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**Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación**

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Magíster en Pedagogía del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

**Developing EFL teacher's identity: the role of EFL teachers in the classroom**

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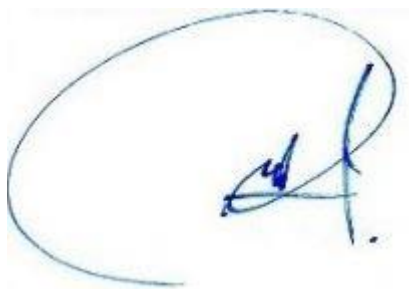
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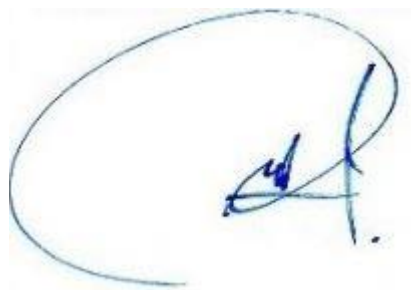
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FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN  
MAESTRÍA EN PEDAGOGÍA DEL INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

**DEVELOPING EFL TEACHER'S IDENTITY: THE ROLE OF EFL TEACHERS IN  
THE CLASSROOM**

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**Date:**

February, 2021

**ABSTRACT**

Early teaching and student experiences act as cultural references for English as a Foreign Language teachers. Tools and strategies are articulated in the form of roles, which are constantly tested and negotiated within the classroom, modeling the EFL teacher's identity. The following is a case study on three EFL teacher's identity development from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador. The presence of roles related to EFL teaching was identified through a semi-participant observation and compiled in an observation grid. Observed tools and strategies origin was deepened in the transcription of interviews based on life stories, using a biographical methodology. The use of Socializing / Empathizing skills from the Acculturator role were present in codeswitch using an Ecuadorian pitch, aimed to deal with emotional transactions in the class successfully. Previous working experiences allowed teachers to find strategies to incorporate EFL teaching roles with low emotional labor. Role models from the family and working context played a crucial role in the integration of emotional tools to negotiate roles within the class with low emotional labor.

**Keywords:** Experience, EFL teacher, role, emotional labor, identity, negotiation.

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**CONSTRUYENDO LA IDENTIDAD DEL DOCENTE DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA  
EXTRANJERA: EL ROL DE LOS PROFESORES DE INGLÉS EN EL AULA**

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**Fecha:**

Febrero, 2021

**RESUMEN:**

Los profesores de inglés como lengua extranjera usan sus experiencias previas como referencia para estructurar su identidad dentro del aula. Herramientas y estrategias se articulan en forma de roles, que constantemente están a prueba y se negocian dentro del aula, moldeando la identidad de un profesor de inglés como lengua extranjera. El siguiente es un estudio de caso sobre el desarrollo de la identidad docente de tres profesores de inglés de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador. A través de una observación semi-participante, se identificó la presencia de roles afines a la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, las cuales se recopilaban en una matriz de observación. El origen de las herramientas y estrategias observadas se profundizó en la transcripción de entrevistas basadas en relatos de vida, utilizando una metodología biográfica. Se identificó el uso de las destrezas Socializadoras/Empatizadoras en el rol Aculturador de los docentes de inglés, las cuales se presentan al cambiar de código con una tonalidad ecuatoriana, lo cual tiene como objetivo reducir la fatiga emocional de los estudiantes. Las experiencias laborales previas en donde los roles docentes eran desafiados y negociados continuamente, permitieron establecer estrategias para el uso eficaz de herramientas en la reducción de la fatiga emocional y construir así su propia identidad docente. Los modelos a seguir en el contexto familiar y laboral cumplieron un papel crucial en la incorporación de herramientas emocionales para negociar roles dentro de la clase.

**Palabras clave:** Experiencia, fatiga emocional, identidad, negociación, profesor de inglés como lengua extranjera, rol.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This research was born from the search to understand the reasons for the teacher's attrition. One of the main factors in this problem was the high amount of emotional labor in teachers when dealing with emotional transactions in the classroom. The lack of pedagogical experience means that the roles within the EFL teaching identity are not well structured, making their resources insufficient to handle emotional classroom transactions effectively. The investigation describes the strategies that English teachers used to structure the roles present in their teaching identity. The selection and hiring processes in private institutions allow professionals with a third-level degree to apply for this position despite not having previous pedagogical training. The negative perception of the result compared to the objective leads the teacher to negotiate their active roles to structure a new teacher identity.

