Metacognitive Strategies to Foster Professional Development in Pre-Service Teachers Based on a Reflective Teaching Approach

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To our families for their endless support.

In memory of those who will remain in our hearts.
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Abstract

This action research project was carried out at a language center located in Bogota. The researchers intended to explore how metacognitive strategies can be adapted for pre-service teachers (the target population), with the purpose of increasing and structure reflection in order to foster professional development. For that reason, the overall aim of this study was to analyze the impact of reflective teaching and metacognitive strategies on pre-service teachers’ professional development. By doing so, this paper presents the relevance of implementing metacognitive strategies, such as planning, monitoring and evaluating allowing pre-service teachers to be aware of the different stages, weaknesses and strengths during their teaching process, which can take place inside and outside of the classroom. Data collected throughout the implementation included students' questionnaires, a supervisor's questionnaire, pre-service teachers' metacognitive questionnaires, institutional students' surveys, teaching journals and a checklist given by the language center. For data analysis, grounded theory was implemented making use of the open, axial and selective coding. Results showed that when teachers actually reflect upon their own process, they can improve their teaching practice, which will benefit all the actors of it: teachers, students and the institution. Additionally, findings also reported that metacognitive strategies can be implemented in teachers’ performance to improve the professional development.

Key words: metacognitive strategies, professional development, reflective teaching, pre-service teachers.
Resumen

Este proyecto de investigación acción fue realizado en un centro de lenguas localizado en Bogotá. Las investigadoras tuvieron la intención de explorar como las estrategias metacognitivas pueden ser adaptadas para docentes en formación (sujeto-objeto de investigación), explorando nuevas maneras de el desarrollo profesional. En este sentido, el objetivo principal de este estudio era analizar el impacto de la enseñanza reflexiva y las estrategias metacognitivas sobre el desarrollo profesional de los docentes en formación. De esta manera, este proyecto presenta la importancia de poner en práctica las estrategias metacognitivas, como la planificación, el monitoreo y la evaluación permitiendo a los profesores ser conscientes de las diferentes etapas, debilidades y fortalezas durante su proceso de enseñanza, que puede ocurrir dentro y fuera del aula. La recolección de datos fue realizada por medio de cuestionarios para los estudiantes, el cuestionario para el supervisor, cuestionarios metacognitivos realizados por los docentes en formación, una encuesta institucional, diarios de campo y una "checklist" dada por el centro de lengua. Para el análisis de datos, la teoría fundamentada fue puesta en práctica aprovechando de la codificación abierta, axial y selectiva. Los resultados mostraron que cuando los profesores en realidad reflexionan sobre su propio proceso, pueden mejorar su enseñanza en la práctica, que beneficiará a todos los actores de ello: profesores, estudiantes y la institución. Además, las conclusiones también divulgaron que las estrategias metacognitivas pueden utilizarse en función de los profesores para mejorar el desarrollo profesional.

Palabras clave: estrategias metacognitivas, desarrollo profesional, reflexión docente, docentes en formación
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO FOSTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

Index

Index of Figures 9
List of tables 10
1. Problem 11
  1.1. Problem statement. 11
  1.2. Research question 13
  1.3. Objectives 13
    1.3.1 General objective. 13
    1.3.2 Specific objectives. 13
  1.4. Background research 14
    1.4.1. Local studies 14
      A mirror reflective teaching practices: Universidad Libre (Fúquene & Parra, 2016) 14
    1.4.2. National studies 18
      Teachers' Attitudes towards Reflective Teaching: Evidences in a Professional Development: Universidad de Córdoba. (Jerez, 2008) 18
      The role of reflection during the first teaching experience of foreign language pre-service teachers: an exploratory-case study (Cote, 2017) 20
    1.4.3. International studies 22
      Teachers' Attitudes towards Reflectivity is the essence of quality teaching and learning by Iqbal, Bin, Alam, Shahfiq ur, Shabir, & Wajid (2013) 22
      Reflective Practice: The Teacher in the Mirror by (Rayford, 2016) 23
  1.5 Justification 26
2. Theoretical framework 28
  2.1 Reflective teaching 28
  2.2 Metacognitive Strategies 36
  2.3 Professional Development 40
3. Methodology 48
  3.1 Type of research: Action research 48
3.2 Instruments for data collection:

- A Teaching Journal: 51
- Questionnaire: 51
- Questionnaire to the Supervisor (personal contact): ¡Error! Marcador no definido.
- Questionnaire to the Students (Group): 52
- KTP (Kids and Teens Program) Checklist: 53
- Metacognitive questionnaire: 53

4. Context description 54

5. Pedagogical Proposal 56

6. Data Analysis 65

Core category: Action plans based on metacognitive strategies and reflection to enhance teachers’ professional development 70

Subcategory 1: “Reflective Teaching” 71
Subcategory 2: “Metacognitive strategies” 75
Subcategory 3: “Professional development” 77

7. Conclusions 82

8. References 84
Index of Figures

Figure 1: Relation between the three subcategories and the core category
List of tables

Table 1: Students' opinions regarding the pre-service teachers' performance.

Table 2: Activities that students’ like to do in class.

Table 3 Students' feelings towards the class.
1. Problem

1.1. Problem statement.

In the practicum process at Centro Colombo Americano in the KTP (Kids and Teens Program), two pre-service teachers from Universidad Libre realized about their need to learn how to be an effective teacher, a teacher that not only accomplishes the standards given by the institution, but also that assures students’ proficiency in the foreign language. This need was identified through an exhaustive self-observation and peer-observation.

The language was concerned about the practitioners' performance, therefore, there was a weekly meeting with a supervisor and other pre-service teachers to discuss and socialize topics related to English teaching regarding the parameters established by the institution. Furthermore, the practitioners carried out of presentations about pedagogical issues and English advanced topics (grammar, pronunciation, etc).

In order to develop the practicum, each pre-service teacher had two courses. One of them was shared with a team-teacher (it means an experienced teacher that was in charge of the class). Each practitioner was supposed to carry out activities progressively until he or she ended up delivering the whole class. Also, there was a regular observation done by the team-teacher, in which he/she gave constant feedback according to the performance in the classroom. As a result, the two novice teachers needed to work on their use of transitions (sentences to connect activities), use of learning strategies, time management and assessment. As a result, the two
novice teachers needed to work on their use of transitions (sentences to connect activities), use of learning strategies, time management and assessment.

In addition, each practitioner was responsible for teaching a course by their own. Here, the supervisor observed the practitioners' classes, twice a semester. This with the purpose of identifying if they accomplished the institution's requirements (Task Based Learning and Communicative Approach), using a checklist to assess their performance (See annex A). As a consequence, the supervisor's feedback was congruent with the team-teachers' advice. (See annex C)

Thus, as self-examination each pre-service teacher reflected upon their process and practicum in a teaching journal. By doing this, they wrote how their classes were developed, including number of students, the type of activities that were done that class, how those activities were performed and a reflection of how the class could have been better. In these journals, they could find some weaknesses in their teaching practice, such as the implementation of learning strategies, teaching grammar, time management, group management, attention spread, an appropriate use of English register. As it can be seen, reflective teaching was a core topic in our research query, which is one of the main constructs of this study. (See annex B)

Besides, there was a regular observation done by a team-teacher, he/she gave the pre-service teachers constant feedback according to their performance in the classroom. Additionally, a supervisor observed the practitioners' classes, twice a semester. In both cases, pre-service teachers showed that their performances had to improve in order to accomplish Centro Colombo Americano standards (See annex A). In other words, it was necessary to first
reflect upon the reflective practice and make decisions about that, this is known as *professional development*.

Based on the data collected all along the diagnostic phase, it is possible to recognize the existence of a necessity, related to teachers’ performance that assure standards’ fulfillment and students’ settlement. Without effective teachers, effective learning is a difficult goal to accomplish, in other words, if teachers do not accomplish with the requirements given by the institution and do not worried about their students’ learning, it is not possible to guide and provide students with tools to learn English as a foreign language. This is the reason why this project is centered on teachers’ needs.

1.2. Research question

How can metacognitive strategies foster professional development in pre-service teachers based on a reflective teaching process?

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1 General objective.

Analyze the impact of reflective teaching and metacognitive strategies on pre-service teachers’ professional development.

1.3.2 Specific objectives.

1. Foster professional development for pre-service language teachers by using a form based on metacognitive strategies.
2. Characterize the class-to-class process based on the phases of metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring and evaluating).

3. Interpret the result obtained under the concept of reflective teaching on pre-service teachers’ professional development.

1.4. Background research

In this part of the investigation, some background studies are going to be summarized. These, with the purpose of recognizing the importance of what other researchers have done in the field, and also, in order to establish what the contributions of these studies are for the current project. Therefore, they are organized in the categories of: local studies, national studies and international studies.

1.4.1. Local studies

*A mirror reflective teaching practices: Universidad Libre* (Fúquene & Parra, 2014)

To begin with, there is a project called “*A mirror reflective teaching practices*” by Fúquene & Parra, a thesis for a MA in education foreign languages emphasis at Universidad Libre. In this paper, it is possible to see how peer-assessment as part of a reflective teaching process takes action in teachers’ professional development. At first, Fúquene & Parra set a question research related to “collaborative work, by giving feedback to each other, teachers could deal with their difficulties going deeply in their classes’ analysis to find [...] weaknesses and strengths”. In order to solve the problem, they set some objectives; a general objective that
was to “analyze the influence of peer feedback in the reflective teaching process of two researchers at two state schools”; and four specific objectives:

The first was to review the theoretical documents about peer feedback, reflective teaching and professional development. The second was to design instruments to collect data from teacher researchers’ classes. The third was to observe the partners’ classes in order to highlight weaknesses and strengths in their practice. The last one was to reflect upon the teaching practice based on collaborative analysis of the teacher researchers’ classes.

(Fúquene & Parra, 2014, pág. 11)

Thereby, as an action research, it shows different strategies for data collection, as lessons plans, performance of the class, observation (log and observation format) and a reflect done every day. They did this in order to have enough information for analysis and create their own conclusions. In the analysis stag, the researchers created 3 categories aiming to answer the question research.

The result of this thesis shows that peer-feedback has a positive impact on the reflective teaching process owing to how these processes help teachers to discover their weaknesses and strengths in their practice that they could not see before. Fúquene & Parra claim that the reflective process helps teachers to feel more “aware of about their environment and their abilities and limitations” (2014, p. 89), not only by peer-assessment but also using self-assessment.
Given the fact that most of the projects presented in the graduated program at Universidad Libre are based on students’ needs “A mirror reflective teaching practices” provides this paper with a general idea of how to develop a project from the teachers’ view. Also, this thesis mentions several theoreticians and methodologies which can give some theoretical support to develop this paper, due to the base of the research framework is peer-feedback, reflective teaching and professional development; the last two topics are very close to what this paper focuses on.

