, those conflicts are solved as student teachers experience the act of teaching, allowing them to shape and reshape their teacher identity. Tensions can be seen as potentially productive in creating environments conducive to the formation of a satisfying teacher identity (Smagorinsky et al. (2004). In this regard, the tensions or conflicts that student teachers experience in teacher education programs, provide them with more determination to build their identity as teachers.

Researcher Identity Construction.

The process of becoming a researcher is conceived as learning a set of tools and techniques that allow individuals to build knowledge (Thomson & Walker, 2010). Also, “an individual becoming a teacher-researcher begins to merge the perspective of teacher and researcher into a single dynamic one” (Taylor, 2017, p. 22). Nonetheless, the idea of becoming “contains an implicit temporal dimension. Becoming suggests a transformation over time: a becoming other than what one is already” (Barnacle, 2005, p. 179). According to Jorgensen et al., (2015), the concept of researcher identity is “a mental and emotional connection with research, confidence in one’s ability to consume research, desire to conduct a magnitude of research in the future, and identification within the larger research community” (p. 328). Likewise, Ponterotto and Grieger (1999) define RI as “how one perceives oneself as a researcher, with strong implications for which topics and methods will be important to the researcher. Naturally, one’s RI both influences, and is influenced by, the paradigm from which one operates” (p. 52). Considering the above, RI is how individuals see themselves as researchers within a research community. Also, the concept entails an engagement in research processes and the implications of those processes as individuals conduct research. Besides, researcher identity is mediated through the negotiation of internal facilitators, external facilitators, faculty impacts, and beliefs about research; enhanced by accepting fluid conceptualizations of research, and manifested through research behaviors and attitudes toward research (Jorgensen et al., 2015).

The process of researcher identity construction “may be rigid and unchangeable at a certain stage of a teacher’s career due to a number of internal factors, but this state of identity is temporary and open to change” (Nana, 2017, p. 373). In this regard, the process of becoming a teacher-researcher is never completed (Danielewicz, 2001); it is under construction and reconstruction as individuals interact and enact research. Nana et al.,

(2017) define RI as a socially constructed and ongoing process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences. It is also a socially situated process, giving rise to meanings and positionings that are part of the social world (Brickhouse, et al. 2000). In other words, the process of becoming a researcher is embedded in the communities of practice from which individuals learn and engage in the process of inquiry, therefore, they develop identities-in-practice (Girod and Pardales, 2002).

Since the process of developing a researcher identity is also context-specific and context-dependent (Hernández-Hernández & Sancho-Gil, 2015), it is important to consider the learning environments that help consolidate research processes. In this sense, researcher identities are meant to be diverse, differentiated by distinct experiences embedded in divergent institutional and disciplinary environments. Brew et al. (2011) claim that “there are clearly interactions between what individuals bring from their previous histories and environments, and how these are acted upon in their present situations” (p. 51). In this regard, the researcher identity construction is linked to the individual’s previous experiences with enacting research since those constitute the foundation to become a researcher. Contextual factors associated with universities, colleges, schools, and programs create more opportunities for individuals to integrate a model of being a researcher (Hall and Burns, 2009). Hence, all the theoretical knowledge gained through formal instruction in undergraduate and graduate programs that individuals bring into the process (Hall & Burns, 2009), influences the development of their research competencies and the construction of their researcher identity. “The model of identities existent for researchers are situated inside the figured worlds of academia” (Hall & Burns, 2009, p. 52), that is, researcher identity is connected to individuals’ previous experiences in teacher education programs, work,

cultural and gendered identities, and current psychological understandings of who they are as teachers and researchers.

It is commonly acknowledged that the researcher has an impact on both the research process and the construction of knowledge (Bettany and Woodruffe-Burton, 2009). As teacher-researchers enact research processes, they are building a new sense of being. In this vein, researchers change throughout the process of investigating challenging topics affecting and re-thinking their work and their perceptions about themselves. According to Hamilton et al. (2012), conducting research instills a sense of duty, social justice, and a need to instigate changes in the settings in which the research project takes place. Enacting research has a lasting and a transformative impact on the conceptualization of selfhood that it extends beyond academic boundaries (Coffey, 1999). Considering the insights mentioned above about researcher identity, I conclude that RI is how individuals **recognize** themselves as researchers as they engage in research scenarios and conduct research. Likewise, the RI development entails an evolving process that has no start or end point, and it is connected to individuals' previous experiences in higher education programs as they become members of a community of practice. In the following paragraphs, I describe the three dimensions of researcher identity in order to shed light on how the process of RI occurs.

Dimensions of Researcher Identity

The researcher identity formation entails an ongoing process that is embedded in the social. In this sense, I will provide an account on the three dimensions of researcher identity in order to understand its development: the social nature of researcher identity, the dynamic nature of researcher identity, and the reflective nature of researcher identity.

The Social Nature of Researcher Identity

A social nature of researcher identity emphasizes that identity construction should be analyzed by means of a sociocultural lens through which situational identities are negotiated and lived in and through activity (Gunasekara 2007; Remich et al. 2016). **Since the RI formation is a socially constructed process, we cannot underestimate** the influence of context and the situated nature of this development (Inouye & McAlpine 2017; McAlpine et al. 2014). Although individuals' experiences are acknowledged, identity is considered relational and individuals are claimed to position and be positioned by others in particular changing scenarios (Castelló et al., 2021).

According to Nana et al. (2017), the notion of teachers as researchers involves complexities that extend far beyond having the technical knowledge to do research. This is a process that requires reflection upon their role and participation in social interactions in order to construct the researcher identity. In this sense, it is relevant to consider the academic scenarios that grant language teachers with the necessary theoretical principles and practical tools to conduct research and imagine themselves as researchers. Thompson et al. (2016) similarly acknowledge that researcher identity is defined as unique and stable but shaped through social action. Additionally, the process of developing the researcher identity entails participation in communities of practices (Thompson et al. 2016) because, in those scenarios, teacher-researchers put into practice all the theoretical knowledge gained through formal instruction in graduate programs. Another significant aspect concerning the importance of the social nature of researcher identity is formal education. Graduate programs enable teacher-researchers to gain formal training and supervision in doing research, as they engage in rewarding activities such as seminars, discussions, symposia,

and the like. Likewise, formal research instruction has a particular set of norms and definitions for what it means to be a researcher (Hall and Burns, 2009). The aforementioned permits individuals to develop their research competence and take on a new identity as they conduct research.

The Dynamic Nature of Researcher Identity

The researcher identity construction is a process that entails transformation. This dynamism is related to two features: development and fluidity.

Researcher identity development is understood explicitly as constant negotiation-re-negotiation of past, present and future identity experiences, within the notion of identity-trajectory (McAlpine et al., 2014; Inouye & McAlpine 2017). RI development is a “relevant heuristic to characterize dynamism in the continuous negotiation between stability and change through time” (Castelló, 2021, p. 10).

Gunasekara (2007) and Rayner et al. (2015) consider researcher identity as a dynamic, changing, and fluid construct. In this sense, RI is perceived as a process instead of an output (Castelló et al. 2020). The construction of researcher identity is a dynamic process that entails a permanent construction of who we are and who we want to become. Its development is possible due to sociocultural environments and educational instruction where teachers gain the necessary theoretical principles and practical tools to conduct research and imagine themselves as researchers.

The Reflective Nature of Researcher Identity

The reflective nature plays a crucial role in the formation of one’s identity since this process leads to negotiating and understanding the professional I-concept. Likewise,

reflection allows individuals to analyze their own pedagogical activity while giving opportunities to raise awareness and suggesting changes in attitudes and behaviors in individual and professional contexts (Protassova et al., 2021). According to Freire (1970), reflection is seen as the critical consciousness to interrogate social structures and provoke changes. Similarly, reflection involves a way of knowing and becoming aware of actions in order to transform those into coherent experiences (Schön, 1982; Dewey, 1910). In this vein, Bengtsson (1995) affirms that “within work contexts, reflection becomes an acknowledged way for student-teachers to learn about their practice and about themselves” (p. 37). The previously mentioned insights entail that reflection allows individuals to think of new possibilities to act within the teaching context and research scenarios to shape a new understanding of being and make sense of previous experiences.

Although practices and experiences connected to research are recognized as highly relevant, the way in which individuals perceive and interpret these experiences is also essential to explain how researcher identity is constructed and shaped (Castelló et al. 2020). Ideas, representations, conceptions, or perceptions, prevail in defining identity. Self-reflection and critical thinking (Alexander et al., 2014; Leibowitz et al., 2014), as well as the thoughts or representations of oneself, which are constructed in social contexts, seem to have a significant influence on RI construction.

The construct of researcher identity stands at the core of the teaching profession since teachers are required to become researchers in order to think of new possibilities to act within their classrooms. **Conducting research enables teachers to develop reflection. Thus, it provides opportunities to analyze the pedagogical activity, allowing teacher-researchers to evolve and construct their self-images.** Therefore, teacher education programs should foster self-reflection, critical thinking, and research in order to understand

how teachers convey teacher knowledge and transform or take on new identities. Teachers' reflection as a result of their graduate studies is associated with their development of inquiring skills, namely, their abilities to bring changes into their school settings (Clavijo et al., 2004). Besides, as teachers become researchers, "they permit teacher educators to solidify the new communities of teacher-researchers who are engaged in transforming educational practices at all levels" (Pineda and Clavijo, 2003, p. 81). **To conclude**, I tackled the construct of researcher identity as a dynamic and socially constructed process that is influenced as teacher-researchers engage in the process of learning to teach, conduct research, and reflect on their experiences in their classrooms.

An Ecological Perspective on Identity Construction.

To better understand teacher-researcher identity construction, it is crucial to analyze the interplay between teacher identity and researcher identity through an ecological lens. "The term ecology, from a biological perspective, refers to the study of the relationships and interactions between and among organisms and their environment" (Goodnough, 2010, p. 170). Van Lier (2004) defines ecological theory as "a way of thinking and acting" that "assumes that humans are part of a greater natural order, or even a great living system" (p. 3).

An ecology can exist if there are two or more actors/factors that harmoniously interact among them within a specific context. For instance, to understand why an apple tree produces such an abundance of fruit it is necessary to consider the apple tree is caught

up in webs of exchange, providing shelter and sustenance for insects, birds and mammals. They, in turn, pollinate its blossoms, distribute its seeds, and fertilize its roots (Davis et al., 2000). Thus, it is possible to talk about ecology as there is a relationship among the tree and the other living species, the first nurtures the others and conversely. Moreover, the life of the tree is considered in relation to the life of the forest of which it is a part (settings).

Adopting an ecological perspective to study the complexities of many aspects of education is not new (see Odom et al. 2002; Reyes, 2009). An ecological lens has previously been considered to examine different areas in the field of second language teacher education such as teacher agency (Miller & Gkonou 2018) identity itself (De Costa & Norton 2017) and educational policies. For instance, Firestone (1989), building on Long (1958), stresses that educational policy can be thought of as an ecology. In Firestone's viewpoint, many social aspects (such as the classroom aspects, the research aspects, the district aspects, and the legislative aspects) operate within the educational system, and these aspects interact in an ecological way. Similarly, Goodlad (1987) theorized teacher reform and leadership through a metaphor of ecology.

Teacher and researcher identities ecologically co-exist despite inevitable tensions. Xerri (2017) argues as a teacher researcher that alternating both his identities (TI and RI) and keeping them completely separated is not an option. He claims that if he had seen his teacher identity and researcher identity separately since he became a teacher-researcher, these would have 'suffered'. Likewise, Banegas (2012) embraces the co-existence, co-relation and acknowledges the ecology of both identities "I could not split the *organic* relationship within my teacher-researcher identity" (p. 34). He asserts that many of his accounts as a teacher are constantly informed by knowledge from his formal

education as a researcher. Moreover, Banegas (2012) states that his classroom experience determines his decisions as a researcher. Lastly, he claims that teacher-researchers do not like to be labeled as teachers doing research but as teachers and researchers in their own right. That is to say, teachers involved in research processes want to claim the RI for themselves without losing their TI.

Teacher identity and researcher identity inform each other. Individuals who hold both identities are likely to benefit from the symbiotic relationship of TI and RI. On the one hand, TI is revitalized by RI. Teachers' awareness and sensitivity are increased which derives into an improved understanding of learners' needs and perspectives, development of theoretical and practical knowledge for teaching (Edwards, 2020). "Teacher-researchers extend their individual theories about teaching and learning, then apply their improved theoretical knowledge to their teaching practice" (Edwards, 2020, p. 9). Moreover, confidence about teaching can result from the natural interplay of both identities. The enthusiasm or motivation for the teaching career is also particularly renewed when teachers assume a researcher role. On the other hand, RI can be revitalized by TI through changes of perceptions or beliefs about research, development of research skills as well as sustained engagement in research. The above is possible as teacher-researchers take ownership of the research process in their immediate contexts (e.g. their classrooms) while realizing the applicability of research to their teaching. In addition, researchers' autonomy and their appreciation of the value of collaboration with peers can be greatly influenced by features of TI. Lastly, the ecological interaction between the teacher and researcher identities fosters agency among the individuals that can help them overcome the possible tensions and obstacles that may arise as a consequence of holding both identities.

To sum, teacher researcher identity construction can be analyzed under an ecological lens as teacher identity and researcher identity relate and ‘fuel’ one another. Despite possible tensions, the natural co-existence of these identities may bring affordances at cognitive, professional and even emotional levels for individuals who hold them.

Researcher Identity from a Poststructuralist Perspective.

In order to understand the researcher identity construction process at a deeper level, I decided to consider this phenomenon from a poststructuralist viewpoint. A poststructuralist perspective highlights the importance of a complex social practice through which relationships are defined, negotiated, and resisted (Norton et al. 2011). Various scholars (Hall, 1992; Grass, 1998; Norton et al. 2011) who advocate poststructuralist theories of language, recognize identity as a dynamic process that takes place in relation to the larger social world. Individuals negotiate and renegotiate a sense of self as they engage in social interactions. Omoniyi and White (2008) assert that RI is indeed a role, a subject position, and a mixture of individual drive and social influences (Omoniyi & White, 2008). Norton (2014) similarly states that the social and cultural practices we engage in, serve to construct our identities. Thus, it follows that the different settings and interactions relate powerfully to the ways in which identities are constructed.

From a poststructuralist point of view, researcher identity is “fluid, multiple, diverse, dynamic, varied, shifting, subject to change and contradictory” (Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad, 2014, p.). In line with Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad’s (2014) idea of seeing identity as a dynamic process, Norton (2014) also recognizes that identities are contingent, shifting, and context-dependent, and that while identities or positions are often given by social structures or ascribed by others, they can also be negotiated by agents who wish to position themselves.

Poststructuralists do not see identity as a ‘given or innate’ feature; on the contrary, individuals themselves must construct who they aspire to become. Individuals are able themselves to choose who they want to be and how they want to be recognized in specific settings. In this sense, identity claims are defined as “acts” through which individuals construct new definitions of who they are (Kouhpaenejad & Gholaminejad, 2014). Put differently, teachers who are to be recognized as researchers must construct that identity for themselves by learning and engaging in research. Since researcher identity is a socially constructed process, teachers are required to engage in meaningful research experiences throughout their stay in initial teacher education undergraduate and graduate programs. As these teachers conduct their own studies, they begin to see themselves and be recognized by others as researchers, which may significantly contribute to strengthening their new identity as teacher-researchers. Additionally, they develop connections with their research topic and setting, and “may even be personally transformed by the research [projects they conduct]” (Dryden, 2009, 42).

A poststructuralist perspective also highlights the importance of social interactions when constructing identities. Social activity is a key aspect through which teachers not only **attain** teacher cognition and teaching experience but also co-construct their new researcher

selves. Cavanagh et al. (2014) point out that teachers acquire a new understanding of how to be and how to teach from their experiences as learners and contact with teachers. Teachers are then likely to build an identity as they engage in a sociocultural environment. Muhammad et al (2015) claim that researcher identity is equally “shaped through our social location within society and reinforced through interactions with others relative to that position” (p.3). In a similar way, Vygotsky (1987) highlights that it is through others that we become ourselves while Engeström (1987) highlights the importance of social interaction since “the individual’s contribution quickly loses its individual identity and merges into a vast pool of similar contributions in the social exchange within communities” (p. 127). In short, teachers co-construct a new sense of being through social interaction as members of different communities. This social interaction often contributes to refine and shape not only their teacher identity but also their researcher identity.

To conclude, a poststructuralist perspective helped me to understand the process of researcher identity construction in the context of the present study. Participation in academic learning contexts and socio-cultural activities can offer teachers the opportunity to reflect and transform their understanding of who they are as teachers and consequently as researchers.

This chapter has addressed the theoretical constructs and conceptual lenses that allowed me to examine the researcher identity construction. First, I discussed the construct of teacher identity as a prolonged and ongoing process that is mediated through social interactions. Second, I addressed the issue of researcher identity including its social, dynamic, and reflective nature. Third, I introduced the ecological lens as part of the conceptual framework that helped me better understand the researcher identity construction process. Finally, I reviewed the poststructuralist perspective as another conceptual lens that

equally contributed to my understanding of researcher identity as a dynamic and socially constructed process.

Chapter 3

Related Studies

This chapter presents a series of related studies on the issue of teacher-researcher identity construction in the field of language teaching. I examined empirical studies published in well-known journals over the last decade in order to understand the issue of researcher identity; however, there has been little focus on the identity of the teacher-researcher (Norton and Early, 2012). As a result of the process of reviewing the literature, I took into consideration seven research articles that provided significant insights regarding the elements that may influence the construction of researcher identity. The selected articles fulfilled the following criteria: they were published in peer-reviewed journals, and they related to teacher/researcher identity construction. On the other hand, I did not find articles with a focus on researcher identity construction in Colombian journals. However, I took into consideration articles on teachers' research engagement and commitment in the Colombian context since the act of conducting research is a relevant source for RI construction.

