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# CONSTRUCTION OF EFL TEACHER EDUCATORS' KNOWLEDGE BASE IN A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN NICARAGUA

Angel María Dávila
*Southern Illinois University Carbondale*, mangeld79@siu.edu

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# CONSTRUCTION OF EFL TEACHER EDUCATORS' KNOWLEDGE BASE IN A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN NICARAGUA

By

Angel María Dávila

B.S.Ed., Martin Lutero University, 2005
M.S.Ed., URACCAN University, 2011
M.A., Southern Illinois University, 2013

A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Philosophy degree

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
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DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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Doctor of Philosophy

in the field of Education with Concentration in Curriculum and Instruction

Approved by:

Dr. D. John McIntyre, Chair

Dr. Peter Fadde

Dr. Sosanya M. Jones

Dr. Cheryl Ann Ernst

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Angel María Dávila, for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education with Concentration in

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TITLE:  CONSTRUCTION OF EFL TEACHER EDUCATORS' KNOWLEDGE BASE IN A

TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN NICARAGUA

MAJOR PROFESSOR:  Dr. D. John McIntyre

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe

the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, the types of knowledge and

skills that constructed their knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and

classroom practices in a teacher education program at a Nicaraguan University.  This study

presents a literature review on the sources of knowledge and knowledge base of EFL teacher

educators in the field of language teacher education.  I used a purposeful sampling technique to

select both the research site and the six EFL teacher educators who participated as research

participants in this study.  Data were collected from three sources: a curriculum analysis, six one-

shot semi-structured interviews, and a document analysis to lesson plans, syllabi, and assessment

instruments used by the research participants.  To analyze the data collected, I used the

qualitative data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014).  As a mode

of findings, I describe the sources of knowledge, a categorization of knowledge base and skills

that Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators possess as well as the relationship they identified

between their knowledge base and their teaching practices in EFL teacher education classrooms.

Findings revealed that Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators possess sixteen types of

knowledge and fourteen types of skills that resulted from eight sources of knowledge, among

which English proficiency, own experiences as language learners, subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, teaching experience in EFL teacher education programs, assessment knowledge of language student teachers, and knowledge of students' L1 seem to be the most important when it has to do with actual teaching in language teacher education classrooms.  In addition, according to the findings, the process of becoming an EFL teacher educator may take many years.  It begins with the professional coursework teacher educators take in their language teacher education programs where they first become English teachers.  It continues with teaching experiences either in high schools, English teaching centers, or universities.  Their professional knowledge as teacher educators is completed through the interaction with EFL preservice student teachers in teacher education classrooms, in which their previous pedagogical, linguistic, and teaching experiences as EFL teachers is transformed.  In other words, their professional identity as EFL teacher educators is developed as they begin teaching in EFL teacher education programs.

Pursuing this further, this study presents some pedagogical implications based on the findings that can help improve the quality and preparation of EFL teacher educators in Nicaragua.  Finally, it offers some avenues for more research regarding the knowledge base of EFL teacher educators in Nicaraguan teacher education programs.

*Keywords:* EFL teacher educators, knowledge base, teacher qualifications, language teacher education, knowledge base and classroom practices, teaching skills

DEDICATION

To my beloved mother, for her unconditional love and priceless and her humble pieces of

advice that made me the person who I am now; to my beloved father, who accompanies me from

heaven and who taught me how to be a good person and a person who never gives up, no matter

what; to my beloved wife and son for being always by my side and for being an invaluable

support while I was pursuing my doctoral studies; to my siblings, for their words of

encouragement that kept me focused on my studies.  To all and each one of them my greatest

gratitude for greatly contributing to accomplish this milestone in my professional life.

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**CHAPTER 1**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1. Background of the Study**

This study falls into the field of knowledge of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher education. Teacher education "describes the sum of various interventions that are used to develop professional knowledge among practitioners" (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 398; see also Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Richards, 1990, 2008a; Wright, 2010). According to Hinkel (2011, 2017), the final goal of second or foreign language teacher education is to improve the quality of second or foreign language student learning. In this study, EFL teacher education is understood as the process of learning to teach English in a country or geographical area in which English is neither the official language nor the main language for everyday communication and interaction, which happens to be the case of the city in Nicaragua wherein this study took place. Based on the existing literature, the field of EFL teacher education can be divided in two subfields, EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators. According to Moradkhani et al. (2013), EFL teachers can be defined as "language teaching experts who are involved in the real act of teaching English as a Foreign Language to language learners" (pp. 124-125). On the other hand, EFL teacher educators can be defined as "those professionals who provide formal instruction and support for teacher candidates during pre-service teacher education programs" (Moradkhani et al., 2013, p. 124). In this study, I will focus on how EFL teacher educators build the types of knowledge that integrate their knowledge base.

For the purpose of this research, I defined EFL teacher educators by combining the definitions of EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators presented by Moradkhani et al. (2013). That is, EFL teacher educators in the context of Nicaraguan teacher education were defined as

*language teaching experts who helped EFL teacher candidates develop English proficiency and who provided formal instruction and support for teacher candidates to become effective English as a Foreign Language teachers*.  This definition implies that in Nicaragua the curricula in all EFL teacher education programs offered at both private and public universities centered on preparing EFL teachers both pedagogically and linguistically.  That is prospective student teachers who enter EFL teacher education programs do not have to demonstrate English proficiency as an admission requirement.  They are expected to acquire English proficiency and become EFL teachers in the four or five years within their bachelor's degrees.

### 1.2. Statement of the Problem

The knowledge base that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers need to acquire and develop in teacher education programs in order to teach English effectively has been examined extensively (Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Hinkel, 2011; Layette, 1993; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Richards, 1998, 2008a; Smith, 2005; Tedick, 2005).  This means, for example, that, even when EFL teacher education programs are designed and implemented differently from one institution of higher education to another, curricularists who develop such programs may have in mind that based on practice and research a knowledge base has been determined for preparing EFL teachers, and they know that they have to take into consideration this knowledge base to make their EFL teacher education programs appealing to prospective student teachers as well as to provide quality education.

Knowledge base has to do with the understanding, awareness, expertise, knowledge, and skills that should equip EFL teachers to provide effective teaching in EFL classrooms (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Hinkel, 2011; Richards, 1998; Tedick, 2005).  In other words, it is expected

that pre-service EFL teachers would put into effect the knowledge base they acquire in their teacher education programs by integrating it and transforming it to make their EFL teaching accessible to EFL learners.  In this scenario, communication skills and English proficiency are two important competencies that should be part of EFL teachers' knowledge base (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Layette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; see also Faez, 2011; Hinkel, 2011; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013).  Other types of knowledge that must compose EFL teachers' knowledge base are content knowledge and theories of L2 teaching (Day, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Layette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998), teaching skills (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998), pedagogical content knowledge and support knowledge, knowledge of disciplines which influence language teaching, for example, linguistics and sociolinguistics (Day, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998), and contextual knowledge (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Layette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998).

