

New Trends in Foreign Language Teaching

Methods, Evaluation and Innovation



Edited by

António Lopes and Raúl Ruiz Cecilia

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
António Lopes and Raúl Ruiz Cecilia	

Part 1 – Methods and Approaches

Chapter One.....	6
Teaching CLIL in a Post-Graduate Programme: Survey Conclusions on Teacher’s Training Needs María Bobadilla-Pérez and Pilar Couto-Cantero	

Chapter Two	20
Task-Based Approach to Teaching Foreign Languages to Older Adults: A Neurobiological Perspective Magdalena Kalita	

Chapter Three	38
Task-based Approach to Foreign Language Education: A Neurobiological Perspective Sławomira Kolsut	

Chapter Four	56
A Case for LSP David Tual, Teresa Geslin and Jamie Rinder	

Part 2 – Teachers in the Making

Chapter Five	64
Gender as a Global Issue in Foreign Language Teacher Training Juan Ramón Guijarro-Ojeda	

Chapter Six	82
How Bold are Language Teachers? Comparative Analysis of the Data of a Transatlantic Survey on Technology-Mediated Task-Based Language Teaching António Lopes	

Chapter Seven.....	137
Top Ten Keywords to become an Impact Teacher	
Pilar Couto-Cantero and María Bobadilla-Pérez	

Chapter Eight.....	157
The Reflective Approach in Pre-Service Foreign Language Teacher Education	
Sandra Mardešić	

Part 3 – Innovation in the Classroom

Chapter Nine.....	174
Codeswitching as a Teaching Strategy: L2 Learners’ Assessment of Experimental Practice	
Anna Franca Plastina	

Chapter Ten	198
The Significance of Composition Symbols for the Development of Writing in a Foreign Language	
Rebekah Rast	

Chapter Eleven	212
The Causal Effect of Proficiency and Gender on Formulaic Language Use in Different Task Types	
Ümran Üstünbaş	

Chapter Twelve	229
Effects of Expanded 10-minute Writing on L2 Speaking and Writing Fluency Development	
Sakae Onoda	

Chapter Thirteen.....	258
Learning Grammar Using Corpora: A Case Study	
Ivano Celentano	

Part 4 – Evaluating and Assessing

Chapter Fourteen	278
Integrated Forms of Self-Evaluation and Evaluation for Incoming Foreign Students at the University of Padova	
Ivana Fratter	

Chapter Fifteen	294
Assessment and Certification of Foreign Language Learning through Rubrics: A Methodological Perspective Davide Capperucci	
Contributors.....	308

CHAPTER SEVEN

TOP TEN KEYWORDS TO BECOME AN IMPACT TEACHER

PILAR COUTO-CANTERO
AND MARÍA BOBADILLA-PÉREZ

1. Introduction

Despite today's approaches in the Teaching and Learning Process being devoted to promoting Student-Centred Curriculum and Self-Learning Strategies, this chapter is aimed at two main different purposes. Firstly, it tries to upgrade the role of the teacher in that Teaching and Learning Process; and secondly, it is intended to provide a list of the top ten keywords to encourage our Pre-teachers to become In-service Impact Teachers. This research was focused on postgraduate students who were provided with training in order to allow them to become teachers at Secondary Compulsory Schools in Spain. Data has been collected by means of a Classroom-Action Research put into practice with the suggestions of participants applying for the: "Master universitario en profesorado de educación secundaria obligatoria y bachillerato, formación profesional y enseñanza de idiomas" Postgraduate Programme at UDC University. It is a one-year university-led teacher training course in which two placements are included.

Regarding professional development, participants' information seemed to be highly relevant from a qualitative point of view, taking into account that they were students preparing to become teachers in a not far away future. Thanks to the obtained results, on the one hand, it will be ascertained that our initial hypothesis has been accomplished and the role of the teacher seems to be still more important than expected in the Teaching and Learning Process. On the other hand, the top ten keywords obtained out of this research will help and serve as a guide for future teachers to reach a Master Teacher Qualification. Moreover, this research offers a large number of possibilities to be implemented at any other levels

of education, and in other national or international contexts. It also offers the possibility to widen the top ten keywords out in order to explore and re-define what the ideal Impact Teacher should be.

According to Devine, Fahie and McGillicuddy¹, teachers, including those at pre-service level, hold beliefs not only about the teaching professional practice, but also about people, structures, systems and theoretical paradigms that underpin them. In addition, there is an interconnection between the professional and personal identities of teachers, which means that the way teachers understand and define themselves shapes the way they understand and define others. The role of teachers, however, has changed throughout history and this change also affects their beliefs. While traditional instruction used to require teachers to be content experts and teach as much information as possible, the new student-centred approach requires teachers to assume different roles (Rico & Ertmer²) and, therefore, different opinions arise.