## **CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FUNDAMENTS**

### **1.1. General issues**

Teachers' capability of providing an appropriate answer during an emotional episode in the class is essential in the achievement of EFL teaching goals. But when schemas or cognitive resources are limited, the correct behavior to apply becomes uncertain (Schutz, Cross, Hong, & Osbon, 2007). In the US, the high emotional labor caused by the lack of tools and strategies to deal with emotional transactions in the class is one of the most influential elements on the EFL teacher's phenomena according to Barnet & Shields (2020). English language proficiency is merit enough to be considered as an EFL teacher in most of the public and private institutions in Ecuador. The Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (2017) allows private institutions to train professionals with a university degree, not related to pedagogy, in an attempt to provide tools and strategies to reach EFL classroom objectives. Previous research shows how early experiences act as a reference to portrait in front of the class and deal with emotional transactions, in the form of a cultural background (Schutz & Mikyoung, 2014). This identity is defined by the student, institutional and cultural expectation that develop a process that defines how to portrait in front of the classroom as an EFL teacher, process described by Aghaei (2020) as the teacher's professional role identity-building process. Tools and strategies obtained from training and their experience, gather in EFL roles that provide teachers with a framework to make better decisions. These roles become part of an EFL teaching identity (Aghaei, Bavali, & Behjat, 2020). EFL teachers' identity in the Ecuadorian working selection process is not a priority nowadays, which

increases emotional labor in Ecuadorian EFL teachers and interrupts students' learning process. Ecuador is ranked 81st out of 100 countries, the last in Latin America, with a score of 46,57 considered "Very Low" by the Common European Framework and is the last position in Latin America according to the 9th edition of the EPI-EF Proficiency index (EF Education First, 2020).

## **1.2. Historical overview**

A high amount of EFL teaching positions were filled with professionals with a mastery of the language, but with important voids in classroom management, methodology, and emotional training which will later be a factor in the increase of attrition in US learning institutions (Barnett & Shields, 2020), as the result of improper handling of the emotional nature in the teaching process (Schutz, Cross, Hong, & Osbon, 2007). Teachers bring their early class experiences as personal and cultural backgrounds that act as a reference point to deal with emotional transactions (Schutz & Mikyoung, 2014). The tools and strategies from early experiences and previous pedagogical training are part of a teacher's identity. Wenger (1998) label it as a consequence of the interaction with different learning and teaching communities. Danielewicz, cited by Zhang in 2017, described a teacher's identity as an arrangement of beliefs, attitudes, and values present in specific cultural practices. Pouria Aghaei defines identity as a "dynamic and continuing process, developing over time and influenced by the teacher's characteristics and prior experiences on the one hand, and professional contexts that are found relevant by teacher educators on the other" (Aghaei, Bavali, & Behjat, 2020). A teacher's identity is defined as the way teachers' portraits in front of their students, the institution, the community, and themselves (Schutz, Cross, Hong, & Osbon, 2007).

A specific outcome is anticipated from the use of strategies and tools in EFL roles in the shape of goals. Teachers will appraisal the congruence between goal and outcome by analyzing their capability of handling the situation, leading to a process of reinforcement or negotiation of the EFL teacher's identity (Schutz & Mikyoung, 2014). Early personal experiences, as well as previous working practices, establish an image of "how a teacher should be" on the institution, the student, and the teacher itself. EFL teacher training provides them with cognitive resources and schemas to apply in emotional transactions, strategies that later will be tested in classrooms with different characteristics (Farrell, 2010).

Socio-cultural norms, as well as institutional power, establish an average structure to portrait

in the development of the teachers' careers (Aghaei, Bavali, & Behjat, 2020). Volkman, cited by Farrell in 2010, tie professional self-image with the variety of roles teachers believed are expected to play by an institution and the culture, according to their experience in past learning processes, described as "institutionally created ready-made roles" (Farrell, 2010). The effectiveness of the tools and strategies in these roles is limited. The clash of teacher's goals with students' expectations in emotional transactions generates emotional episodes that must be handled properly according to cultural emotional display rules (Schutz & Mikyoung, 2014).