According to the existing body of literature in EFL teacher education, however, the field of EFL teacher educators has not yet received enough attention.  There is still neither a consensus on how these professionals construct their knowledge and skills that determine them as EFL teacher educators nor a consensus of what types of knowledge compose their knowledge base (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013).  Among the areas which are sources of EFL teacher educators' knowledge are the following: EFL teacher education training, vicarious learning, experience as EFL learners, teaching experience as EFL teachers (Arıoğul, 2007; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013), teaching experience in teacher education programs, and language teaching related research (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013).  Regarding the types of knowledge that EFL teacher educators should possess, according to the existing literature, are,

for example, knowledge of language and related disciplines, knowledge of English language teaching theories, skills, and techniques, knowledge of context and social relations, knowledge of class, time, and learning management, knowledge of research and professional development, knowledge of practicum, knowledge of teachers and their assessment, and knowledge of reflective and critical teaching (Arıoğul, 2007; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013). These researchers have called the attention that more research is needed to continue to explore the field of EFL teacher educators. Researchers from outside the field of EFL teacher education said that it is paramount to understand how teachers of teacher candidates, as they referred to teacher educators in general, acquire the knowledge and skills they need to teach effectively in teacher education programs (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2010). Therefore, in order to continue the understanding of how EFL teacher educators develop their knowledge base and how this knowledge base is integrated, it was important that a qualitative phenomenological study be conducted to describe and understand the lived experiences of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators in a teacher education program at a public university in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. In terms of research design, I found that of the existing studies, the most rigorous design had been a grounded theory study (Moradkhani et al., 2013). In this regard, a phenomenological qualitative study would provide a new perspective in understanding EFL teacher educators' knowledge base because it focused on the lived experiences of EFL teacher educators as well as it included a research population different from the one in the existing literature, in this case, Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators.

In the context wherein this study took place, there was no curricula or program to provide formal education to EFL teacher educators. The only time in their preparation in which the target EFL teacher educators received formal training was in their pre-service teacher education

program which was intended to prepare EFL teachers and not EFL teacher educators. This means, for instance, that in Nicaragua when EFL teachers graduate, they enter the job market as EFL teachers either in elementary schools, high schools or in intensive English programs. Later in their careers as EFL teachers, some of them may be recruited to teach in EFL teacher education programs, either because they are considered experienced EFL teachers or because they may possess higher levels of education, for example, masters or doctoral degrees. In other words, it is believed that being an experienced EFL teacher or having postgraduate degrees would be enough to work as teacher educators. However, according to the exiting research, becoming an EFL teacher educator requires more than that (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013). That is, EFL teachers may experience that the knowledge and skills they possess as EFL teachers may change once they start working in language teacher education programs (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013).

From a personal perspective, I would say that I experienced a similar process before I became an EFL teacher educator. Right after I graduated from my teacher education program, I began teaching English as a Foreign Language at the high school level and in intensive English programs for adult learners. During this time, I put into effect the types of knowledge and skills I had learned in my teacher preparation program. After some years of teaching experience at these levels, I was recruited to teach in an EFL teacher education program. At the beginning, I thought all I had to do was to transfer my previous EFL teaching experience, English skills, and knowledge to my new teaching setting. Soon I realized that applying my previous teaching experience to this new teaching milieu was not that easy at all. Of course, part of it was transferred, part of it I had to readjust, and I also had to learn new EFL teaching methodologies

and teaching strategies based on the characteristics of the teacher education program and on the characteristics and learning needs of the teacher candidates to whom I was teaching. During a constant reflection of my new teaching environment and teaching reality in my first years as an EFL teacher educator, I understood that I was not only an English teacher anymore but also a professional in whose hands was the quality of education that EFL teacher candidates might receive. I started to read more in order to be as informed as possible regarding issues in EFL teaching, curriculum development, assessment, teacher supervision, EFL teaching methodologies and strategies, use of technology in EFL teaching, and first and second language learning theories. Pursuing this further, I made more efforts to improve my own English and communication skills. I also started to become a teacher model for my students. That is, for each activity or teaching strategy I used to teach English and English teaching pedagogy and didactics, I kept in mind that my students could learn not only the content intended to be acquired but also the teaching strategy itself for their possible future teaching. I always tried to do my best in the classroom to provide meaningful learning opportunities to my student teachers as far as English communication skills and teaching skills was concerned.

In the process of becoming an EFL teacher educator, I noticed that the depth of knowledge and teaching skills required to teach in teacher education programs was higher than those needed to work as an EFL teacher only. I also experienced that EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators shared some types of knowledge and skills but EFL teacher educators possessed other types of knowledge that EFL teachers did not have. For instance, Moradkhani et al. (2013) found that EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators have some knowledge in common such as knowledge of language and related disciplines, knowledge of ELT theories, skills, and techniques, knowledge of context and social relations, and knowledge of class, time, and

learning management, but they also differ in that EFL teacher educators have other types of knowledge, namely, knowledge of research and professional development, knowledge of practicum, knowledge of teachers and their assessment, and knowledge of reflective and critical teaching.  Pursuing this further, Moradkhani et al. (2013) said that EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators differ as well in that the latter possess a higher level of depth of their pedagogical knowledge and its degree of consciousness.  It was in this scenario, where the need to conduct this qualitative phenomenological study arose in order to investigate the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators who like me might have constructed their knowledge base and professional identity through practice.  Consequently, this study intended to explore the following purpose and research questions.

### 1.3. Research Purpose and Research Questions

### 1.3.1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that constructed their knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices in a teacher education program at a Nicaraguan University.  *EFL teacher educators' knowledge base was defined as the understanding, awareness, expertise, knowledge, and skills that equipped Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators to provide effective teaching, pedagogically and linguistically speaking*.  Pursuing this further, Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators were defined as *language teaching experts who helped EFL teacher candidates develop English proficiency and who provided formal instruction and support for teacher candidates to become effective English as a Foreign Language teachers*.  The phenomenon investigated in this study was Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base construction.

To explore this issue, I examined the following research questions:

**1.3.2. Central Research Question:**

- How do EFL teacher educators construct their knowledge base in an EFL teacher education program in a public university in Nicaragua?

**Sub-questions:**

- What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base?

- What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators?

- How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices?

The rationale for investigating the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that integrate this knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices lied in the existing literature in the field of EFL teacher education. For instance, Zhang (2008) said that research in the area of teachers' knowledge has to cover these three components in order to have a fuller picture of this research problem. That is, if a research study includes only one or two of these issues, it would be considered incomplete. Pursuing this further, the need to inform these research questions grew more because the research body about EFL teacher educators' knowledge base was and continue to be still in its infancy (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Hinkel, 2005, 2011; 2017). Lastly, these questions were also appropriate because the research approach chosen to inform them, phenomenology, allowed such qualitative open-ended questions (Creswell, 2013, 2014).

## 1.4. Expected Impact and Significance of the Study

This study was significant because it contributed to the discussion in the existing body of literature (e.g., Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013) regarding the types of knowledge and skills EFL teacher educators should possess.  A lot has been said about the knowledge base that EFL teachers must develop to teach English as a Foreign Language effectively (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Layette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; see also Faez, 2011; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Tedick, 2005), but the exploration of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base was and continue to be in its infancy (Moradkhani et al., 2013), mainly in contexts such as Nicaragua in which EFL teacher educators not only have to deal with making pre-service teacher candidates develop advanced oral and written English proficiency both to function in a daily life setting and in an academic environment, but also have to deal with helping them construct their pedagogical knowledge at the same time.  This study may also increase the level of awareness of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators about their knowledge and skills as it examined the lived experiences of six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators regarding the process they underwent to construct the knowledge base that defines them as EFL teacher educators.  Lastly, this study may benefit university administrators and curriculum designers of the Nicaraguan university wherein the EFL teacher educators under investigation taught, who may, based upon the results, undertake actions to improve the curriculum of the EFL teacher education program they offer as well as to create opportunities of professional development for new EFL teacher educators.