Nana and Jing (2017) conducted a qualitative narrative study to understand the researcher identity construction of four Chinese university EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers. These authors aimed to explore crucial socio-institutional and individual factors that afforded and constrained RI construction. The data were collected through narratives and in-depth interviews. The findings provided information about the factors in academic learning contexts such as Master and doctoral programs that contributed to the development of RI. Four relevant individual aspects that affected participants' RI construction were motivation, academic qualifications, publications, and

networking with researchers. Outcomes also indicated that higher education programs supported the construction of RI whereas institutional and social context constrained its development.

Xu (2014) conducted a narrative inquiry to understand EFL teachers' research practices and their identity construction as researchers in China. This study drew on narrative frames and in-depth interviews to describe four scenarios where teachers' researcher identity construction took place. The first scenario called *a struggling periphery research practitioner* portrays Min's story, a lecturer in his early thirties with six years' teaching experience attempting to self-position as a researcher without much success. The second scenario '*a self-contented established researcher*' presents Dan's experience, an associate teacher with 18 years of experience who successfully claimed her researcher identity. Dan's success is attributed by herself to her research engagement during her Ph.D. studies. However compulsory, her research engagement in postgraduate education and further publications increased her interest in research and motivated her to assume a researcher's voice. The third scenario '*a passive would-be researcher*' describes Jenny's experience of being obliged to be involved in research to get a promotion, despite that condition, she displayed her interest in research and her efforts to become a researcher. The fourth scenario *a disheartened non-researcher* introduced Peter's story. Peter had less than three years of experience, one publication in a journal but felt completely discouraged to become a researcher by contextual factors. Most of the factors were connected to his workplace conditions. The impossibility to get a better job contract, low income, and inequalities in relation to his colleagues made Peter focus only on his classroom performance and abandon his initial interest in research. Thus, findings suggest that several

aspects highly influenced participants' RI construction process. These included: academic competence signaled by research interests and publications, institutional and peer support in the workplace, and the academic and professional life cycles in which participants were involved.

Norton and Early (2011) conducted another study that aimed to understand the importance of narrative inquiry in the researcher identity construction. They invited teachers from a poorly resourced rural school in Uganda to participate in a collaborative research project. Relying on small stories, the authors argued that several researcher identities were identified, including international guest, collaborative team member, teacher, and teacher educator. Norton and Early (2011) concluded that narrative inquiry makes visible the complex ways in which researcher identity impacts research, not only in language teaching but also in education more broadly.

Jurasaitė-Harbison & Rex (2005) conducted an ethnographic study in the elementary department of a school in Lithuania. The authors discovered in the data gathered that a teacher was taking on the identity of a researcher as she experienced informal dialogues with other researchers and reflected on her own practices in the classroom. The findings highlighted the importance of “each interactional position since it was a form of subjectivity, an expression of personhood, and a way of being from which the participant viewed herself as a teacher and reexamined her practice” (Jurasaitė-Harbison & Rex, 2005, p. 447). The authors similarly acknowledged that professional identities emerge discursively in different social interactions since language is a constitutive element in identity construction.

In a conceptual article, Banegas et al. (2019) explored the relationship between teacher research and teacher identity in language education programs. The conclusions outlined that educational associations, institutions, and organizations helped teachers develop their teacher-researcher identity. Besides, the authors discussed the importance of approaching and including inquiry-based activities in initial English language teacher education programs as those are means to inform and transform teachers' practices. In other words, conducting research **is seen as a process of empowerment and reflection**. Similarly, Banegas et al. (2019) suggest that conducting research should be seen as a process of teacher empowerment and reflection since, through research, teachers gain the competence to justify their pedagogical practice. Finally, the authors highlight that teacher research is promoted among in-service teachers through short courses and postgraduate programs, allowing teachers to become stronger reflective practitioners, curriculum designers, researchers, authors, and above all generators of situated knowledge and context-responsive pedagogies.

Regarding the issue of teachers' research engagement and commitment in the Colombian context, Viafara and Largo (2018) conducted a survey study that explored eighty English teachers' perceptions concerning the influence of graduate programs and courses on their teaching and professional development. According to participants, their enrollment in a master's program and research processes positively impacted their development as teachers since they became more reflective. Likewise, conducting research as graduate students fostered these teachers' reflection as they configured and conducted informed and coherent inquiry and pedagogical activities and understood the importance of research in their professional development. Findings showed that the collaboration within

the school community when conducting research projects resulted in a growing awareness about the relevance of research. Thus, the newly acquired knowledge put the participants in a privileged position so that other stakeholders, colleagues, and experienced researchers accepted offers to develop research projects with them. However, some members of participants' school communities seemed to oppose their innovation plans derived from research due to traditional beliefs.

This section has offered a brief review of the aspects that influence the construction of teachers' researcher identity. The previous studies highlight that the research instruction student-teachers received in graduate programs helped them to develop a deeper understanding of conducting research, taking on a new identity as researchers, and becoming transformative intellectuals (Xu, 2014; Nana and Jing, 2017). Likewise, social interactions, educational institutions, and peer support in the workplace became a source of researcher identity formation since they provided individuals with opportunities to integrate a new model of being and acquire the theoretical and practical tools to enact research (Banegas et al., 2019; Jurasaitė-Harbison & Rex, 2005). Considering the local context, scholars (Viafara and Largo, 2018; Granados-Beltrán, 2018) asserted that enrollment in master-level programs provided teacher-researchers with opportunities to reflect and transform their pedagogical practices within the classroom. Besides, as teacher-researchers engaged in action research projects, they became power literate and pursue research in the field of English language teaching.

Chapter 4

Research Design

This chapter introduces the research approach and type of study, offers a description of the setting and participants, and presents the methods for collecting and analyzing data including a description of 'retrospective accounts'. Additionally, this chapter provides an explanation of the researcher's positionality, and the contexts where they constructed their identities. This chapter finally addresses the issue of trustworthiness, ethical considerations that guided this narrative research, and participants' trajectories.

Qualitative study

The study was conducted under the qualitative research paradigm. According to Kumar (2011), the main focus of the qualitative paradigm "is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people" (p. 103). Likewise, LeCompte and Schensul (1999) claim that qualitative research focuses on participants' perspectives, meanings, and multiple subjective views. Since identity involves internal processes, participants' perceptions became highly relevant and a central focus of the study. Marshall and Rossman (2011) present five general hallmarks of qualitative research relevant to understand how suitable the paradigm is for the present inquiry. Qualitative research is enacted in naturalistic settings, draws on multiple methods that respect the participants' humanity, focuses on context, is emerging and evolving, and is fundamentally interpretive (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Narrative Research

The type of the current inquiry is narrative research. Creswell and Poth (2018) define narrative as research that starts with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals. In contrast, Clandinin (2013a) highlights that "the focus of narrative inquiry is not only valorizing individuals' experience but is also an exploration of the social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional narratives within which individuals experiences were, and are, constituted, shaped, expressed and enacted" (p. 18). Thus, it is relevant for the present study to consider within narratives the social background and context where teachers constructed their RI. By addressing participants' narratives of experience throughout their higher education and professional trajectories, I was able to comprehend the circumstances that facilitated and hindered participants' RI construction.

Retrospective accounts in narrative research

Narrative inquiry is a way of collecting subjective interpretations of the past from the perspectives of individuals who lived those experiences. That is to say, narrative inquiry relies on "stories constructed about past events that give an account for those events" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 170). These stories encompass personal experiences that reconstruct people's lives (Glover, 2003). Polkinghorne (1988) states that researchers can approach the inquiry explanatorily or descriptively from data collected through interviews. In either case, narratives are retrospective accounts. Stories are longitudinal in nature, they unfold over time. Descriptive narrative inquiry, according to Glover (2003), aims to

"represent the stories individuals or groups use to understand the temporal connections between the events they have experienced . . . [and] seeks to understand how individuals, who reconfigure their lived experiences as stories, represent themselves and other social actors in their accounts" (p. 152)

Retrospective data gathering can elicit meaningful information for narrative studies. Although no set of measures is likely to completely eliminate error and bias in retrospective accounts as participants are asked to recall past events, states of mind or mental processes, the literature suggests that steps can be taken to reduce concerns related to trustworthiness. One of the most effective techniques used to improve recall is the stimulation of memory through cues. Beckett et al. (2001) suggest that a pre-stimulation can end up in a more accurate recall. A prestimulation can be accomplished by sending participants a diagram, a photo, or a short text prior to some data gathering stages making the attitudinal object salient in the participants' mind through emotional or cognitive appeals (Jaspers et al., 2008). In the present study participants were pre-stimulated through timelines (see appendices F & G) that were sent via email prior to the interviews to help them recall. Moreover, Ericsson and Simon (1980) present a technique that can provide more accuracy to the retrospective exercise. They suggest asking participants to report salient events rather than general information. Similarly, Yarrow et al. (1970) state that individuals are able to recall better specific events. Thus, in the present study particular attention was given to special academic experiences. Participants were asked to recall their memories on joining/graduating from undergraduate, master and doctoral programs, presenting their thesis proposals, taking certain courses, which constituted remarkable experiences in their academic/professional lives. The timelines (See appendices F & G) had bullets and cues with outstanding moments in participants' academic lives as teachers and researchers to help them recall more concrete details or information.

An issue that may arise from focusing on specific events is that people reconstruct the past, either intentionally or unconsciously, to align with their current situation (Henry et al., 1994). Individuals tend to seek meaning in the past. Some people may not want to

express things that would reduce the worth or meaning of their previous experiences, particularly when those experiences are tied to conceptions of self (Yarrow et al., 1970). Those may end up making participants respond influenced by the need to show achievement or receive social acceptance which is called ‘attributional bias’. To reduce that risk, the questions used during the interviews were carefully designed and proofread. In addition, participants were given the chance to tell their stories spontaneously in the personal narratives. Participants were asked to write three narratives by following a prompt. The prompt in each of the narratives was designed in a way that participants could tell their stories without feeling constrained to tackle a specific achievement in their identity construction process. Instead, participants were placed in a specific time period of their educational process and asked to openly narrate their experiences research-wise.

Context

This research study was developed in the context of a public university in Southern Colombia. The university offers a wide variety of undergraduate teacher education programs including an English language teacher education program from which all participants of this study graduated at different times. The main goal of this undergraduate program is to prepare prospective EFL teachers to work in primary and secondary schools in the country. To achieve this goal, students in the program are expected to gain pedagogical, communicative, social and research competencies. Mandatory research courses in the program include ‘Research Methodology’ ‘Research Seminar’ and a newly added elective course on ‘action research’. The ‘research methodology’ course covers a balanced and objective view of methods including “formal experiments, introspective methods, ethnography and case studies” (microdiseño curricular). Special “emphasis is

given to the context of educational research, particularly in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. The course also examines “the context of educational research, planning educational research, strategies for data collection techniques, as well as data analysis” (microdiseño curricular-). **The microdiseño curricular is a formal document that includes the teaching disciplines, subjects, and themes, delimiting the epistemological and methodological structure that supports the teaching-learning process of language teachers in the process of becoming agents of change.** In the ‘research seminar course’ students get familiar with “the necessary theoretical principles and practical tools to conduct a diagnostic research project, in keeping with the research lines of the Faculty of Education and the English Teacher Education Program” (microdiseño curricular-). Similarly, student-teachers are required to develop mini-scale research projects during their teaching practicums. Specifically, they observe school settings, identify an area of improvement, and formulate a research question that enables them to address the issue and develop strategies to ease the difficulty.

The ‘action research’ course is meant to encourage students to “deal with strategies to identify problematic situations or issues considered to be worthy of investigation in order to bring about changes in practice” (microdiseño curricular-). Learners are asked to collect data and interpret, develop problem-solving strategies, and report their findings.

The same public university also offers a variety of master level programs, including the Master in English Language Teaching from which participants in the current study graduated recently. The research component of this program curriculum includes the following courses ‘Introduction to Research and Academic Writing’, ‘Research Methods’, and ‘Thesis Research’. These courses were designed mainly to accompany the research project students must undertake to obtain the master’s degree. ‘Introduction to Research

and Academic Writing' aims to enable graduate students to develop their ability to critically evaluate academic articles and papers, including research studies, in the field of English language teaching. It focuses on assessing the efficacy of research questions and evaluating the significance of research rationale and the pertinence of research methods used to conduct studies. Moreover, students taking this course are expected to gain basic academic writing skills. The above is achieved through discussions, specific readings, academic writing tasks, and article presentations. The course 'Research Methods' continues with the process initiated in 'Introduction to Research and Academic Writing'. This course introduces the different existing qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods designs and a variety of research genres (e.g. narrative, action research, critical race theory). Through a series of discussions, presentations, and writing assignments, students become acquainted with the different methods and approaches and help them develop a proposal, which is the first stage of a research project. Once student-teachers complete this course, they present their research proposal which is progressively refined with the help of a thesis advisor.

The course 'Thesis Research' is meant to help students refine their pedagogical and research designs and engage them in their studies' actual data collection and analysis stage. Through discussions, group work, lectures, writing activities, and tutorial sessions, students learn theoretical foundations about data collection logistics, processes, and related ethical considerations. Students are also expected to use the knowledge acquired during the course to make decisions regarding their own research projects. Finally, they become acquainted with data analysis procedures and get initial research practice to facilitate their stay in a master level program.

Throughout the master's program, students are encouraged and financially supported to attend and present in national and international research events led by

programs of other universities and organizations (e.g. Symposium on Research in Applied Linguistics, ASOCOPI Annual Congress, Conference by the American Association for Applied Linguistics - AAAL). The previous academic events covered a wide variety of research topics including but not limited to bilingualism policies, plurilingualism, interculturality, professional development, communicative language skills development, use of L1 (mother tongue) in L2 (second language) teaching, the connection between foreign languages and indigenous languages, language assessment, autonomous learning, teacher identity and innovative practices (MDI, 2019).

It is relevant to highlight that annually, the master and undergraduate programs in English language teaching from the same university organize a symposium on research in foreign language teaching. Students from both programs are encouraged to participate as presenters in this event. This symposium constitutes a venue to disseminate results from research studies, teaching practicum experiences, and pedagogical reflections connected to the field of foreign language teaching and learning (Macías & Jaime, 2020).

The master's program in English Language Teaching offers students the opportunity to join two different research groups (*Comuniquémonos* and *Aprenap*) in order to gain broader knowledge on the field of English language teaching; identify problematic issues worthy of investigation, and lead social projects that benefit the local community. The five participants involved in the present study were not subscribed to the previously mentioned research groups when they completed their master's program. Moreover, teacher-researchers developed a deeper understanding of the necessary theoretical and practical principles to conduct research and adopted a research line based on their research interests including: language teachers' professional development, technology and language teaching, development of communicative competencies, and teaching English to children (MDI,

2016). The master's program in English Language Teaching has a repository of 46 dissertations developed within the research lines mentioned above. At the time the data for the present project were being collected, students from the master's program had published 11 articles in peer-reviewed journals since the program started in 2014 (MDI, 2018).

Participants

The group of participants selected for the present research study were two female and three male English language teachers who graduated from an undergraduate English language teacher education program in a public university in Southern Colombia. In the undergraduate-level program, participants took mandatory research courses such as 'Research Methodology' and 'Research Seminar' in order to gain knowledge and skills on the research process. Additionally, three of the participants took '*seminario de grado*' as a degree modality to obtain their bachelor's degree while two others conducted a small-scale research study as their degree modality. '*Seminario de grado*' is an academic and research activity that seeks to deepen students' knowledge obtained during the undergraduate program (Acuerdo 047, 2019). Three aspects were considered to purposefully select participants. First, participants' educational trajectories. All participants had obtained their undergraduate and master's degree in English Language teaching from the same university by the time the study was conducted. Second, participants' research engagement. All participants had led research projects and published at least one article in a peer-reviewed journal by the time they were contacted whereas two participants were pursuing doctoral studies. Third, participants' accessibility, convenience, and willingness to participate and contribute to the inquiry were also considered (Hatch, 2002; Walford, 2001).

Participants were first approached and invited to participate in the study through e-mail. Those participants who replied to the message showing interest in the project were sent a consent form (Appendix A) with all the details of the study: the purpose of the study, the type of data I was to collect, procedures to collect the data and uses of the data collected. Later, participants were requested to attend an informative virtual meeting to learn about specific aspects included in the consent form such as participants' right to abandon the study at any stage if they decided to do so and their bestowing anonymity. I also informed participants that due to the health emergency caused by Covid-19, all the data collection activities were to take place in virtual settings.

Researcher's Positionality

The researcher's stance impacts the investigation course. Bourke (2014) states in this regard that "it is reasonable to expect that the researcher's beliefs, political stance, cultural background (gender, race, class, socioeconomic status, educational background) are important variables that may affect the research process" (p. 2). Considering the above, it is important to clarify my positionality as a researcher.

As a researcher, I joined and completed the undergraduate English language teacher education program at the same university where participants obtained their degrees. Nonetheless, I only knew Sofia, out of the five participants before carrying out the present study. My first contact with research was in the undergraduate program where I took the same courses that participants took: 'Research Methodology' and 'Research Seminar'. Sofia and I attended those mandatory courses together. Based on the insights I gained in 'Research Seminar', I started a research project related to one of the communicative

language skills which was a trendy research issue back then and it was an area of interest for me. I developed part of that project as a degree modality to obtain my degree along with Sofia. However, I took some seminars as a degree modality to obtain my bachelor's degree. I decided to enroll in 'seminario de grado' and I quit the research project because 'Seminario de grado' was a faster route to graduation. 'Seminario de grado' was an academic and research activity that sought to deepen students' knowledge obtained during the undergraduate program, it lasted 160 hours and it was structured in thematic modules (Acuerdo 047). Although I gained some insights related to research in '*Seminario de grado*', I regretted my decision. Finishing my research project would have given me valuable research experiences that could have helped me grow as a teacher researcher. Additionally, it could have helped me understand the social side of research early on in my professional development. Nine years ago, when I was doing the undergraduate program I perceived research as a complex, compulsory and demanding activity. However, my perception of research has changed over time and so have I. After participating in some action research projects at work and pursuing studies in the same master level program in English Language Teaching from which participants graduated at different times, I now feel more empowered and committed to embrace my role as a researcher. When I first started the present research project I hesitated a lot at the moment of making decisions. I still keep questioning myself, because a study does not only involve me, it involves others, however, it is precisely that which encourages me to improve as a researcher. I am not alone in this process, I still believe enacting research requires hard work and discipline but I am more self-aware, I have a wider baggage of research skills and I stopped viewing it as an imposed activity. Additionally, the researcher identity I am constructing has contributed to the improvement of my practices as a teacher. I am able to problematize from classroom

situations and follow research-related procedures to solve those problems. I stay updated due to the regular amount of reading that doing research requires. Likewise, the skills I have developed and the experiences I have had as a teacher have significantly contributed to my growth as a researcher. On the one hand, the leadership skills, autonomy, the ability to multitask, and keep a record of useful data are the result of years of experience as a teacher and have enriched my researcher self. On the other hand, my interests as a language teacher have influenced my interests as a researcher. I have decided to follow certain areas of inquiry based on the situations I experience as an educator on a daily basis.