*Exploring Reflective Teaching through Informed Journal Keeping and Blog Group Discussion in the Teaching Practicum.* (Insuasty & Zambrano, 2010)

Regarding some other local studies, there is an investigation from Universidad Nacional de Colombia called “Exploring Reflective Teaching through Informed Journal Keeping and Blog Group Discussion in the Teaching Practicum”. The researchers found that the practice in foreign languages at a public university had some weaknesses, because practitioners were not developing their reflective skills as teachers although the existence of institutional regulations in that sense.

For this reason, the researchers decided to carry out a study that helped pre-service teachers to go beyond of giving tests, following a syllabus and reciting textbooks, in this way they could be more reflective and critical about their practice. In order to do this, the investigation sought four objectives: (a) to determine the type of perceptions student teachers had about reflective teaching, (b) to broaden student teachers’ insights into reflective teaching, (c) to stimulate student teachers to explore reflective teaching tools during the practicum experience, and (d) to ascertain to what extent student teachers became reflective practitioners.
With the purpose of reaching the previous objectives, this study used Curricular Action Research. The investigation also had other defining features of action research such as being small-scale, localized, and aimed at discovering, developing, or monitoring changes to practice (Wallace, cited in Insuasty & Zambrano, 2010. P. 92).

The population for this study were six pre-service teachers during a length of six months. They developed their reflective process through several tools like, a journal keeping (with regard to description, interpretation, intervention aspects and action plans), blog group discussions (in which pre-service teachers and supervisors gave feedback about the posts) and group or individual conferences to express their feelings and perceptions about reflective teaching.

All this process, allowed the six pre-service teachers to enhance the initial perceptions they had about reflective teaching, also to improve in terms of reflectivity through the use of: informed journal keeping and blog group discussions. In addition, they demonstrated to have expanded their insights into reflective teaching and adopted a more reflective and critical attitude in their practicum. Informed diary keeping and blog group discussion proved to be positive strategies for this purpose because they promoted the development of student teachers’ critical thinking through writing (Insuasty & Zambrano, 2010. P. 100).

By the end of the research, it was concluded that reflection is a process that needs to be well structured as the authors affirm “It needs to be shaped by a systematic professional development process through which student teachers are involved in a wide range of observation, analysis, exploration and evaluation experiences” (Insuasty & Zambrano, 2010, p. 101).
In this way, the research brings to light important aspects to take into account in the present project when reflecting on teaching. To begin with, it provides many ways to develop and structure a reflective process. But also, it remarks the importance of reflection as a systematic process that can be “taught, learnt, assessed, discussed and researched” (Insuasty & Zambrano, 2010, p. 101). Finally, it proposes reflection as a way to encourage teachers to create professional development plans.

### 1.4.2. National studies

_Teachers' Attitudes towards Reflective Teaching: Evidences in a Professional Development: Universidad de Córdoba. (Jerez, 2008)_

In addition, there is a research article that shows what the most common posture from teachers is based on a professional development program. Jerez (2008, p. 92), explains how “reflective teaching is a paradigm that dominates teacher education around the world and most professional development programs include it as a way to improve teachers' practice.” Although it shows the idea that being reflective on the teaching process brings benefits in teachers’ practice, teachers do not take advantage of these kind of tools as it should be. She establishes that “this is a process that has to be guided and designed rather than be left at random” (Jerez, 2008, p. 92). In other words, to improve efficiency on teachers’ performance they must have a commitment with the process. In Jerez’ words the purpose of the study is:

_Aimed at engaging two in-service teachers from a public school in Bogotá while they were participating in a professional development program to initiate a reflective thinking_
process that could allow them to question their beliefs and actions as a way to improve their practice. (Jerez, 2008, p. 92)

This purpose was set from four question research:

How are teachers’ attitudes toward reflective teaching manifested in a professional development program?; What are the factors that influence teachers’ attitudes towards reflective teaching in a PDP?; What kind of changes took place as a result of reflection and action on the teachers’ part? (Jerez, 2008, p. 96)

In order to solve this, the researcher set a qualitative case research study based on description and prescription perspectives of two teachers in Bogotá. The data collection instruments used were: observation, interviewing, questionnaires, videotaping and diaries. From these, information was analyzed and discuss to conclude that:

“in spite of the many difficulties encountered along the way, teachers demonstrated to themselves that improving the teaching practice was possible as long as they wanted to do it. They also seemed to be pleased with the final outcomes of the project and, to them, this was their best achievement. At the end, several changes regarding their attitude toward reflection were observed. The participants were more open-minded and shared their experiences more overtly with others. They also included different activities in the language class that aimed at enhancing their students’ learning even if these were difficult to be carried out” (Jerez, 2008, p. 110)
This study is necessary for the present project because it provides it with one of the main concepts for the framework, professional development in teachers, giving a clear model and objective of this paradigm. As this research was made at Universidad Distrital in Bogotá with two practitioners of the undergraduate programs, the context of the education could be taken as a model in the present paper. In addition, this article contributes with a useful concept for applying in this research, teachers’ reflective thinking, and gives different samples of tools to evidence teachers’ reflections.

*The role of reflection during the first teaching experience of foreign language pre-service teachers: an exploratory-case study* (Cote, 2017)

Furthermore, in Colombia some investigations have been done in the field. Gabriel Cote, from Universidad de Pamplona, researched on “The role of reflection during the first teaching experience of foreign language pre-service teachers: an exploratory-case study”. This research, emerged from the fact that most of the investigations related to reflective teaching, focus on different things rather than “providing participants and teacher educators with an opportunity to begin to get a better understanding on the reflection process of pre-service teachers who are engaged in their first teaching experience”. (Cote, 2017. P. 3)

As a consequence, the study was intended to answer the question: how does a reflective process help student teachers to enhance their practicum? By means of an exploratory case study that was carried out in “four educational institutions: two public high schools, one private primary school and one public university located in a northern town in Colombia.” (Cote, 2017.
Additionally, concerning the population, four practitioners participated in the study using the tools: reflective journals, interviews and classrooms observations.

Consequently, the researcher evidenced that the student teachers reflected during and after the class, it means the categories proposed by Schön: reflection in and on action, respectively. Moreover, all the pre-service teachers reached the first and second level of reflection proposed by Van Manen (as cited in Cote, 2017). When they thought about the effectiveness of certain aspects, such as materials or resources, as well as taking action plans to improve the weak areas. In fact, only two teachers developed the third level of reflection, critical thinking. This, through the reflection of aspects such as the new role they had to play according to society requirements, or the diversity of classroom contexts like ethical background of students, for example.

In the findings, the author stated that “student teachers’ processes of reflection on action and reflection in action (Schön, 1987) helped them to redirect certain actions in their classrooms or to implement necessary changes aimed at improving their teaching.” (Cote, 2017. P. 33)

Furthermore, regarding the fact that only 2 participants reached the last level of reflection, proposed by Van Manen’s (1977), revealed that there was a lack in terms of teachers' knowledge, strategies and guidance, that were necessary to have high levels of reflection.

Finally, the importance of Cote’s work for this project lies on the variety of tools it suggests for reflective practice as “attention should be given not only to the conceptualization but also to the appropriate methodology that a more rigorous process of reflection entails” (Cote Parra, 2017, p. 33). Moreover, it highlights the importance of raising awareness of the reflection
process in teachers as it “will eventually change the way they deal with their first teaching experience, making them more critical of and responsible for their professional and personal growth” (Cote Parra, 2017, p. 33).

1.4.3. International studies

*Teachers’ Attitudes towards Reflectivity is the essence of quality teaching and learning*

*by Iqbal, Bin, Alam, Shahfiq ur, Shabir, & Wajid (2013)*

One of the international studies that is relevant for the present study is the one written by Iqbal et al (2013). It provides different instruments and concepts to this paper, they claim that effective teachers understand the problems that can present in the classroom and help students to be better using reflection in their performance. With this in mind it is possible to say that the purpose of this study was to investigate the teachers’ visions based on the role of reflective practice in order to improve teachers’ performance in classroom. They used different instruments for collecting data as a questionnaire that was designed and administered to 150 teachers in 30 Community Based Schools in district Chitral, KPK Pakistan. As a result, the study showed that teachers who were trained in reflective practice have found a big difference in their teaching skills. Iqbal et al (2013) claim that

The sampled teachers are now able to plan daily for their lessons. They are able to solve their classroom problems more confidently than before. They keep regular reflective diary in which they record their experiences on daily basis. They can solve the problems of students and guide them in a more competent way. They involve their students in
classroom discussion and report the progress of the students to parents and the school management regularly. (p. 15)

The conclusion of this study was that reflective practice helps teachers develop their teaching and learning skills. This is the foundation of professional development.

*Teachers’ Attitudes towards Reflectivity is the essence of quality teaching and learning* helps to establish several connections between the different concepts that this paper discusses, such as reflective teaching and professional development. Also, it gives a wide view of this paradigm showing its concern of how to deal with the carelessness that most of the teachers have about reflective teaching.

*Reflective Practice: The Teacher in the Mirror* by (Rayford, 2016)

Finally, “Reflective Practice: The Teacher in the Mirror” is a study by Celese Raenee Rayford (2016), from the university of Nevada. The researcher observed that according to *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, schools have to keep parents informed about teachers’ coalification, and principals have to propend for activities that encourage teachers' professional development. As a result, “according to Berube and Dexter (2006), the challenge becomes how to engage teachers and administrators in reflective instructional dialogue for the purpose of improving instruction and increasing student achievement.” (As cited in Rayford, 2016. P. 4)

In this way, this study was intended to deepen perceptions of teachers and principals concerning the new strategy, explained above, from a reflective practice perspective. Hence, some research questions were set:
1. What are elementary teachers' perceptions of the reflective practice process?
2. In what ways do elementary teachers promote reflective practice to enhance their professional growth?
3. What are elementary administrators' perceptions of the reflective practice process?
4. In what ways do elementary administrators promote reflective practice to encourage professional development of teachers and increase student achievement?
5. What are the similarities and differences between teachers' perceptions and administrators' perceptions of reflective practice?