## 1.5. Delimitations

This study was delimited to six EFL teacher educators who taught in an EFL teacher education program in a university in Nicaragua.  Interviews with research participants were delimited to EFL teacher educators who had more than three years of teaching experience in the chosen EFL teacher education program.

## 1.6. Limitations

This study focused on the lived experiences of six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators and how they built their knowledge base in an EFL teacher education program.  Consequently, applying the results to another group of EFL teacher educators or to another research setting should be done with this in mind.

- This study was limited in scope to six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators. Generalizations beyond the experience of the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators may neither be a representative sample of all EFL teacher educators in Nicaragua nor a representative sample of all EFL teacher educators in other countries.

- The focus of this study was only on the lived experiences of the target six EFL teacher educators about the sources of their knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that built their knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices.  Other variables or themes related to EFL teacher educators such as the quality of their pedagogical and linguistic knowledge were not studied or measured.

- The research design and semi-structure interviews that were utilized to gather data limit the study to the perceptions and beliefs of the individuals that were interviewed.

## 1.7. Assumptions

- EFL teacher educators would respond honestly to all interview questions. Dishonest or inaccurate responses would not give a true representation of the challenges and pedagogical changes that EFL teacher educators experienced in the process of becoming EFL teacher educators.

- The chosen EFL teacher educators would be willing to participate in the study in an effort to share their lived experiences regarding the process they experienced to become EFL teacher educators.

## 1.8. Definition of Key Terms

**Teacher education.** It refers to the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the skills, attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge they need to do their tasks in schools, classrooms, and community (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Smith, 2005).

**Knowledge Base.** As for EFL teacher educators as applied in this study, I defined knowledge base as the understanding, awareness, expertise, knowledge, and skills that equipped Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators to provide effective teaching, pedagogically and linguistically speaking, in EFL teacher education programs.

**English as a Foreign Language** (EFL). The learning of English in a place where English is not the official language.

**English as a Second Language** (ESL). The learning of English in a place where English is used for daily activities and it is the official language.

**EFL teacher education program.** Programs devoted to prepare EFL pre-service and in-service teachers.

**EFL teachers.**  "Language teaching experts who are involved in the real act of teaching foreign languages to language learners" (Moradkhani et al., 2013, p. 124-125).

**EFL teacher educator.**  "Those professionals who provide formal instruction and support for teacher candidates in pre-service teacher education programs" (Moradkhani et al., 2013, p. 124).

**Nicaraguan EFL teacher educator.**  Language teaching experts who help EFL teacher candidates develop English proficiency and who provide formal instruction and support for teacher candidates to become effective English as a Foreign Language teachers.

## 1.9. Organization of the Study

This dissertation research is written in five chapters.  Chapter 1 provides the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, limitations and assumptions as well as key terms.  Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature informing the problem and research questions. This includes a review of second and foreign language learning theories, literature on curriculum models utilized in EFL teacher education, research on EFL teachers' knowledge which set the foundations of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, and research on EFL teacher educators' knowledge base construction.  Chapter 3 presents the study methodology, including the research design, role of the researcher, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, strategies for validating findings, anticipated ethical issues, and narrative structure for presenting the results of the study. Chapter 4 reports the findings and a discussion of findings of this study specifically related to the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, the categories of their knowledge base, and the relationship Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators find between their knowledge base and their classroom practices.  Finally, chapter 5 provides a summary of

findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further research as related to EFL teacher

educators' knowledge base.

# CHAPTER 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to explore the body of literature in the field of EFL teacher education that informs the ways EFL teacher educators build the knowledge base that defines them as teacher educators. This chapter consists of six sections. First, I present a section on second language learning theories. Here I cover the most common theories as well as approaches and methods commonly utilized when learning and teaching a second language. I included this section because knowing how a language is learned and taught informs the work that EFL teacher educators do. In other words, language learning theories and educational practices connect each other and provide the theoretical foundations for EFL teacher education in one way or another. Second, I explore theoretical and empirical studies concerning EFL teachers' knowledge base. This section is composed of three subsections, namely, EFL teachers' knowledge base, knowledge base of educators outside language teacher education, and curriculum models mostly utilized in EFL teacher education. This section is significant for this study because it sets the foundations of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base. Third, I discus empirical research about EFL teacher educators and the process they undergo to build their pedagogical knowledge base as teacher educators. In this section, I also present the gaps in the literature which call for more research regarding EFL teacher educators and their knowledge base. Fourth, I present a description of EFL teacher education in the context of the educational system of Nicaragua. Fifth, based on the review, I pose the research questions to be addressed in this dissertation research. Finally, I introduce a conceptual framework developed as a synthesis of existing views in the literature regarding EFL teacher educators' knowledge base construction,

which was used to inform the research problem, research questions, research design, findings, and implications of this study.

## 2.1. Language Learning Theories

In this section of the literature, I introduce five theoretical perspectives as far as learning a second language is concerned, namely, Behaviorist theory, Innatist perspective: Universal Grammar, Krashen's Monitor Model, Cognitive theory, and Socio-cultural theory. Language learning theories give language teachers perspective towards teaching a second language (Mayer, 2011). I also include some of the approaches and methods that have been commonly utilized in EFL classrooms, such as the grammar-translation approach, direct approach, reading approach, audio-lingual approach (United States), oral situational (Britain), affective-humanistic approach, comprehension-based approach, and communicative approach.

Second language theories, approaches, and methods are rooted in first language (L1) acquisition theories in many respects (Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Lightbown & Spada, 2006). For example, some theories and approaches pay more attention to the innate abilities that second language (L2) learners have to learn an L2. While others consider that the immediate environment as well as the broader social context in which learners interact plays an important role in the acquisition process of a second language (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). As an EFL teacher and as an EFL teacher educator, I think that language learning theories, approaches, and methods inform the work we do either in EFL classrooms or in EFL teacher education programs. I believe that language teachers, instructors, and language educators at any level, aware or unaware, utilize features of some of the language theories and approaches presented in this section. From a personal perspective, I view second language learning theories and approaches like multiple windows in a language classroom from where I can look through to the same student or group of students and get different points of views from each window on how to

approach the learning and teaching process of a second language, in my case, the English

language.  Therefore, I present next the learning theories, teaching approaches and methods that

influenced and that continue to influence the work of EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators.

**2.1.1. Behaviorist Perspective**

Since 1940s, behaviorism has been an influential learning theory when it has to do with

second and foreign language learning and teaching (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011).

The two most influential advocates of behaviorism regarding second and foreign language

leaning have been Nelson Brooks (1960) and Robert Lado (1957).  These two behaviorist

proponents contributed to the development of audiolingual teaching materials as well as teacher

preparation (Brooks, 1960; Lado, 1957; Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

From a behaviorist point of view, the acquisition of a second language or foreign

language occurs through imitation, practice, reinforcement, and habit formation (Lightbown &

Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Metchell & Myles, 2004; Skinner, 1957).  Under this language

learning perspective, there is a direct cause-effect and stimulus-response relationship (Lightbown

& Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011).  The role of the L2 learners is passive (Lightbown & Spada, 2006;

Mayer, 2011).  In other words, learners receive a stimulus, in this case the target content or piece

of language to be learned, then they are expected to produce a response through imitating their

teacher or instructor.  The role of a behaviorist language instructor or teacher is to provide the

correct stimulus, engage learners to produce the expected response, and provide enough practice

and reinforcement until learners can demonstrate the expected behavior automatically (Mayer,

2011).  Language teachers or instructors are not expected to explain in detail how the target

language works, for instance, explaining the target language from a syntactic or morphological

point of view is not necessary, but to make learners produce the intended behavior change

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exactly as planned in the curriculum and presented in the classroom by the language teacher or

language instructor.  Learners under this language learning perspective may learn in what

situations to use the language behaviors they aimed to learn (Mayer, 2011), but the focus of

instruction will always be the automatic production of the target behaviors.  The behaviorist

language teacher or instructor utilizes rewards as a strategy to make language learners perform

the expected behaviors (Mayer, 2011).