If there is a goal-outcome congruence after the appraisal, pleasant emotions will appear, confirming the effectiveness of the role and reinforcing teacher identity. When teachers have no schemas or cognitive resources to activate, they will be unsure of the appropriate behavior to apply, causing an incongruence between the goal and the outcome. Appearing unpleasant emotions influences belief change with new roles and emotional display rules that will have to be negotiated with the community and included in the roles in the EFL teacher's identity (Farrell, 2010). Emotional dissonance result of this dynamic increases the levels of emotional exhaustion, burnout, and attrition, a phenomenon described as emotional labor (Schutz & Mikyoung, 2014).

Nias in 1996, cited by Schutz and Mikyoung (2007) explained that teachers will invest themselves in emotional transactions. Emotional skills from the teacher's background influence how to deal with emotional transactions in the classroom. When the role's strategies allow the teacher to have a goal-outcome congruence, they are incorporated in new negotiated identity roles (Farrell, 2010). The negotiation process in different communities of practice will create the opportunity to incorporate new skills in the teacher's identity (Zhang, 2017).

Farrell specifies three main roles in the EFL teaching process: The role of the teacher as a manager provides strategies to control what happens in the classroom. The teacher becomes an English learning seller by telling jokes or using interaction dynamics. Teachers can motivate students by keeping the student on the task, delivering information, and providing positive and negative feedback (Farrell, 2010). The teacher is a knowledge transmitter that motivates learners to go beyond their potential capacities through innovative technics (Aghaei, Bavali, & Behjat, 2020). The teacher as a professional is another EFL role where the professional becomes a collaborator that shares its experiences with another teacher to

continually search for knowledge and become knowledgeable about teaching the subject matter (Farrell, 2010). The teacher becomes an information exchanger that produces and offers solutions while constantly investigate new ways of improving students' learning, as well as an expert and a learner about a subject matter of knowledge (Aghaei, Bavali, & Behjat, 2020). These two roles can be part of any teacher's identity, but "the role identity of Teacher as Acculturator is something that may make English language professionals somewhat unique" (Farrell, 2010). The teacher as an Acculturator makes students socialize with topics related to life with other countries and cultures. When teachers integrate this role into their identity, they will sometimes offer advice and support to students as care providers (Farrell, 2010). Teachers with this role will mediate between their context and foreign socio-cultural settings while caring about their student's life in or outside the classroom. Teachers will develop empathy and provide emotional support to students (Aghaei, Bavali, & Behjat, 2020).

Depending on the goal established by the teacher, some characteristics of these roles are going to be predominant in the Teacher's EFL identity. The achievements will vary depending on the age of the student, institutional goals, and the availability of communities of practice in the student's daily context.

### **1.3. Major contributions to the research area**

This investigation aims to provide a better understanding of EFL teachers' emotional environment. The description of tools and strategies from an EFL teacher's identity that can deal with emotional transactions in the class with low emotional labor can provide a guide to support other EFL teachers' identity development. Institutions can develop a new appreciation of EFL teachers' emotional needs and focus their training on the development of the roles with enough resources to invest in emotional transactions. This investigation can demonstrate the influence of EFL teaching identity on the wellbeing of teachers, students, and institutions in general, becoming meaningful in the decision-making process of State Educational Organisms in Ecuador. An EFL teaching identity with emotional skills that ease a role negotiation process provide strategies to achieve low emotional labor transactions in the classroom and develop intrinsic motivation in students' EFL learning.

## **CHAPTER 2: PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **2.1. Research questions**

- How can an EFL teaching identity be structured?
- Which elements influence the role development in this process?
- How can teachers negotiate EFL teaching roles with low emotional labor in the class?

### **2.2. General goal**

The objective of this research is to describe the EFL teacher's identity-building process from three experienced EFL teachers with a master's degree in EFL teaching pedagogy.

### **2.3. Specific objective:**

- Classify role tools and strategies from EFL teachers' identity.
- Identify the origin of these tools and strategies on EFL teachers' background.
- Identify the elements involved in the EFL teaching identity negotiation process.

## **CHAPTER 3: INVESTIGATION METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Method**

This research is deductive-inductive. Deductive in the appliance of EFL teacher's identity theories to identify similar characteristics in the participants and their use in their daily context. The investigation becomes inductive when, describing the individual EFL teacher's identity-building process, shared elements appear between participants.