Regarding the methodology, the researcher said that “the study was conducted using a regional cross-sectional survey design (Creswell, 2008; McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). The method of sampling was targeted (Creswell, 2008)” (As cited in Rayford, 2016. P. 12). Additionally, an average of 413 elementary teachers and administrators from different states, were surveyed and 6 teachers and administrators were interviewed to know their opinion about reflective practice. Furthermore, most of the schools were located in urban and suburban settings, and the average class size was 21-30 students.

Data analysis showed that elementary teachers thoughts about reflection were: that it is very helpful when identifying weak areas and it helps teachers to improve their teaching practices. Data also evidenced that teachers reflected during and after their practice, in order to make adjustments in their classes. They also liked reflecting on their performance, and preferred to do it alone, but they needed some time to dialogue with peers, too. In addition, it showed that teachers perceived reflection to be very important for having a better teaching planning, and because it enhances professional growth. Additionally, “the data suggested that principals
perceived reflecting with others and reflecting about teaching to be useful in improving teachers' performance in the classroom” (As cited in Rayford, 2016).

As conclusion, the results suggested that teachers were aware of the relevance of reflection; for this reason, they were willing to participate in reflective practices. Moreover, it is important that teachers want and feel free to offer suggestions to other colleagues with the purpose of enhancing professional growth. Finally, “adult learning must be geared toward a teacher taking personal action. It is the alternating engagement of the teacher being viewed as a learner and an instructor” (As cited in Rayford, 2016)

Therefore, this study is closely related to the current investigation, because it raises awareness of the usefulness of reflective practice in many aspects: improving teaching planning and instructions, making adjustments during the class time and the most important one, encouraging professional growth. Moreover, it provides some important information about peer work when reflecting, because data suggested that teachers perceived it as a prior tool for the process.
1.5 Justification

Even though, being a teacher means someone who has knowledge in a specific area, this does not mean that the teacher has finished his/her learning process. For this reason, reflective teaching is an important practice which is believed to become a need in academic fields, such as pre-service teachers or even experienced teachers.

Teachers usually look for several strategies to improve students’ learning, but sometimes they forget about their own learning. Like teachers’ learning process never finishes some of those strategies that are used for enhancing students’ learning, as metacognitive strategies, can be applied to boost teachers’ performances. As a result, professors are aware of this and willing to grow as teachers which seeks professional development.

This paper was born from the necessity of two pre-service teachers who did their practicum in the Centro Colombo Americano. They have found some weaknesses in their practicum. (See annex A, B & C). This research seeks to enhance the two pre-service teachers’ performances based on three concepts: reflective teaching, metacognitive strategies and professional development.

The first concept is related directly to a critical self-assessment and reflection done by teachers in order to have a good decision making, planning and performing processes in the classroom. All of this with the purpose of propending an efficient environment which fosters learning.
The second construct is metacognitive strategies. These are based on learners and how they are aware of their learning process through different stages as planning, supervising and evaluating the success of a learning activity. Usually, these strategies are orientated to learners, but the idea of this project is to adapt them to teachers, in order to use them as a tool to improve their performances.

The final concept that this project will talk about, as it is mentioned above, is professional development. This is understood as an ongoing process which looks for teachers’ progressions as professionals in order to enhance education of quality. That is finally the duty of teachers, create and promote spaces where students feel comfortable enough to learn and develop themselves as people.
2. Theoretical framework

Education changes according to the society where it is stated and so teachers do. Nowadays, teachers are asked to be multicultural, comprehensive, innovators and planners; to place integral students with special learning needs in their classrooms; to involve technologies for teaching; and parents in the learning process. “No matter how good pre-service training for teachers is, it cannot be expected to prepare teachers for all the challenges they will face throughout their careers” (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2009). In order to make this possible, it is necessary to have teachers worried about their own process of professional development. In this sense, they can take advantage of different tools to enhance this professional growth. For this reason, this project entails tools as **reflective teaching** and **metacognitive strategies**, that helps teachers to encourage their **professional development**. Therefore, these three concepts are going to be explained below.

2.1 Reflective teaching

The first construct that this project takes into consideration is reflective teaching. In order to be able to talk about this, it is necessary to set a definition of it. It is also important to mention how reflective teaching becomes a cyclical process. Furthermore, it is possible to discuss how decision making is important to reflective teaching. Finally, it is imperative to talk about reflective teaching as a systematic inquiry, which entails three principles: practice is evidence based, reflective practice involves dialogue and reflective teaching links beliefs and practices.

Reflective teaching is defined as an approach to teach. According to Jack Richards, it has distinct stages, such as: “hand-in-hand with critical self-examination and reflection as a basis for
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO FOSTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

decision making, planning and action in the classroom.” (Richards & Lockhart, 1994. p. ix) in other words, reflective teaching is an autonomous process that each teacher should have. Here, it is necessary to say that decision making, planning and action in the classroom become a cycle that teachers must apply constantly on their classes.

Moreover, according to Schön (cited in Wallace, 1991), there are two different kinds of professional knowledge. On the one hand, there is what he calls “received knowledge”; it refers to all the theoretical background that a professional is supposed to know according to his career. For instance, a language teacher is expected to know about linguistic concepts, such as, intonation patterns or grammatical hierarchy. This means that there is certain knowledge that the trainees do not experience in professional action, but they received from other sources like the university.

On the other hand, there is the “experiential knowledge”, which Wallace (1991) defines as the combination of the concepts knowing-in-action and reflection. When talking about knowing-in-action, Schön (as cited in Wallace, 1991) says that it is when trainees are able to recognize certain phenomena related to their practicum. On the other hand, reflection implies the judgements trainees do about the phenomena they had already recognized. This can be done through the “conscious development of insights into knowing in action” (Wallace, 1991. P. 13) or based on different theories and techniques.

Furthermore, Schön (as cited in Gaynor, 2013) categorizes reflection into two different types. The first one is called reflection-in-action understood as a process made in context, took no basis and createing new theories based on the reality.
Regarding reflective teaching, Wallace (1998) highlights that it is a common activity among teachers, and he talks about the situations in which this can happen. For example, when a teacher has had a class that went extremely good or extremely bad, he or she reflects on the things that were done during the class time, and how well they resulted or how wrong they went. In addition, the author says that the purpose of this kind of reflection is to avoid certain mistakes, or to repeat some things that went right.

In this approach, teachers must take different conditions into account, like collection of data, teachers’ and students’ beliefs and attitudes, and the practice itself to have a critical reflection about their teaching processes. All of these with the purpose of helping the teacher in the decision-making process. (Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

According to Richards & Lockhart (1994), decision making is the process in which the teacher has different options and it is required to select from among these options the ones he thinks are the best suited to a particular goal. These decisions have three types, beginning with planning decisions, interactive decisions and evaluative decisions.

*Planning decisions* are each moment where the teacher develops macro-plans or goals for a course or a class. The lesson plan helps teachers to organize the lesson to effectively accomplish the objectives, the activities, the time needed, resources, teaching strategies, grouping arrangement, possible problems and action plans (Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

*Interactive decisions* could also be included in the starting point of the class. Lessons must be dynamic, each decision that the teacher makes in order to have more dynamic classes is
an interactive decision. These decisions are part of teaching skills, which enables teachers to assess students’ response in each dynamic activity (Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

The last type of decisions is evaluative; Richards and Lockhart (1994) stated that, it refers to decisions made after the lesson. Usually, evaluative decisions are done based on certain criteria. These criteria must be set on students and teachers’ necessities. The idea is that after having the evaluation process, the teacher starts to create an action plan to improve his classes. Here is where the cycle starts once more.

In the book “reflective practice” Farrell (2013) cites John Dewey and his thoughts about reflective inquiry. He highlights the importance of reflection for emancipating teachers from the routine, which seeks to teach classes rather than teaching students. Regarding to this aspect Dewey (as cited in Farrell, 2013) said that reflection allows teachers to emancipate from routine activities, because they direct, plan and foresight activities and “considered reflective practice to be intentional, systematic inquiry that is disciplined and will ultimately lead to change and professional growth for teachers” (Dewey as cited in Farrell, 2013, p. 9)

Furthermore, when talking about reflective teaching, Farrell (2013) states three principles for this process:

- *Practice is evidence based*
- *Reflective practice involves dialogue*
- *Reflective teaching links beliefs and practices*
These principles are extremely important as they help to clarify what a reflective process entails. They set a clear perspective that reflection is a serious and rigorous process that involves observation, being open to the possibility of learning from others, and expose the real classroom practices.

Therefore, it emerges the first principle *practice is evidence based*. For this reason, teachers should collect data as an evidence of their classes, in order to reflect on this, and finally being able to make decisions. That is the reason the author proposes four questions that enable reflection. In the first place “What do I do?”, also “Why do I do it?” and “How do I do it?”, and at last “Will I change anything?”

Regards to the first question, “What do I do?” teachers recall information about an incident or incidents that they perceived as significant. It is important to point out that such incidents can be positive or negative, such as extending an activity because it was successful, or having to change the activity because it was not working well for students. In this way, through recalling, describing and analyzing those events, teachers have the opportunity to explore the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

For this reason, teachers have the alternative of a case study about a specific situation they have encountered during their practice. For instance, a problem or joy that the novice teacher has experienced can be faced in different ways, such as: comparing classroom participation of a low achieving student and a high achieving one, or how the teacher makes use of a lesson plan, among others, are situations that have different perspectives to be face off.
Thereby, a teacher “clarifies particular issues, looks at alternatives, and chooses a particular course of action to follow”. (Farrell, 2013, p. 11.)

Consequently, there is the question “How do I do it?” At this point, teachers must go beyond than just thinking about the things they do, but to gather information of what they do. In order to do so, there are a wide range of options that teachers can consider. For example, self-reflection, student’s views or even colleagues’ reflections (Farrell, 2013).

With regard to self-reflection, teachers can do this by means of keeping a teaching journal or recording their classes. The fact of keeping a journal, requires teachers to stop to think about their classes and gather general information (in which patterns can be found or focus on specific aspects). Besides, recording lessons gives teachers the opportunity of realizing about aspects they may not notice during the class. Thus, they can review by watching or listening to the recording and reflecting upon that (Farrell, 2013).

Another way of collecting data is through students’ reflections (Farrell, 2013). Students can be asked to give feedback to teachers by means of evaluations, concept maps, or just asking them simple questions as “What was the class about?” or “What was difficult for you?” Moreover, colleagues’ reflection is a different way to gather data. In this case, a peer observes the classes of another teacher and then provides feedback. Therefore, when it comes to colleagues’ observation different types of instruments, such as quantitative or qualitative, may be useful.