2. Present Study

Over the last few years, the concepts of *student-centred* and *teacher as a facilitator* have been considered as determining and substantial. Meanwhile, other ideas such as *teacher-centred* and *teacher as an authority figure* have been understood as totally opposed and obsolete (Ha³). We do agree with McCabe and O'Connor⁴ that the student-centred approach encompasses some beneficial results for students, such as active responsibility for learning, proactive management of learning experience, independent knowledge construction with teachers as facilitators.

However, some authors still doubt whether or not student-centred approaches are more effective than traditional teacher-centred approaches (Davis & Lung⁵). Jabbour⁶ states that since learners are used to the

¹ Dymrna Devine, Declan Fahie and Deirdre McGillicuddy, "What is 'good' teaching? Teacher beliefs and practices about their teaching," *Irish Educational Studies*, no. 32 (2013), 84.

² Rodolfo Rico and Peggy Ertmer, "Examining the Role of the Instructor in Problem centred Instruction," *TechTrends* no. 59.4 (2015), 97.

³ Phan Le Ha, "The politics of naming: critiquing "learner-centred" and "teacher as facilitator" in English language and humanities classrooms," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, no. 42.4 (2014), 392.

⁴ Alan McCabe and Una O'Connor, "Student-centred learning: the role and responsibility of the lecturer," *Teaching in Higher Education* no. 19.4 (2014), 351.

⁵ Tara Davis and Hùng Lũ, "Student and Instructorcentred Approaches to Teaching Precalculus," *PRIMUS*, no. 25.6 (2015), 495.

teacher-centred approach, it is, therefore, a great hurdle for the teacher to get students to overcome the change of roles in the classroom and it also makes it difficult for the teacher to get them to assume increased responsibility for their own learning and development. According to some researchers, although the student-centred approach offers effective practices, this method is ineffective for around 30% of the students because they are not fully engaged in the Teaching and Learning Process (Hockings⁷; Knight and Collins⁸).

Teachers, thus, are being challenged to rethink their underlying assumptions about teaching and learning to succeed in achieving useful practices and make all students feel comfortable with the system (Baran, Correia and Thompson⁹). According to Schroeder¹⁰, the student-centred approach involves the balance between teacher and student, as teachers should not be positioned as the active agent and students as the passive one. In addition, the Teaching and Learning Process implies dialogue and interaction between both agents to create knowledge (Kahl and Venette¹¹). Regarding this interaction between teachers and students, Neumann¹² recognised three possible relationships. In the first option, the student is at the forefront and teachers do not suggest what students should learn and they simply avoid disruptions. In the second option, the teacher is at the forefront and stays at a relational distance from students, and students creating learning objectives that they are expected to follow. In the third one, where both teacher and student share the forefront, a free human being encounters another free individual in a demanding way. This latter alternative implies measurable improvements in student performance but,

⁶ Khayrazad Jabbour, "Issues that restrain teachers from adapting student-centred instruction in Lebanese school," *Tejuelo*, no. 17 (2013), 87.

⁷ Chistine Hockings, "Reaching the students that student centred learning cannot reach," *British Educational Research Journal* no. 35.1 (2009).

⁸ Sue Knight and Carol Collins, "Opening Teachers' Minds to Philosophy: The crucial role of teacher education," *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, no 46.11 (2014).

⁹ Evrim Barana, Ana-Paula Correia and Ann Thompson, "Transforming online teaching practice: critical analysis of the literature on the roles and competencies of online teachers," *Distance Education*, no. 32. 3 (November 2011), 421.

¹⁰ Sara J. Schroeder, "Infusing Learner-Centred Strategies into the Classroom," *Occupational Therapy in Health Care*, no. 26.4 (2012), 219.

¹¹ David Kahl and Steven Venette, "To lecture or let go: A comparative analysis of student speech outlines from teacher-centred and learner-centred classrooms," *Communication Teacher*, no. 24.3 (2010), 179.

¹² Jacob W. Neumann, "Developing a New Framework for Conceptualizing "Student-Centred Learning," *The Educational Forum*, no. 77.2 (2013), 163.

perhaps more significantly, effecting longer-term changes in teacher behaviour, reporting greater confidence and enhanced beliefs in their own self-efficacy (Bangs and MacBeath¹³).