### **3.2. Design**

The qualitative approach of this paper focuses on describing EFL teachers' identity development phenomena perceived by the element involved in the process (Bernal, 2010). EFL teacher's development can be better studied when it is observed in the environment in which it occurs. The importance of the context allows the researcher to reach the particular setting under study. (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007)

### **3.3. Type**

The investigation is descriptive, as it consists of the characterization of the EFL teacher's identity structure (Arias, 2012), selecting its fundamental characteristics, and a detailed

description of the tools and strategies in their roles (Bernal, 2010). Qualitative research is often characterized by being descriptive, as they contain quotations in the attempt to describe phenomena in a narrative form (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

### **3.4. Participants**

Three English as a foreign language teachers with a master's degree in pedagogy from Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador with ten experience years in the field are chosen. The number of participants is due to the investigation's objective to deeply describe the EFL teacher's identity-building phenomena.

### **3.5. Settings**

The observation process was done in the first five days of classes on three online EFL synchronic classes of 3 hours each with A2 and B1 students between 17 to 35 years old. Audio and video from the classes were recorded from the Zoom platform and transcribed. Zoom platform was used in the case of the interview because of the pandemic context.

### **3.6. Instrument**

A semi participant observation took place in the first 5 EFL classes of A2 and B1 students between 17 to 35 years old. During this process, an observation grid was used to identify tools and strategies incorporated in each role which is composed by an adaptation of the strategies in the roles present in EFL teachers' identities according to Farrell (2010) and Aghaei (2020). The time and description of the EFL role strategy used by the teacher in the class were documented. Roles were divided into "Manager", "Acculturator" and "Professional".

A semi-structured, biographical interview took place to identify the origin of these strategies and the teacher's role incorporation process after the observation. Open questions related to five analysis units, learner experience, previous working experiences, teaching experience, training, and confidence-building, were adapted to identify the origin of the observed tools and strategies used in class.

### **3.7. Technique**

Two qualitative techniques will be used to obtain a fuller understanding of the studied phenomena. A semi-participant observation that "consists in visualizing or capturing through sight, in a systematic way, any fact, phenomenon or situation that occurs in nature or society, based on research objectives Pre-established" (Arias, 2012). Likewise, in participant

observation, "the researcher becomes part of the community or environment where the study is carried out" (Arias, 2012). The researcher "must spend the longest time in the situation being observed, to know directly everything that in his opinion can constitute information for the study " (Bernal, 2010).

A life-story interview, defined by Hernández (2014) as "a meeting to talk and exchange information between the interviewer and the interviewee / s. In the interview, through the questions and answers, communication is achieved and the joint construction of meanings regarding a topic" (p. 403). "It is a technique based on a dialogue or conversation face to face between the interviewer and the interviewee on a previously determined topic, in such a way that the interviewer can obtain the required information." (Arias, 2012)

### **3.8. Procedures**

A semi-participant observation took place during the first five days of virtual synchronic classes and recorded with the teacher's consent. An observation grid was used to collect evidence of EFL teaching roles presence and frequency in the class.

Life-story, Narrative interviews with a biographical methodology were applied to three experienced teachers. The life-story will focus on the experience of specific events, which differs with the life-history methodology when making a complete recount of the participant's life. The virtual platform Zoom was used to carry out semi-structured interviews, which were later recorded and transcribed.

The participants were questioned about the effectiveness of strategies related to EFL teaching roles in class and their origin. The personal, working, and institutional influence on its development and use and the experiences where new strategies had to be developed to overcome obstacles in their EFL teaching life.

### **3.9. Limitations**

This study's qualitative methodology provides a deep view about the process of an EFL teaching identity development that are hard to generalize in a bigger context. A quantitative investigation about the frequency of specific roles in a big scale community can be useful to describe the kind of EFL teaching identities of the institution involved, as well as, a better perspective of Emotional labor before and after negotiating EFL teaching roles in the participants obtained with a quantitative pre and post-test, can generate a new perspective of emotional transactions in the Ecuadorian classrooms.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1. Results

An observation grid was used in the observation process to identify the teachers' most used roles in their classes, as well as a description of the tools and strategies incorporated in every role. All three EFL roles were present in class during the observation process, but some were more frequently used by the teachers.