My plans in the near future research-wise are to continue to learn through action, to learn from others and hopefully to be able to teach my students how to enact research.

All the above implies that I am in a position the participants were at some point in their lives. We have gone through similar academic and professional situations while becoming researchers, and sharing our native language. Narrative analysis views the role of the researcher as an opportunity rather than a bias. “As narrative inquirers, we become part of participants’ lives and they part of ours” (Clandinin, 2013a, p. 30). Thus, connections between the researcher and the participants should be acknowledged rather than neglected.

Data collection methods

Personal Narratives

Data were firstly collected in the form of personal narratives. According to Bennett (1986), “the presentation of self takes the form of personal narrative when our memories take shape through language. Stories may be told for the joy of telling, as an effort to relive the past, or as presentations of self” (p. 430). Langellier (1989) adds that “our stories tell us who we are and who we can-or cannot-be, at both surface and deep-level meaning” (p.

267). Thus, personal narratives allowed participants to reflect and confidently attempt to sort themselves out as researchers by recalling previous experiences lived within the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Three narratives were collected, participants were asked to write them and upload them to a personal folder in Drive. In the first narrative, participants were given a prompt (see Appendix B) to express their experiences, ideas, and beliefs connected to RI construction at the undergraduate level. Participants were asked to describe their first contact with research and their expectations in terms of research (if any) when they entered the English teacher education program. The different experiences that participants had in their classes and as members of research groups, the memorable interactions with other individuals through research, events, or any other aspect narrated through their narratives, shed light on their RI construction.

The second narrative sought to dig deeper into participants' experiences in the master's program in order to understand the process of RI construction. Participants were requested to read a quote to trigger, reflect and then describe experiences that had an impact on their researcher selves during their stay in the master's program. For instance, anecdotes with mentors and classmates, particular situations while developing their thesis projects during the program (affordances and challenges), or meaningful research-related lessons (see Appendix C).

In the third narrative, participants were asked to read a quote about becoming a researcher, reflect and describe the researcher they consider they had turned into after graduating from the master's program. They were asked to describe all anecdotes/experiences in regards to research after finishing the program to the day they wrote the third narrative. Anecdotes and experiences like pursuing doctoral studies,

participating in research events (research symposia, forums, conferences), research projects at their workplace or joining academic communities. Participants were told to mention as well their motivations, interests, and the research-related challenges that they had overcome since their graduation of the master program (see Appendix D)

In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews constituted another source of data collection. The implementation of in-depth interviews allowed me to gather meaningful experiences participants encountered upon entering and during their stay in the undergraduate and graduate programs. “Interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them. It is also necessary to interview when we are interested in past events that are impossible to replicate” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 108). For the present study, participants recalled meaningful events through their academic and professional trajectory that shed light on their RI formation. As identity construction is ‘a phenomenon that cannot be observed’, data related to the phenomenon was best gathered through interviews allowing participants to tell their own stories and voice crucial aspects of the RI construction process.

Showkat and Parveen (2017) state that “one of the most important benefits of in-depth interviewing is that it helps to uncover more detailed and in-depth information” (p. 5). For the present study, I interviewed each participant three times to gain further insights on the information initially provided by them in the personal narratives. The first interview elicited participants’ experiences linked to RI development upon completing their undergraduate program. It was conducted after participants had submitted the first written personal narrative. The second interview was conducted to expand participants’ ideas

connected to their RI construction upon completing the master's program. It was right after submitting the second written personal narrative. The third interview focused on participants' educational and research-related professional experiences after graduating from the master's program. This interview was conducted after participants presented the third written personal narrative. As participants' educational trajectories were similar in terms of a chronology of events, I designed a timeline (see Appendix F) that was sent to participants prior to the interviews which was used during the interview as well. The purpose of the timeline was to help participants recall previous experiences from their involvement in the undergraduate and graduate programs. I took into account the most remarkable stages participants went through that were crucial in the construction of their researcher identity. The three interviews were administered and video recorded through the platform 'Google Meet'. No face to face encounters were held due to the sanitary emergency caused by Covid-19. All interviews were done in Spanish (participants' native language) to make participants feel more comfortable. The interviews had some core questions (see Appendix H, Appendix I, and Appendix J) about their trajectories as teacher-researchers in the undergraduate and graduate programs. Other questions in the interviews were specially designed to expand on participants' ideas initially revealed in the written narratives.

Documents / Artifacts

Artifacts are documents that existed prior to the research at hand (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; LeCompte and Preissle, 1993).

According to Hopkins and Ahtaridou (2008), "documents surrounding a curriculum or other educational documents can illuminate rationale and purpose in interesting ways.

The use of such material can provide background information and understanding of issues that would not otherwise be available” (p.122). For the present study, documents such as higher education program curricula and research courses syllabi helped me comprehend participants’ educational background and the influence of the different courses and research activities in their RI construction. Moreover, documents facilitated the construction of a timeline to support participants’ narratives. Documents are objective sources of data due to their ‘nonreactive nature’, which means documents exist independent of a research agenda (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Thus, documents provided accurate information connected to participants’ research educational background that was taken into account in the elaboration of the timeline. The data collected through those documents allowed participants to recall meaningful experiences and interactions in the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Participants were also asked to submit three artifacts that defined them as researchers along with a brief description of their importance in the construction of their researcher selves. Artifacts were collected in the form of reflection articles, journals, flyers, research training material, pictures, and research projects (see Appendix E). Then, participants were required to select one out of the three artifacts as ‘the most representative one’ of their Researcher Identity. Lastly, participants were asked to talk about all the artifacts and explain in detail their selection during the third in-depth interview.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was done under the principles of narrative research. Polkinghorne (1995) states that paradigmatic cognition in narrative analysis "produces networks of concepts that allow people to construct experiences as familiar by emphasizing the common elements that appear over and over" (p.10). Thus, in this research study, data were

organized into features, then those features in data were classified into common categories. The above is considered 'inductively deriving concepts from data' (Polkinghorne, 1995).

Consequently, I performed the analysis of narratives reading each individual written narrative twice. It is relevant to recall that I decided to collect three different sets of narratives. The first set was collected to understand participants' identity construction upon completing an undergraduate-level program. I read this first set of five narratives to get acquainted with participants' ideas. That initial encounter with the data allowed me to identify some features and formulate questions to be included in a subsequent interview. The second time I read the same set of written narratives, I found some initial categories. I also assigned a color to each category to consolidate the color-coding system. I selected some excerpts to uphold each category.

Subsequently, I gathered curricula and syllabi to learn about participants' educational trajectories. "Documents of all types can help the researcher uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem" (Merriam, 1988, p. 118). I collected and highlighted excerpts from 'Proyecto educativo' of the English language teacher education program from 2012 to 2018. While coding relevant information, I paid particular attention to how structured the research component was and the addition of relevant courses to contribute to the teacher professional development in 'proyecto educativo' of the English language teacher education program from 2018 to 2022. I also examined the syllabi of the courses 'Metodología de la investigación' and 'Research Seminar' from the undergraduate program. Additionally, I analyzed the business management program's curriculum because one participant simultaneously studied that program and the undergraduate program in English language teacher education. I considered it relevant to collect those documents as the participant was in contact with

research in the business management program as well. Therefore, I focused only on the courses directly connected to research in the business management program. Later, I examined the 2011 version of the curriculum of the master's program in English Language Teaching and collected the syllabi of the following research courses in the same master's program: 'Introduction to Research and Academic Practices', 'Research Methods' and 'Thesis Research.' I focused on the objectives of these courses and the tasks students were asked to do as part of their thesis project development. To conclude this step, I designed a timeline using the data found in all the documents mentioned earlier. Timelines offer a visual depiction of a life history, where events are displayed in chronological order. Timelines facilitate recollection and sequencing of personal events (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). For the purpose of this study, the timeline was intended to help participants recall their experiences in the undergraduate program, the master's program and doctoral studies. I sent the timeline to the participants prior to the interview and used it during the interview as well. The timeline covered the entire educational trajectory since participants joined the English language teacher education program until the present day. For the participant named 'Hog', a special timeline was designed that included the courses taken in the business management program (see appendix G).

The next step involved the analysis of the first set of interviews. The first set of interviews allowed me to gather more relevant information, in addition to that provided in the first narrative, regarding the RI construction process upon completing the undergraduate program in English Language Teaching. I transcribed the individual interviews directly from the virtual meeting with the participants using Tactiq. Tactiq is a browser extension that automatically saves Google Meet live conversations to a word document in Drive. I first checked the transcriptions and refined them in order to have the final version. I

watched the video recordings of the first set of interviews and 'cleaned up the speech', that is, I removed repeated words and unfinished sentences to facilitate coding (Fraser, 2004). I made side comments indicating some silences and pauses that could eventually enrich the analysis (Fraser, 2004). The transcription of the interviews and subsequent refinement allowed me to get close to participants' stories. I color-coded excerpts that made reference to the factors that hindered and promoted Researcher Identity (RI) construction.

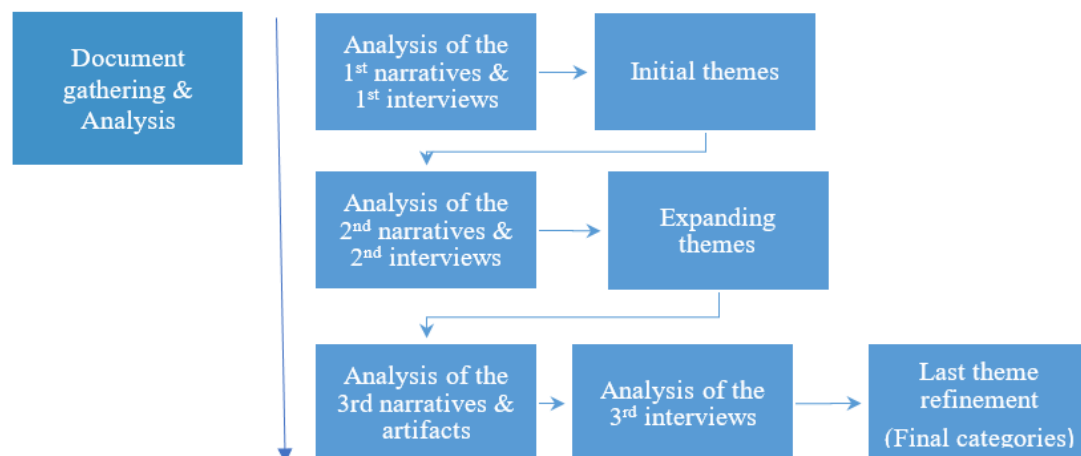
Later, I read the second personal narrative following the same procedure. I first read to make sense of participants' narratives and read again to identify excerpts that could support my categories. I found new categories and rearranged my initial categories. Some of them were: Impact of research, teachers' influence, support systems, internal drive towards enacting research, lack of maturity and self-awareness, lack of organization in the research component, perception of research as something hard to do, and lack of time to be involved in research processes. Then, I discussed my coding and analysis "dilemmas" with my thesis advisor to see if I could identify better connections among categories which is highly recommended for researchers analyzing data without partners (Burant et al., 2007 as cited in Saldaña, 2009).

Later, for the second set of data [second narrative about the master's program and second interview] I did the analysis following the same procedure which allowed me to expand the categories. I also identified new stages of the identity construction process. Regarding the third set of data which included the third narrative [about their experiences once they completed the master-level program], the artifacts, the third interview, and the procedure were different. I started double reading the third narrative, then I revised the products/documents uploaded by the participants to a Drive Folder and then I formulated some questions for the third interview. Moreover, I analyzed the curricula of the doctoral

programs from Concordia University and Universidad del Valle. I took into account information about the subjects they took to help participants recall experiences lived in each graduate program during the third interview. This third interview was also transcribed, refined, and analyzed in an attempt to identify data that could enrich or further support the categories and consequently identify new aspects of the researcher identity construction process. It is relevant to emphasize that the excerpts selected to uphold the categories were translated by myself from Spanish into English as the narratives and interviews had been conducted in participants' mother tongue, Spanish. An external person who was proficient in English/Spanish and had an academic experience at the level of a masters' program in English, verified the accuracy and quality of the translated excerpts used to support the outcomes of the present study. Thus, a deep revision of my translations by a language educator served to reduce potential bias by testing for equivalence, congruent value, and careful use of colloquialisms (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). The person in charge of checking the translations, assessed, refined, commented, and suggested some amendments such as changes of expressions to achieve semantic accuracy.

Figure 1

Data collection procedure



Note: procedure to gather the data (narratives, documents and interviews)

Trustworthiness and ethical considerations

On the other hand, it is crucial to mention that reliability and replicability will never be adequate frames for a narrative inquiry due to the multiple truths and standpoints considered (Bell, 2011). Instead, narrative researchers may consider other aspects such as access, verisimilitude, authenticity, and honesty.

In the present study, access was evidenced as I provided readers with first-hand accounts of participants' experiences narrated through their stories, "their cultural context and the process of construction of knowledge" (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 94).

Verisimilitude was evidenced as the participants' stories resonated with the experiences the researcher had. In this regard, I was a graduate student from the same teacher education program and lived through similar events like the five participants (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Another important aspect to consider is authenticity. This was addressed as I provided sufficient information to prove that the stories narrated were honest and coherent (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Honesty was evidenced in this study since participants read and checked the stories about their experiences reconstructed by the researcher, in order to confirm that these were accurate.

An analysis that 'makes sense' to the reader is considered to be trustworthy (Firestone, 1967, as cited in Merriam, 2009). To ensure the above, I piloted the three

written narratives including the instructions to help participants write their narratives. Moreover, to ensure verisimilitude and honesty, I relied on 'member checking' also called 'respondent validation', once I finished collecting data. Member checking is about soliciting feedback on emerging findings from the participants (Merriam, 2009). It "is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 111). Respondent validation can be considered "the most critical technique for establishing credibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314). Gathering data from multiple instruments and constant retrospection contributed to the study's accuracy since it reduced personal bias (Wolcott, 1975). I drew on data from multiple sources such as written narratives, in-depth interviews, documents, and artifacts (the artifacts were collected in the last stage). By doing so, I was able to contrast the information they had stated in the in-depth interviews or described in their written narratives and to dig deeper into their experiences within the undergraduate and master-level programs..

Regarding the ethical issues I considered when conducting the present study, I designed, explained and made sure all participants had knowledge of the purpose of the study, by signing a consent form (see Appendix A.). Also, the consent form informed participants of my intentions as a researcher and the data to gather. Participants were also reminded of their right to leave the study at any stage if they decided they no longer wanted to take part in the project. Lastly, they were introduced and provided with the contact information of the thesis advisor. In case participants felt overwhelmed by any procedure and unable to express it to the main researcher, participants could inform the thesis advisor. Since participants shared three different artifacts including journals, reflection articles or master's thesis, they were reminded of the respect for their intellectual property.

Participants' trajectories: An overview of participants' paths into research

This narrative research aimed to understand how five English language teachers constructed their researcher identity through their academic and professional experiences. The study also sought to identify the factors that promoted and hindered participants' researcher identity construction in the undergraduate and graduate programs. To have a better understanding of how this process occurred, it was crucial to present five different stories that reveal participants' paths into developing their research skills. These stories were written taking into account the remarkable experiences that participants described through their written narratives and in-depth interviews while illustrating how they constructed their researcher selves. It is important to mention that participants checked and read the stories I wrote, in order to confirm that the retold experiences were accurate and provided credibility to the present study. I relied on 'member checking' in order to explore whether narratives had resonance with participants' experiences, and to give participants the opportunity to consider if their experiences or perceptions as captured in the narratives applied to them (Birt et al., 2016)

Hog: A multitasker researcher

Hog started the undergraduate program in English Language Teaching in 2007; he was simultaneously studying an undergraduate program in Business Management. He joined both programs at the age of 15, and was not sure which professional line he was going to choose back then. He remembered his contact with research in the English language teacher education program was limited to isolated activities in pedagogical and research courses such as analyzing an issue encountered in the classroom. He perceived research as a way to solve classroom issues. Conversely, in the Business Management

program, he soon realized that research was a key aspect, useful in both professional careers.

However, as Hog was young and lacked maturity, he wanted to take the most accessible paths. To graduate from the English language teacher education program, he opted for '*seminario de grado*', as the fastest degree modality to obtain his bachelor's degree.

Moreover, to avoid developing a thesis, he decided to do a specialization as a degree modality to graduate from the Business Management undergraduate program. Little did he know that he had to conduct a research study to graduate from the specialization in Strategic Marketing Management. He then started a journey that helped him grow as a researcher. Hog learned from social interactions with classmates, professors, and the like. Later, Hog joined the master's program in English Language Teaching as he decided to follow the teaching career path. The master's program was an enriching experience for him as a researcher. But he also acknowledges how his experiences doing research in the Business Management field, despite their quantitative nature, prepared him to assume a teacher-researcher role. He was both working on his thesis project for the master's program and on a project as a business manager for his family company. Having graduated from the master's program, he used the feedback received from his professors during the dissertation to refine his master's thesis and published his first article in a national indexed journal. Thanks to his impetus to pursue research engagement opportunities, he was sponsored to attend a professional development program in Hyderabad (India) while he was teaching some courses at a public university in his hometown. He gained valuable insights from international professors and researchers. After that, Hog started his doctoral studies in English language teaching and was given the chance to teach academic writing and

research seminars in the same public university in his native town. He was then learning how to support others to become teacher researchers while developing a thesis on materials for his doctoral program.