In addition, the question “why do I do it?” has to do with teachers’ beliefs regarding learning and teaching English. In this stage, teachers reflect on their practices to notice if they are
related to their beliefs or not, and if they want to change something about their performance according to what they believe. As a consequence, teachers can ask themselves “Will I change anything?”, and they can answer it according to the results of the previous questions.

The second principle is called *reflective practice involves dialogue*. The main goal of this principle is to challenge teachers, as during self-reflection a teacher may biases the process, focuses only on aspects that does not make him or her uncomfortable. However, the starting point is a “dialogue self”, which can be done through an autobiography, for example. The purpose of this is then being able to analyze the text according to the beliefs, values and assumptions that guide teachers’ practices.

Subsequently, teachers can expand the dialogue to their peers. The first option is a critical friendship, in which a colleague, who is also a friend, gives the teacher pieces of advice in terms of education, instead of being a consultant. The next option is team teaching. In this case, two or a group of teachers assume evaluating, planning and delivering classes as a group. The third choice, is peer-coaching. Here, there are two teachers that agree on helping to improve aspects of teaching of one or both of them by means of dialogue. Finally, there is the possibility to be part of a teacher reflection group. Thus, teachers meet periodically, and they reflect and discuss teaching aspects of their classes.

Moreover, a teacher can reach several levels of reflection. To begin with, the basic reflection is the descriptive level, then there is the conceptual level which is based on teacher's’ description of their practice. In this level, it exits the possibility of exploring the theories behind the practice, and also changing some practices according to students’ needs. Lastly, the critical
level is the deeper reflection, and is related to the “context, society, moral, ethical and sociopolitical issues”. (Farrell, 2013, p. 23)

Finally, the last principle is **reflective practices links beliefs and values**. Farrell took into account Dewey’s (as cited in Farrell, 2013) thinking about this aspect. For this reason, it can be said that teachers have some beliefs that they think they use in their practices known as (theories in use) and then there are the actual theories they use during their practices called (espoused theories). In this way, teachers’ practices are very influenced by their beliefs, values and theories about learning and teaching. Yet, the theories they think they use during classes, are not always the same they really use in their practice.

In conclusion, Farrell sets that “reflective practice means more that fleeting thoughts before, during or after a lesson; it means examining what you do in the classroom and why you do it”. (2013, p. 4) He also states, that practices in the classroom are related to the assumptions and beliefs teachers have about teaching and learning English. In addition, he considers that reflection has to be done through a systematic collection of information. As a result, the importance of reflective practice lies in collecting evidence, since many teachers may have a perception over a class, as a “good or a bad lesson” but most of the time they do not have evidence to prove it.

Regarding reflective teaching, it is possible to agree on how this process is carried out by teachers as an autonomous cyclical structure. Also, one consents with the fact of the importance of making a contrast between received knowledge and experiential knowledge. One of the
important affirmations, that is well appreciated, is the two kinds of reflection (reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action) that are vital for this study.

2.2 Metacognitive Strategies

In addition to the first construct, this one refers to metacognitive strategies seen not only as an instrument for students but as a tool that teachers can use during reflection, to be aware of their own teaching process. For this reason, despite these strategies are commonly used for learners, teachers can also take advantage of them, if they know how to adapt them to teaching.

Therefore, the first thing that is going to be presented is the concept of learning strategies and its definition. Subsequently, there will be the three branches of learning strategies: cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies and social-affective strategies, with their corresponding definitions.

As an introduction, it is valuable to mention a brief definition of the isolated terms “learning” and “strategies”, as it provides a wider look at the historical background where this concept comes from, how the two words finally got attached, and are applied to education.

Thus, according to Rebecca Oxford (1990), learning refers to the conscious knowledge (in contrast, of the word “acquisition”, which talks about the unconscious or spontaneous knowledge). In addition, there is the term strategy, that has its roots in the ancient Greek strategia, used in the war, and related to the management of troops, more specifically “planning, competition, conscious manipulation, and movement toward a goal” (Oxford, 1990, p. 7). Also, another related term can be found, which is the word tactics, that refers to the necessary tools for
accomplishing strategies. As time passed by, the term strategy lost its military connotation, and it started to be connected to the actions carried out by people, in order to achieve an objective (Oxford, 1990).

Having a historic context, now, it is necessary to take an overview to the definition of learning strategies. It can be said that they are considered as the understanding and actions that may magnify the achievement of a learning goal (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). In addition, Rebecca Oxford (1990) stated that metacognitive strategies are specific actions that the learner takes in order to make the learning easier and faster. They also help it to be more enjoyable, effective and self-direct. Finally, Oxford (1990) stated that these strategies make the learning more transferrable to other or new situations.

In this way, according to O’Malley & Chamot (1990), learning strategies not only have the purpose of facilitating the learning process, but also of affecting students’ motivation. In contrast, it is important to highlight that sometimes these strategies are applied without awareness, somehow, they can have the same beneficial impact over learning.

Moreover, O’Malley & Chamot (1990) claimed that learning strategies have been classified, into three categories according to the type of mental process that they required. The first class is known as cognitive strategies, they are “directly related to individual learning tasks and entail direct manipulation or transformation of the learning material” (Brown & Palincsar, as cited in O’Malley & Chamot, 1990. P. 8). The second class is called social-affective strategies, which can be applied to a wide variety of tasks, through the interaction with people or controlling the affective aspect of learning. Finally, the last category is metacognitive strategies,
that involves thinking about the own learning process, by means of: “planning for learning, monitoring of comprehension or production (...) and self-evaluating after the learning activity has been completed” (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990. P 8).

In this order of ideas, the focus of this investigation was based on the metacognitive strategies. To give a more complete explanation, the concept metacognitive strategy is going to be presented by isolating the term metacognition. Concerning this Flavell (as cited in Rowsome, Lane, & Gordon, 2014, p. 152) defines it as “one’s knowledge concerning one’s own processes and products or anything related to them”. Even though this definition is short, it essentially explains what metacognition refers to. It is important to highlight that metacognition is divided into two components: metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive control and regulation.

On the one hand, metacognitive knowledge can be referred to memory, comprehension and learning processes that an individual is aware of. As Flavell (as cited in Rowsome, Lane, & Gordon, 2014, p. 153) claims it is also “knowledge about persons, tasks, and strategies. Thus, it includes knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of one’s own memory and learning, about cognitive requirements of tasks”.

On the other hand, metacognitive control and regulation is when the individual acquired or applied metacognitive knowledge in their learning process. In fact, Schneider and Artelt (as cited in Handel, Arlet, & Weinert, 2013, p. 45) say that “the actual and conscious regulation of the learning process however takes place through planning, monitoring, and metastrategic activities, that is, the implementation of metacognitive knowledge in the process of self-regulated learning” this is what structures metacognitive strategies.
This kind of strategies enables learners to be aware of their learning process through “planning for, monitoring or evaluating the success of a learning activity” (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 44). Furthermore, they can be applied to a different range of tasks. For instance, metacognitive strategies involve planning or anticipate for a task by means of directed attention (focusing on what you are doing) or selective attention (pay attention to certain pieces of information). Additionally, learners can apply self-monitoring to determine the effectiveness of the task and the strategies they are using to develop the task, this can be done for example through a self-questionnaire.

In contrast, Oxford (1990) suggests that metacognitive strategies mean going beyond the cognitive part, by allowing students to pay a more independent role in their own learning process. On top of that, Oxford (1990) claims that metacognitive strategies make language learners more capable and she also proposes three categories for this kind of strategies, centering, planning and evaluating the own learning.

As a result, the three categories of metacognitive strategies, previously mentioned, involve some specific techniques. For example, in centering your learning, activities like overviewing, linking with already known material and paying attention are part of it. In addition, when arranging and planning your learning, some activities like organizing, setting goals or seeking practice opportunities are present. Furthermore, in evaluating the own learning, two options can be found: self-monitor and self-evaluation.

Taking into account all the theory explained above, it is possible to agree in terms of how metacognitive strategies can be applied to handle and structure students’ knowledge. Also, to
highlight the fact that they are extremely important when it comes to developing a more autonomous and reflective learning process, as well as being more aware of the own knowledge. The discrepancy starts when this kind of strategies are commonly used for students, but it is believed that teachers can use them in order to enhance owns practice. As a result, the stages “planning for, monitoring or evaluating the success of a learning activity” (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 44) are valuable for the current study, as they can entail a process that encourage teachers to pay more attention to their teaching practice and find new ways to boost that practice.

2.3 Teachers’ Professional Development

The last construct to be reached in this theoretical framework is professional development. To broach it, it is important, not also, to have a definition, but to mention the goals it seeks, its tools to get it effectively, and some obstacles it may have.

As well as Reflective Teaching is an ongoing process, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development define professional development (2009) as:

On-going, includes training, practice and feedback, and provides adequate time and follow-up support. The ideal of successful programs is to involve teachers in learning activities that are similar to ones they will use with their students, and encourage the development of teachers’ learning communities. (p. 49)

It means that professional development seeks to enhance education by means of having better teachers who are concerned by their students’ process. This aim is achieved thanks to a continuous thinking procedure. This way of improving can be used not only by the teacher but
also students can be involved in this. Here teachers might become students and vice versa in order to learn from each other’s experiences.

In addition, it is possible to say that effective professional development is a process “which results in improvements in teachers’ knowledge and instructional practice, as well as improved student learning outcomes.” (Wei, 2009, p. 3) In other words, effectiveness depends not only on the activities that help teachers to improve, but on teachers’ performances after starting this process. If they do not apply knowledge gotten from these activities in their practice, the process itself becomes useless.

That is to say that “Professional development is defined as activities that develop an individual’s skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher.” (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development , 2009, p. 49) As it was explained before, professional development seeks one single purpose, help teachers to be better. This can only be done by setting some goals. That is why OECD (2009) states that teachers who search professional development have some goals established. These goals can be divided into fields depending on the area where they are located like:

- To be aware of new knowledge proposed in their area of expertise.
- To renew individuals’ skills, attitudes and strategies looking for the development of new teaching techniques and goals, new circumstances and new educational research.
- To train individuals to make changes into curricula or other aspects of teaching practice.
- To empower schools to evolve and use new strategies regarding the curriculum and other aspects of teaching practice.
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO FOSTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

- To foster reciprocation of information and expertise among teachers and others; and to aid weaker teachers become more effective.

These goals allow teachers to have a clearer perspective of development, how their practices can take action and that there are many tools, as courses, workshops, collaboration among schools or teachers, etc., in order to make this procedure easier. Also, it shows that this can be done either in a collaborative group or without any support.