The main role used by teacher 1 was the Acculturator EFL teaching Role, because of the importance she gave to Social/Empathizer role strategies in the class. The frequent use of an Ecuadorian pitch while socializing and the teacher's interest in students' life outside the class settled a comfortable class environment. In the manager role, the teacher used codeswitch to provide important information from the institution and facilitate special needs students' understanding. Action researcher strategies from the professional role were present as the teacher constantly investigated new online resources to improve students' learning.

In teacher 2, Acculturator EFL Teaching Role was also present above the other EFL teaching roles. The teacher's effort in understanding student's emotional situations during classes was fundamental in her teaching process. Social/Empathizer role strategies were present in the use of community language to reduce student's stress in-class participation. The teacher used Manager Role strategies to encouraged student's participation by asking student's opinions before changing the speaker.

Teacher 3 used the Manager EFL Teaching Role more frequently, as it focused on the establishment of rules and alliances with students. The teacher linked student's goals with English learning, using conditional language to show students the possibility of building their knowledge by trying and learning from their mistakes with the teacher's support. Moral educator strategies from the Acculturator role were used to analyze the influence of student's actions on future rewards.

**Table 1: EFL teaching roles in class**

EFL Teaching roles			
Teacher/Role	Manager	Acculturator	Professional
Teacher 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of extra online resources aside from the book.</li> <li>• “Friendly language” to provide instructions.</li> <li>• Code-switch for special needs students</li> <li>• Use of group games with the grammar objective.</li> <li>• Encourages participation calling by their names.</li> <li>• Skillful in the use of many online tools at the same time.</li> <li>• Using of the phrase: “it is better” before providing feedback. When a student doesn't know an answer, the teacher replies with the phrase "It's Ok, don't worry" before providing the answer.</li> <li>• Use of Spanish for important institutional information.</li> <li>• Use of contextualized examples to improve student's understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A social phase takes place at the beginning of classes and can be repeated during the class period. An Ecuadorian pitch will be used to lower emotional labor in the class and improve participation.</li> <li>• Deep interest for student's wellbeing by listening to their problems and their opinion about activities in the class.</li> <li>• The teacher emphasize the importance of providing moral support in moments of crisis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanges information, tools, strategies, games and technology use with colleagues and superiors.</li> <li>• Resilient ways to solve emotional episodes during the classroom with low emotional labor.</li> <li>• Continuous search for new teaching processes and skills to improve student's learning.</li> <li>• Uses daily life examples to develop problem-solving strategies in students.</li> <li>• Vast subject matter and teaching knowledge.</li> </ul>
Teacher 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of extra online resources aside from the book.</li> <li>• Community language is used to encourage participation.</li> <li>• The teacher uses group games with the grammar objective.</li> <li>• Encourages the participation by calling their name individually, changing the speaker with questions like: "what do you think?" and "What about?"</li> <li>• The teacher takes notes while listening students' performance to provide feedback.</li> <li>• Use of the word "remember" before delivering institutional information, citing the source with the phrase: "according to..."</li> <li>• After receiving an incorrect answer, the teacher asks a dichotomous questions with key information about the topic. When the student choses an option, the teacher uses the phrase: "ah, ok. So it may be..." to provide the correct answer.</li> <li>• When a student doesn't know an answer, the teacher replies with the phrase "don't worry" before providing the answer.</li> <li>• Use of contextualized examples to improve student's understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A social phase takes place at the beginning of classes and can be repeated during the class period, this topics are further related with grammar topics</li> <li>• Own feelings and thoughts about teacher's abroad experiences are used as examples of foreign culture's adaptation.</li> <li>• Deep interest for student's wellbeing by listening to their problem and opinions about activities in the class.</li> <li>• Social and emotional skills are being part of the class activities. The teacher provides examples and anecdotes showing the importance and the appliance of social and emotional skills in different contexts.</li> <li>• The teacher emphasize the importance of providing moral support in moments of crisis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanges information, tools, strategies, games and technology use with colleagues and superiors.</li> <li>• Resilient ways to solve emotional episodes during the classroom with low emotional labor.</li> <li>• Continuous search for new teaching processes and skills to improve student's learning from neurosciences and psychology.</li> <li>• Uses daily life examples to develop problem-solving strategies in students.</li> <li>• Vast subject matter and teaching knowledge.</li> </ul>
Teacher 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of extra online resources aside from the book.</li> <li>• The teacher collects student's personal goals and link them to English learning.</li> <li>• Use of the phrase: “Don't worry, now it's the time to make mistakes” before providing feedback to allow students to feel confident about their participation.</li> <li>• Grammar points are repeated and the student is asked to try again. The teacher focus on reasoning while providing an answer and analyzing mistakes.</li> <li>• The teacher uses group games with the grammar objective.</li> <li>• Skillful in the use of many online tools at the same time.</li> <li>• Use of contextualized examples to improve student's understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An alliance is established with the student to achieve English learning goals.</li> <li>• Deep interest for student's learning process by listening to their problems and opinions in the class.</li> <li>• The teacher emphasize the importance of providing moral support in moments of crisis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanges information, tools and strategies with colleagues.</li> <li>• Resilient ways to solve emotional episodes during the classroom with low emotional labor.</li> <li>• Continuous search for new teaching processes and skills to improve student's learning.</li> <li>• Uses daily life examples to develop problem-solving strategies in students.</li> <li>• Vast subject matter and teaching knowledge.</li> </ul>