Tyler: a research community member

Twenty-eight year old Tyler joined the undergraduate program in English Language Teaching in 2009. Tyler's mom was genuinely engaged in the Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation in Colombia, known as Colciencias. When teachers developed small-scale research projects that had meaningful learning outcomes, Colciencias supported and fostered those processes, and in some cases, participants were called to attend national events. Tyler went to Bogotá two times to attend those research activities and somehow, from those encounters he developed an interest in conducting research.

Tyler asserted that his contact with research during the undergraduate program was insufficient. He kept a record of all the courses he had taken since he was in the undergraduate program, and he claimed that his first contact with research was in the sixth semester. The undergraduate program was meant to last only eight semesters back then when Tyler was studying. His experience in the undergraduate program was marked by strict professors from different departments who disregarded his research ideas. Despite not feeling prepared to face research processes at that point, he was moved by the inspiration produced by his professors and his desire to learn, and found an inspirational role model as a researcher. Tyler joined the master's program in English Language Teaching, where he attended multiple national and international symposia, forums, and congresses. Those events were great opportunities for Tyler to expand his research knowledge and establish relationships with committed researchers. He became a member of one of the university's research groups in the same university where he obtained his master's degree. Tyler's

eagerness to continue to learn led him to join a second master's program in 2021.

Additionally, he currently belongs to an international research community in which he is very active. Tyler soon understood the value of belonging to a community of practice.

Katalina: a thoughtful teacher researcher

Katalina wanted to become a teacher since she was very young. She attended a 'normal' school. Normal schools have an agreement with higher education institutions to prepare educators for the preschool and primary levels. When students complete the cycle in a normal school, they receive a degree as qualified teachers, allowing them to continue into an undergraduate teacher education program in a college of education. Thus, Katalina started the undergraduate program in English Language Teaching with some expectations in regards to research because she had already been instructed on that matter. However, she felt her contact with research was limited at that stage of her life. She was critical about the matter. She stated that all courses related to research were based on identifying a problem, formulating research questions, or reviewing some literature through her undergraduate program. *"We were full of first steps, we had great professors with lots of experience as researchers, but the way the program was structured did not allow much progress. It was too much theory and little practice; there should be some sort of continuity"* (Katalina, IDI1 73). However, it was very different when she entered the master's program in English Language Teaching in 2017. For her, it was evident the articulation in the research component of the master's program.

Although her motivation towards research had decreased, her interest was renewed when she joined the master's program. Katalina was interested in becoming an agent of social change to contribute to her work settings, which is why she developed her thesis project at the school where she was working at that moment with her students as

participants. Her research project was significant and her thesis was approved with distinction. When she looked at the past, she reflected on how much she had changed as a teacher and grown as a researcher during the master's program. After she graduated in 2019, she published an article in a peer-reviewed journal. Since then, she has been making efforts to keep in contact with research, attending symposia, and looking for funding opportunities to do her Ph.D. But more importantly, she has kept reflecting on her practices as a teacher and has carried out classroom research. projects.

Tom: self-critical researcher

Tom entered the English Language Teacher Education program in 2007. For him, there was no actual research during the undergraduate program but short tasks or exercises connected to research. In the research courses, there was some sort of reflection based on identifying a problem in the classroom or reviewing some literature, but not to the point of developing a project. Tom joined a research group, but there was a lack of commitment from the members, and that initiative was not successful. As a requirement to graduate from the undergraduate program, he opted for designing the program's webpage. To do so, he conducted a comprehensive literature review on websites focused on English language teaching and education. He considered that conducting a state-of-the-art review was not an authentic experience as a researcher and felt dissatisfied with the project results. He stated that he would not have dared to call himself a researcher then, just like he did not dare to call himself a researcher today. He participated in those scenarios as a self-imposed labor, because he did not feel those activities actually promoted research.

Now I know you can debate, listen to other people's experiences that can guide you.

Currently, it is more common to see those kinds of research symposiums. However,

there are still many that have a traditional approach, and those are the ones I attended in the undergraduate program (Tom, WNI, 41).

When Tom joined the master's program in English Language Teaching in 2017, he faced challenging and exciting situations. He felt uncomfortable at the beginning of the process and was self-critical. He did not feel equipped to enact research in a master's program. Hence, he had to start reading more, listening to experienced professors, engaging in discussions with his classmates in less formal settings such as restaurants, cafés, or in his own house. He wanted to update his knowledge base and be a better practitioner everyday. During the master's program, he received the recognition of "Young Researcher". Nonetheless, that recognition did not have much impact on him because he was, as he currently is, interested in research because of the social impact that often accompanies this process. He had a high workload by the time he was doing the master's program and had to quit one of his jobs to engage in research projects properly. He felt he was not doing enough, he wanted to be more focused and work harder in research-related processes. He published an article in a peer-reviewed journal with one of his peers, and when he graduated from the master's program, he published a second article with his thesis partner. He won a scholarship and moved to another country with his family to study his Ph.D eager to learn and grow not only as a teacher but as a researcher. Later, he published a book related to the same field in which he had developed his thesis aiming to share his knowledge with other teacher researchers. After that, Tom continued tele-collaborating with teachers and student-teachers from his hometown university, moved mainly by the impetus to support his community through the knowledge he was gaining.

Sofia: a wholehearted teacher researcher

When Sofia started her undergraduate program in English Language Teacher education back in 2010, she was not aware of the fact that she was going to become a teacher. She joined the program mainly because she felt proficient in English as she had studied English at an institute before entering the undergraduate program.

Throughout the program, she understood that she was getting prepared to be a teacher. When she chose to work on a thesis as a degree modality to graduate, she understood that researching was highly connected to her role as a teacher. Although she felt that the research study she developed was not that valuable since it was related to one of the communicative language skills, she considered that it gave her ground for future research experiences. Thanks to that encounter with research in the undergraduate program, she was able to overcome academic challenges as a researcher in the master's program. She joined the master's program in English Language Teaching in 2017. She recalled the first semester as a struggling stage for her and her classmates. However, she felt more equipped because she had had contact with research before. Her thesis research idea in the master's program came as she got acquainted with the different trends in English language teaching in a pedagogical course. Her interests nourished her research enterprise as a teacher, and she enjoyed the process thanks to that.

Structuring the proposal and gathering the data were very challenging undertakings. She conducted a narrative inquiry and felt connected to participants' stories. Making sense of participants' words in the data analysis was both exciting and thought-provoking for her. After her dissertation, she continued working on publishing an article. She managed to publish her work in a prestigious international journal. Later on, she focused on publishing a book related to her master's thesis along with a classmate and her thesis advisor. They worked hard to edit and re-edit the information. Sofia was not optimistic the entire time; but

she trusted the process and the effort invested in the thesis project. Things turned out fine, and they managed to publish the book in 2021. Currently, Sofia is looking for new research opportunities. She is keen on doing a Ph.D. to keep working on ideas related to professional development, identity, and beliefs, as she feels particularly connected to these topics.

This chapter has presented the methodology that guided the present narrative study including the context and researcher's positionality, the methods and procedures of data collection, the stages of the data analysis process, issues related to trustworthiness and ethical considerations, and an overview of participants' trajectories.

Chapter 5

Findings

This chapter presents the findings that aim to respond to the questions that guided this research study. I will initially make reference to the aspects that constituted participants' researcher identity construction upon completing an undergraduate-level program and a master-level program. Then, I will provide a thorough description of the factors that promoted such as Higher education courses, Professors' influence, Peers' support, and Impact of research studies. As those that hindered the construction of researcher identity as revealed through participants' experiences: Lack of time for research processes, Lack of articulation of research in the undergraduate program, and Research as a compulsory task/work. I used the following letters and numbers to indicate the source of data for each excerpt: Written Narrative (WN), In-Depth Interview (IDI) accompanied by the number of the corresponding source (1, 2, or 3), and the number of the specific line in the narrative text or interview transcript where the quote was extracted from. The following example illustrates the previous strategy which corresponds in this case to line 11 in the second written narrative submitted by Tom: "I could talk to professors and classmates and they made me rethink my research projects, it was vital for me to appreciate that stage of my life" (Tom, WN2, 11).

Researcher identity construction process upon completing an undergraduate-level program

The narratives of participants revealed that they did not construct their researcher identity when completing the undergraduate-level program despite having received research instruction. Participants claimed to have faced some tensions in the undergraduate-

level program since they entered with a misconception about the goals of the program and were not mature enough to claim their teacher identity or their researcher identity. Besides, participants found research as a complex and irrelevant process that only experienced professors could develop. **In this sense, I will refer to lack of readiness to become researchers and lack of opportunities to enact research as tensions participants faced when constructing their researcher identity in the undergraduate program.**

Lack of readiness to become researchers

Participants' narratives indicated that they did not want to become teachers once they entered the undergraduate-level program. On the contrary, they reflected a higher interest in learning English to travel and work abroad rather than becoming English language teachers. Tyler said: I enrolled in the ELT program with the idea of learning English in order to travel, (...) but once I was in the third semester it was tough because I realized I was about to become an English teacher (Tyler, IDI1, 187). In this regard, Sofía affirmed that it never crossed her mind to become an English teacher: "I decided I wanted to study foreign languages, but because I wanted to travel and leave this country, not due to my desire to become an English teacher. (...) even though ... I ended up being one" (Sofía, WN1, 5). Since participants did not want to be teachers, they could not claim a researcher identity during their time in the undergraduate-level program. In line with Sofía's idea of not seeing the teaching profession as appealing, Tyler recognized he was reluctant to become a teacher and uncertain about being a researcher: I was not aware of becoming a researcher within the undergraduate program, (...). I wanted to pursue my degree to travel abroad (Tyler, IDI1, 186).

On the other hand, participants claimed they were too young when they enrolled in the undergraduate-level program. Therefore, they were not mature enough to understand the implications of becoming a teacher and a researcher. As stated by Hog: I have to confess that I was an undergraduate student, and I did not care so much about research, about academic knowledge, I actually went to research symposia more to enjoy and visit new places (Hog, IDI1, 162). Similarly, Tyler affirmed that he was too young to claim his teacher identity or his researcher identity for himself: I enrolled in the ELT program when I was 16. And I was not sure about becoming a teacher. I was not fully aware of becoming an English teacher in an elementary or high school. And I realized this when I was in the third semester (Tyler, IDI1, 187).

Taking into consideration the previous insights, participants pointed out that they joined the undergraduate-level program when they were too young, so they could not fully understand the value of becoming researchers back then. They could not develop their researcher selves since they were not mentally mature to take on a new role as researchers. Also, the five participants asserted that they were not aware of their role as researchers in the undergraduate level program because they were not familiar with the theoretical principles and practical tools to conduct research projects.

Lack of opportunities to enact research

As time went by in the undergraduate-level program, participants became aware of the implications of conducting research. Therefore, they did not recognize themselves as researchers when completing their bachelor's degree, mostly because they lacked research experience and perceived the research process as a complex procedure. On this matter, Sofía felt she lacked research competencies despite the fact of developing a small-scale

research project during her stay in the undergraduate program. She pointed out: *I was not a researcher, maybe we had studied aspects related to research and I wanted to learn more about it, (...) but I did not consider myself an expert in this matter* (Sofía, IDI2, 17).

Participants did not recognize themselves as researchers due to the lack of opportunities to develop research processes in the undergraduate program. Therefore, they found this process as something complex that only experienced professors could develop as Hog mentioned: “I had apathy towards the research processes, precisely because I considered research as something complex, boring, and tedious” (Hog, N1, 28). Since participants did not value their skills as researchers due to the lack of experience or research instruction, they tended to avoid any type of encounters with research scenarios. In this vein, Tyler expressed that he “took some seminars (seminario de grado) as a degree modality, I did it in order to avoid the famous thesis” (Tyler, IDI1, 113). However, he regretted his lack of commitment towards research processes as these would have facilitated his stay in the master’s program.

The lack of opportunities to enact research in the undergraduate level program forced participants to think of research as an unachievable task to do. Participants asserted that they focused on theory when taking research courses but lacked practice. In this regard, Katalina stated:

There was too much theory and little practice, that’s how I experienced it. We had these classes in which we were always presenting ideas for projects that were never implemented. Then, presenting and seeing my classmates present the same over and over again. (...) Writing questions repeatedly was like we were always in the first step of research; there should have been something else that could have been done through the courses] (Katalina, IDI1, 69).

Also, Katalina's experience in the undergraduate program evidenced a lack of practical tools to make sense of her role as a teacher-researcher. According to participants, they did not receive relevant research instruction to enact their role as teacher-researchers. Katalina stated: "doing research was never applied in a real educational field and the research never went as deep as it should have" (Katalina, WN1, 18). Hog similarly affirmed that when conducting research, they just observed classes but did not go deep into proposing solutions: "I remember that we observed classes in public schools (...). The main purpose of these observations was to identify recurrent problems presented by language teachers in relation to class discipline and student participation" (Hog, WN1, 11). Based on the previous insights, participants lacked the opportunity to develop a more profound understanding of research by experiencing the act of conducting research.

Likewise, participants highlighted the limited opportunities to carry out research studies when taking research courses, which affected the development of their research skills. Tyler expressed that "before my second year in the ELT program, (...) I hadn't had any contact with the field of research. Therefore, my preparation in this field was limited" (Tyler, WN1, 39). In the same matter, Hog added: "I must confess that in the undergraduate program, they did not contribute much in helping me to understand the difference between some important concepts about research and writing a research proposal" (Hog, WN1, 22). Considering the previous statements, the lack of opportunities to enact research did not allow teacher-researchers to recognize themselves as researchers. Since they were not familiar with the theoretical and practical tools to conduct research, they could not claim a researcher identity for themselves.

The previous insights disclosed a lack of opportunities to understand the research process from a deeper or practical perspective. As teacher-researchers had no opportunities to conduct research, they thought of it as a complex and irrelevant process for their professional development. Based on participants' experiences in the undergraduate-level program, they were not interested in conducting research and saw it as an isolated task from their role as teachers. Taking into account participants' narratives, I concluded that they did not develop their researcher identity when completing the undergraduate-level program due to their misconceptions about the goals of the English teacher education program and a disavowal towards becoming English language teachers.

Researcher identity construction process upon completing a master's degree program

In the present section, I introduce the salient themes in participants' narratives regarding their researcher identity construction process upon completing a master's degree program. Narratives revealed that when participants finished the program they felt they could claim the researcher identity for themselves. Although the teacher-researchers considered they were still refining their identities, they experienced shifts in two dimensions. First, participants' concept of research changed as they felt they earned a membership to the research community, a community they felt was reserved for an exclusive group of experts. Second, participants' self-concept shifted as they started to

acknowledge their new skills and be recognized as researchers by their colleagues and students.

Membership in a research community

Narratives of participants upon finishing the master's program, revealed a significant shift of the perception they had of research and how they saw themselves as researchers. This shift was evidenced as the five participants earned a membership in the research community which was constituted by scholars, professors, some graduate students and experienced researchers who were actively engaged in research.

Prior to the master's program, participants viewed research as an enterprise reserved for experts in the field. However, when participants entered the master's program they went through a rigorous process of reflection derived from their contact with research and the research community. Doing research led participants to a welcoming research community that was not as they had portrayed it before as they had initially assumed the community was extremely selective and less collaborative. In this regard, Tyler's idea of research and the research community was transformed as he became a member of a research group. The research 'legion' as this group was known let Tyler understand that research was not as complex as he thought and that through collaboration he could give and receive support from his fellow researchers.

"I joined a group. Well, it's not a group, it's a research community. (...) We have built this community of around 50 or 60 researchers working at undergraduate and graduate-level programs worldwide; some are from China and Australia. (...). Then, we have developed a 'research culture'. The community has grown without being

bound to a university. Some people call it 'the legion' because all members are constantly collaborating, supporting those who are doing their research projects (Tyler IDI1, 160).

Experiencing first-hand collaboration among researchers allowed participants to develop a sense of belonging to a research community, helping them refine their RI and perceiving the research process as something achievable. Hog remembered he attended events in which universities were allies of the research processes. He came back from those events feeling part of something broader, excited about the companionship and camaraderie among participants in those events.

“Then, luckily we had the possibility to attend one or two out of three research 'ASOSEARCH' events. Back then, there was an encounter between three universities annually. One of the universities used to be the host, and the others were participants. It was a beautiful research event. Students and experienced researchers from the same majors shared their experiences. We learned how to be a community through those events”. (Hog IDI1, 156).

In the same way, as RI construction is often in flux and is the result of constant reflection, having contact with researchers that would challenge their ideas and provide meaningful feedback was highly important for the participants to expand their research knowledge base. “Whenever you present your projects or proposals you need to be attentive because there will be people who know about research and they will give you feedback. They will help you change your perspective of research” (Tyler, IDI2, 169). RI construction is the result of interaction among individuals who relate to others due to and through their

role as researchers. As participants engaged in social interactions, they built a new understanding of what it implied to be a researcher. Participants as teacher-researchers joined professional networks that allowed them to keep updated and to disseminate knowledge obtained from research processes more easily. “Fortunately, with time and experience I’ve learnt how relevant it is to belong to research groups and communities, how much help you can receive in academic events, for example” (Tyler, IDI1, 198). Katalina’s experiences were similar to Tyler’s. She felt she experienced a sense of belonging to a collaborative community. As she put it, “I liked that everyone could participate, and you were able to meet people who were into research, who were willing to contribute to your work, that was very cool” (Katalina, IDI1, 106).