According to Lightbown and Spada (2006), the behaviorist perspective to second or

foreign language learning has been related to the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) created

by structuralist linguists in the United States and Europe.  The CAH presupposes that those

linguistic structures that are similar in the first language (L1) and second language (L2) would

not represent difficulty for L2 learners to acquire.  However, where the L1 and the L2 are

different, L2 learners should learn L2 language structures with difficulty (Lado, 1957).   In other

words, the CAH compares the language structures in order to establish which structures are

similar and which are dissimilar between the first language and the target language.  In the mid

and late 1970s, the CAH was criticized because empirical evidence showed that the claim that all

language errors could be predicted by CAH could not be sustained, but was undoubtedly useful

in the retrospective explanation of errors (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Based on behaviorist techniques such as imitation, practice, reinforcement, and habit

formation (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Metchell & Myles, 2004) as well as on the

work of Brooks (1960) and Lado (1957) and features from behavioral psychology (Skinner,

1957), one of the most used approaches for learning a second language was created, the

audiolingual approach (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).  The audio-lingual approach was basically

developed for language learners to produce correct pronunciation and correct grammar patterns

through intensive repetition. Classroom activities focused on mimicry and memorization, and language learners were expected to learn dialogues and sentence patterns by heart (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011). Errors produced by the learners were corrected immediately to avoid forming bad habits (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). In this language teaching approach, the role of the language teacher or instructor is to direct and control students' behavior, provide a model of the target behavior, and reinforce correct responses (Diaz-Rico, 2008; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011). Memorization and accurate oral repetition are two of the most used techniques to verify if learning of the target behaviors have occurred. In this scenario, continual repetition of errors must be avoided as early as possible because it could lead to a fixed acquisition of incorrect structures and non-standard pronunciation of the target language (Diaz-Rico, 2008; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011).

**2.1.2. The Innatist Perspective: Universal Grammar**

The Innatist perspective to language learning originated as a rejection of the behaviorist view to second or foreign language acquisition (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Metchell & Myles, 2004). The fundamental hypothesis of the innatist view is that all languages share certain basic language structures, which Chomsky calls Universal Grammar (UG) (Chomsky, 1986; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Selinker & Gass, 2008). Researchers who use UG as their theoretical perspective focus firmly on the language dimension of second language learning. They think that language is a separate module in the mind of individuals, different from other facets of cognition (Metchell & Myles, 2004). According to Chomsky (1986), human beings are biologically endowed with the faculty to acquire their first language or languages in their surroundings during a critical period of language development. Even though Chomsky did not make specific claims of the implications of UG theory regarding the acquisition of second

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languages, some linguists interested in second language acquisition think that UG provides

principles that may help understand how L2 learners acquire second languages (Metchell &

Myles, 2004; Selinker & Gass, 2008; White, 2003).  For instance, the innate language faculty

which Chomsky (1986) said L1 children possess may exist in L2 learners which during the

critical period of language development may help them to acquire the target language or

languages of their environment (Metchell & Myles, 2004; White, 2003).  According to Metchell

and Myles (2004), L2 children "create a mental representation of language which not only goes

beyond the input they are exposed to, but is also strikingly similar to that of other native speakers

of the same language variety" (p. 55).

However, others believed that the principles of UG which explain the acquisition of the

L1 do not help explain what happens with L2 adult learners who have passed the critical period

of language development (Bley-Vroman, 1983; Schachter, 1990).  Therefore, it is necessary to

examine the acquisition of second languages by adults from a different perspective.  Cook (2003)

believed, however, that even when many L2 adult learners are not able to acquire full mastery of

a second language, it is still necessary to seek an elucidation for the fact that L2 adult learners

sometimes show evidence of knowing more about the target language than the input to which

they are exposed.  This make us believe that UG is available in some way to L2 learners as well

(Metchell & Myles, 2004; White, 2003).  White (2003) considered that L2 adult learners may

need explicit grammatical instruction because their UG has been altered by their L1 and because

of this they may think that some language structures found in their L1 will accurately transfer to

the language structure of the target language.

Lightbown and Spada (2009) said that researchers that use UG focus mostly on methods,

such as grammatical judgements to investigate what learners know about the language, rather

than focusing on speaking.  In other words, innatist researchers assess students on what they actually know about the language rather than on how L2 learners utilize the target language in a given situation (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Metchell & Myles, 2004).

**2.1.3. Krashen's Monitor Model**

Krashen's (1982) Monitor Model to second language acquisition was influenced by Chomsky's theory of first language acquisition.  The Monitor Model presupposes that L2 learners acquire a second language by direct exposure to the target language.  In other words, L2 learners acquire a second language by utilizing that language as they interact in the environment where that language is spoken (Horwitz, 2013).  Krashen's Monitor Model consists of five hypotheses: (1) the acquisition/learning hypothesis; (2) the monitor hypothesis; (3) the natural hypothesis; (4) the input hypothesis; and (5) the affective filter hypothesis (Horwitz, 2013; Krashen, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011).

**2.1.3.1. The acquisition/learning hypothesis.**

According to Krashen (1982), acquisition and learning as related to second language acquisition are two different processes.  Acquisition is the result of a subconscious process similar to the process children experience as when they acquire their first language.  This process requires meaningful interaction in the target language with no explicit language instruction (Horwitz, 2013; Krashen, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011).  In other words, L2 learners who experience this way of acquiring a second language do not focus consciously on the structural system of the target language; instead, their attention revolves around acquiring communicative functions in the target language as they interact day by day in the environment wherein the target language is spoken.  Learning, on the other hand, occurs as a conscious process on mastering form and grammatical rules of a second language.  This process is mainly

accomplished by the means of explicit and formal instruction (Horwitz, 2013; Krashen, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011). Out of these two processes, according to Krashen (1982), only acquired knowledge of a target language can be utilized in spontaneous conversation in the L2.

### 2.1.3.2. The monitor hypothesis.

The Monitor Hypothesis claims that the acquired system of a target language is responsible for two main tasks: (1) it initiates the utterances of the L2 speaker and (2) it is the system that guarantees spontaneous use of the target language (Krashen, 1978, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Peregoy & Boyle, 2013). The learned system, on the other hand, behaves as an editor or as a monitor, whose main function is to make small adjustments and polish the outcomes of the acquired system (Krashen, 1978, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Peregoy & Boyle, 2013). The monitoring process happens when the speaker or writer has enough time to process language at a more conscious level, when the speaker or writer is interested in producing correct language, and when the speaker or writer has learned the appropriate grammar rules (Krashen, 1978, 1982; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Peregoy & Boyle, 2013).