Consequently, as Kelly, Dorf, Pratt and Hohmann¹⁴ state, teacher roles are the visible outcomes of teacher mediations across many situated influences and wider educational discourses within a contested social arena, they respond to the roles adopted by students and they are enacted within a particular subject, classroom, school culture and so on. These new roles include those of content facilitator, meta-cognition facilitator, process facilitator, advisor, counsellor, assessor, resource provider, administrator, designer, co-learner, and researcher (Bawane and Spector¹⁵). Though these added responsibilities may be daunting, teachers have the knowledge, expertise and skills to meet the challenges to become the new teacher leaders for today's classroom settings (Mulrine and Huckvale¹⁶). Nevertheless, possibly the most pressing factor influencing the success of the teachers' roles we have stated is the current commitment which measures the success of schools, educators, and students based on results from standardised assessments (Mangin and Stoelinga¹⁷) as teachers prefer actions where their individual decision-making power is present, rather than collective agreements (Mouraz, Leite & Fernandes¹⁸). Bearing in mind these standardised assessments, managing teachers' authority role was often quite challenging as it might ease the achievement of desirable outcomes within the classroom (Tillapaugh and Haber-Curran¹⁹).

¹³ John Bangs and John MacBeath, "Collective leadership: the role of teacher unions in encouraging teachers to take the lead in their own learning and in teacher policy," *Professional Development in Education*, no. 38.2 (2012), 336.

¹⁴ Peter Kelly, Hans Dorf, Nick Pratt, and Ulrike Hohmann, "Comparing teacher roles in Denmark and England," *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, no. 44.4 (2014), 570.

¹⁵ Jyoti Bawane and Michael Spector, "Prioritisation of online instructor roles: implications for competency-based teacher education programs," *Distance Education*, no. 30.3 (2009), 388.

¹⁶ Christopher F. Mulrine and Manina Urgolo Huckvale, "Secondary Special Education Teachers as Teacher Leaders: Redefining Their Role," *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, no. 50.2 (2014), 64.

¹⁷ Melinda Mangin and Sara Stoelinga, "The Future of Instructional Teacher Leader Roles," *The Educational Forum*, no. 74.1 (2009), 55.

¹⁸ Ana Mouraz, Carlinda Leite, and Preciosa Fernandes, "Teachers' role in curriculum design in Portuguese schools," *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, no. 19.5 (2013), 487.

¹⁹ Daniel Tillapaugh and Paige Haber-Curran, "At the intersection of leadership

In spite of that, teachers created an environment in which the students could engage in a real adaptive leadership challenge, creating a space for them to apply their learning. Students also develop, at the same time, psychological functions, such as paying attention, remembering, reasoning, and planning as well as interactional and pragmatic functions, like recognizing different roles, rights, and responsibilities in classroom activities (Feryok²⁰). To conclude, inspiring and encouraging students to become active participants is not a simple and effortless task, but this is the new challenge (Reyes²¹). Teachers bring their experience, knowledge and values into the classroom and encourage students to better develop their language skills and attitudes, which means no doubt they make an important difference in the Teaching and Learning Process: making students gaining knowledge by themselves (Díaz, Alarcón & Ortiz²²).

The authors believe that high-quality pre-service teachers' training is a priority if we want to succeed in education. Therefore, we have decided the participants in this study to be pre-service teachers at our university. They often lack confidence in their teaching abilities, robust pedagogical content knowledge developed through experience and they may even harbour negative orientations (Biggers and Forbes²³). According to Butler and Cuenca²⁴, for all sides involved in pre-service teacher preparation there exists a lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of their professors due, in part, to the perception of teacher training as an uncomplicated and self-evident activity. However, before teacher training strategies can be widely implemented and tested, professors must first become more aware of the specific modes of teacher commitment that

and learning: a self-study of using student-centred pedagogies in the classroom,” *Educational Action Research*, no. 21.4 (2013), 522.

²⁰ Anne Feyroc, “Teaching for learner autonomy: the teacher's role and sociocultural theory,” *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, no. 7 (2013), 222.

²¹ Agustín Reyes Torres, “Literature in the foreign language syllabus: Engaging the student through active learning,” *Tejuelo*, no. 15 (2012), 14.

²² Claudio Díaz Larenas, Paola Alarcón Hernández, and Mabel Ortiz Navarrete, “A Case Study on EFL: Teachers' Beliefs About the Teaching and Learning of English in Public Education,” *Porta Linguarum*, no. 23.1 (2015), 176.

²³ Mandy Biggers and Corey Forbes, “Balancing Teacher and Student Roles in Elementary Classrooms: Preservice elementary teachers' learning about the inquiry continuum,” *International Journal of Science Education*, no. 34.14 (2012), 2206.

²⁴ Brandon Butler and Alexander Cuenca, “Conceptualizing the Roles of Mentor Teachers During Student Teaching,” *Action in Teacher Education*, no. 34.4 (2012), 297.

exist today and consider how these approaches may serve the needs of the students and faculty at their university (Mason²⁵).