Likewise, Hog, who had seemingly avoided research during the undergraduate program, experienced a meaningful change during the master’s program. He wanted to pursue further research opportunities after graduating from the master’s program and felt highly supported and encouraged by the research community he had become part of. A teacher-researcher he had met in a convention introduced Hog to the coordinators of a doctoral program and that same teacher-researcher reviewed his proposal. “He checked my proposal and I felt like a novice teacher researcher, the entire proposal was gone, but his constructive criticism led me to reset my initial idea, which was something good in the end” (Hog, IDI3, 303).

Participants also started to view research as a less complex process as members of the research community started to acknowledge their skills as researchers. “I feel I have so many tools, I feel I have many skills. For instance, my thesis advisor said that I have the ability to find documents easily, thanks to technology. Thus, it has helped me a lot, I’ve

developed some sort of expertise” (Hog, *IDI2*, 470). Similarly, Hog pointed out that he had changed his perception toward the research process during his stay in the master’s program which led him to consider research as something he could undertake in view of the support he and his classmates had received from the researcher community. “Obviously there was a period of two or three years that definitely changed my concept of what today I believe research means, of how I perceive research, of how I understand it and how I make others (my students) understand it, thanks to professors and colleagues” (Hog, *IDI2*, 463).

Considering the previous insights, participants experienced a shift in their perception of research as they completed the master’s program. This conceptual shifting was evidenced as the five teacher-researchers obtained a membership in a research community, which helped them understand that undertaking research was an achievable process. Besides, once scholars, professors, graduate students and experienced researchers welcomed the participants into a community of practice, they developed a new sense of being researchers, understood the implications of conducting research, and built a professional affiliation toward research processes.

Social Recognition

Participants’ self-concept and RI construction process shifted as they were recognized as members of a community of practice. The immersion in a research community, granted participants with opportunities to experience social recognition as researchers while valuing their competencies and building a new sense of professional affiliation when completing the master’s program. The fact of being recognized as researchers by their professors, colleagues and students became a tipping point that led them to a self-concept change.

Since the RI construction happened in social interactions: professors and colleagues played a crucial role in forming, sustaining, and transforming participants' professional identities. Social actors did not only provide teacher-researchers with tools to become reflective practitioners, but also valued their competencies as they joined research groups.

Participants pointed out the importance of being recognized as valuable members of a research group since it meant that they were knowledgeable in terms of research. In this sense, a professor from the university invited Tyler to join a research group. This experience allowed him to grow as a researcher as he stated: "you are constantly learning... by working with these researchers [professors from the master's program]. I constructed my identity as a researcher throughout that process. I even discovered my interests in terms of research" (Tyler, IDI2, 642). In this sense, the experience of conducting research projects together with professors with a huge research trajectory, empowered participants to take on a new identity since they were being acknowledged as researchers.

Furthermore, Katalina mentioned that her colleagues recognized her competences as a researcher based on her trajectory in the master's program. She stated that "my colleagues know that I have the potential to conduct research projects and they have invited me to work on some projects" (Katalina, IDI 3, 63). Katalina and other participants received a distinction for their master's thesis, and the fact of obtaining such an important acknowledgement led them to position themselves as capable teacher-researchers in the field of English Language Teacher Education. In this regard, Hog affirmed that "a meritorious master's thesis has opened doors to many opportunities, I am sure that that recognition allowed me to enroll in a PhD program, I feel more experienced as a teacher researcher" (Hog, IDI2, 323).

Likewise, Katalina stated that when she received the distinction, she realized that her research idea was appealing and interesting for the scholars or professors who evaluated the thesis. Bearing in mind the previous statements, participants' images as researchers were transformed as the researcher community recognized their competences. Since Katalina and Hog obtained such an important recognition as researchers, they wanted to contribute to the field of language teaching with the knowledge gained throughout their stay in the master's program, so they decided to write an article based on their research study. In this sense, Hog claimed that the recognition of a master's thesis with distinction, motivated him to write an article as "I realized that I was doing something different from my other classmates (...) and that [this distinction] opened the possibility to enrich my résumé and to do different things [studying a doctoral program, teaching undergraduate students]" (Hog, IDI3, 445).

Katalina also commented that once she obtained the distinction for her thesis, she wanted to disseminate her knowledge with the teacher community. According to her, it was rewarding to see that

"the things do not remain in what you just studied, in what you solved, in what you improved. But [it is good to see] that the idea I had as a researcher, went beyond, and it reached others. I feel that is a great contribution as a researcher to the field" (Katalina, IDI2, 229).

In the same line of thought, Sofia stated that sharing her work with the researcher community was highly rewarding, it allowed her to self-position as a researcher "the fact of publishing [an article], being cited, and that people take into account what you wrote and find it interesting, recognizing your ideas as valuable is rewarding and it helps you believe in yourself as a researcher" (Sofía, IDI2, 363). Considering participants' responses, the idea

of submitting an article to a journal, receiving a positive response to publish it, and being recognized by the researcher community allowed them to self-position as researchers.

Tyler commented that he heard of an event at Universidad de Sucre where he could share initial ideas about his research proposal. He submitted a paper and received an acceptance letter from the university: “when I received the e-mail and realized that my proposal had been accepted, I was very happy and I thought that what I was doing in terms of research was not bad at all” (Tyler, IDI 3, 215). Once he attended the event, shared his findings with the researcher community and received interesting feedback, he knew he had to refine his idea, but the support he received was meaningful and allowed him to reinforce his self-image as a researcher. Tom mentioned that he attended an academic symposium with a colleague and shared with the researcher community their insights about a project. He claimed that “it was the first presentation we delivered in front of a research community (...). It was the first time I was in front of others... talking about what we had done, discussing an article we wrote on student teacher agency and teacher development. It was cool” (Tom, IDI2, 134). Moreover, Hog pointed out that once the researcher community recognized his contribution to the teacher education field, “you cannot stop there, you have to contribute with more (...) and whatever you do as a researcher you have to do it in the most responsible way” (Hog, IDI3, 174). Hog was also proud of the impact of his work as a researcher in the teacher community. He claimed that “the recognition I have received from the people in my region makes me proud because unfortunately, not many teachers conduct research studies nowadays (...) It is satisfactory to my community and to me, the fact of having an article published in an indexed journal” (Hog, IDI2, 377). Being able to contribute to their local communities with tangible ideas facilitated the self-image shift. Those participants, who prior to the master’s program used to see research as a very

challenging or impossible enterprise, now experienced the recognition of their colleagues, felt more empowered to support research processes and do research on their own.

The construction of RI was mediated as teacher-researchers' competencies were acknowledged by the research community members. Once social actors such as colleagues, professors, and peers valued and recognized their competencies as researchers, they began to take on a new identity [RI].

Belonging to a research group, working collaboratively with former professors of the master's program, and being recognized by a community for their contribution to the field of English language teaching, allowed these five participants to reinforce their images as researchers. They felt empowered since they realized that the knowledge they had gained throughout their stay in the master's program was important and had an impact on their regions and work settings. Participants' conceptual shift led them to view themselves as more capable researchers and voice their ideas in research related discussions.

Factors that promoted researcher identity construction

In the present section, I address the aspects that fostered and promoted researcher identity construction among participants by taking into account their experiences in the undergraduate and graduate programs. The factors considered under this category are: higher education courses, professors' influence, peers' support, and impact of research studies.

Higher education courses

Research instruction promoted RI construction. For some teacher-researchers, their experiences in different courses in the undergraduate and graduate programs granted them with meaningful instruction that enabled them to become the teacher-researchers they were

at the time of the data collection. For instance, Sofia mentioned that when taking some courses related to research in the undergraduate program, she got acquainted with the process of conducting research. In this sense, she said, “we took this course in English, we had to read articles in which they reported research studies. (...) This allowed me to understand its structure and how to write it” (Sofia, IDI1, 53). Thus, she affirmed that the knowledge gained throughout this research course was crucial when she had to develop a small-scale research for her degree modality. She highlighted that what she “studied in this course was useful to write and develop [her group’s] research proposal. What we did in this course was pretty basic. (...) However, it was useful once I enrolled in the master’s program” (Sofia, IDI1, 59). Also, Katalina acknowledged that in the undergraduate program she “learned to characterize, but we only focused on the first steps to conduct research: wrote down the research question, and developed a pedagogical intervention” (Katalina, IDI1, 190). Later, she considered that those aspects were useful in her RI construction when enrolling in the master’s program.

Consequently, they learned how to structure and modify their research project. In this sense, Hog claimed that his “research proposal changed from the moment [he] started the first semester until the end of the master’s program” (Hog, IDI2, 263). Higher education courses facilitated the interaction with peers and professors, and allowed participants to develop a deeper understanding of the research process.

Courses such as ‘Introduction to Research’, ‘Research Methods’, and ‘Thesis Research’ in the master-level program gave participants the chance to refine their research proposals, build knowledge about the research process, and gain a deeper understanding of their role as researchers in the field of English Language Teaching. To illustrate this aspect, Tom recalled his experience in the first year of the master’s program when he worked with

his thesis partner. When refining their research proposal, they initially wanted to study the issue of student-teachers' perceptions about language teaching instead of the construction of teacher identity. However, the interaction with his thesis partner and the contents covered in the program curriculum helped them to redirect their research interests. As he affirmed,

I started working with my partner, Sofía. We did not have in mind the idea of studying the issue of identity. (...) We did not have our research idea all of a sudden, it was changing from the interaction and talks I had with Sofía and Professor Apollo (Tom, IDI2, 101).

Thus, Sofía claimed that some courses helped her refine her research interests, and allowed her to gain knowledge of research. Later, she said that “some courses were useful when conducting our research project since those focused on certain topics that were suitable for our project. So, courses such as Research Methods and Thesis Research were useful to nourish our research” (Sofía, IDI2, 318). Additionally, “When taking a course with professor Somnus, we had to collect the data, so we designed the instruments, (...) contacted participants, (...). We wrote the consent form, (...) and collected all the data at the end of the third semester” (Sofía, IDI2, 203). The process of collecting and analyzing the data was guided by professor Somnus during the course ‘Thesis Research’. The experience these teacher-researchers lived throughout this semester allowed them to understand research processes at a deeper level, and develop new skills in terms of research. The courses taken in the master’s program allowed them to see research from another perspective and granted them opportunities to imagine themselves as researchers. For Hog, the knowledge gained in these courses brought him many opportunities since he managed to get a job in a higher education institution to teach research courses.

Although explicit research instruction was key to promoting the RI construction, other courses contributed significantly during their graduate programs.

“The course ‘Issues and Trends in Language Teaching’ was crucial since I wanted to study the issue of teacher professional development, teacher identity, and beliefs about language learning but I knew what I wanted to do research about thanks to that”. (Sofia, WN2, 18).

According to Katalina, courses such as ‘Bilingualism’, ‘CALL’ and ‘Language Teacher Education and Development’ were useful to refine their perspectives about research. In this regard, she recalled that “these courses I attended during the master’s program were pretty useful for my research study, all the articles professors shared with us, turned into potential references” (Katalina, IDI2, 55). Teacher-researchers’ experiences with different courses in the undergraduate and graduate program helped them to construct their researcher identity. These courses were also crucial to refine their research proposal and research interests. Additionally, since some teacher-researchers were pursuing a doctoral degree, they reflected upon the impact of some doctoral courses in the construction of their researcher selves and a shift on their perception of research. “The research courses and workshops in this matter have been the most enriching part of my doctoral studies. I have learned about research methodologies, current qualitative research methods, and different ways to conduct research” (Tom, WN3, 11).

On the other hand, participants acknowledged that the assignments they handed over for the different courses in the master’s program helped them to build a new understanding on how to write a research report and develop their academic writing skills. Hog considered that he was a better writer due to the practice of writing essays and refining his thesis work. Tyler also reaffirmed the importance of developing the academic writing

skills in the master's program since this was crucial to take on a new identity. During the master's program "you develop this skill (writing skill) because you had to present fifteen papers, and write down your thesis. So you have to learn how to write when studying for a master's degree" (Tyler, IDI3, 119). Besides, when "I took these courses and met some professors, I felt that my writing skill had improved. I am more knowledgeable about academic literacy now" (Tyler, IDI3 125). The experience of conducting research and writing research papers became a source of researcher identity construction since participants were able to disseminate their insights and knowledge to the research community. According to Sofía, conducting small-scale research in the undergraduate-level program was crucial, because once she enrolled in the master's program, she had gained some experience in writing research reports. Put differently, the development of her academic writing skills in the undergraduate program facilitated the process of writing essays and research papers. Following the same line of thought, Tyler emphasized the importance of engaging in research groups and conducting small-scale research during his stay in the undergraduate-level program as relevant actions to develop his research skills.

In short, participants' experiences with different courses in the undergraduate and graduate programs helped them to construct their researcher identity. Moreover, other courses including but not limited to 'Issues and Trends in Language Teaching', 'Bilingualism', and 'Language Teacher Education and Development' were useful for these participants to determine their research interests. Finally, teacher-researchers revealed the importance of developing their academic writing skills in order to facilitate the process of writing research reports and disseminate their insights and knowledge to a larger academic community.

Professors' influence

For participants, professor-researchers who instructed them through their higher education studies significantly influenced their RI construction. These professors came to represent the 'researcher' participants aspired to become in the long term. For Tyler, Professor Apollo greatly impacted him, so he became a role model in terms of how to be as a teacher. Tyler stated in this regard: "he was our professor. I noticed he was such a humble person, but he had given so many lectures and published so many articles, I learned so much from him, I wanted to be like him" (Tyler, IDI2, 93). Regarding the same professor, Sofía stated: "he [professor Apollo] was a role model in terms of conducting research studies. Therefore, the fact of working and publishing an article with him was truly meaningful" (Sofía, IDI3,142).

Participants highlighted that professors had an influence on them as researchers since they helped them to refine or redirect their research interests. In this regard, Katalina felt inspired by her professors' work:

"Many of my professors inspired me to follow certain research processes and lines. Through their work, I found ideas, and I decided what areas of inquiry in the language field I was interested in. I emphasize some professors' work like Apollo's, Athenea's, Somnu's, Artemis's, Hera's, and Minerva's work. They all contributed considerably to the construction of the 'researcher me'. Particularly because I would like to have the knowledge and the extensive research experience they have in the field of language teaching" (Katalina, WN2, 19).

Katalina acknowledged her professors' encouragement to engage in research. Professors were crucial role models in the formation and growth as researchers. In the same line of thought, Tyler mentioned that a professor shared his knowledge about a research

line in the field of English language teaching which eventually led Tyler to develop an interest in that specific area. According to Katalina, professor Somnus helped her to narrow down her research proposal when taking an important course about research. She affirmed: “with professor Somnus and my partner, we changed the focus of our research study. (...) He guided us through the line of research we wanted to undertake” (Katalina, IDI2, 139). The support and guidance received from professors of the master’s program enabled these teacher-researchers to restructure their research proposals and refine their idea of being a researcher since those professors became a source of identification.

They encouraged participants to publish research articles and share the knowledge gained throughout their experiences in the master’s program with a large research community. According to Hog, Professor Alaska encouraged him and his thesis partner to write an article and submit it to a peer-reviewed journal. Her professor said: “You have to publish. You cannot let your thesis remain there. You have to publish an article based on what you studied (...) and that is why we submitted our article to a peer-reviewed journal” (Hog, IDI2, 337). From the previous insights, I can say that professors helped participants to make sense of their role as researchers and reflect on the social impact of their work in the field of English Language Teaching.

On the other hand, professors also became academic guides and role models while enacting research. They helped participants understand the issue of conducting research from a broader perspective and develop their RI. For instance, Sofia highlighted the unconditional support from her thesis advisor when refining her research proposal. She pointed out that “he guided us through the whole process and patiently explained to us how to deliver the results of our study” (Sofia, IDI1, 56). According to Sofia, Professor Apollo was always willing to help her and her thesis partner to have a clear image of what a

narrative inquiry was about. Thus, Sofía and Hog affirmed that professor Caelus was really knowledgeable in terms of data analysis. Sofía mentioned that this professor “did not have a filter when assessing your research proposal. He could destroy your idea in minutes, (...), but he did so..., so that we could refine our proposal” (Sofía, IDI2, 152). The above implies that Sofía turned criticism into an opportunity for growth since she worked hard to elaborate her research proposal and understand the issue of conducting research from a different perspective. Commenting on the same professor, Hog recalled that “he dedicated part of his class to give us some tips about academic writing (...) and that experience contributed to the way I write research articles or conduct research” (Hog, IDI2, 188). On the same matter, Tom affirmed that he improved his academic writing skills due to his professor’s discipline and rigorousness. As teacher-researchers became more confident when writing essays and research papers, they accepted their new role as researchers. Hog similarly commented that “professor Caelus built confidence in ourselves, and taught us that the process of conducting research should not be conceived as a complex and tedious process. This requires a certain rigor, and it can be done with discipline” (Hog, WN2, 18).

The positive influence of professors helped participants to think of research as something achievable and accessible while allowing them to envision themselves as researchers.

“Teachers mark you a lot; (...) I started to view research from a new perspective, not as a complex process in which only few people can do it, and the rest of us are relegated. Caelus opened doors for us to express ourselves, to do research in an easier way. He gave us tips on how to consult databases; he gave us writing tips” (Hog IDI2, 301).

For the most part, professors were positive role models participants wanted to follow while building their researcher identity. However, some professors became the type of researchers that participants did not want to turn into. The behavior and attitudes of some professors came to represent not-so-good models for these five teacher-researchers. In this sense, Hog acknowledged that “some students have the conception that some teachers do not offer opportunities for professional development. But even, the not-so-good teachers provide opportunities for reflection upon the researcher they wanted to become” (Hog, IDI1, 93). However, overall interactions with professors made participants reflect on and learn from what constituted a good teacher-researcher.

To conclude, participants’ narratives revealed that professors played a crucial role in the construction of their researcher identity since they constituted instant role models and sources of inspiration for the ‘researcher’ that participants aspired to become. Moreover, support, encouragement, and feedback provided by professors in the master’s program enabled participants to reinforce their self-images as teacher-researchers, and understand the process of conducting research from a much broader perspective.