### 2.1.3.3. The natural hypothesis.

According to the natural hypothesis, the acquisition of a second language occurs in predictable ways as it happens when acquiring the first language (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011). In other words, some grammatical forms are acquired first, whereas others tend to be acquired at a later time in the acquisition of a second language. According to Krashen (1977), L2 English learners would acquire grammatical morphemes in the following order. First, they acquire the inflectional morpheme *–ing* which marks the progressive

aspect of English verbs as in *He is playing;* the *plural* form of nouns as in *apple-apples;* and the *copula to be* as in *the sky is blue*. Second, L2 English learners acquire the *auxiliary* as in *She is going* and articles as in *a banana*. Third, they acquire *irregular past* verbs as in *spoke*. Lastly, they acquire the inflectional morpheme *–ed* which denotes past tense of regular verbs as in *played*; the *third person* singular *–s* as is *He works*; and the genitive noun *'s* as in *Tom's book*. Lightbown and Spada (2006) concurred with Krashen's grammatical morphemes acquisition order as they said that language features, for instance, the third person inflectional morpheme *–s,* which L2 English learners state or learn in an easy way are not necessarily the easier ones to acquire. This means that even advanced English learners would make errors when producing this morpheme in spontaneous conversation.

### 2.1.3.4. The input hypothesis.

Krashen's input hypothesis explains the manner in which second language acquisition happens. It only focuses on acquisition, not on learning (Krashen, 1978, 1982, 1985, 1998). According to this hypothesis, acquisition occurs when L2 learners have opportunities for enough exposure to language that is comprehensible input and that has *i+1* (Krashen, 1982, 1998; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011). In this case, the *i* stands for the language knowledge and skills already in the acquired system of the L2 learners. On the other hand, *+1* represents the language knowledge and skills a step beyond the L2 learners' acquired system (Krashen, 1982, 1998; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011).

### 2.1.3.5. The affective filter hypothesis.

The affective filter hypothesis represents a metaphorical barrier that does not allow L2 learners to acquire a second language even when they have enough opportunities of exposure to comprehensible input in the target language (Krashen, 1982, 1998; Lightbown & Spada, 2006;

Mayer, 2011). In this scenario, affect has to do with emotional state of L2 learners, their feelings, attitudes, needs, and motives they have toward acquiring the target second language. This hypothesis presupposes that L2 learners who are bored, anxious, tense, or worried about something block in some way the comprehensible input available to them, phenomenon that translates in failure of language acquisition (Krashen, 1982, 1998; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011).

Krashen's theory to second language acquisition rejects the value of teaching some language features such as grammar (Cowan, 2008). In other words, from Krashen's point of view, grammar instruction is pointless because it allows L2 learners to accumulate learned knowledge about the target language, which cannot be translated to acquired knowledge, spontaneous use of the L2 being learned. In this scenario, there are some questions that are difficult to answer utilizing Krashen's theory, for instance, what process, learning or acquisition, would you assign to an L2 English speaker who has acquired the English language in an EFL context and who is fluent and able to utilize English effectively either in an everyday life situation or in an academic environment in an English speaking country. For questions like these one and other reasons, Krashen's theory has been criticized. For example, a critic to Krashen's theory is McLaughlin (1987), who said that Krashen's theory lacks empirical evidence. This author also argued that it is impossible to tell which process, learning or acquisition, is taking place in the brain of an L2 learner at a particular instance. It means that the definition of the concepts of learning and acquisition are not well defined as related to the L2 learning and these concepts can be interpreted in different ways. However, despite this type of criticism, Krashen's theory resonated during the time when language learning was focused on dialogs memorization and rule learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Krashen's second language acquisition ideas

fostered the origin of communication-based second language approaches, such as immersion and content-based instruction (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

## 2.1.4. The Cognitivist/Developmental Perspective

The cognitive perspective to second language acquisition began to gain the attention of second language researchers since 1990s (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Metchell & Myles, 2004). Cognitivist language researchers see the mind of an L2 learner as a computer, whose main job is to store, process, and retrieve information, in this case language information (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Metchell & Myles, 2004). Automatization and restructuring are two notions important for cognitive theorists (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Metchell & Myles, 2004). However, the type of automatization of cognitivists is different from the automatic behaviors that L2 learners may acquire under a behaviorist perspective. Cognitivists look for automatization of a second language but the L2 learners are more aware why cognitive behaviors take place. That is, cognitivists try to make the learning process meaningful for the L2 learners. L2 Learners are active learners, which means that they play a very important role in building their knowledge. They use their prior knowledge to continue to grow their linguistic skills. The teachers' role is to provide meaningful learning experiences so the L2 learners can make the connections and associations necessary to transfer information from the short-term memory to the long-term memory and make it stay and use it when needed (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Metchell & Myles, 2004).

In general terms, it can be said that there are two groups of cognitive linguists or researchers regarding second language acquisition, information processing theorists and constructivist theorists (Metchell & Myles, 2004). The first group examines how L2 learners process language information as well as how their capacity to process an L2 grows over time.

These cognitive theorists focus on the computational aspect of second language acquisition. They may or may not think that there is a special innate module for second language learning (Metchell & Myles, 2004).

Information processing cognitivists investigate second language from two approaches, information processing approach and processability. The information processing approach, examines how different types of memories, namely, short-term memory (STM) and long-term memory (LTM), including declarative and procedural, treat novel L2 information and how this new stored language information becomes automatic and restructured via repeated activation (McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996). Under this approach, L2 learning is seen as the acquisition of complex cognitive skills, of course, step by step, and it includes internal representations that control and guide performance (Karmiloff-Smith, 1987; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996). As L2 performance increases, a constant restructuring process takes place as L2 learners simplify, put together, and gain control of their internal representations (Karmiloff-Smith, 1987). Pursuing this further, Anderson (1985) agreed with McLaughlin and Heredia (1996) that second language acquisition occurs as the storage, processing, and retrieving information in the STM and LTM. This author considered that declarative long-term memory and procedural long-term memory store and process different kinds of language knowledge. Declarative knowledge refers to *knowing that* while procedural knowledge refers to *knowing how*. For instance, an L2 learner may know that he/she has to add the *–ed* inflectional morpheme to form the past tense of regular verbs in English, *declarative knowledge*. But he/she may not be able to do it automatically in practice, *procedural knowledge*. Anderson (1985) said that L2 learners can transition from declarative to procedural knowledge through three stages: (1) the cognitive stage, a description of how the procedure is learned; (2) the associative stage, a method for performing the skill is

worked out; and (3) the autonomous stage, the skill becomes more and more rapid and automatic. Taking as an example the –*ed* past morpheme again, in the cognitive stage, the L2 learner would learn that this morpheme is added to make the past tense of regular verbs in English. As for the associative stage, the L2 learner would extensively practice how to add the –*ed* morpheme to regular verbs in English, associating the action with the declarative knowledge. Lastly, in the autonomous stage, the L2 learner's actions of adding the –*ed* morpheme to regular verbs becomes automatic to the extent that he/she will do it unconsciously and may even forget the declarative knowledge. In other words, the automatized language information stored in the procedural LTM can be used rapidly as the situation needs it.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) applied Anderson's (1985) three-stage model to learning strategies. Learning strategies are procedures that can be utilized by the L2 learners so as to make their own L2 acquisition more effective (Metchell & Myles, 2004; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). There are three general types of learning strategies: (a) metacognitive strategies, (b) cognitive strategies, and (c) social or affective strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). The first category, metacognitive strategies, is composed of four more specific strategies, namely, (1) selective attention, paying attention to specific elements of learning tasks, for instance, when listening, L2 learners may focus on keywords or phrases; (2) planning, planning for the organization of spoken or written language; (3) monitoring, revisiting a learning task, checking for information that needs to be recalled or produced; and (4) evaluation, checking for comprehension of a listening task or evaluating language performance after it has occurred (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). The second category, cognitive strategies, encompasses eight representative strategies, for instance, (1) rehearsal, repeating the names of items to be recalled; (2) organization, categorizing words, terms, and concepts based on their syntactic and semantic

characteristics; (3) inferencing, utilizing text information to guess meanings, predict results, or complete omitted elements; (4) summarizing, L2 learners synthesize what they have heard to see if they have stored that information; (5) deducing, using rules for language understanding; (6) imagery, utilizing images to recall and understand verbal language; (7) transfer, utilizing mastered information to make easier the acquisition of novel learning tasks; and (8) elaboration, integrating novel language information with known information (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Lastly, social or affective strategies consist of three representative strategies, for example, co-operation, solving problems with peers and getting feedback on a learning task; (2) questioning for clarification, asking a teacher or peer for clarification or examples; and (3) self-talk, self-talking to lower levels of anxiety or to make sure that a learning task will be successful (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