According to Darling-Hammond (2009) professional development becomes more effective when it is focused on concrete tasks for teachers, assessment, observation and reflection rather than abstract discussions. Here teachers have the opportunity to be more aware of their own process by looking for the achievement of each task.

There is another focus that professional development can have, based on “the analysis of the conceptual understanding and skills that students will be expected to demonstrate.” (Wei, 2009, p. 7) In this case, the teacher sees his progress according to the class evidence by being aware of whether his students are learning or not.

The National Staff Development Council (NSDC), as Wei (2009), says that teachers must have standards that point to specific practices and stances that allow effective professional development. These standards are organized into three types: context, process and content. To illustrate the first type “context”, below there is a quotation done by Wei:

Staff development can be defined as the standard that improves the learning of all students by organizing adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district, also named Learning Communities. Furthermore, it
requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement known as Leadership. Moreover, it requires resources to support learning and collaboration this is called Resources. (2009, p. 9)

Based on the citation, it is possible to say that context standards are used to involve the community that surrounds the learning process the teacher is handling at that moment. Showing that professional development also embraces, in a significant way, other actors like parents, administrative personnel, etc.

The second type of standards is Process Standards, Wei (2009) claims that these are used for improving the learning of all students through data collection. It also uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact. In addition, it prepares educators to apply research, make decisions and involve knowledge about human learning and change it to improve learning. Finally, it provides educators with knowledge and skills to create an enriching professional environment.

These standards are made for improving students’ learning process by means of teachers’ enriched practice process, whether in an individual or in a collective way. The base of this is the data collection, because without this step there is no a possible action plan. To have a good data to work with, it is useful to monitor progress according to the information that is gathered. If data collection is well done, students will have an improvement but if it is not, there is not going to be a change.
The last type of standards is *Content Standards*, defined as:

Staff development that improves the learning of all students: it prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement. It means Equity. It also deepens educators’ content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately in order to have Quality Teaching. And it provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately to have Family Involvement (Wei, 2009, p. 10)

Based on this, content standards are those which help teachers to create a favorable environment, in order to have a good class development. These standards are based on the content knowledge that teacher may or not have. This knowledge can be based on previous experiences, talks with colleagues or college knowledge.

On top of that, there are areas to work on, in order to have an efficient professional development. These areas are based on teachers’ necessities and they can be: teaching special learning needs students, ICT teaching skills, student discipline and behavior problems, instructional practice, subject field, student counselling, content and performance standards, students’ assessment practices, teaching in a multicultural setting, classroom management and school management and administration. All these areas and tools are articulated to reduce the
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO FOSTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

negative impact in these fields; therefore, this permits teachers to have an effective professional development.

Having talked about what professional development is, its goals, different tools to get an effective professional development, different areas to work on, it is also important to talk about some reasons that impede teachers to be part of professional development. This conflict, as OECD (2009) claims is caused by several reasons like:

- Problems with work schedule.
- The belief that professional development is not suitable for teachers.
- Family responsibilities.
- The belief that professional development is too expensive.
- Lack of employers’ support in this process.

Thanks to professional development, teachers’ practices can be improved in different areas with different types of tools. As OECD (2009) claims it is important that even if some teachers are not making a structured process of professional development at least these teachers must have informal dialogues that allow them apply knowledge.

In other words, the teacher can not only do the assessment process by himself but also by having dialogues with colleagues. The teacher should also look for other sources of information to create a bigger view with a huge range of possibilities to improve his practice.

To summarize, it is possible to say that professional development is a structured process that is necessary in teachers’ practices, due to the fact that nowadays classrooms have changed, have a lot of diversity and issues that can make demanding the way of teaching. In addition to
this, teachers have the responsibility with the society to form better people. This process has different tools to be effectively accomplished, different areas to work on, reasons that impede teachers to be part of it. All of this should be taken into account when someone decides to be part of this process.

On the other hand, some critics have been done to professional development, because, according to Díaz-Maggioli (2004), there are some stumbling blocks when it comes to teacher development. Most of the time, those problems are about effectiveness, and they have to do with the different implementations of the process. But, at the end, all of them have in common ‘the noble intention of improving student’s learning’ (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004, p. 1)

Consequently, some of the stumbling blocks (the most relevant ones) are going to be named, and briefly described:

- **Top down decision making:** The first problem emerges when the teachers are not the main actors of the process, but the administrators and consultants. This means for example, that the teachers do not make decisions.

- As a consequence of the previous issue, there is a lack of ownership of the professional development process and its results. This, is due to the fact that teachers feel their voices are not heard.

- **Lack of systematic evaluation of professional development:** Usually these kinds of processes are not evaluated, as assessing development seems almost impossible. But this, is just owing to ‘the complex nature of teacher competence’ (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004, p. 4).
Moreover, it would be beneficial if those evaluations were communicated to the teaching communities.

- **Standardize approaches to professional development that disregard the varied needs and experiences of teachers:** What happens with standardize programs is that they presuppose that all teachers must be in the same level of performance. But they do not take into account teacher’s particularities. Furthermore, ‘researchers have pointed out that teachers go through certain developmental stages as they progress in their careers, each of which triggers specific needs and crises that they must address’ (Fessler & Christensen cited in Díaz-Maggioli, 2004 p. 4)

To conclude, it is important to highlight, on one hand, that the theory framed in teachers’ professional development is concern about how to make better teachers through training and even if this is a valuable way to improve, it is not the only one. On the other hand, one agreed on the importance of setting goals to improved, and being aware of the stigmas and problems that may be presented all along the way of this process.
3. Methodology

3.1 Type of research: Action research

This work is centered, as the title above claims, on action research. Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2011) highlight the cultural aspect of action research by saying that the concern of change in this type of investigation is not only focused on individual cases, but that it also affects the culture, in which the individual is submerged (culture understood as language, activities and social relationships, among others).

In addition, Elliot (1990) defines action research, as the type of investigation that is based on the diagnosis, in contrast to other kind of research that involve reflection and judgement on prescription. Furthermore, this author proposes certain characteristics for action research in the educational context:

1. Investigation is always related to the situations teachers have to face in daily practice, it means the human problematics in a specific context.
2. The main purpose of the investigation is to explore the diagnosis or comprehension the researcher has about a certain issue. Also, the diagnosis does not imply the appropriate action, it only suggests some ideas.
3. The proposed action (which is always based on a theoretical background) should be stopped while the investigator gets a complete understanding of the practical situation.
4. Action research tries to explain what happens with a specific situation. When doing this, a description of the issue (for example a case study) is done, rather than the formulation of rules or statistics.

5. The investigation takes into account the point of view of the people that are immersed in the situation (for example teachers or students). That is why, the facts are considered as human actions. For instance, an investigation can take into consideration people’s thoughts and beliefs.

6. As action research is closer to the participants' point of view, it uses colloquial language in the reports, instead of complex abstract language.

7. This kind of investigation, demands a self-reflection from the participants, by means of the dialogue.

8. Finally, trust between the investigator and the participants is really important, as the researcher should have free access to the context, and in contrast, the participants should have free access to the information of the investigation.

Moreover, research can be used in a wide variety of disciplines and fields, like educational, industrial or sanitary environments. However, it will also imply a systematic and organized process. In this way, Stenhouse (as cited in Elliot, 1990) said that it is the systematic and ongoing study, that has to be planned and self-critical he also states that this process is close to public critics and empirical tests, whenever these are appropriated.
As a result, action research implies a specific set of actions, in order to carry out an investigation through particular phases, which are often developed as cycles. Thus, according to Richards & Lockhart (1994), initial reflection, planning, action and reflection compose this kind of investigation.

Hence, the first phase of action research is the initial reflection, where the teacher needs to observe what is happening in the classroom and reflect about it, in order to identify a concern theme. In this way, "Some preliminary observation and critical reflection is usually needed to convert a broad concern to an action them." (Richards & Lockhart, 1994. P. 27). The second phase is planning, which involves deepening in a concern, through the use of information-gathering instruments, as well as determining a detailed plan of action of the change the researchers is intending to make.

Subsequently, there is the action phase, in there; the investigator has to carry out the action plan that was set in the previous phase. After that, it is the observation part, in which the researcher observes the effects of the action plan that was just developed. It also entails monitoring and recording, in order to be able to report the process in detailed. Finally, it comes the analysis and critical reflection about the relevance of what was done. This reflection involves several aspects such as "how effective were your changes? What are the barriers to change? How can you improve the changes you are trying to make?" (Richards & Lockhart, 1994. P. 27).
3.2 Instruments for data collection:

A Teaching Journal:

A journal is a written recording of “events and ideas for the purpose of later reflection”. (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p. 7) In addition, according to McKernan (1996) it is a personal document, in which the teacher writes not only the events, but also his concerns and beliefs that can be useful for later processes of interpretation, evaluation and reflection.

For this reason, it is the first instrument in this investigation, in which the two pre-service teachers talked about the description of their classes and their concerns. For this activity the Universidad Libre format of teaching journal, was used. (See annex B)

Questionnaire:

It can be brief defined by Kemmis and McTaggart (As cited in McKernan, 1996. P. 125) as ‘written questions requiring responses’. In addition, according to McKernan (1996), the questionnaire is one of the most common tools for data collection, as it is ‘easy to administer, provides direct responses of both factual and attitudinal information’ (McKernan, 1996. p. 125).

In addition, he states that this tool can be compounded by two types of questions. Closed questions, when people choose from a range of pre-established answers. Open questions, when people can express their ideas in their own words.

Furthermore, there are three types of questionnaires; by mail, in group and having personal contact. In the first type, the investigator sends the questionnaire via e-mail. In the
second type, the investigator joins a group of people for answering the questionnaire. Finally, in the last type the investigator meets the person, and ask him/her to answer the questions.

**Questionnaire to the Supervisor (personal contact):**

In Centro Colombo Americano, a supervisor is a person who observes teachers' classes, with the purpose of providing assessment and feedback. In this particular case, a questioner was applied to the practitioners’ supervisor, as the person who knew the pre-service teachers' strengths and weaknesses This questionnaire intended to know her opinion about reflective teaching, professional development and metacognitive strategies. (See annex D)

Regarding the practitioners’ supervisor, it can be said that she was an experienced teacher who had worked for several years in the language center in different programs, such as the KTP (Kids and Teens program) or the AEP (Adults English program). Nevertheless, her expertise area was teaching little children and she also gave training to the practitioners in areas as teaching how to use learning strategies in the classroom and adapting learning strategies to children.