Pre-service teachers were traditionally exposed to a large number of theoretical knowledge foundations and then were expected to find ways to apply their learning in a classroom. More recently, this perspective has been reversed by asserting that experiential learning establishes the basis for understanding theory (Gut, Beam, Henning and Cochran²⁶). Thus, pre-service teachers' training courses must grapple with their role in terms of how their own coursework and pedagogical approaches support the development of teachers who are able to work in the current teaching profession (Margolis, Hodge and Alexandrou²⁷). Kane and Francis (2013:366) identified five central tasks to be accomplished during the pre-service teachers' training courses. These included: 1-getting to know students curriculum, and school, 2-designing responsive instructional programs, 3-creating a classroom learning community, 4-enacting a beginning repertoire, and 5-developing a professional identity. In addition, one of the essential conditions that enable pre-service teachers to learn is the availability of professors who afford effective guidance and have supervisory approaches compatible with their learning needs (Klieger and Oster-Levinz²⁸).

We consider, indeed, that the leading requirement to be successful in training pre-service teachers is taking their beliefs into consideration. Rajuan, Beijaard and Verloop²⁹ pointed out five categories of orientations based on underlying beliefs and values. The academic orientation emphasises teachers' subject expertise and sees the quality of the teachers'

²⁵ Kevin O. Mason, "Teacher involvement in pre-service teacher education," *Teachers and Teaching*, no. 19.5 (2013), 561.

²⁶ Dianne M Gut, Pamela C. Beam, John E. Henning, Deborah C. Cochran and Rhonda Talford Knight, "Teachers' Perceptions of their Mentoring Role in Three Different Clinical Settings: Student Teaching, Early Field Experiences, and Entry Year Teaching," *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, no. 22.3 (2014), 241.

²⁷ Jason Margolis, Ashley Hodge, and Alex Alexandrou, "The teacher educator's role in promoting institutional versus individual teacher well-being," *Journal of Education for Teaching*, no. 40.4 (2014), 392.

²⁸ Aviva Klieger and Anat Oster-Levinz, "The influence of teacher education on mentor teachers' role perception in professional development schools," *Journal of Education for Teaching*, no. 41.2 (2015), 115-127.

²⁹ Maureen Rajuan, Douwe Beijaard and Nico Verloop, "The role of the cooperating teacher: bridging the gap between the expectations of cooperating teachers and student teachers," *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, no. 15.3 (2007), 225.

own subject matter knowledge as their professional strength. Secondly, the practical orientation pays attention to the artistry and classroom technique of the pre-service teachers and attaches importance to the classroom experience and apprenticeship models of learning to teach. The technical orientation, on its behalf, underlines the knowledge and behavioural skills that pre-service teachers require and it is associated with micro-teaching and competency-based approaches. Then, the personal orientation stresses the importance of interpersonal relations in the classroom as well as taking the form of offering a safe environment that encourages exploration and discovery of personal strengths. Finally, the critical orientation emphasizes the role of schools in promoting democratic values and reducing social inequities and views schooling as a process of social reform, being the goal of pre-service teachers' training to help teachers become critical and reflective. In short, as stated by Sjolie³⁰, an essential question underpinning research on pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning is the extent to which teacher education effects deep changes in pre-service teachers' rather than narrow conceptions of teaching and learning. Our motivation to carry out this study is the assumption that pre-service teachers' beliefs shape and influence their future performance in the classroom.

Considering the influence of beliefs in the teachers' performance and according to Friedrich and Hron³¹, it is assumed that personal and pedagogical beliefs influence teachers' classroom practices. Thus, they should always bear in mind the beliefs, knowledge, theories, attitudes, images, assumptions, metaphors, conceptions and perspectives related to teaching, teachers, learning, students, subject matter, curricula, materials, instructional activities and self (Fung³²). Besides, some of the main goals for pre-service teachers to learn the building up of a professional identity are assigning a major role to the teachers' autonomy as well as assuming cooperation as a fundamental issue in teacher training methodology.

Roychoudhury and Rice³³ explained that teachers' dispositions can tell them how they teach; intellectual dispositions deal with processing the

³⁰Ela Sjolie, "The role of theory in teacher education: reconsidered from a student teacher perspective," *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, no. 46.6 (2014), 730.

³¹ Helmut F. Friedrich and Aemilian Hron, "Factors affecting teachers' student-centred classroom computer use," *Educational Media International*, no. 48.4 (2011), 274.

³² Angela C. Fung Tam, "The role of a professional learning community in teacher change: a perspective from beliefs and practices," *Teachers and Teaching*, no. 21.1 (2015), 23.