The second approach known as processability theory has to do with how second language structures are learned and taught (Pienemann, 1998, 2003). Processability theory centers on the acquisition of the procedural skills needed to process formal properties of an L2 (Pienemann, 1998, 2003). It seeks to explain how L2 learners acquire the computational devises that work on the language knowledge they build (Pienemann, 1998, 2003). According to Metchell and Myles (2004), L2 learners build gradually the capacity to match language features through elements in a sentence. It means that L2 Leaners would not have access to language features they are not able to process yet (Pienemann, 1998, 2003). To Pienemann (1998), second language acquisition can be predicted through the following developmental stages. First, L2 learners are able to only process conceptual structures, such as single words and fixed phrases, which means that at this level L2 learners do not have syntactic information regarding the L2 lexical item. When L2 learners are capable of assigning grammatical categories to lexical items, they can produce

lexical morphological markers.  However, at this level L2 learners still cannot produce

grammatical structures.  Consequently, they will use mostly serial content words, for instance,

action + agent + patient.  In the third stage, L2 learners are able to share information at phrase

level.  As soon as L2 learners have mastered phrasal procedures, they can acquire rules and

language skills at a sentence level.  Finally, when L2 learners have acquired syntactic

information at the sentence level, more complex language features become available to the L2

learners, such as subordinate clauses.  As for the teachability part of Pienemann's (1998)

processability theory, he says that "stages of acquisition cannot be skipped through formal

instruction and that instruction will be most beneficial if it focuses on structures from the next

stage" (Pienemann, 1998, p. 250).  In other words, instruction could be more effective if

language teachers or instructors pay attention to the developmental level of L2 learners regarding

second language acquisition.

The second group of cognitive linguists believe that second language acquisition occurs

by utilizing the language, driven by communicative needs on the part of the L2 learners

(Metchell & Myles, 2004).  In the same line of thought, learning is considered as the

examination of language input, and language growth is believed to result from a great number of

associations made by L2 learners as they utilize the target second language (Ellis, 2003; Metchell

& Myles, 2004).  That is, "constructivists believe that the complexity of language emerges from

associative learning processes being exposed to a massive and complex environment" (Ellis,

2003, p. 84). They think that there is not an innate module in the brain devoted to language

acquisition as claimed by Universal Grammar (UG) researchers.  Cognitivists do not see any

distinction between the mental processes of learning and acquisition as seen in Krashen's theory

as far as second language development is concerned (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Metchell & Myles, 2004).

## 2.1.5. Socio-Cultural Perspective

Socio-cultural theorists believe that cognitive development, including language acquisition, occurs through social interaction. Socio-cultural advocates see thinking and speaking as two closely related processes as opposed to psychological theories that consider that thinking and speaking are a related process but that happen autonomously (Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Vygotsky, 1987). Under this perspective, language skills, such as speaking and writing, are thought to mediate thinking (Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Vygotsky, 1987). In the same of line of thought, socio-cultural theorists think that second language learning takes place as L2 learners interact with other L2 learners or native speakers of the target second language within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), in which the L2 learners in development receive support from their interlocutors to advance their linguistic knowledge to a higher level (Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Metchell & Myles, 2004; Vygotsky, 1987). The ZPD as related to second language acquisition has to do with the space or learning situation wherein the L2 learner co-constructs language knowledge in collaboration with more expert speakers of the target language (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998). Krashen' (1982, 1998) i+1 metaphor to second language acquisition is sometimes seen as the same as the ZPD concept of the Socio-Cultural Perspective. Nevertheless, these two ideas are not the same because, on one hand, the ZPD implies that L2 learners actively participate in building their language knowledge assisted by a more capable counterpart. On the other hand, the i+1 metaphor implies only the provision of comprehensible input to the L2 learners. The purpose is comprehensibility and the input comes from outside the learner. In other words, L2

learners do not do much work to build that comprehensible input supposed to make them advance to another level of language acquisition (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998).

As we can see, there are various learning theories from which EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators can choose in order to better understand how the learning process of a second or foreign language occurs. As for this study, the learning theories presented above helped me understand what language learning principles or what learning perspectives guided the pedagogical knowledge of the Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators who participated in this study. I was very interested in learning how aware they were about these type of knowledge and how this knowledge became part of their knowledge base. Other valuable theoretical types of knowledge that have been available for ELF teacher educators are approaches and methods to teaching a foreign language; these approaches, as learning theories, help language teachers comprehend L2 acquisition (Anthony, 1963; Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014) while methods provide specific procedures to teach an L2 (Anthony, 1963; Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Next, I introduce some of the most utilized approaches and method in the field of EFL teacher education.

### 2.1.6. Approaches and Methods for EFL Teaching

The approaches and methods for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) presented here are sometimes referred to as either approaches or methods. However, some authors such as Anthony (1963), Celce-Murcia (2001b), and Richards and Rodgers (2014) think that these two terms have different meanings. On one hand, an approach refers to a theoretical view of language teaching, which does not prescribe steps on how teaching should occur but provides a set of principles and believes that L2 teachers and instructors can utilize to teach an L2. On the other hand, a method is a set of procedures that guides language teachers or

instructors step by step on how to teach the target language (Anthony, 1963; Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Furthermore, activities used in the classroom, such as imitation, repetition, dictation, drills, using pictures to learn vocabulary, and so forth, are known as teaching techniques (Anthony, 1963; Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In this section, I follow Anthony (1963), Celce-Murcia (2001b), and Richards and Rodgers' (2014) point of view as I introduce and describe some of the approaches and methods to teaching English as a Foreign Language that have been used in the past and that still have some application today as well as those more recently created approaches and methods utilized in EFL classrooms.

Like the language learning theories introduced above in this section, I think that approaches and methods to teaching English as a Foreign Language are worth being examined by those professionals devoted to EFL teaching or EFL teacher preparation. That is, theories to language learning, approaches, methods, and techniques to EFL teaching come to enrich the knowledge base of EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), approaches and methods to language teaching allow EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators to be aware of the evolution of EFL teaching. Pursuing this further, awareness of these approaches and methods for teaching EFL permits EFL teachers and educators to carry out their teaching practice from multiple perspectives available to them. This means, that EFL teachers and educators can see these approaches and methods not as prescriptions to follow but as sources to adapt and apply based on their own teaching realities.