**Questionnaire to the Students (Group):**

A questionnaire to the students, was developed with the purpose of knowing the opinion and feelings of students about the general class environment and also, the pedagogical issues. The total amount of students that answered this questionnaire, in the first and second application, were 14. (See annex E and F)
KTP (Kids and Teens Program) Checklist:

Furthermore, a process of self-assessment and peer-assessment was carried out through the checklist, because after each class, pre-service teachers were asked to fill out a checklist format. The information here is mainly about the pedagogical model (communicative approach and task-based-learning). Furthermore, this is the same format that supervisors used to observe pre-service and in-service teachers at the Colombo Americano. (See annex A)

Metacognitive questionnaire:

Finally, there is an instrument that the researchers have created. This instrument is based on the three principles of metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring and evaluating). And it is designed to register and categorize the information from the interventions. (See annex G)
4. Context description

Concerning the population for this study, it refers to two pre-service teachers. The first one (Subject 1: S1), is a student from Universidad Libre in Bogotá, who started her language studies in 2013 and at the moment of the intervention was in ninth semester. Regarding her personal information, she is 21 years old, and lives in Facatativá, a town located in Cundinamarca-Colombia, at a distance of an hour and a half from Bogotá.

In relation to her practicum, it is important to say that before starting at the Centro Colombo Americano, she had had some experience, working during one semester, at the English and French Saturday courses of Universidad Libre.

The second subject (S2), is also a student of a language studies at Universidad Libre. She started her studies at this university in 2013 and at the moment of the intervention was in ninth semester. Regarding her personal life, she is 22 years old, and was born in Cúcuta but she has lived in Bogotá since she was a child. Concerning the teaching experience, the Colombo is the first place where she started it.

As it was mentioned before, the two pre-service teachers started their practicum in the second semester of 2016, at the Centro Colombo Americano, that is located in Bogotá, downtown in street 19 #2a - 49. In order to be able to do the practicum there, they had to take an English exam and an interview. Then, before starting the semester, it is mandatory to take a training course, not only for the practitioners, but also for all the teachers that want to work at the institute.
In this way, the training course had two components; a theoretical and a practical part. The former, was compound by readings, workshops and lectures regarding the pedagogical model (communicative approach and task-based learning) and the philosophy of the institute. The latter, the practical part was during the vacation course, where each trainee (or sometimes two trainees) were sent to a class with a team teacher, in which the trainee had to observe the two first classes, and then, had to implement activities in the classroom progressively, until he or she ended up giving the whole class. In addition, the schedule for the training course was from Monday to Friday, from 1 to 4 p.m., for two weeks.

In regard to the practicum during the semester, the two pre-service teachers worked in the KTP “Kids and Teens Program”, that is only one of the different kinds of courses that the Colombo Americano offers. The KTP courses are on Saturdays, and the two pre-service teachers were delivering classes in the schedule from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. During the semester, the pre-service teachers, that already took the training course, had two courses. One with a team teacher, in which the trainee implemented activities progressively, and another by their own.
5. Pedagogical Proposal

To plan classes, pre-and in-service teachers must follow a template with different characteristics given by CCA. To begin with, the classes are planned on the framework of Task-based-learning (TBL) and a communicative approach. Therefore, the institution requires that the classes must have at least three interaction moments and a communicative task. Other requirements are, communicative objectives, the use of a learning strategy per class, a listening activity (with its pre, while and post stages), training on a specific pronunciation pattern, teaching grammar inductively, and two moments of assessment.

The supervisor evaluates all these aspects twice a semester when he/she goes to observe a class using the CCA’s checklist (See annex A). The aim of the observations is to provide feedback to teachers in order for them to improve their performance. Teachers have to deliver 16 classes during the semester. The implementation was done in 2017-1, between March 11th and May 13th.

The decision of having the implementation part was taken from the problem statement, when the two pre-service teachers realized that they had some weaknesses, such as time management, the application of learning strategies, the use of transitions, etc. Therefore, they needed to be more reflective about their practice, in order to improve their teaching performance, and also their students learning. This can be evidenced in the supervisor’s observation, and their teaching journal (See Annex B & C)
IMPLEMENTATION #1: CLASS #6

Objectives:
- Communication: Talk about party plans
- Language: Use should and be going to
- Learning strategy: Circumlocution
- Pronunciation: Silent letter l
- Task: What’s the best organization?

Pre-service teacher in charge: S1

Time: 100 minutes

Date: March 11th, 2017.


Materials: Book, color papers, slides, board, markers

During this class, as a warm up S1 used a game snap, clap and pop to review the topics from previous classes. S1 also implemented a song in order to contextualize the topic. Grammar explanation took more time than expected. All the objectives were not reached because of time. The instrument applied was the metacognitive questionnaire.
IMPLEMENTATION #2: CLASS #7

Objectives:
- Communication: Talk about buying recycled items and prohibitions in stores
- Language: Use Must/Mustn’t
- Learning Strategy: Use Predicting
- Pronunciation: Get familiar with ‘contractions’
- Task: To find the most common prohibition in stores

Pre-service teacher in charge: S2

Time: 100 minutes

Date: March 18th, 2017.


Materials: Book, color papers, slides, board, markers.

During this class, S2 applied the game of ‘scrambled words’ for students to practice the topic ‘must and mustn’t’. S2 also applied a listening activity for contextualizing the grammar of the lesson and subsequently study the grammatical rules. Students practice the pronunciation pattern with a conversation model, and finally had some free practice in the task finding the most common prohibition in stores. The instrument applied was the metacognitive questionnaire.
IMPLEMENTATION #3: CLASS #8

Objectives:

- Communication: Talk about your favorite playlist to select the best in class.
- Language: Practice present simple
- Pronunciation: Intonation
- Learning Strategy: Scanning
- Task: What’s the best playlist?

Pre-service teacher in charge: S1

Time: 100 minutes

Date: March 25th, 2017.


Materials: Book, color papers, slides, board, markers

In this class students watched a video about music history in ancient Greece. They went over a reading about how people used to listen to music and applied the strategy “scanning” in order to answer some questions. To work on pronunciation, S1 asked students to identify how a robot talks and tried not to imitate it, intonation was the key to succeed in this. For the task, students had to select their three favorite songs and create a playlist to share with their partners. All the objectives were achieved. The metacognitive questionnaire was the instrument applied in this session.
IMPLEMENTATION #4: CLASS #9

Objectives:

- Communication: Talk about predictions to select the most amazing one.
- Language: Use future with will.
- Pronunciation: Contraction ‘ll.
- Task: Select the most amazing prediction.

Pre-service teacher in charge: S2

Time: 50 minutes

Date: March 18th, 2017.

Evaluation: Formative assessment.

Materials: Book, notebook, slides, board, markers.

In this class, S2 applied the game 'Chinese whispers' as a warm up, and then a listening activity about the future of human race for introducing the topic 'will' and analyzing the grammar features of the sentences in the recording. After that, students practiced the contractions of will with a conversation model. The class finished with students making their own predictions for humanity in the task. The instrument for this class was the metacognitive questionnaire.
IMPLEMENTATION #5: CLASS #10

Objectives:

- Communication: Talk about music that helps you to learn English.
- Language: Get familiar with and use first conditional.
- Pronunciation Tip: Contraction I’ll.
- Task: Select the best kind of music that helps you to learn English.

Pre-service teacher in charge: S2

Time: 100 minutes

Date: April the 8th, 2017.


Materials: Book, notebook, slides, board, markers, pieces of paper with a peer-assessment formats.

As a warm up, S2 played a video and students had to make up sentences about what was going to happen next. Then, S2 developed a listening activity. After that, students used the strategy 'analyzing a grammar chart' to study the topic: first conditional. Later, they practiced the pronunciation pattern through an interaction activity. Finally, students talked to several classmates about their favorite music to learn English. The instruments applied in this class were the students' questionnaire (first application) and the metacognitive questionnaire.
IMPLEMENTATION #6: CLASS # 11

Objectives:

- Communication: Talk to your partner about possible plans.
- Language: Practice first conditional  
  - Ex: If I go to University, I will study medicine
- Task: Find out the least popular plan

Pre-service teacher in charge: S1

Time: 100 minutes

Date: 29th, 2017.


Materials: Book, color papers, slides, board, markers

For this class, the warm up was a competition game based on matching in order to practice previous grammar topics. S1 used an extract from “Hercules” where the characters talked using first conditional. Students had to focus their attention on the intention of the sentences. Furthermore, they answered a question related to the video itself. The objectives were not fully accomplished due to time. The instrument applied was the metacognitive questionnaire.
IMPLEMENTATION #7: CLASS #12

Objectives:

- Communication: Talk about traveling experiences.
- Language: Use present perfect.
  
  Example: Jessica Watson has become the youngest person to sail around the world alone.
- Learning Strategy: Context clues.
- Pronunciation Tip: Contractions I’ve - I haven’t
- Task: Select the most extreme experience.

Pre-service teacher in charge: S2

Time: 100 minutes

Date: May the 6th, 2017


Materials: Book, notebook, slides, board, markers, pieces of paper with the lyrics of a song.

The first activity was the warm up, in which students played 'Chinese whispers'. Then, they used the learning strategy 'context clues' during a reading activity. Later, students did a filling in the gaps activity with a song. After that, the grammar practice was made with some exercises on the book. Finally, students practiced the pronunciation of contractions, and talked to their classmates to select the most extreme experience. The instrument that S2 used in this class was the metacognitive questionnaire.
IMPLEMENTATION #8: CLASS #13

Objectives:

- Communication: Talk about places to go on vacation.
- Language: Use present perfect questions.
- Learning Strategy: Taking notes.
- Pronunciation: Contractions in short answers.
- Task: Find the best city to relax.

Pre-service teacher in charge: S2

Pre-service teacher in charge: S2

Time: 100 minutes

Date: May 13th, 2017


Materials: Book, notebook, slides, board, markers.

In this class, the warm up was a game called 'the hot seat' with the purpose of practicing vocabulary. Then, students applied the learning strategy 'taking notes' during a listening activity. Subsequently, students practiced the target grammar with controlled activities in the book. After that, they interacted for practicing the pronunciation pattern and had a peer-assessment moment. Finally, in the task, students talked to their classmates to select the best city to relax. The instrument that S2 applied this class was the metacognitive questionnaire.
6. Data Analysis

For the data analysis, this project has taken Grounded Theory as a compass. The goal of this methodology is to understand a situation by constructing a theory. As Stern (1995) claimed, to gain more information of an unknown field or to get a new perspective on a specific situation.