## **4.2. Analysis**

A life story, semi-structured interview was applied to identify the origin of the tools and strategies observed in class. Teachers' interview transcriptions were coded into five analysis units:

### **Learner experience**

Teacher 1:

- Enjoyed technology since she was a child.
- Had a Psychologist father that used friendly language with an Ecuadorian pitch.
- Learned English at the same institution currently working.

Teacher 2:

- Had a strict experience as a student.
- An abroad flexible learning experience as a teenager encouraged the use of questions and developed critical thinking.

Teacher 3:

- Enjoyed EFL learning experience.
- Had a passion for languages that increased with the time.

### **Previous working experiences:**

Teacher 1:

- Worked with young kids
- Used friendly language to communicate with kids.
- Learned tools to work with kids
- Interested on the students' wellbeing outside the class.

Teacher 2:

- The teacher felt more comfortable in new working contexts while acquiring new teaching strategies.
- Searched for new ways to improve teaching.
- Learned about affective filter

Teacher 3:

- The teacher had to deal with high emotional labor transactions in the class.
- Used conditional language.

- Established alliances with students

### **Teaching experience**

Teacher 1:

- Learned new online tools with students.
- Shared strategies with the teaching community.
- Learned to adapt the material to the class needs.

Teacher 2:

- The appliance of new teaching strategies from training improved student's learning process.
- Applied "Needs analysis" as English for specific purpose techniques.
- Applied teaching strategies from Neuroscience.

Teacher 3:

- Acquired emotional skills to develop low emotional labor transactions.
- Established new strategies for students to link students' personal goals with English learning.
- Used conditional language with students to identify their effort rewards.
- The teacher shared its passion for languages with students.

### **Training**

Teacher 1:

- Strategies and tools gathered from previous working training provided better strategies to negotiate roles with different learning communities.

Teacher 2:

- Training improved teaching resources and increased teacher's confidence in the class.
- The teacher assumed a continuous training process to improve her understanding of students' emotional needs.

Teacher 3:

- Language training was always present as a personal goal.
- Training provided emotional strategies to lower emotional labor during classroom transactions.

## **Confidence building**

Teacher 1:

- Moral support, tools and strategies provided by the teacher's boss increased its confidence while dealing with new teaching contexts.

Teacher 2:

- The knowledge about the affective filter in the class provided tools to handle problems in the class with low emotional labor, which developed teacher's confidence.

Teacher 3:

- Teacher's interaction with students provided emotional tools to handle problematic situations in the class and increased the teacher's confidence.

## **4.3. Discussion**

The observation grid provides evidence of Farrell's EFL teaching roles being present in the participants. Teachers had a predominant role according to their expectations about the students, the institution, and the learning process that guided their teaching process and established their classroom goals. The professional role in the participants allowed them to actively gather resources from their environment as they interacted with different communities of practice, as said by Zhang in 2017. The professional role provided teachers with options to increase their tool and strategy stock through the interaction with other sources in different communities of practice. Manager role allowed to link students' goals with classroom objectives, developing an alliance between the teacher and the student. The acculturation role bonds classroom topics to students' emotional context, improving the classroom environment and lowering emotional labor in classroom emotional transactions.