³³ Anita Roychoudhury and Diana Rice, "Preservice Secondary Science Teachers'

knowledge of content and pedagogy and use them to achieve desired learning outcomes in their classrooms; cultural dispositions are related to be aware of cultural diversities of students and to meet the needs of all learners they teach. Finally, moral dispositions are essentially an awareness of one's moral values and the inclination to think about the ramifications of these values in instruction. Therefore, teacher commitment, so closely associated with job satisfaction and its performance, might be enhanced or diminished by factors such as: student behaviour, administrative support, parental demands and national education policies. As a consequence, their behaviour includes characteristic features that emerge while they are performing certain tasks, like working in the classroom, preparing lessons or fulfilling administrative obligations (Uibu and Kikas³⁴).

As stated by Hobson and Morrison-Saunders (2013:778), good teaching cannot be reduced to technique, but it comes from the identity and integrity of the teachers and, in the same lines, teachers' beliefs depict the tension that exists with being teachers as technicians versus intellectual, loving, and caring human beings (Alfaro & Quezada³⁵). In fact, students feel the teachers' emotions and beliefs long before they feel the intellectual content offered by them (Xu and Huang, 2010:193). These beliefs, as a consequence, have an orientation towards the future and play a particular driving role for the students and also within the Teaching and Learning Process (Biesta, Priestley and Robinson³⁶).

Teachers' emotions and feelings can be positive, such as joy, satisfaction and pleasure, or negative, like frustration, anger and anxiety (Sadler, 2013; Arnaiz y Pérez-Luzardo, 2014). However, emotions usually remain unchangeable in terms of a person regardless of teaching experience, subject-matter and age of the students (Mevorach & Strauss³⁷).

Teaching and Reflections During a Teacher Education Program," *International Journal of Science Education*, no. 35.13 (2013), 2201.

³⁴ Krista Uibu and Eve Kikas, "The Roles of a Primary School Teacher in the Information Society," *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, no. 52.5 (2008), 462. Alfaro, Cristina and Reyes Quezada, "International Teacher Professional Development: Teacher Reflections of Authentic Teaching and Learning Experiences," *Teaching Education*, no. 21.1 (2010), 54.

³⁵ Cristina Alfaro and Reyes Quezada, "International Teacher Professional Development: Teacher Reflections of Authentic Teaching and Learning Experiences," *Teaching Education*, no. 21.1 (2010), 54.

³⁶ Biesta Gert, Mark Priestley, and Sarah Robinson, "The Role of Beliefs in Teacher Agency," *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, no. 21.6 (2015), 628.

³⁷ Miriam Mevorach, and Sidney Strauss, S., "Teacher educators' in-action mental

As a result, teachers should consider their own goals as teachers in order to make them meaningful in the Teaching and Learning Process. When training pre-service teachers, professors have to make them reflect on the educational purposefulness of their future teaching career from different points of view. Purpose can be defined as a stable, long-term goal of contributing to the world beyond the self (Tirri & Ubani³⁸). We do agree with Richards and Templin³⁹ on the fact that the role that pre-service teachers choose can often be predicted by the way in which they prioritise roles and, thus, roles are arranged in a loose hierarchy from most to least important to the teachers' identities. Melek⁴⁰ remarked that a significant quality of teachers is to display positive personal attributes, which involves being constructive, supportive and encouraging and so this study has been devoted to finding, among other aims, the top ten characteristics to become an impact teacher according to UDC pre-service teachers.

3. Method

Our research study was focused on a group of pre-service teachers who were asked about their beliefs and about the top ten keywords they thought they should have to become an impact teacher. The main objective was to select the most important qualities for a teacher to have in a student-centred classroom in order to be an outstanding future teacher. The Driving Question which started this research was as follows: Which attributes should an impact teacher have? Pre-service teachers considered the role of the teacher still very important in the student-centred classroom and they placed great importance on the attributes and beliefs an outstanding teacher would need in order to succeed in the Teaching and Learning Process.

Regarding participants, this study consisted of 23 Spanish university students at a Master's Degree level in Teacher Training at University of A Coruña (UDC). All of them were studying within the Foreign Languages Teacher Training at Compulsory and Non-compulsory Secondary Levels Module. One of them was male (4.34%) and the other 22 female

models in different teaching situations," *Teachers and Teaching*, no. 18.1 (2012), 26.

³⁸ Kirsi Tirri and Martin Ubani, "Education of Finnish student teachers for purposeful teaching," *Journal of Education for Teaching*, no. 39.1 (2013), 23.

³⁹ Andrew K. Richards and Thomas J. Templin, "Toward a Multidimensional Perspective on Teacher-Coach Role Conflict," *Quest*, no. 64.3 (2012), 166.