Peers' support

Across all higher education levels, participants were accompanied by their peers in their RI construction process who assisted them by sharing useful information for their research projects, providing relevant feedback, and lending emotional support.

Sofía referred to her classmates' support as a symbiotic association that helped her in the process of enacting research and becoming a researcher. She claimed her classmates gave her feedback about her research project and she gave them feedback on their projects in return. They exchanged useful articles for each other’s studies

“I remember when I was going to work alone on the topic of beliefs, I used to chat with a classmate a lot. We used to share articles because he also wanted to work with the topic of beliefs too. I remember he had his partner in the project, but we still helped each other. When I consolidated the research idea for my thesis, and I found my own partner, we continued to support each other and share useful info with the other group” (Sofia, IDI 2, 397).

Participants learned a lot from their peers. Individuals are different and have a particular background with different values, skills, and beliefs, and those are useful to engage in social interactions. Teacher-researchers constructed their RI through their peers’ support and encouragement.

“I had this classmate who was an innate leader, very responsible and assertive. We learned from each other, but at the same time, we complemented each other. I think we grew as researchers together” (Hog, IDI1, 350)

Likewise, Hog stated that when he started his thesis during the master’s program he did not have a clear idea of what he wanted to research about, but his partner in the project did. Thus, his partner enlightened the research path for Hog. “Well, initially I had no clue what to do research about and in that sense my friend had a clearer perspective, he wanted to inquire about materials, everything aligned beautifully” (Hog, IDI2, 252).

Peers motivated teacher-researchers while conducting their research studies. For example, Hog claimed that “Steven [his] colleague who belonged to the same cohort as [him] during the master’s program, kept [him] on track, thanks to him [they] were able to finish [their] research project” (Hog, IDI2, 219). Likewise, Tom asserted that his classmate contributed to his productivity as a researcher. He motivated him to keep involved in research processes even after graduating from the program “I owe a lot to Harry, together

we have had a great productivity, we published an article a while back, we have a book almost ready and an article that will be published in a well-known magazine soon” (Tom, IDI2, 153).

The process of becoming a researcher is influenced by participants’ educational trajectory. As teacher-researchers struggled to understand certain constructs or refine their research ideas, their classmates helped them clarify concepts through discussion. For instance, Tom stated that it was very important to discuss with his classmates certain topics because he felt he lacked theoretical knowledge about research: “I began to feel very uncomfortable because I lacked conceptual knowledge. However, I filled those gaps through reading and through conversations with my peers from the master’s program. For me that was very important” (Tom, WN2, 7).

Similarly, Katalina stated that her classmates provided her with lots of support when she was writing her proposal. Her classmates gave her feedback that helped her reflect deeply on the process she was going through as a researcher: “We were very close as a group, (...) it was evident when we presented our proposal, everyone made insightful comments and formulated questions that made us think like: what is your intention with that? What if you try this better?” (Katalina, IDI2, 196)

Teacher-researchers created a professional bond with their fellow peers. This contributed to their identity construction as they continued to receive support from their classmates even after finishing their graduate studies. Constructing a researcher identity is an endless social process and for some teacher-researchers it was achieved as they later taught research related courses to undergraduate students. Hog felt supported by his classmate and colleague.

“I had the possibility to teach a research course that my classmate Steven had already been teaching, academic writing and research seminar (...) he helped me a lot, we were teaching the same in different shifts, we complemented each other’s work, we became experts in APA and other things” (Hog, IDI3, 117)

Peers became part of a professional network that encouraged teacher researchers to continue to be involved in research processes. Katalina was invited by one of her classmates after she finished the master’s program to join a research project in a university where her classmate worked. She immediately accepted the invitation, “I said I was available whenever he needed (...) I told him I wanted to be part of his study doing whatever it was required because it is not about being the leader but supporting the research project” (Katalina, IDI3, 141).

Moreover, teacher-researchers considered that enacting research entailed a lot of teamwork, and peer support was crucial in the process of becoming a researcher. In this sense, Katalina claimed her peers’ help played a central role: “when you are in a research group is a must, distributing responsibilities and trusting each person (...) on the other hand you can work with different contexts because some classmates work in universities, some others in primary or secondary school” (Katalina, IDI3, 261). Likewise, Sofia stated that her peers’ support facilitated certain aspects of conducting research while making the process of becoming a researcher smoother “I ended up working with Tom, since we wanted to focus on teacher professional development, plus he had access to the possible participants for our research study, that made it easier” (Sofia WN2, 20)

Like their professors, their peers were also role models and a source of inspiration for teacher-researchers. Tom expressed how much he admired his peers from the doctoral program as researchers. “I met this girl (Tom’s classmate) and she said: Hi I’m Liv, I spent

six months last year in Antarctica learning about whales' reproduction and communication mechanisms. She (Liv) is amazing" (Tom IDI3, 281). Tom's peers had worked on projects that he would have never imagined and offered him a new perspective to understand qualitative research.

When pursuing the master-level program, support from peers became a crucial source of RI formation as they encouraged participants to be involved in research processes. Peers helped these five teacher-researchers refine their research proposals and clarify concepts as they provided each other feedback in academic discussions held in the classroom.

Impact of research studies

Another aspect that promoted RI construction was the impact of conducting research projects at a local level (at their workplaces- schools, institutes, universities) and at a global level (their cities, their country, society in general). Taking into consideration their engagement in those research processes, participants were willing to contribute to the community with the knowledge gained by doing research. This idea of contribution is seen as a source of RI formation.

Tyler said he would like to help his students to become researchers just like his professors had supported him in the same regard:

"I think this is like a snowball that spins and spins. What Professor Vulcan learned in Agatha's university in the United States of America, he applied it here. Vulcan helped us, his students, to become researchers. So, I would like to do the same with

my students, help them become researchers. I would like to create a research group” (Tyler, IDI1, 283).

Hog affirmed that when conducting research, his intention was to contribute to the development of the English teaching community:

“I wouldn’t like to leave my region (...) I want to learn in order to contribute (to my local region) (...), and that’s why I don’t want to go abroad or leave my city. I want to live here (...) because I think I have to contribute a lot here by studying issues we face in our classrooms or our community” (Hog, IDI2, 483).

In like manner, he then added:

“Research can also boost my community since it has been relegated. That’s my intention, to involve people so that this does not become an individual effort, but something that will help transform the community and my undergraduate students here... I want to instill the need to conduct research [in my students] so that they also investigate. They have to publish and begin to contribute as well” (Hog, IDI3, 510).

Tyler similarly pointed out that he wanted to encourage his student-teachers to conduct research and contribute to the field of English language teaching as teacher-researchers. For him, “it is important to teach and share with students as much as you can” (Tyler, IDI2, 373). Sharing the knowledge gained in graduate programs and research studies gave teacher-researchers a new sense of belonging to a community of practice.

Furthermore, Hog considered his researcher self could help him to improve his teaching practices. As he put it, “honestly, I think being a researcher takes you out of the 'traditional teacher' stereotype. I want to go out of my comfort zone in the classroom... and teach in the best way. I feel I can achieve that through research. That’s why I keep on trying

to learn, trying to grow as a researcher” (Hog, IDI, 398). Also, pursuing a graduate program provided participants with the necessary tools to enact research and take on a new identity. Teacher-researchers considered it important to share with the teaching community the insights gained through research activities. In this regard, Hog acknowledged that “when you are a graduate student, you have to develop research and publish, you have to contribute [to the teacher community]. One way to contribute is by letting others know what you are doing (...) and the best way is by conducting research” (Hog, IDI3, 497). Tom also affirmed that he wanted to create a research network in order to share aspects of research and education with the teacher community. In this sense, he would be able to contribute and impact his community.

The previous insights illustrate the positive impact of enacting research as a factor that promoted participants’ RI construction. Teacher-researchers’ idea of sharing the knowledge gained in the graduate program with the teaching community led them to consolidate a new identity as researchers, and to be recognized as such by colleagues and former professors.

Factors that hindered researcher identity construction

In this section, I describe the factors that have obstructed participants' RI construction throughout their educational and professional lives. The categories embedded in this section are: ‘lack of time to get involved in research processes’, ‘lack of articulation in research courses at the undergraduate level’, and ‘research as a compulsory task/activity’.

Lack of time for research processes

A factor that hindered the development of participants' RI construction had to do with the amount of work and responsibility that conducting research often entails. Participants were reluctant to get involved in research processes at some specific points of their careers. The above hindered the construction of RI as participants were not in contact with research and were away from the continuous reflection that often accompanies research.

Hog claimed that he was not able to participate in research processes due to time constraints. He pointed out that "I used to run away from formal research. The truth is I used to feel some apathy towards research due to lack of time" (Hog IDI1, 324). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that this belief was from the time he was working full-time and pursuing two undergraduate programs simultaneously. Similarly, Tom acknowledged that lack of time was an issue as well. He claimed in this regard:

"a big difficulty I found along the way was my workload. I was working 40 hours in one institution, 14 hours in another institution, and I was doing my master's. I got the chance to quit one of those jobs, which allowed me to stop being a traditional teacher and gain more experience as a critical researcher" (Tom, WN2, 27).

Besides, once Tom had more time available, he led research projects with some colleagues. The above demonstrates that time constraints affected the internal drive towards enacting research. Katalina also found it difficult to conduct a research project and work at the same time. She claimed that

"studying and working at the same time requires effort and it is not easy. If you want to do something the best way, you have to focus on one thing. For me, I could not conduct a research project, work, and pursue a master's program" (Katalina, IDI2, 246).

Recalling her experience in the undergraduate program, Katalina stated that she was not involved in research groups to obtain her bachelor's degree since doing research required too much time. She claimed that "back then, the program asked for a degree modality and I met the requirements to join a research group or to work on a thesis, but it took time. Then it was easier to take some seminars in order to obtain my bachelor's degree" (Katalina, IDI1, 150). Katalina added that the research processes required effort, dedication, and reflection, and it was something that could not be achieved very quickly. She highlighted that "doing research is not something that is done from one day to the next. It gives you a headache. I mean, you need to invest time because you have to write, (...) it is not easy" (Katalina, IDI1, 181).

Similarly, participants expressed their interest in doing research when studying their master's program, despite their heavy workload. Tyler claimed to have gained a deeper understanding of his role as a researcher in the field of English Language Teaching, but he required time to be involved in research processes in order to continue constructing his researcher identity. As he put it:

"I have experience [conducting research studies]. But, to be honest, I feel that I still have a long way to go. And the amount of time I have available is not enough. And that is one thing that hinders, I would like to develop [many projects]" (Tyler, IDI3, 439).

In a similar way, Sofía claimed that "doing research is complex, but if I did not have to work, I would devote time to do that [conduct research studies]. Even though I do not feel prepared to be in charge of a research group or something by myself" (Sofía, IDI3, 386).

Considering teacher-researchers' experiences, time constraints constituted a factor that hindered their researcher identity construction due to the lack of opportunities to engage in research studies or take an active role in research groups. As they did not get involved in research processes, participants did not develop their researcher selves at some points of their professional careers.

Lack of articulation of research in the undergraduate program

Explicit research instruction constitutes a relevant factor to gain the necessary practical and theoretical tools to develop research processes. However, a lack of articulation of the research component in the undergraduate program impacted participants' RI construction. Participants viewed the research process throughout the program coursework as a series of disconnected actions or initiatives and not as a coherent threaded journey as they thought it should have been.

Hog stated in this respect:

“I remember the contact I had with research at the undergraduate level program did not help me raise awareness on the relevance of becoming a researcher, on the relevance for my formative and professional process. There were only isolated research tasks” (Hog, WN1, 8).

He then acknowledged the lack of articulation in the research component. Similarly, Katalina summarized her research experience in the undergraduate English teacher education program as limited. She expressed her frustration since she could not develop her research skills as she was expecting when enrolled in the undergraduate program. She commented: “my experience with research in the undergraduate program can be summed up in two words: scarce and limited. Two words that reflect my frustration because I

couldn't develop my research potential since the beginning and throughout the academic experience in the ELT program" (Katalina, WN1, 2). Later, she added that

"in the undergraduate program, there is exposure to research but not an immersion in it. The courses we took, did not prepare us to face the process [of conducting research per se], and that was frustrating for not having cultivated it since the beginning (Katalina, WN1, 23).

In other words, participants claimed that they did not receive properly threaded research instruction at the early stage of the undergraduate English teacher education program, which was something that constrained their RI formation since they did not recognize themselves as researchers and did not develop their research skills.

That lack of articulation in the research component kept some participants away from actually enacting research. For instance, Katalina argued that during the whole English teacher education program, the courses focused on theoretical concepts and presenting research proposals that were never developed. Her perspective evidenced how the lack of connection in the courses of the research component of the undergraduate program did not represent a growing experience for her. Working only on proposals did not allow her to develop a deeper understanding of research. Additionally, Tom recalled that he took some research courses during his second year in the undergraduate program; however, he did not comprehend the importance of doing research in his role as a teacher as he received research instruction. In this regard, he pointed out that "in the fourth and fifth semesters, [he] had the opportunity to take some advanced courses and do some research exercises. But, at that time [he] didn't know how these processes could be structured in a formal research study and how those related to his profession" (Tom, WN1, 9). These excerpts indicate that the contents covered in those courses were not relevant to

comprehend the process of conducting research. Therefore, it affected the researcher identity construction in these participants because they lacked the research knowledge and experiences that could have developed their research skills and eased their stay in the master's program.

When Tyler enrolled in the master's program, he concluded that the research instruction received in the research courses was not relevant to comprehend research processes. He recalled: "I was not sure about the research part. I had some vague notions of what research was. My experience in the undergraduate program was not the best [in terms of doing research]" (Tyler, IDI2, 49). Katalina also acknowledged that the lack of practical tools to conduct research hindered her researcher identity construction. She claimed as follows: "from my experience, I feel that it was necessary to dig deeper into research and its stages. Professors focused on the theory, but we always lacked practice" (Katalina, WN1, 11). Regarding the lack of practice when it comes to conducting research in the undergraduate program, Tyler highlighted that he "would have liked to be more exposed to research-related activities beforehand, since [he] realized how important such activities were when [he was] pursuing a master's degree" (Tyler, WN1, 73).

Based on the previous teacher-researchers' experiences when taking research courses in the undergraduate English teacher education program, it is possible to state that the lack of articulation of the research component in the program curriculum, hindered participants' RI construction. According to participants, they took research courses; however, those were not meaningful to understand the research process. Participants affirmed that they focused on identifying a problem, formulating research questions, or reviewing some literature in those courses, but lacked the practical part of actually conducting a research study.

Explicit research instruction is not only important to comprehend research processes, but to build and refine RI. In this sense, I reviewed ‘Los Microdiseños’ of the English Teacher Education program where participants studied their bachelor’s degree, and I noticed that currently, students from the undergraduate program have access to explicit research instruction and other subjects such as ‘Second language learning theories’, ‘Principles of language teaching’, ‘Reflecting teaching’, ‘Academic writing’, ‘Action research’, that are crucial to make sense of the process of conducting research. However, participants from the present study did not take those courses in the undergraduate level program. Consequently, the lack of research instruction in the research component and lack of practical tools hindered their researcher identity which would have eased their stay within the master’s program.

Research as a compulsory task/work

Participants perceived research as a compulsory task, particularly in the undergraduate program. They felt obliged to attend the research courses and the research events like symposia because those were graded and it could impact their performance in the undergraduate program. As teacher-researchers viewed this process as highly complex and mandatory, they developed an adverse attitude towards research which seemingly affected the construction of their RI. Although in the master’s participants had to develop a research project to graduate, the compulsory nature of research was eased by the appropriate structure of the research component in the program, peers’ support, and professors’ support.

Katalina recalled her experience as a student-teacher in the undergraduate program as follows: “when I was in the ELT program, I saw research as an obligation. Something

awful that you had to do in order to graduate” (Katalina, IDI3, 203). In the same regard, Tom claimed that when taking research courses, he found research processes as something he had to do as mandatory work which did not help him raise his interest in conducting research studies. As he claimed, “[research courses] were so boring. (...) I was like: ‘why do we have to do this’. Those courses were mandatory, so there was nothing you could do” (Tom, IDI1, 48).

Similarly, teacher-researchers claimed that they attended research symposia but those scenarios were seen as a mandatory activity. They did not find research as an opportunity for professional development. Tom narrated that he “participated as an assistant in a research symposia. [He] was forced to do it. [He] did not see it as an opportunity to grow professionally though. To be honest, those academic spaces did not foster the interaction between participants” (Tom, WN1, 32). Most of the participants in this study were not interested in research scenarios or conducting research during their stay in the undergraduate level program, which affected their RI construction.

In contrast, participants experienced a tipping point when studying their master-level program. Once teacher-researchers consolidated their research proposals, they had to deliver a presentation to share their research proposals with professors and colleagues. For them, it was a crucial moment in which they had no choice but to take on a new identity as researchers, despite the lack of theoretical tools to develop a research study. In this regard, Katalina recalled some experiences in the master’s program that compelled her to head toward the development of her researcher identity. She added, “it was a presentation based on your research proposal in front of some professors. You had to do it. I felt a huge pressure. I felt I was a contestant because I had to sell my research proposal” (Katalina,

IDI2, 159). Despite considering research as a compulsory task, participants recognized that in the master's program they found the research processes interesting. According to Katalina, "when I enrolled in the master's program I knew I had to do it (conduct research)...because you have to do it to graduate." (Katalina, IDI2, 305).

Equally necessary to mention is Sofía's experience during her stay in the master-level program. She asserted that once she was about to complete her master's program, she focused on her research thesis instead of the other courses she took. She noted that:

"it was the last semester and I had my own priorities, the thesis. I did not ignore the other courses I was taking (I focused on the final papers), but in the end, what mattered was the thesis. Otherwise, I was not going to graduate" (Sofía, IDI2, 218).

Sofía found doing research as a compulsory activity in order to graduate. Therefore, once she obtained her master's degree, she was not interested in continuing doing research.