Regarding this, Strauss and Corbin state that grounded theory is “a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed. Theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection.” (As cited in Bowen, 2008. p 273). In other words, data provides the research all along the process with information from the analysis and the data itself by coding.

Coding

In order to define what coding is, it is possible to say, that is a process to categorize data through a constant analysis of codes. These codes are a form of identifying, as Birks and Mills (2011, p. 78) claim, “conceptual reoccurrences and similiraties in the patterns of participants experiences.” When a code is repeated several times it forms groups of codes representing a higher level concept which forms a category.

According to Corbin and Strauss, it is possible to divide the data analysis into tree types of codes: open, axial and selective. Open code is defined as a stage where the researcher must identify different categories and concepts that emerge from an exhaustive analysis of the collected data. These categories condense similarities that were found in the analyzed data, and reflect some abstractions that could end up being a core category. (Mongue, 2015)
Below the open codes that this investigation has, are going to be shown.

1. URLSS: Useful learning strategies for students.
2. AES: Activities engaging students.
3. RIAGE: Reflection in action about grammar explanation.
4. WES: Warm up engaging students.
5. ROAT: Reflection on action about timing.
6. CFO: Critical friendship about the outcome.
7. CFSAT: Critical friendship supervisors advise timing.
8. RIATDT: Reflection in action timing during the task.
9. CFTTSL: Critical friendship team-teacher advice listening.
10. ROATG: Reflection on action about timing because of grammar.
11. RIALS: Reflection in action about learning strategy.
12. RIAOGLS: Reflection in action about organization of groups in the learning strategy.
13. RIBASGI: Reflection in action about being aware of students’ grammar internalization
14. ROABE: Reflection on action for better explanations.
15. MYWEG: Monitoring yourself when explaining grammar.
16. MYOTO: Monitoring yourself to obtain the outcome.
17. CCA: Creating criteria for assessment.
19. MYDI: Monitoring yourself delivering instructions.
21. ETP: Evaluating timing when planning.
22. CUAPP: Choose useful activity for pronunciation when planning.
23. BASAP: Being aware of strengths during assessment planification
24. ROAELP: Reflection on action about forgetting the lesson plan.
25. MYT: Monitor yourself about timing.
26. CWUTMSLFME: Creating warm up to make students learn faster and more efficiently.
27. ECDT: Evaluating collecting data for the task.
28. SRTPA: Students reflection through peer-assessment.
29. SNWCSUI: Searching new ways to confirm students understanding of instructions.
30. FRMTCM: Finding the right moment to correct mistakes
31. FBWDIof instructions conhrough per: Finding better ways to deliver instructions.
32. APPT: Action plans for pronunciation topics.
33. APLBU: Action plans listening better understanding.
34. APCDT: Action plan for collecting data for the task.
35. SBURL: Seeking better understanding regarding listening.
36. ISPRP: Improve students’ performance regarding participation.
37. APTGITPC: Action plan for teaching grammar inductively thanks to peer-couching.
38. TPTSL: Teachers’ progress through students’ learning.
39. DIBU: Divide instructions for better understanding.
40. ROATAS: Reflection on action about teachers attention spread.
41. ROAEPT: Reflection on action about explanation of pronunciation.
42. ROALLD: Reflection on action about listening level difficulty.
46. RIAUI: Reflection in action about understanding of instructions.
47. RIATASCP: Reflection in action to avoid supere-correction in pronunciation.
48. ROATP: Reflection in action about timing when planing.
49. ROAFLP: Reflection on action about following the lesson plan.
50. ROATRAO: Reflection on action about timing in order to reach all the objectives.
51. ROAELP: Reflection on action about forgetting the lesson plan.

On top of that, axial code is, according to Corbin and Strauss (cited in Birks & Mills, 2011) “a set of procedures where by data are put back together in new ways after open coding,
by making connections (and within) categories” (p. 96). As a consequence, this type of code is based on organizing the open codes into groups by looking for patterns and making explicit relationships among them.

In this research, there have been created three subcategories where the open codes were placed.

**SUBCATEGORY #1: Reflective Teaching**

1. **RIAGE**: Reflection in action about grammar explanation.
2. **ROAT**: Reflection on action about timing
3. **CFO**: Critical friendship about the outcome.
4. **CFSAT**: Critical friendship supervisors advise timing.
5. **RIATDT**: Reflection in action timing during the task.
6. **CFTTSL**: Critical friendship team-teacher advice listening.
7. **ROATG**: Reflection on action about timing because of grammar.
8. **RIALS**: Reflection in action about learning strategy.
9. **RIOGLS**: Reflection in action about organization of groups in the learning strategy.
10. **RIBASGI**: Reflection in action about being aware of students’ grammar internalization
11. **ROATAS**: Reflection on action about teachers attention spread.
12. **ROAEPT**: Reflection on action about explanation of pronunciation.
13. **ROALLD**: Reflection on action about listening level difficulty.
14. **RUAUI**: Reflection in action about understanding of instructions.
15. **RIATASCP**: Reflection in action to avoid supere-correction in pronunciation.
16. **ROATP**: Reflection in action about timing when planning.
17. **ROAFLP**: Reflection on action about following the lesson plan.
18. **ROATRAO**: Reflection on action about timing in order to reach all the objectives.
19. **ROAELP**: Reflection on action about forgetting the lesson plan.
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO FOSTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

SUBCATEGORY #2: Metacognitive Strategies

1. MYWEG: Monitoring yourself when explaining grammar.
2. MYOTO: Monitoring yourself to obtain the outcome.
3. CCA: Creating criteria for assessment.
5. MYDI: Monitoring yourself delivering instructions.
7. ETP: Evaluating timing when planning.
8. CUAPP: Choose useful activity for pronunciation when planning.
9. BASAP: Being aware of strengths during assessment planification
10. ROAELP: Reflection on action about forgetting the lesson plan.
11. MYT: Monitor yourself about timing.
12. CWUTMSLFME: Creating warm up to make students learn faster and more efficiently.
13. ECDT: Evaluating collecting data for the task.

SUBCATEGORY #3 Professional Development

1. SRTPA: Students reflection through peer-assessment.
2. SNWCSUI: Searching new ways to confirm students understanding of instructions.
3. FRMTCM: Finding the right moment to correct mistakes
4. FBWDIof instructions cohrough per: Finding better ways to deliver instructions.
5. APPT: Ation plans for pronunciation topics.
6. APLBU: Action plans listening better understanding.
7. APCDT: Action plan for collecting data for the task.
8. SBURL: Seeking better understanding regarding listening.
9. ISPRP: Improve students’ performance regarding participation.
10. APTGITPC: Action plan for teaching grammar inductively thanks to peer-couching.
11. TPTSL: Teachers’ progress through students’ learning.
12. APCS: S: Action plan for class structure.
13. APT: Action plan for timing.
15. DIBU: Divide instructions for better understanding.
16. APCS: Action plan for class structure.
17. APT: Action plan for timing.

Finally, this explanation would not be complete without the selective code. It is, according to Robert Wright (2014), the interpretative part of all this process. In this type of coding, the researcher joins all the categories into a core category that seeks to answer the research question. This core category will be defined as follows:

**Core category: Action plans based on metacognitive strategies and reflection to enhance teachers’ professional development**

Metacognition and reflection are two concepts closely related that can be applied into teachers’ professional development. On the one hand, metacognition permits people to be more aware of their mind and all the processes that this can have. It means that it shows how people learn and grow as time passes. On the other hand, reflection is a process where people either see how they are acting in the moment or see how they acted in a specific situation and make decisions on how to change.
Furthermore, teachers’ professional development means and is related to be better teachers (inside and outside the classroom) by using different tools as reflection, training and/or dialogue with peers. Below, there is an illustration of how the subcategories are related to the core category.

Figure 1: Relation between the three subcategories and the core category

Below, these three concepts are going to be defined by means of subcategories, showing how the instruments of collected data provide evidence.

**Subcategory 1: “Reflective Teaching”**

The first subcategory shows the importance of a self-reflection and peer-reflection practice for teachers. Self-reflection understood as a systematic and periodic procedure that every teacher should
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO FOSTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

carry out. This process entails a rigorous self-examination and self-monitoring part that allows teachers to be aware of the things they do in their classes, and the reasons why they do them. Furthermore, peer-reflection is how teachers through dialogue with their peers can be aware of the weaknesses in his/her performance. Moreover, the importance of this subcategory relies on the fact that teachers can take action plans in order to overcome their difficulties. As a result, they can become better teachers and improve their students’ learning.

The reflection category is based on the data results from the metacognitive questionnaire and students’ questionnaire (first and second application). These evidenced how teachers can be aware of their own practice, not only during the class time but also outside the classroom, taking into account their peer’s observation and advise referring to class development.

In order to understand this in a wider perspective, it is necessary to give an introduction about reflective teaching. Dewey “considered reflective practice to be intentional, systematic inquiry that is disciplined and will ultimately lead to change and professional growth for teachers” (as cited in Farrell, 2013. p. 9) Additionally, Farrell (2013) stated that the most important thing in a reflective process is that it has to be evidence-based. It means that, teachers can collect data as source for future reflection. Also, they can take advantage of the “critical friendship” to improve their weaknesses. Finally, it is possible to say that as Schön (as cited in Gaynor, 2013) claims there are two types of reflection (reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action), and that both of them are necessary to make this process more systematic.

The first instrument that showed evidence of a reflective process was the “Metacognitive questionnaire”, in which the pre-service teachers had to reflect after every single class, about several
aspects like, the things they did well, the things they needed to improve and how they would improve those things, among others.

When pre-service teachers used this questionnaire, some categories of reflection, proposed by Schön, were found. The first one is **reflection-in-action** as it can be appreciated in this extract:

> “Students developed an activity about analyzing a grammar chart, and after socializing the answers, students had to do a filling in the gap activity, in order to practice grammar. This was a big mistake because I skipped the part when I had to elicit information about the context of present perfect, and then clarify the structure with the help of students, before the controlled practice. To fix this, I did the grammar and context explanation taking as an example the first answer in the activity that students did.” (S2, Metacognitive questionnaire 4)

Hence, it is evident that the normal routine of the class was disturbed by the fact that the pre-service teacher skipped the contextualization part, before the controlled practice. As a result, the practitioner **was aware of** the mistake, **reflected** about it and **took an action** to fix the situation; she had to redirect the class by explaining grammar after the controlled practice.

Another example of **reflection-in-action** is this: “I had to reduce the interaction during the task, because I was running out of time”. (S2 Metacognitive questionnaire 1) During the class development, the pre-service teacher reflected about timing and decided to do something about it. She realized that she was having issues with timing; therefore, she reduced the amount of interaction.