⁴⁰ Ebru Melek Koç, "Development of mentor teacher role inventory," *European Journal of Teacher Education*, no. 34.2 (2011), 195.

(95.65%). Their ages ranged from 19 to 34. A group of 10 students came from the English Studies Faculty, 9 came from the Translation and Interpreting Faculty, 1 from the Modern Languages Faculty and 3 from the Teacher Training School of Education. Most of them came from University of A Coruña but they also came from University of Santiago de Compostela, University of Vigo and University of Salamanca. None of them had previous formal teaching experience apart from some modules related to learning languages or to general teaching practices, techniques and approaches. These individuals participated voluntarily and their written consent to participate was obtained.

Considering data elicitation tools, given that questionnaires used by other researchers for the specific purposes of the presented study could not be found, a questionnaire of our own creation was designed in order to obtain the answers needed to give a response to our research question. Over the last five years, the Research Group on Language and Culture Didactics (DILEC), coordinated by one of the present authors, has carried out different Research Projects with participants from previous years where students were asked to write down the top ten words they considered important to define a Master Teacher. As a result, a list of thirty words was collected and submitted to the judgements of external experts. Therefore, based on the aforementioned list of words collected from former students at this University (See fig. 8-1 below), our first research question aimed to determine, according to their criteria, the top ten keywords which, in their opinion, should define an impact teacher. They were asked to write from 1 to 10 next to the word they considered most to least important, meaning 1 the most important and 10 the least.

Furthermore, in the second part of the questionnaire free space was offered for them to write an open response in which to add other words not included, or any comments or suggestions to improve the aforementioned research.

TOP TEN KEY WORDS TO BECOME AN IMPACT TEACHER

Choose your ten key words and write 1 to 10 (meaning 1 the most important and 10 the last one).

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Active | ☐ Imaginative |
| ☐ Advisor | ☐ Impartial |
| ☐ Authoritarian | ☐ Innovative |
| ☐ Caring | ☐ Motivating |
| ☐ Coherent | ☐ Objective |
| ☐ Compelling | ☐ Organised |
| ☐ Confident | ☐ Patient |
| ☐ Creative | ☐ Resourceful |
| ☐ Dedicated | ☐ Respectful |
| ☐ Empathetic | ☐ Responsible |
| ☐ Encouraging | ☐ Supportive |
| ☐ Engaging | ☐ Sympathetic |
| ☐ Enthusiastic | ☐ Updated |
| ☐ Fair | ☐ Vocational |
| ☐ Flexible | ☐ _____ |
| ☐ Friendly | |

Email address (optional) _____

Fig. 8-1. Caption of the questionnaire.

If we consider hereinafter the procedure to develop this study, it is important to highlight that participants were given instructions and once the researchers had explained the purpose of the study, the questionnaire was prepared to be filled in individually. Researchers encouraged participants to ask for further information if required and once data was collected and analysed, an oral debate was organised to clear out doubts and check the findings. This oral debate was also needed to get to know what they had understood about the meaning of some items with the purpose of clarifying if a term had different meanings for each individual. As this activity was offered as an anonymous and voluntary action, participants were again informed that none of this data would be used for their academic records and they would be treated with confidentiality.

4. Data Analysis and Results

All participants came to an agreement in terms of the doubtless importance of the role of the teacher in nowadays' classroom despite the student-centred approach. They believed the student-centred curriculum has been promoted more and more throughout recent years and that this approach attempts to change the focus of instruction from the teacher to the students as well as to develop learners' autonomy and independence. However, our research assumption has been verified and every single participant thought that teachers still have a key role in the Teaching and Learning Process.

With reference to the attributes teachers should have, there is not such an agreement though. Most participants were aware that some of the qualities are unavoidable, but we have found a great assortment concerning the other options.

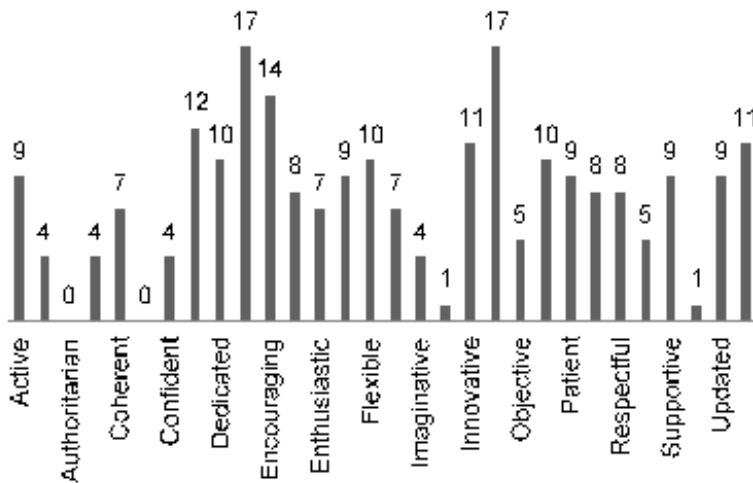


Fig. 8-2. Results of the list given to participants according to the different options.
(Source: compiled by authors)