The information gathered from interviews confirms what is said by Nias in 1996, cited by Schutz and Mikyoung (2007), teachers will invest themselves while dealing with emotional transactions. Interviewed teachers described their interest in sharing the pleasant emotions they felt while learning a new language. The success in classroom emotional transactions increased progressively through participants' working experience. The lack of schemas or cognitive resources to activate in the first emotional transactions, develop a feeling of uncertainty in the participants as said by Schutz in 2007. Emotional skills like confidence and resilience were necessary for the role negotiation process to take place. Some of these

skills were part of the individual background of the participants, but others appeared as the result of gathering new tools from training, interdisciplinary assistance, and institutional support.

Aghaei and Schultz, establish that a professional role identity is built from early personal and working experiences that provide a reference of how to portrait in front of the students and the community in general. Participants agree with the influence of role models, like parents, teachers, colleagues, and superiors in their role identity construction. The strategies used by these references were adapted to new learning communities during role negotiation processes as in the case of teacher number one, whose psychologist father used familiar language to communicate with his patients. The teacher adopted this strategy and adapted it to students' needs as part of the classroom role negotiation process, gathering into the cognitive resources and schemas from the EFL teacher identity, as said by Farrell in 2010.

Emotional display rules described by Schutz in 2014, were negotiated while dealing with emotional episodes in the classroom, consequence of the clash of both, students' and teachers' expectations. Previous job experiences in learning communities with different characteristics, along with the influence of personal, labor references and training, allowed teachers to gather tools to develop individual negotiation strategies with a positive outcome in the vast majority of emotional transactions in the classroom. The use of friendly language, linking student's goals with classroom objectives, and providing a safe place to make mistakes while trying became negotiation strategies in the participants' EFL teaching identities. The participants explain that the use of negotiation strategies during an emotional episode in the classroom builds an alliance with the students that benefit the reach of EFL learning goals. The appraisal of congruence between goal and outcome after an emotional episode with low emotional labor in the class reinforces the elements in the teachers' EFL identity as posted by Farrell in 2010.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### CONCLUSION

People obtain tools from their environment and is through interaction that is used to reach an objective, becoming a strategy. When a strategy is successful, it is used again to obtain the same goal, which will end up becoming a role from a person's identity. But when the environment changes, roles must adapt. A process of negotiation with new tools and strategies will take place to allow new roles to appear and be successful in the gathering of new objectives. Teachers' EFL learning experiences became a cultural background that acted as a reference point to deal with emotional transactions in the class (Schutz, 2014), and influenced the kind of tools and strategies incorporated in their EFL teaching identity roles.

Farrell (2010) describes how EFL learning experiences establish an image of the way teachers should be, including a behavior expectation. New teachers will use this as a reference on how to portrait in front of their students, the institution, the community, and themselves. (Schurz. et al, 2007) Teacher's cultural backgrounds along with the tools obtained from EFL training were part of their first EFL teaching experiences. The clash of teacher's beliefs and student's expectations led to high emotional labor transactions in the class. As being a new environment, old strategies needed to pass through a negotiation process to fit into this new context.

Emotional skills are fundamental for teachers to handle emotional labor and start this identity reconstruction process. Some elements, like resilience, can be part of the teacher's emotional background, but others come from the interaction of the individual with its context, in the case of the emotional support provided by family, superiors, and colleagues. Both, internal and external emotional elements are necessary for a low emotional labor EFL identity negotiation process to take place.

The teacher's cultural background will influence the kind of tools and strategies gathered in the roles. The congruence of the outcome with the goal after the use of a negotiated role in the class generates pleasant emotions that increase the teacher's confidence, incorporating these tools and strategies into their EFL Teacher's Identity roles.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Establishments must provide resources for teachers to structure an EFL teaching identity according to institutional expectations. Tools, strategies, and new methodologies can be part of teachers' training. The incorporation of these elements in an EFL teacher's identity will depend on the negotiation of old strategies into new ones, a process that will be highly influenced by institutional and peer support.

Generate the opportunity for teachers to apply new methodological strategies in groups with different characteristics. Emotional transactions resulting from teachers' and students' expectations will develop an opportunity to challenge inefficient elements in the teacher roles and negotiate the incorporation of new elements into the EFL teacher's identity. Emotional labor during this process can produce feelings of uncertainty at first, so that, institutions must identify signs and symptoms related to high emotional labor and burnout, establishing a safe place to interchange thoughts about intrinsic and external causes. Encourage teachers to identify conflictive elements during classroom emotional transactions while providing methodological and empirical resources will increase teachers' confidence in the use of new strategies in the class.