Besides that, it is possible to evidence **reflection-on-action** in the following extract: “I took a lot of class time trying to lead those topics clear that I didn’t notice when the time went away and the bell rang” (S1 Metacognitive questionnaire 1) In here, the pre-service teacher is aware of the mistake or weakness that she had in class **after** she finished it. As Schön (cited in Gaynor, 2013) says this kind
of reflection takes place after class, when the teacher takes some time to think what could have gone better.

In addition, as Farrell (2013) suggested, students' feedback was asked at two different moments of the course, in the middle and at the end. Students answered a questionnaire in which they had to give their opinion about aspects, such as the activities they liked and did not like of the class, their feelings and the environment in the classroom.

Specifically, the second question of this instrument was about the activities students did not like from the class and why. In the first application, the answers were listening, the learning strategy: predicting, activities on the notebook, and only some students said that they liked all the activities. Some of these answers were “No me gusta la actividad de “prediction”, porque no le veo la finalidad”, “No me gustan las de hacer ejercicios en el cuaderno. Porque son aburridas”, “Las de escucha algunas veces no entiendo”.

This shows that students’ questionnaire was an opportunity for pre-service teachers’ reflection about their teaching practice. The two practitioners reflected upon the activities students did not feel comfortable with, and improved this aspect. As a consequence, in the second application most of the students said they have liked all the class' activities.

Finally, a supervisor observed the pre-service teachers' classes and gave them some recommendations. These advices were evidenced in the following extract: “I took into account our supervisor’s advice about the listening part. So, this time I tried to make students listen to the recording, without looking at the transcription, which was next to the questions they had to answer, by asking them to cover it with their pencil case”. It is evident that the pre-service teacher took into account a weakness that the supervisor appreciated during the listening part. Thus, she worked on this
aspect in the next class. In this way, she was making changes in her teacher practice with the purpose of helping students to improve their listening skills

**Subcategory 2: “Metacognitive strategies”**

The second subcategory is based on the awareness of the knowledge and how people receive and internalize that information. As Rebecca Oxford (1990) stated, this consciousness allows to learn easier, faster and, more efficiently, which represent advantages in terms of learning skills. However, the most relevant part of metacognitive strategies is that they help students to play a more independent role in their own learning process (Rebecca Oxford, 1990). Even though, these strategies are commonly used to help students in and outside the classroom, here it is verified that teachers can utilize them in order to be more aware of their performance. It is important to highlight that metacognitive strategies are divided into three: planning, monitoring and evaluating (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990). These types of strategies are sequential, and should be done in that order so the process becomes more efficient. This is due to the fact that a class need to be planned, before to be teach. When the teacher is in class he/she monitors him/herself and finally the session is evaluated according to the performance and the monitoring stage.

This subcategory can be seen in different parts of the metacognitive questionnaire, where the two pre-service teachers monitored and evaluated their teaching performance. Evidence of this is the following extract, in which the teacher monitored herself to obtain the outcome of the task: “I have been told that the outcome of the task should not be based on students’ votes, but in the results of the interaction. I was aware of this during the task, but I could not find a better way to take out the outcome”. *(S2 Metacognitive questionnaire 4)*
Another example of this is the subsequent extract: “Though I had transitions in my lesson plan, I forgot to say some of them when I was in class”. (S2 Metacognitive questionnaire 1) It is evident that the teacher monitored herself and evaluated the use of transitions. Also, she made a contrast between the things she had planned and the results during the class.

In addition, this extract shows how the teacher monitored herself when she was delivering instructions: “I was not clear enough when I asked some questions to students. For example, when I was in the evaluation part of the learning strategy, and asked them if the strategy (predicting) was helpful for developing the listening activity. Students thought I was talking about the listening topic (recycling clothes) and asking if this was helpful for the environment”. (S2 Metacognitive questionnaire 1)

The last three extracts were the answers to a part in the metacognitive questionnaire called “Three things you did not do as well as you would have liked to do in the classroom”. Therefore, it demonstrates that the teachers monitored and evaluated their actions in the classroom, and this helped them to be more aware of their weaknesses and identify the specific areas they needed to work on.

At this point, it is important to remember that metacognitive strategies refer to the development of activities that help learners to monitor their own learning process. In this order of ideas, the fact of having a metacognitive questionnaire, created to check the three moments of metacognition (planning, monitoring and evaluating), is a metacognitive strategy that allows reflection in different areas. This, as the questionnaire is playing the role of an activity that helps teachers to monitor their teaching practice.

Furthermore, the supervisor's questionnaire was another tool that showed the importance of metacognitive strategies as a way to carry out teachers' reflective process. The supervisor's answer
about this issue was: 'Although meta-cognitive strategies require a lot of time and dedication, they are extremely useful to enrich the learning process each teacher has after the interventions with students. I deeply believe that being organized really helps to improve teaching practices but only when the reflection is made consciously'.

**Subcategory 3: “Professional development”**

The third subcategory demonstrates the importance of being an efficient teacher. In other words, a teacher who is worried about his students’ learning, and can accomplish institution’s requirements. For example, if there is a social harmony issue between students, the teacher must act as a mediator to smooth problems out. In this case, it is pertinent to say that teachers cannot be efficient by themselves but they need to have help in order to improve and be prepared for any kind of situation they may have to face.

One way to measure teachers' proficiency is by asking students how they feel in class and what it is the issue that they would like to change. This can be evidenced in a survey that is done by the CCA and in the two applications of a questionnaire for the students where they have to explain their feelings and perceptions of the classes done by the two pre-service teachers.
In the following chart, it is possible to evidence the result of the survey.

![Chart showing student opinions on pre-service teachers' performance](chart.png)

Table 1: Students' opinions regarding the pre-service teachers' performance

The previous table is measured from 0 to 5.0, where 5.0 is equivalent to an excellent, 4.6 to a very good, 4.0 to a good, 3.7 to a needs improvement and 2.9 to a deficient.

On the one hand in this survey, students manifested that the two pre-teachers had to work on the use of learning strategies, and should bring more material (different than the one from the book) to teach. On the other hand, students’ perception about the use of English and the attitude towards the class was positive due to these were the highest scores. The CCA averages the score of 12 questions to give a grade to the teacher. This grade was 4.4 that in the scale is equivalent to a very good (VG)

Furthermore, the teachers applied a questionnaire twice to deepen students' opinions regarding their feelings, attitudes and perceptions about the class. From the comparison of those two applications, teachers created some memoranda to evidence if they took into account students’ advice to improve their classes. The first memo showed how teachers changed their activities in class in order to make it more dynamic because some students ask for it, as it is shown in the following chart.
Table 2: Activities that students’ like to do in class.

In this question, the answers were set in a large range of possibilities. In the first application one student said he liked reading activities and another said he liked the use of technology. Also, two students liked listening activities, while three students liked group activities and another three liked interactive activities. Finally, four students preferred games.

During the second application the answers were: one student liked interactive activities, another student liked listening activities and another one grammar activities. Two students liked participation activities. Finally, the majority of students liked games.

Here is evident that pre-service teachers took advantage from games to engage students more in their own learning process.

Another memo that can serve as an example of professional development is number 5, where teachers had to structure the classes appropriately designed, in order to make students feel well. In the first classes, teachers used a too high English level for students' understanding, but after collecting the
information from the questionnaire, they lowered their register to make more understandable their classes. Below it is possible to see students’ answers in the chart.

![Chart showing students' feelings towards the class](chart.jpg)

Table 3 Students' feelings towards the class.

In this chart, it is shown how students were feeling towards the class, they were not bad but it could have been better, in here some of the students’ comments in the first application were: “No entiendo cuando las profesoras hablan en inglés” or “Me aburro en ocasiones”. While in the second application were: “Me gusta la estructura de la clase” or “Siento que aprendí en clase”. The previous information means that students' perceptions improved along the process. This, due to the efforts of the pre-service teachers to work on their weaknesses, in order to help students learning.

The three principal aspects that this study used were reflective teaching, metacognitive strategies and professional development. The way they were articulated during this process is going to be explained below.
To begin with it, metacognitive strategies are the strategies, in which people can be more aware of their knowledge and learning process. Making this last one faster, easier and more efficient (Oxford, 1990).

Thereby, the pre-service teachers created a form called “metacognitive questionnaire” where they joined these two concepts to keep track of their performance in and outside the classroom. By doing this, they fulfilled the first specific objective: “Elaborate and use a form based on metacognitive strategies to foster professional development for pre-service teachers majoring in languages”

In this form, classes were described under the compass of the three stages of metacognitive strategies (planning, evaluating and monitoring). Besides, by doing an exhaustive process of reflection class-by-class, pre-service teachers classified important areas to work on, in order not to only accomplish the institution class structure but to improve their students’ learning. In this way, they reached the second specific objective: “Characterize the class-to-class process based on the phases of metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring and evaluating).”
7. Conclusions

To finish this investigation, some conclusions are going to be drawn according to the exhaustive analysis of the gathered data. First, it is valuable to point out that teachers' reflection is not enough to make a change in their performance, thus it should be the base for setting suitable action plans. Teachers need to take concrete actions, with the purpose of making their classes more efficient to seek for student's learning.

Second, it is important to highlight that metacognitive strategies can also be used by teachers, in order to enhance their teaching performance. Sometimes, teachers take for granted their knowledge and classroom practices, and they forget that a teacher’s learning never stops. For this reason, they need to be constantly looking for different and new ways to growth professionally. Hence, metacognitive strategies are a mean for teachers to be more aware of their learning and teaching process.

Furthermore, in contrast to the believe that reflection is just fleeting thoughts about a certain class, it actually means a systematic and organized process (Farrell, 2013). In this way, metacognitive strategies are useful in order to structure and systematize the reflective process, through the application of the phases proposed by O'Malley & Chamot (1990) planning, monitoring and evaluating.

Besides, it is important that teachers take into account students’ perceptions, this aspect should not be underestimated in viewing of the fact that teachers’ perceptions may be vitiated on the previous knowledge of a specific situation or in a denial face of their mistakes. In this case, it is fundamental to compare both perceptions (teachers' and students’) and draw conclusions from them.

In this way, the main purpose of this research was to use the metacognitive strategies and reflection in order to make better teachers, which means people who are concerned about their
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES TO FOSTER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

students’ learning as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2009) claimed. The evidence has shown how taking into account all the topics above (metacognitive strategies and reflective teaching) along with one's reflection, peers and supervisors’ recommendations, can enhance professional development, when it is carried out thought a systematic process.
8. References


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