To conclude, teacher-researchers experienced some situations in the undergraduate program that did not help them to develop their researcher identity. Participants acknowledged that they were compelled to engage in research processes as they attended the research courses and the research events like symposia. The fact of considering some research scenarios, and conducting research as a compulsory task, affected the construction of their researcher selves since they had no interest in this matter.

The previous categories illustrated the factors that hindered participants' RI construction through higher education and professional experiences. Teacher-researchers entered the English language teacher education program with a disavowal towards becoming language teachers. Participants struggled to construct their teacher identity and were seemingly less likely to take on a new identity as researchers. Furthermore, the lack of

articulation between the courses of the research component in the program curriculum did not allow participants to develop a deep understanding of research while finding this process complex and irrelevant for their professional development. Finally, the lack of time to get involved in research and the perception of the research process as a mandatory task affected the RI construction since they were not able to get acquainted with the theoretical and practical tools to conduct research studies.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Conclusions

This narrative research sought to understand how a group of English language teachers constructed their researcher identity through their academic and professional experiences. The study was developed in the context of a public university in Southern Colombia, and the participants were five English language teachers who had obtained undergraduate and master's degrees in English language teaching. All participants had engaged in research projects and published at least one article in a peer-reviewed journal. The use of personal narratives, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and artifacts allowed me to dig deeper into their experiences as teacher-researchers in order to answer the research questions.

In this chapter, I will firstly provide a discussion and conclusions of the findings by answering the research questions. Secondly, I will offer some suggestions for further research in regards to the construction of researcher identity for language teachers. Thirdly, I will refer to the limitations I encountered through the development of the study. **Finally, I will make reference to the pedagogical implications.**

The findings suggest that RI formation is a dynamic process (Gunasekara, 2007; Rayner et al., 2015, Norton et al. 2011) that entails a permanent construction of who we are and who we might become as researchers (Barnacle, 2005). **The narratives of participants revealed that they did not construct their researcher identity when completing the undergraduate program, despite having received explicit research instruction. Participants enrolled in the undergraduate English teacher education program with a misconception about the program as they wanted to learn English to travel abroad. In this sense, they did**

not claim a teacher identity for themselves and seemed less likely to consider a researcher identity. These general findings are in line with the constructs cited in the theoretical framework that acknowledge that teacher and researcher identities ecologically co-exist, and both cannot be seen separated (Xerri, 2017). Since both identities co-exist and co-relate, teachers' classroom experience determines their decisions as researchers (Benegas, 2012). Participants did not recognize themselves as teachers, so they could not take on a new identity as researchers.

A lack of readiness to become researchers that participants faced during the undergraduate program did not allow them to see themselves as researchers since they perceived the process of conducting research as a highly complex one. For them, the act of conducting research was something that only professors with a long research trajectory could do. Therefore, they considered themselves unprepared to engage with research processes when they were student-teachers in the English teacher education program. In this vein, Worrall (2004) and Pham (2006) affirm that when teacher-researchers do not develop research processes, they encounter research as a complex task to undertake. Therefore, teacher-researchers view this process reserved for those considered experts or professional researchers. Additionally, participants lacked the necessary research opportunities to enact research in order to gain the practical tools to understand this process at a deeper level. The process of becoming a researcher is perceived as acquiring a set of tools that allow individuals to make sense of the research process and build research knowledge (Thomson & Walker, 2010), as the five participants did not encounter opportunities to develop their research skills through the undergraduate program, they did not claim RI for themselves.

Regarding the question about RI construction process upon concluding a master's program, participants' narratives revealed that they experienced a conceptual shift in terms of how they viewed the research process when they obtained membership in a research community. As a result of the interaction with scholars, professors, experienced researchers, and graduate students, participants gained the necessary research knowledge to perceive research as a less complex process, which helped them to feel more empowered to undertake research. The previous idea serves to reinforce the view that the researcher identity is mediated through social interactions, and from those interplays, individuals shape and build a new conceptualization of research (Jorgensen et al., 2015). Thus, the fact of belonging to a research group, working collaboratively with former professors of the master's program, and being recognized by the research community became sources of RI formation. Therefore, participants built a new sense of being as they were recognized as researchers by a community (Sachs, 2005) for their contribution to the field of English language teaching. Similarly, identity formation is seen as a social process since it represents how teachers view themselves and how the teacher and researcher communities see them as professionals (Danielewicz, 2001; Clarke, 2009).

Constructing identities involves others (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 35, Vygotsky, 1987), therefore the social aspect plays a crucial role in the construction of RI (Day et al., 2006; Nana et al., 2017). RI is an ongoing process that it is mediated as teacher-researchers interact with social actors (Norton, 2014; Thompson et al. 2016) while reshaping their understanding of who they are and who they want to become as they learn how to teach (Barnacle, 2005). Considering the previous statement, participants in the present study constructed their RI as they interacted with professors of the graduate program and colleagues. Social interactions played an essential role in the construction of their

researcher selves since professors and colleagues became a source of inspiration for some of them. The overall interactions with professors made participants reflect upon what constituted a good teacher-researcher. Not only did some professors represent the 'researcher' participants aspired to become in the long term, but they also lent support for participants to learn and develop their research skills. Additionally, participants' interactions with their peers and colleagues helped them in the process of enacting research since their feedback was meaningful to refine their research interests and research proposals in the graduate program. These general findings are in line with those in Banegas (2019) and Nana and Jing (2017) as these similarly highlight the importance of educational associations in the construction of RI.

Thus, the process of becoming a researcher is embedded in the community of practice where teacher-researchers learn and engage in research processes (Girod and Pardales, 2002). Specifically, enrolling in a graduate program granted participants with opportunities to shape their RI as they gained the necessary theoretical principles and practical tools to develop research. Hence, contextual factors associated with universities and teacher education programs enabled teacher-researchers in the current study to integrate a model of being a researcher and reinforce their research skills (Hall and Burns, 2009). Different courses in the master's program (e.g. *Research Methodology, Introduction to Research and Academic Writing, Research Methods, and Thesis Research, Issues and Trends in Language Teaching, Bilingualism*) became crucial as these allowed participants to discover their research interests and reflect on their perspectives about conducting research (Viafara and Largo, 2018).

The experiences participants gained throughout the graduate coursework were substantial grantors of knowledge building, which consequently led to the construction of

their researcher identity. Moreover, participants' narratives revealed that the enrollment in graduate programs fostered the participation in research processes since teacher-researchers gained knowledge of research and a deeper understanding of this process. As a consequence, participants wanted to contribute to the community with the knowledge gained by enacting research. In line with the previous insights, enacting research is a process of teacher empowerment and reflection because it informs and transforms teachers' practices (Banegas et al., 2019). For participants, the fact of conducting research had a positive impact on the construction of knowledge because it allowed individuals to build a new sense of being and re-think their work and perceptions about themselves (Bettany and Woodruffe-Burton, 2009). Reviewing the literature, the studies evidenced the impact of research processes in the construction of their researcher identity (Norton and Early, 2011) offering opportunities for professional development, reflection, and teacher empowerment (Banegas et al., 2019; Viáfara and Largo, 2018).

On other hand, the findings revealed that participants faced some tensions in the undergraduate program that hindered their RI construction. Time constraints constituted a factor that did not allow participants to engage in research scenarios and therefore, did not help them develop their researcher selves as they completed their teacher education program. According to participants, their workloads and responsibilities kept them away from engaging in research processes and academic discussions, which would have granted them opportunities to succeed during their stay in the master's program. Despite taking research courses in the undergraduate program, participants did not develop a deeper understanding of the research processes. For the five participants, the research instruction offered in the teacher education program was irrelevant and lacked the practical

component. Most participants were reluctant to engage in research or be part of research groups during their stay in the undergraduate program because they were not familiar with the theoretical principles to develop research studies. According to Banegas et al. (2019) it is crucial to engage in postgraduate education in order to become stronger reflective practitioners and gain the necessary research knowledge to undertake research and take on a new identity as researchers.

Besides, they found the process of conducting research quite complex and not relevant to their role as teachers. In this sense, Banegas et al. (2019) claim that it is necessary to include meaningful inquiry-based activities in initial English language teacher education programs since these allow student-teachers to inform and transform teachers' practices, gain research knowledge, and develop a new sense of being. Finally, participants perceived the act of conducting research as a compulsory task to obtain their degree. Some teacher-researchers were reluctant to engage in research due to the lack of research knowledge (Cárdenas et al., 2010). Therefore, the idea of developing a small-scale research as a requirement to graduate was not an option for them. Based on that, they decided to become research assistants or take some seminars as a degree modality to obtain their bachelor's degree. However, participants regretted their lack of commitment towards research processes during their time in the undergraduate program, since those experiences would have helped them to develop their research skills.

This narrative research has described the process of researcher identity construction that occurred for the five participants upon completing undergraduate and graduate-level programs. Firstly, teacher-researchers' narratives revealed that they could not develop their RI because participants were not mentally mature to take on a new role as researchers.

Similarly, they were not familiar with the theoretical principles and lacked the practical tools to make sense of the implications of doing research and their role as researchers. Secondly, participants experienced a conceptual shift as they completed their master's program. The interaction with professors and experienced researchers became a source of RI formation. From those social encounters, teacher-researchers were recognized as researchers by the community and gained the necessary research knowledge to feel empowered and undertake research studies. Thirdly, it has examined 'higher education courses', 'professors' influence', 'peers' support' and 'impact of research studies' as factors that promoted the construction of researcher identity. Finally, it addressed 'lack of time to get involved in research processes', 'lack of articulation in research courses at the undergraduate level', and 'research as a compulsory task/activity' as factors that hindered the RI formation in five participants upon completing the undergraduate and graduate-level program.

Suggestions for further research

Further research should be conducted in terms of how teacher identity and researcher identity inform each other since a prospective language teacher becoming a teacher-researcher will eventually merge the perspective of a teacher and that of a

researcher into a single dynamic one (Lee, 2020). Similarly, research may also seek to explore participants' experiences once they complete their doctoral program in order to obtain more insights concerning the process of researcher identity formation. **The following are possible questions for further research to consider:**

- **How teacher identity and researcher identity inform each other?**
- **What is the impact of doctoral programs in the construction of researcher identity?**
- **What is the impact of conducting research in the construction of researcher identity and teacher identity?**

Limitations of the study

The following limitations should be considered in future research studies. First, all the in-depth interviews took place in virtual settings due to the health emergency caused by Covid-19. Conducting in-person interviews would have offered a more convenient conversational setting to build rapport and opportunities to observe visual and emotional cues from participants. The second limitation had to do with the period of time for data gathering. Although participants were asked to address their experiences since they joined the undergraduate English Teacher Education program to the present time when I collected the data; participants highlighted they had had research contact during primary school and high school. As identity construction is a never-ending process that needs to be observed across time, participants showed an adverse attitude towards research during their undergraduate programs it would have been relevant to analyze the influence of that earlier contact with research that participants experienced during their primary and high school years. Finally, the lack of prior local research studies constitutes another limitation since

those would have provided more theoretical and practical background to examine the issue of teacher-researcher identity in Southern Colombia.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings in this study represent an essential contribution to the field of language teaching, since they tackle the issue of researcher identity as teacher-researchers complete their undergraduate and graduate programs. The construction of researcher identity is an aspect that should be considered in the field of language teaching because the role of the teacher as researcher allows to transfer teachers from a state of powerlessness to a state of power, from being mere receivers of lecturing to initiators of change. According to participants' experiences, the researcher identity is built as teacher-researchers become members of the researcher community and experience the act of conducting research. In this sense, graduate programs play a fundamental role in the construction of RI, since teacher-researchers gain the necessary research tools when receiving research instruction, allowing them to empower themselves as researchers.

Considering the importance of research instruction in the construction of RI, undergraduate programs need to focus on promoting the implementation of research at an early stage of the program. The findings could be used as a starting point to introduce changes into the curricula of teacher education programs. In this vein, prospective teachers should have access to the theoretical principles and practical tools as they enter a teacher education program, allowing them to understand the implications of undertaking research and making sense of their role as teachers and researchers. On the other hand, the findings could be used to generate discussion and reflection in the institution where the data were collected.

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Appendixes
Appendix A. Consent form

Universidad Surcolombiana
Facultad de Educación
Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés
Formato de consentimiento

Título del estudio : Understanding the Perspective of Five English Language Teachers
about their Researcher Identity Construction

Apreciad@ _____:

Usted ha sido invitad@ por su trayectoria académica e investigativa a ser parte de un estudio realizado por una estudiante del programa de Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad Surcolombiana. Es crucial que lea cuidadosamente el siguiente texto y realice las preguntas que considere necesarias sobre el estudio y su rol como participante.

Este proyecto de carácter cualitativo y con enfoque narrativo tiene como objetivo central analizar las perspectivas de cinco profesores de inglés sobre su proceso de construcción de identidad como docente investigador. Es de aclarar que no se obtendrá beneficio económico, sin embargo, se espera que los resultados de este estudio contribuyan a identificar los factores que promueven y/o dificultan la construcción de identidad como docente investigador en docentes de lengua extranjera.

Si usted acepta participar en esta investigación, se le pedirá responder un cuestionario socio-demográfico en el que deberá brindar algunos datos personales, datos básicos sobre su trayectoria educativa y profesional. Adicional a lo anterior se le pedirá escribir (en Word) tres narraciones respecto a su trayectoria investigativa durante sus

experiencias académicas y profesionales. Posterior a ello, se le solicitará participar en tres entrevistas virtuales que tienen como objetivo identificar factores que hayan limitado y promovido su construcción de identidad docente a lo largo de sus estudios de educación superior y experiencia profesional. Las entrevistas serán video grabadas para el fin investigativo. Finalmente, se le pedirá comedidamente compartir tres artefactos/productos (Ej: reflexiones realizadas durante su formación académica, textos, publicaciones, journals, fotografías, reconocimientos etc.) que usted considere lo identifican como docente investigador. *Cabe resaltar que no se le solicitará asistir a ningún encuentro presencial con el fin de salvaguardar su salud en medio de la emergencia sanitaria causada por el Covid-19. Todas las actividades anteriormente mencionadas serán llevadas a cabo de manera virtual.*

La información suministrada por usted será tratada de manera confidencial, sólo la investigadora principal y su asesor de tesis tendrán acceso a ella, además se garantizará anonimato. Su participación en este estudio es de carácter voluntario; usted puede retirarse del mismo en el momento que lo desee a pesar de haber llenado este formato. De ser así, sus datos, respuestas e ideas no serán tenidas en cuenta en el estudio. Si algunas de las preguntas o temas tratados durante las entrevistas le resultan incómodos, usted tiene derecho a hacérselo saber a la investigadora y/o no responder.

Para preguntas, dudas o inquietudes se puede comunicar con la investigadora Jenny Quiñones al correo: jennytatiana2000@gmail.com ; al teléfono: 3204706857. También puede comunicarse con el asesor de tesis docente: Diego Fernando Macías, correo: diego.macias@usco.edu.co , teléfono: 3166950914.

**Hago constar que yo _____,
identificad@ con la cédula de ciudadanía No. _____, he leído y
entendido el procedimiento general del presente estudio. Por lo tanto, de manera
completamente voluntaria otorgo mi consentimiento para la participación en la
presente investigación.**

Firma del participante

Appendix B.

First Narrative Prompt

Estimado participante,

Gracias por contribuir al presente estudio.

Comendidamente le solicito que relate detalladamente en forma escrita anécdotas durante su formación en el programa de pregrado que influyeron en su ‘ser’ investigador. Puede describir su primer contacto con la investigación durante el pregrado, sus expectativas o vivencias particulares en cursos de investigación, situaciones particulares en semilleros (de ser el caso) o su experiencia en el desarrollo de su tesis de pregrado (de haberla realizado). Puede mencionar cualquier situación ya sea positiva o negativa que haya marcado su desarrollo como investigador durante el periodo en el que realizó su pregrado.

Instrucciones:

- Realice su narración en un lugar silencioso.
- Tómese un momento para reflexionar y reconstruir sus memorias antes de empezar a escribir. Puede tomar nota de ciertas ideas que considere importante incluir y no le gustaría olvidar.
- De ser posible procure contar los hechos llevando un orden cronológico.
- Use situaciones de su experiencia personal para dar soporte a sus ideas.
- Puede hacer su narración en español o inglés (como se sienta más cómodo).
- Recuerde que no hay un límite de páginas o palabras, exprese sus ideas libremente.
- Puede escribir su narrativa sobre este documento de Word o subir su propio documento al folder.

Los datos obtenidos, se emplearán sólo con fines investigativos. En ningún caso será juzgado o se vulnerará su privacidad. No olvide que toda la información recolectada será presentada de manera anónima.

Al finalizar el estudio le permitiremos leer el reporte para que verifique que sus ideas están correctamente reflejadas en el escrito, podrá solicitar que se retire o modifique cualquier información que considere no representa lo expresado en la narrativa

Appendix C.

Second Narrative Prompt

Estimado participante,

Gracias por su colaboración en este proyecto, por favor lea atentamente:

La investigación suele estar asociada a un conjunto de procedimientos adecuados para diferentes cosmovisiones y el proceso de convertirse en investigador se concibe como el aprendizaje de un conjunto de herramientas y técnicas (Thomson & Walker, 2010). No obstante, la idea de convertirse "contiene una dimensión temporal implícita. El 'convertirse' sugiere una transformación en el tiempo: un devenir diferente de lo que ya el individuo es' (Barnacle, 2005, p. 179). El desarrollo de identidad de investigador es específico y dependiente del contexto (Hernández-Hernández & Sancho-Gil, 2015). Está "incrustado en lo social... siempre debemos tener en cuenta dónde se está produciendo el aprendizaje y su papel en los medios en curso de producción y reproducción social en ese momento y lugar en particular" (Lee & Roth, 2003).