Sharing knowledge with colleagues is fundamental to structure EFL roles. An effective strategy used in a specific situation related to the Manager, Professional or Acculturator role can become a frame for another teacher. Expectations should be managed properly to reduce emotional labor in the negotiation process.

Teachers must be aware of the cultural background they are bringing to class. This includes an opinion of the subject, the student, and the institution. This perception comes along with an expectation that will produce emotional labor when is not accurate. Emotional skills that increase resilience and flexibility are necessary for teachers to adjust old beliefs with the students' context. Institutions can create workshops focused on strengthen these emotional skills and encourage pair collaboration.

Intrinsic and extrinsic teacher's motivation influence the gathering of new resources and their incorporation on EFL teaching identity roles with low emotional labor. It is recommended to deepen this phenomena in further studies.

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## ANNEXES

**Table 2:** Observation grid

TEACHER ROLE											
TEACHER'S NAME	MANAGER	CLASS		DATE	ACCCULTURATOR	PERIOD		LINK	PROFESSIONAL		
		TIME	SITUATION			TIME	SITUATION		TIME	SITUATION	
VENDOR - INNOVATOR	A teacher who is ready to create new learning techniques and materiales. A seller of "learning" of English; "selling" a particular teaching method.			SOCIALIZER - EMPATHYZER	*Socializes* with students; attends functions outside class with students. A teacher who can act as an intimate friend and develop emphaty with students.			COMMUNITY BUILDER - COLLABORATOR	A teacher who xchange the latest information and technologies in the fields with colleagues.		
ENTERTAINER - ARTIST	A teacher that has the art of entertainign,telling jokes and stories to class, and creating new games.			SOCIAL WORKER - CULTURAL MEDIATOR	Offers advice and support to students on matters related to living in another country/culture. A teacher who helps leatners to know the foreign language social and cultural setting.			REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER	Teachers who are knowledge producers and offer solutions for emerging problems.		
COMMUNICATION CONTROLLER	Attempts to control classroom communication and classroom interaction dynamics (turn taking, etc.)			CARE PROVIDER - COUNSELOR	Plays careprovider role for students, cares about his-her learners' daily life in and outside the classroom. A teacher that is always ready to listen to learners and give appropriate solution.			ACTION RESEARCHER	A teacher who constatly investigate teaching process in order to improve student's learning.		
JUGGLER	Multitasker in the classroom,.			MORAL EDUCATOR	A teacher who enhances learners' social and emotional skill development.			ENTERPRENEUR	A teacher who involves in the extended school life and try to answer its challenges.		
MOTIVATOR - SCAFFOLDER	Motivates students to learn; keeps students on task, helps learners go beyond their potential capacities.							EXPERT - KNOWLEGEABLE	A teacher with a great subject matter and teaching knowledge.		
PRESENTER - KNOWLEDGE TRANSMITTER	Delivers information, transfer the knowledge from authorities to learners.							LEARNER	A teacher who is constantly learning new things about teaching and self as a teacher.		
ARBITRATOR	Offers feedback (positive and negative) in classroom										
FACILITATOR	A teacher who facilitate the whole learning process for learners.										

Inspired by Farrell (2010) and Aghaei (2020). Adapted and created by the author.

## **Semi-structured interview questions:**

### **EFL teaching roles – strategies**

- Where did you find these resources or strategies?
- Did you hear someone that was using this strategy?
- When did you know that this strategy was effective?
- When was the first time you started applying this strategy?
- How can you decide if something works or if something doesn't work?

### **EFL teaching identity**

- How can you define yourself?
- How can you define your EFL teacher's identity?
- How can you define yourself?
- When did you know that this will work while teaching English?
- How can you decide if something works or if something doesn't work?
- Can you tell me the biggest difference you can see, from when you started teaching until now?
- What is the biggest difference in you?

### **Influence**

- How did you feel when you met them, not as a student, but as a colleague?
- How did you incorporate the strategies from your partners into your own EFL teacher's identity?
- How do you think the material you use influences your teaching identity?
- When did you decide to do things in your way?