As one can perceive in the chart above, 73% of participants stated *empathetic* and *motivating* were the top attributes of an impact teacher. During the debate, they were asked whether they would have chosen *motivated* if it had been an option, as *motivating* means the act of encouraging students and *motivated* implies the teacher having a reason to teach. Every participant confirmed they would also choose it as both qualities are important in a different way.

In addition, 56% of students selected *encouraging*, *creative* and *innovative*. We believed *creative* and *innovative* had just one possible interpretation, but we wanted to know if they understood *encouraging* either as the quality of making students feel more confident, or as the quality of stimulating them by guidance. Interviewees, thus, expressed several opinions and, in the end, half and half meant either one or the other definition. Finally, around 43% of pre-service teachers believed *vocational*, *flexible*, *organised*, *dedicated* and *supportive* to be the remaining terms to make up the top ten keywords list. The rest of the qualities did not have enough support to be included although some of them reckon on several points.

During the debate, we also asked them why none of them had chosen neither *authoritarian* nor *compelling*. *Compelling* was defined as something captivating, absorbing and fascinating that evokes interest and attention in a powerful way, which we thought was a positive. However, most interviewees explained they considered it quite similar to *engaging* and they had other qualities to place first. Regarding *authoritarian*, all participants agreed on the fact that it only had a negative or very negative meaning. They explained that some of them selected *coherent*, with the meaning of following the laws and rules, and *patient*, when talking about respecting the time students need, and they even found these two terms quite negative in a way, so they would never choose *authoritarian* as a quality for a teacher to have.

To finish with, we analysed the priority order and observed that there exists a surprising contradiction between two main groups. On the one hand, those participants who had studied a degree in languages before this Master's and, on the other hand, the three students who had previous knowledge about teaching. The language group, formed by 20 students, gave priority to firstly *motivating*, secondly *encouraging* and thirdly *supportive*. On the contrary, the three pre-service teachers who had previously studied a degree in education, believed *vocational*, *creative* and *imaginative* to be the top three attributes. We do believe the reason for this difference is related to the experience they had from being undergraduates. Language degrees used to be mainly theoretical and, although practical activities are being more and more included, professors were not used to dealing with creative or imaginative situations. As we have said before, teaching methods such as grammar-translation are old fashioned and new dynamic techniques are flourishing. However, education studies have been traditionally much more active, inventive and original and students usually choose them as future careers due to vocation.

5. Discussion

The double purpose of this study was first aimed to demonstrate that the role of the teacher is still relevant in the Teaching and Learning Process and second, it was also aimed to provide a list of the Top Ten Key Words to define what an Impact Teacher should be, according to the participants' opinions. Although this study involved only twenty-three participants and the results are not, of course, generalizable, they can be useful to understand that all teachers have a different and personal opinion of what education means and the needed requirements to succeed. The results showed that teachers' roles remain important although students are now the focus of the classroom and that quality teacher training is paramount to improving the Teaching and Learning Process.

As we stated before, our motivation to carry out this study was the assumption that participants' beliefs influence and help to give shape to their future performance in the classroom. Thus, according to Fung⁴¹ they gave their opinions bearing in mind their beliefs, attitudes and conceptions all related to the Teaching and Learning Process. Furthermore, regarding the influence of beliefs in the teaching styles, as Friedrich and Hron⁴² pointed out, personal and pedagogical beliefs were directly related to the way in which participants decided to assume classroom practices, and consequently, influenced them when making decisions.

Butler and Cuenca⁴³ considered that lack of clarity about the roles and tasks of teacher trainers was the result of the generalised perception that the teacher training profession is a very simple and self-evident activity. Contrary to this perception, the authors of this study consider that if there exists a real teacher commitment with students and the Teaching and Learning Process, the tasks involved in pre-service teacher preparation are really tough and require a lot of hard work, instruction, self-assessment and lifelong learning. All these thoughts were translated to participants during fieldwork and they were entirely on the researchers' side, agreeing whole-heartedly that becoming a teacher is not an easy task to perform.

⁴¹ Angela Choi and Fung Tam, "The role of a professional learning community in teacher change: a perspective from beliefs and practices," *Teachers and Teaching* no. 21.1 (2015), 22-43.