### 2.1.6.1. Grammar-translation approach.

The Grammar-Translation approach is rooted in the language approach utilized to study classical languages, such as Classical Latin (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers,

2014). According to Celce-Murcia (2001a, 2001b) and Richards and Rodgers (2014), in this approach, the aim of learning an L2 is to be able to read literature written in that target second language. These authors said that among the principles guiding this language learning approach are the following. The main focus is to analyze the grammar rules of an L2 in order to understand and utilize the syntax and morphology of the target L2. The sentence is the basic unit of analysis. Grammar is taught deductively in a systematic and organized manner. Perusing this further, language teachers and instructors use the learners' L1 to carry out the teaching process. There is little emphasis on using the target L2 for communication. The two language skills mainly developed are reading and writing. A common exercise is to translate text from the L2 to the L1 and vice versa and accuracy is emphasized. Some of the teaching techniques commonly used are, for example, translation of literary texts, reading comprehension questions, making inferences taking into account the understanding of passages, fill-in-the-blanks, memorization, use of words in sentences, compositions, use of bilingual word lists and dictionaries. L2 learners are passive learners; they are just receivers of instruction. Language teachers or instructors are seen as authorities in the classroom. Lastly, the language teacher or instructor does not need to be fluent in the target L2.

### 2.1.6.2. Direct approach.

The Direct Approach also known as the Natural Approach was created by the end of the nineteenth century (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The interest for this language teaching approach became apparent by that time and still is because it focuses on developing L2 learners' ability to utilize the target L2 rather than to analyze it, as it occurs in the Grammar-Translation Approach (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In other words, advocates of the Direct Approach thought that the Grammar-Translation Approach

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to second language teaching was not that effective because L1 learners instructed under this approach were not able to utilize the target L2. According to Celce-Murcia (2001a, 2001b) and Richards and Rodgers (2014), other principles of this approach are, for instance, that teachers who use this language teaching approach do not need to speak the L2 learners' first language, which means that instruction can take place only in the target foreign language. Consequently, teachers are to be native speakers of the foreign language or demonstrate native-like competence to communicate orally in the target L2. Additionally, all four language skills are taught but listening and speaking is a priory; reading and writing skills are used as a means to continue to acquire the target foreign language. L2 grammar and culture is instructed inductively. Dialogs and conversational stories are the types of lessons developed in the L2 classroom. Language teachers use actions and pictures to help L2 learners better understand the meaning of the content being studied. L2 learners are encouraged to read literature of their preference but without having to make explicit grammatical analyses of the literary text they choose to read. In addition, some of the teaching techniques utilized in the Direct Approach are, for example, reading aloud, question and answer exercise, self-correction, conversation practice, dictation, map drawing, paragraph writing, and pictures and realia for meaning clarification. The role of the language teacher is to be the primary source of comprehensible input to direct the class activities. Finally, the role of L2 learners is to act as processors of comprehensible input in the target language, and create, together with the teacher, a comfortable and attention-gathering learning milieu.

### 2.1.6.3. Reading approach.

Advocates of the Reading Approach believe that the Direct Approach is impractical. They contend that what L2 learners' really needed to develop was reading skills (Celce-Murcia,

2001a, 2001b).  The rationale behind this is that most foreign language teachers were not

prepared enough to utlize the Direct Approach in EFL classrroms and that people who travel

abroad do not necessarily need to communicate in the foreing language spoken in a particular

country they may visit; reading skills are enough (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b).  Under this

language teaching approach L2 learners are expected to master the type of grammar that would

allow them to understand text in the target foreign langauge (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b).

Translation and reading comprehension are the only focus in the EFL classroom (Celce-Murcia,

2001a, 2001b).  Lastly, it is not required that language teachers are fluent speakers of the foreign

language they teach (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b).

### 2.1.6.4. Audiolingual approach.

The Audio-lingual Approach was created as a reaction to the Reading Approach.

Proponents of the Audio-lingual Approach to teaching foreign languages considered that the

Reading Approach was not appropriate for teaching a second language because it did not center

on the acquisition of all language skills, mainly oral skills, such as listening and speaking (Celce-

Murcia, 2001a, 2001b).  This language teaching approach was intensively utilized in the United

States from 1940 to 1960s.  It is still used in some language programs in the United States and in

foreign countries (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b).  The Audio-lingual Approach, according to

Celce-Murcia (2001b) and Richards and Rodgers (2014), is rooted in the Direct Approach,

structural linguists (e.g., Bloomfield, 1933), and behavioral psychology (e.g., Skinner, 1957).

Celce-Murcia, (2001a, 2001b) and Richards and Rodgers (2014) said that the most notorious

principles of this approach are the following.  For instance, learning is seen as habit formation.

That is, the teaching techniques mostly utilized for instruction are repetition, mimicry, and

memorization.  Pursuing this further, other techniques that can be used are: backward build-up

drill, chain drill, single and multiple slot drill, use of minimal pairs, question-answer drill, complete the dialog, grammar games. Lessons start with dialogs and vocabulary is limited at the beginning. In addition, pronunciation is emphasized from the very beginning and L2 learners are encouraged to prevent errors. In order to make this happen, learning activities and teaching materials are carefully designed. For instance, the dialogs' transcriptions are accompanied by audio cassettes or CDs for the L2 learners to visit and revisit the accurate production of those dialogs as needed. Put differently, L2 learners' role is to be imitators. The fact that teaching materials are carefully controlled is also beneficial to the language instructor because they are required to be proficient only in grammatical structures, vocabulary, and other linguistic features contained in the curriculum or instructional materials. The teachers' role is to act as a model of the target language. Furthermore, language skills are sequenced, for example, listening is stressed first, then speaking and reading, and writing is introduced last. Lastly, grammatical structures are also sequenced and rules are introduced in an inductive way.

### 2.1.6.5. Oral-situational approach.

By the time the Audio-lingual Approach was created in the United States as a reaction to Reading Approach, in Great Britain, linguists created a similar approach to language teaching known as the Oral-Situational Approach as a reaction to the same language teaching approach. This language teaching approach was the primarily used approach in Britain from 1940 to 1960s (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b). The Oral-Situational Approach is rooted in the Direct Approach, Firthian linguists, and language pedagogy (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b). The principles and believes regarding teaching a foreign language under this approach are the following. Oral communicative proficiency is the focus. This requires that instruction in EFL classrooms be conducted only in the target L2. Before introducing written form of teaching materials and

content to cover, oral practice of it is required.  That is, language skills, such as reading and writing, are included in lessons until an oral base in lexical and grammatical forms is developed. L2 grammar is presented from simple to complex.  The curriculum or syllabus is organized situationally; examples of language learning situations are at the airport, at the post office, home, at the bank, at church, at school, and so forth.  Advocates of this approach suggest that an effort should be made to include in the curriculum or syllabus the most general and useful lexical and grammatical components so as to allow L2 learners to acquire the target language systems as complete as possible (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

### 2.1.6.6. Cognitive approach.

Proponents of the Cognitive Approach reject the behavioral principles of the Audio-lingual Approach, which say that language is habit formation.  Language learning, to Cognitive Approach advocates is not habit formation but rule acquisition (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).  According to Celce-Murcia (2001b), this language approach finds its roots in cognitive psychology (e.g., Neisser, 1967) and in Chomskyan Linguistics (see e.g., Chomsky, 1965).  As stated by Celce-Murcia (2001a, 2001b) and Richards and Rodgers (2014), the principles and believes that guide this language teaching approach are as follows.  L2 grammar has to be taught; the way they think it should be taught is either through a deductive or through an inductive analysis.  By deductive grammar instruction, they mean that rules are introduced first and practice comes later.  On the other hand, inductive grammar instruction means that rules can be presented after practice or just leave them in an implicit way so that L2 learners can analyze them by themselves.  In addition, L2 learners are active and responsible for their own language acquisition process; that is, instruction is seen as an individual matter. Unlike the Direct Approach, Audio-lingual Approach or the Oral-Situational Approach where

accurate pronunciation is stressed, in the Cognitive Approach followers think that pronunciation

does not need to be the center of teaching because total acquisition of an L2 is almost impossible.