Teniendo en cuenta las citas anteriores comedidamente le solicito que escriba una narración describiendo detalladamente su experiencia con la investigación durante el pregrado, situaciones o eventos que considere *cruciales en su construcción de identidad de investigador durante su formación en el programa de maestría en didáctica del inglés que cursó en la universidad Surcolombiana*. Puede describir detalladamente vivencias especiales durante las clases de maestría en didáctica del inglés, anécdotas resultado de su interacción con docentes o compañeros, aprendizajes significativos durante su formación de magíster o su actividad profesional en esa época, cualquier otro tipo de vivencias que usted considere le llevaron a sentirse como un investigador durante el periodo en el que realizó la maestría. Si experimentó algún tipo de dificultad durante el proceso, también puede mencionarlo.

Lo anterior me permitirá examinar su perspectiva sobre su proceso de construcción de identidad de investigador al completar el programa de maestría.

Instrucciones:

- Tómese un momento para reflexionar y reconstruir sus memorias antes de empezar a escribir. Puede tomar nota de ciertas ideas que considere importante incluir y no le gustaría olvidar.
- De ser posible procure narrar los hechos llevando un orden cronológico.
- Use situaciones de su experiencia personal para dar soporte a sus ideas.
- Puede hacer su narración en español o inglés (como se sienta más cómodo).
- Recuerde que no hay un límite de páginas o palabras, exprese sus ideas libremente.
- Puede escribir su narrativa sobre este documento de Word o subir su propio documento al folder.

Los datos obtenidos, se emplearán sólo con fines investigativos. En ningún caso será juzgado o se vulnerará su privacidad. No olvide que toda la información recolectada será presentada de manera anónima.

Al finalizar el estudio le permitiremos leer el reporte para que verifique que sus ideas están correctamente reflejadas en el escrito, podrá solicitar que se retire o modifique cualquier información que considere no representa lo expresado en la narrativa.

Appendix D.

Third Narrative Prompt

Experiencias posteriores al programa de Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés

Estimado participante, por favor lea atentamente:

El proceso de construir una identidad contiene una dimensión temporal implícita. Es decir una transformación a lo largo del tiempo: un devenir de lo que uno ya es (Barnacle, 2005). Por otro lado, Ennals et al., (2016) resaltan que la construcción de identidad de investigador también es un proceso vinculado a la relación que entablan otros con el individuo a través de su rol como investigador.

Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior le solicito amablemente que escriba la siguiente entrada personal y privada reflexionando sobre el tipo de investigador/a que es usted tras graduarse del programa de maestría en Didáctica del Inglés. Por favor describa, sus motivaciones, sus intereses, las dificultades que ha superado en el proceso. De igual manera le invito a mencionar cualquier tipo de contacto que haya tenido con la investigación tras graduarse del programa de maestría en didáctica del inglés, ya sea otro tipo de formación post-gradual (otra maestría, doctorado), vivencias en actividades inherentes a la investigación de corta duración (talleres, seminarios, congresos), participación en comunidades científicas, posibles investigaciones en su lugar de trabajo (puede incluir beneficios y / o retos y la influencia que han tenido en usted). Le invito a mencionar vivencias especiales como interacción con la comunidad educativa, con profesores, o con colegas producto de la investigación. Si no ha tenido ningún contacto con la investigación después del programa de maestría en didáctica del inglés, describa las posibles causas.

Instrucciones:

- Tómese un momento para reflexionar y reconstruir sus memorias antes de empezar a escribir. Puede tomar nota de ciertas ideas que considere importante incluir y no le gustaría olvidar.
- De ser posible procure narrar los hechos llevando un orden cronológico.
- Use situaciones de su experiencia personal para dar soporte a sus ideas.
- Puede hacer su narración en español o inglés (como se sienta más cómodo).
- Recuerde que no hay un límite de páginas o palabras, exprese sus ideas libremente.
- Puede escribir su narrativa sobre este documento de Word o subir su propio documento al folder.

Recuerde que los datos obtenidos se emplearán sólo con fines investigativos. En ningún caso será juzgado o se vulnerará su privacidad. No olvide que toda la información recolectada será presentada de manera anónima.

Al finalizar el estudio le permitiremos leer el reporte para que verifique que sus ideas están correctamente reflejadas en el estudio, podrá solicitar que se retire o modifique cualquier información que considere no representa lo expresado en la narrativa.

Appendix E.

Artifacts Collection Prompt

Estimado participante,

Con el fin de *examinar los factores que han obstaculizado y promovido la construcción de su identidad como docente investigador a lo largo de su educación superior y experiencias profesionales*, le solicito subir a esta carpeta de Drive **tres productos/trabajos** que usted considera lo ‘identifican’ como investigador. Por favor tenga en cuenta que los productos/trabajos deben reflejar sus intereses investigativos (puede subir artículos de reflexión realizados por usted durante el pregrado, la maestría, o posteriores. También puede incluir journals que escribió o este escribiendo durante alguna investigación, publicaciones en revistas científicas, flyers, material de entrenamiento, fotografías e incluso su tesis de grado de pregrado o maestría), lo importante es que usted se sienta definido como investigador en ese producto.

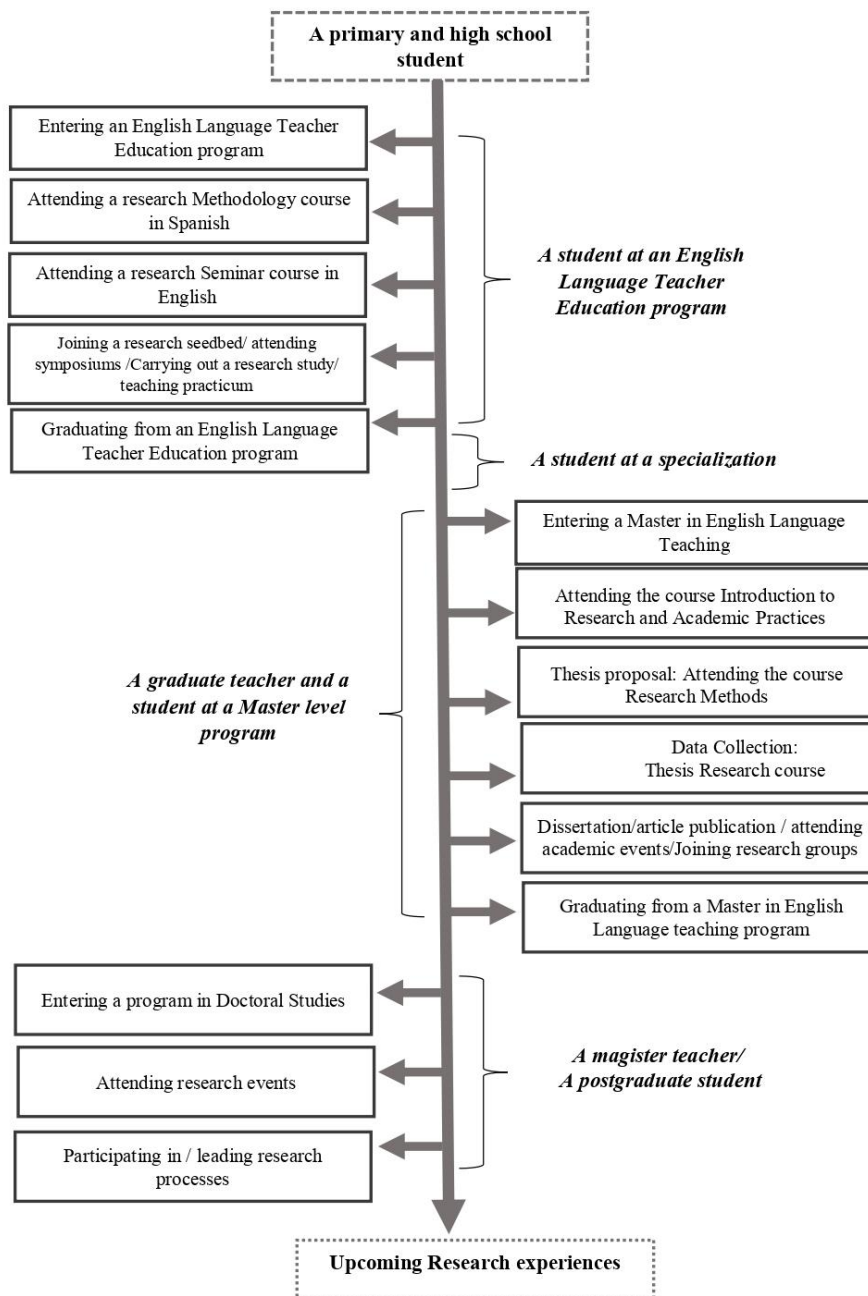
Por favor no olvide ponerle el nombre a cada archivo que suba. Ejemplo: “tesis de maestría”.

Recuerde que este portafolio digital es privado, solamente usted y la investigadora tienen acceso a él, ningún archivo que suba será replicado, compartido con otros participantes o personas ajenas al estudio. Le garantizamos absoluto respeto a su propiedad intelectual.

Appendix F.

Figure 2

General Timeline

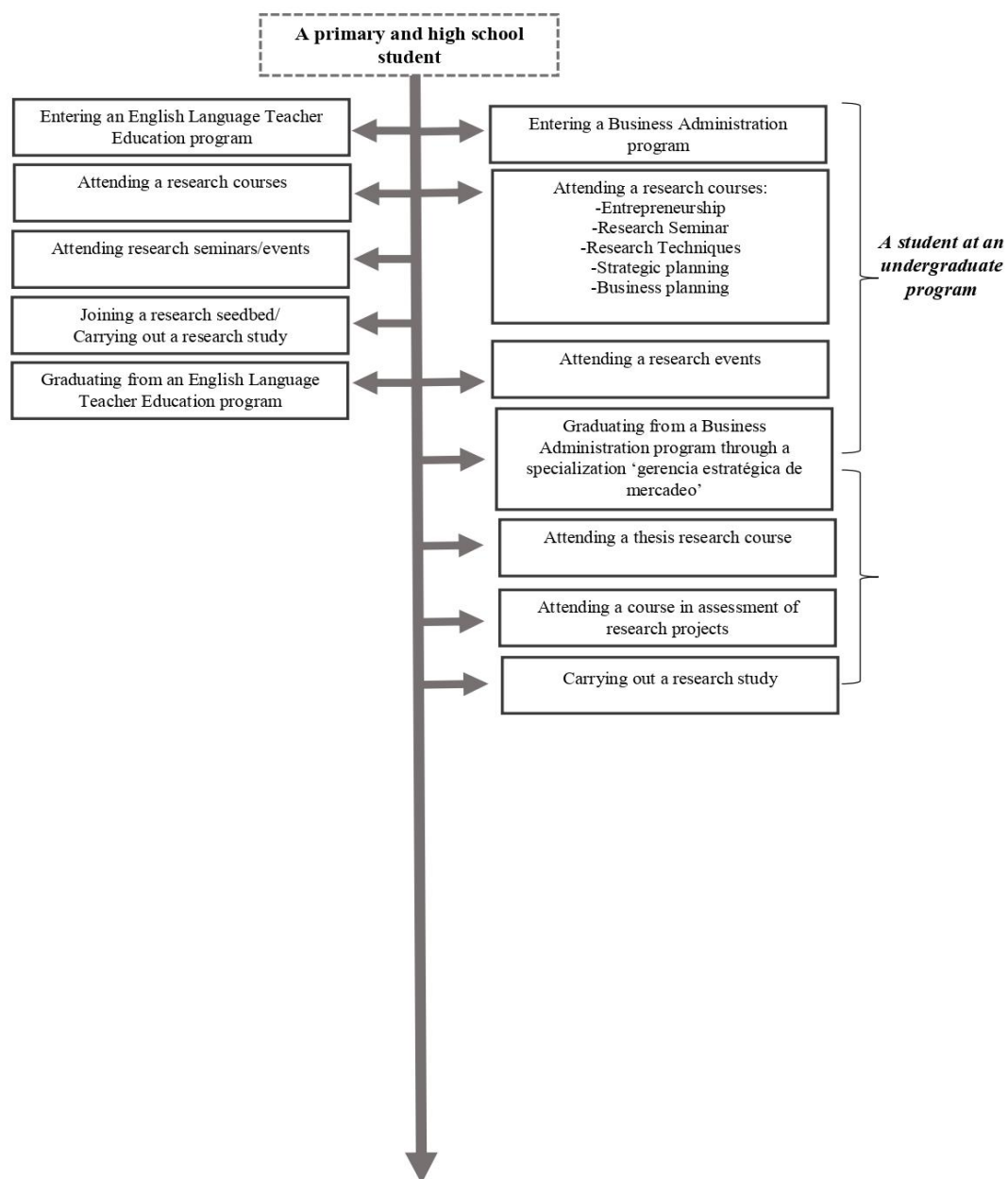


Note: Timeline used with all the participants during the data collection stage.

Appendix G.

Figure 3

Specific timeline



Note: timeline designed for the participants HOG who studied two undergraduate programs simultaneously.

Appendix H.

Interview 1- Undergraduate Program

Estimado participante,

Las siguientes preguntas tienen como objetivo indagar un poco más sobre tu proceso de construcción de identidad de investigador al completar el programa de licenciatura en Educación Básica con énfasis en Lengua Extranjera Inglés.

Estas preguntas fueron especialmente formuladas para ampliar la información que brindaste en la primera narrativa escrita.

Recuerda que los datos obtenidos a partir de las entrevistas, se emplearán sólo con fines investigativos. En ningún caso serás juzgado o se vulnerará tu privacidad. No olvides que toda la información recolectada será presentada de manera anónima. Si alguna pregunta te resulta incómoda está en libertad de no responderla, si en algún momento de la entrevista te sientes indispuerto por favor déjame saber.

Te informo de igual manera que esta entrevista será grabada en tanto en video como en audio ¿estás de acuerdo?

Preguntas generales

1. ¿Antes de ingresar al pre-grado en enseñanza del inglés te sentías un investigador? ¿habías tenido contacto con la investigación?
2. Tras realizar los cursos ‘metodología de la investigación’ y ‘Research Seminar’ que están relacionados con investigación. ¿sientes que aportaron a tu desarrollo como investigador? ¿por qué? ¿por qué no? ¿de qué manera?
3. ¿Consideras que durante tu pre-grado desarrollaste habilidades científicas (explicarle si es necesario) que contribuyeron a tu crecimiento como docente en formación? Explica detalladamente tu respuesta.

4. ¿Perteneceste a algún semillero de investigación durante tus estudios de pre-grado? ¿te involucraste durante el pre-grado en algún proceso/actividad investigativa (como el proceso de acreditación) de manera voluntaria o para cumplir con un requisito de grado? ¿por qué? ¿por qué no?
5. ¿Al terminar el pregrado te veías a ti mismo liderando procesos de investigación a futuro? ¿por qué? ¿por qué no?

Appendix I.

Interview 2 – Master program

Estimado participante,

Las siguientes preguntas tienen como objetivo indagar sobre su proceso de construcción de identidad de investigador al completar el programa de Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés. Cinco preguntas son de carácter general y las demás fueron especialmente formuladas para ampliar la información que usted brindó en la segunda narrativa oral para un total de diez preguntas.

Recuerde que los datos obtenidos a partir de las entrevistas, se emplearán sólo con fines investigativos. En ningún caso será juzgado o se vulnerará su privacidad. No olvide que toda la información recolectada será presentada de manera anónima. Si alguna pregunta le resulta incómoda está en libertad de no responderla, si en algún momento de la entrevista se siente indispuerto por favor comunicárselo al investigador.

Preguntas generales

1. ¿Se consideraba usted un investigador al iniciar el programa de maestría en didáctica del inglés? Explique su respuesta.
2. ¿Considera usted que los procesos vividos durante la maestría en didáctica del inglés le ayudaron o no le ayudaron a desarrollarse como investigador? ¿de qué manera? ¿en qué medida?
3. ¿qué aspectos (expectativas, ideas, creencias) referentes al quehacer investigativo cambiaron durante la maestría?
4. ¿qué aspectos (expectativas, ideas, creencias) referentes al quehacer investigativo se mantuvieron intactas durante la maestría en didáctica del inglés?
5. ¿siente usted que su percepción de sí mismo como investigador cambió a lo largo del programa de maestría en didáctica del inglés? ¿de qué manera?
6. ¿qué considera usted que incentiva a un docente cursando un programa de maestría a convertirse en investigador?

Appendix J.

Interview 3 / Post-master and professional experiences

Estimado participante,

Las siguientes preguntas tienen como objetivo analizar los factores que han obstaculizado y promovido el desarrollo de la identidad de investigador en los participantes tras graduarse del programa de maestría en enseñanza del inglés. Algunas preguntas son de carácter general y otras fueron especialmente formuladas para ampliar la información que usted brindó en la tercera narrativa escrita, de igual manera indagaré sobre los artefactos que compartió en la recolección.

Recuerde que los datos obtenidos a partir de las entrevistas, se emplearán sólo con fines investigativos. En ningún caso será juzgado o se vulnerará su privacidad. No olvide que toda la información recolectada será presentada de manera anónima. Si alguna pregunta le resulta incómoda está en libertad de no responderla, si en algún momento de la entrevista se siente indispuerto por favor comunicárselo al investigador.

Preguntas generales

1. ¿Ha tenido experiencias significativas como investigador luego de graduarse del programa de maestría en enseñanza del inglés? Por favor explique detalladamente su respuesta.
2. ¿Qué aspectos (expectativas, ideas, creencias) referentes al quehacer investigativo cambiaron o se mantuvieron intactas después de graduarse de la maestría en didáctica del inglés? Explique detalladamente su respuesta.
3. ¿Qué factores considera usted que motivan a un docente investigador a seguir involucrándose en procesos investigativos luego de terminar su maestría?
4. ¿Qué factores considera usted que desmotivan a un docente investigador de seguir involucrándose en procesos investigativos luego de terminar su maestría?
5. ¿Siente que su identidad de investigador ha contribuido a su labor como docente de Inglés? Explique su respuesta detalladamente.
6. Por favor explique detalladamente cada artefacto.
7. ¿Se ve a sí mismo realizando investigación dentro de cinco años? Justifique su respuesta.

8. Seleccione uno de los artefactos, el que considere que lo define más como investigador.
9. ¿te ves como investigador en 5 o 10 años?
¿qué esperas haber logrado en ese ámbito?