⁴² Helmut F. Friedrich and Aemilian Hron. "Factors affecting teachers' student-centred classroom computer use," *Educational Media International* no. 48.4 (2011), 274.

⁴³ Brandon Butler and Alexander Cuenca. "Conceptualizing the Roles of Mentor Teachers During Student Teaching," *Action in Teacher Education* no. 34.4 (2012), 296-308.

Not only did the questionnaire help to find out what participants considered important to become an impact teacher, but also the interviews have broadened our knowledge and collection of information. As stated by Kahl & Venette⁴⁴ in their research, the Teaching and Learning Process implied dialogue and interaction in order to create knowledge, a fact that our participants supported one hundred per cent throughout their answers to the surveys and during debate and discussion about the top ten keywords in the fieldwork stage of this study. Moreover, taking into account the third of the three possible relationships recognised by Neumann⁴⁵, as previously explained in the present study chapter, where both the teacher and the student shared the forefront, measurable improvements in students' performance have been appreciated considering that participants shared a double role acting as students during lectures and seminars at this university and playing the role of (pre-)teachers when being at their placements.

As Sadler⁴⁶ stated, it is worth noting that in this research participants demonstrated that individuals are able and must show their emotions and feelings whether they are positive or negative such as anger, frustration and even anxiety (Arnaiz and Pérez-Luzardo⁴⁷). As a consequence of all this data and considerations, they selected their top ten keywords which, in their opinion, defined the perfect teacher they would like to find in front of them and; at the same time, a big amount of self-reflection and critical thinking was originated among them to reflect about the perfect teacher they would like to become.

We do completely think this research project has made them reflect and ask themselves which qualities they should strengthen and put into practice if they want to be successful teachers once they finish their training period. Therefore, according to our research, the top ten key qualities an impact teacher should have are from one to ten: empathetic,

⁴⁴ David Kahl and Steven Venette. "To lecture or let go: A comparative analysis of student speech outlines from teacher-centred and learner-centred classrooms," *Communication Teacher*, no. 24.3 (2010), 178–186

⁴⁵ Jacob W. Neumann, "Developing a New Framework for Conceptualizing "Student-Centred Learning"," *The Educational Forum* no. 77.2 (2013), 161-175.

⁴⁶ Sadler, Ian. "The role of self-confidence in learning to teach in higher education." *Innovations in Education and Teaching International* 50.2 (2013): 157-166.

⁴⁷ Patricia Arnaiz and Jessica Pérez-Luzardo "Anxiety in Spanish EFL University Lessons: Causes, responsibility, attribution and coping," *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* no. 49.1 (2014), 57-76.

motivating, encouraging, creative, innovative, vocational, flexible, organised, dedicated and supportive. Once these words have been highlighted, both pre-service teachers and experienced ones should work on them in order to improve the Teaching and Learning Process. There are still some aspects remaining for further research, like the beliefs of pre-service students who come from different backgrounds, such as purely scientific or technical degrees, or those opinions of future Master's students once the student-centred curriculum is fully implemented. In the meantime, studies like the present one reveal the key role of teachers and the attributes they consider ideal to become an impact teacher.

6. Conclusions

Thanks to the obtained results and further discussion we are ready to shed some light and conclusions on this research and ascertain that both initial hypotheses have been accomplished. On the one hand, the role of the teacher seems to be still more important in the Teaching and Learning process than expected. All pre-service teachers tested throughout this study considered their future as professionals and their role in the educational process as a key and relevant point. They also considered that it is not an easy task to accomplish and that it needs a lot of time and constant effort to reach and maintain success.

On the other hand, the top ten keywords obtained out of this research will help our future teachers and could be used as a guide for them to reach a Master Teacher Qualification. Inviting them to reflect on these issues would enable researchers to give access and obtain interesting information for future investigation. Meanwhile, the top ten keywords list is offered below:

1. Empathetic
2. Motivating
3. Encouraging
4. Creative
5. Innovative
6. Vocational
7. Flexible
8. Organised
9. Dedicated
10. Supportive

It is worth noting that the short number of students tested implies an important limitation in this study and it must be acknowledged. Despite this limitation, this research was focused on PGCE students at UDC Faculty of Education and we consider that all data obtained provided a satisfactory amount of information because they were strictly based on their beliefs, opinions and self-reflections about the teachers' role within the Teaching and Learning Process in their specific language learning context.

In addition, this study offers the possibility to widen the top ten keywords out in order to explore and re-define what the ideal Impact Teacher should be. It also opens up a future line of research in the context of Spanish Universities and can also be extended to other Faculties of Education to share and compare results according to different variables and research projects.

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