It means that errors produced by the L2 are seen as something normal, which tend to improve as

L2 learners grow in their acquisition of the target second language.  In this language approach,

the four language skills, namely, listening-speaking and reading-writing receive the same level of

emphasis at the movement of teaching.  Additionally, vocabulary development is emphasized,

mainly as L2 learners increase their levels of proficiency.  Finally, language teachers need to

have the highest command in using and analyzing the L2 they teach.

### 2.1.6.7. Affective-humanistic approach.

Creators of the Affective-Humanistic Approach see learning of a second language as a

process of self-realization and opportunities for interacting with other speakers of the target

foreign language.  According to Celce-Murcia (2001a, 2001b) and Richards and Rodgers (2014),

this language teaching approach tries to cover the affective elements of L2 learners ignored in

other language teaching approaches, for instance, Audio-lingual and Cognitive Approach, see,

for example, Curran (1976) and Moskowitz' (978) work.  The guiding principles and beliefs of

the Affective-Humanistic Approach, to Celce-Murcia (2001a, 2001b) and Richards and Rodgers

(2014), are the following.  Language teachers and L2 learners seek to create a learning

environment guided by respect.  Moreover, L2 learners' communication needs and interests are

stressed.  In the same line of thought, classroom atmosphere is even more emphasized than

instructional materials or teaching methods. Advocates of this language approach also believe

that learning occurs more effectively when L2 learners and language teachers help each other.

This collaboration among each participating member in the language learning process increases

the probability of L2 leaners' self-realization regarding the acquisition of the target L2.  This

means that instruction is not seen as a one-direction process but an integrative and participatory

process, in which group work and pair work is a common practice. As for the role of language teachers, they are conceived as facilitators or counselors. Under this language teaching approach, language teachers must possess native-like proficiency both in the target L2 and in the L2 learners' L1. This is because L2 instruction may require that teachers utilize translation as a teaching technique to facilitate learning, especially when L2 learners are just starting to acquire the target L2.

### 2.1.6.8. Comprehension-based approach.

According to the Comprehension-Based Approach, foreign language learning takes place if and only if L2 learners receive and understand meaningful input. Put differently, advocates of this language approach believe that the acquisition of a second or foreign language occurs in similar fashion to the first language acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Postovsky, 1974; Winitz, 1981). Among the learning principles that guide this language teaching approach are the following. Listening comprehension plays a very important role; it is aimed at being developed first since it guides the development of other language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing. In other words, L2 learners are exposed to oral meaningful input in initial stages of language development, to which they react through non-verbal communication, for example, using body language (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Winitz, 1981). Speaking is postponed until the L2 learners decide they are ready to speak in the target foreign language; as a result, L2 learners will pronounce and produce more accurate language than when making them speak immediately (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Winitz, 1981). Additionally, the curriculum is designed and organized to introduce meaningful and comprehensible input that allows L2 learners to advance step by step based on their developmental language stages (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014;

Winitz, 1981).  Rule learning emphasized in the Cognitive Approach or error correction stressed

in the Audio-lingual Approach are considered of less importance in the Comprehension-Based

Approach because, on one hand, rules will not facilitate neither the acquisition of the second

language or the automatic use of the target L2.  On the other hand, error correction is not

necessary because the main purpose is that the L2 learners understand what they hear and make

themselves understood when using the target second language (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b;

Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Winitz, 1981).  Finally, native or native-like proficiency in the target

language is required on the part of the teachers.  If not, they have to be provided appropriate

instructional materials, for instance, videotapes and audiotapes so that they can give L2 learners

meaningful input (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Winitz, 1981).

**2.1.6.9. Competency-based language teaching.**

Competency-based language teaching (CBLT) is rooted in the educational movement

known as competency-based education, which emerged in the United States in the 1970s

(Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).  CBLT centers on learning outcomes in the development of

language programs (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).  The main purpose is to determine what

second or foreign language learners are expected to do with the target language instead of

focusing on learning about the language to be acquired (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).  In

other words, this language teaching approach aims at equipping language learners to function

autonomously in an environment where the target language is used as a means of everyday

communication and interaction.  According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), CBLT follows four

main language learning and teaching principles, for example, (1) language is a means for the

expression of functional meaning, (2) language is a tool for the realization of interpersonal

relation and for the performance of social transactions between individuals, (3) CBLT focuses on

communicative competence and pursues the development of functional communication skills in language learners, and (4) CBLT presupposes the notion that language form can be inferred from language function; that is, certain life encounters require certain kinds of language.

In addition, as stated by Richards and Rodgers (2001), CBLT seeks to develop four types of language competencies. The first competency pursued in CBLT is grammatical competence, which has to do with the linguistic competence and the domain of grammatical and lexical capacity. The second competence sought by CBLT is sociolinguistic competence. This competency denotes an understanding of the social context in which communication takes place, including purpose of communication, role of speakers, and shared information of the interlocutors. In the third, CBLT seeks to develop discourse competence. In this case, language learners develop the capacity to interpret how meaning is conveyed either in oral messages or written texts. Lastly, CBLT intends to develop strategic communication competence. This has to do with the capacity language learners acquire to effectively start, maintain, repair, redirect, and end communication processes in the target language.

### 2.1.6.10. Communicative approach.

The communicative Approach's central aim is to develop communicative skills in the target L2 learners. It means that the teachers' role is to facilitate communication in the target language. According to Celce-Murcia (2001a, 2001b), the Communicative Approach was influenced by Firthian linguists (e.g., Halliday, 1973) and by anthropological linguists (see e.g., Hymes, 1972). Communicative competence, to Hymes (1972) and Larsen-Freeman (2000), is the ability that an L2 learner possesses to know when, where, how, to whom and in what manner he or she can utilize the target language for daily communication. Another teaching principle of the Communicative Approach is that the target language curriculum has to add social functions,

semantic notions, and linguistic structures in order to allow L2 learners to develop communicative skills (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Hymes, 1972; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Language information or learning gaps are tackled by fostering group or pair work; it is expected that if a student lacks a specific language component in his or her linguistic repertoire, he or she could get it by interacting and negotiating meaning with others (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In addition, teachers use techniques, such as, language games, picture strip story, scramble sentences, oral presentations, dramatization, or role-play so that foreign language students can experience the use of the target L2 to different social environments (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In the same line of thinking, Hymes (1972) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) said that in a communicative language classroom, an effort is made to utilize authentic activities and instructional materials which reflect real-life situations. In this language approach, all language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated; fluency in all of them is sought. Lastly, it is expected that teachers would possess a native-live proficiency in the target language so they can facilitate communication. Teachers work on error correction but it is not emphasized in this approach (Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b; Hymes, 1972; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

### 2.1.6.11. The natural approach.

The natural approach is a language teaching method developed by Terrell (1977) and later improved by Krashen and Terrell (1983). It follows principles of the five language acquisition hypotheses proposed by Krashen (1982) previously discussed in the learning theories section, namely, the acquisition/learning hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the natural hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis. This language teaching method presupposes that the acquisition of a second language occurs in predictable ways similar

to the acquisition of a first language (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; see also Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), the natural approach is basically a different way to term what was called Direct Method in the 1900s and which I already presented above in this section. Krashen and Terrell (1983) said that some grammatical forms are acquired first, whereas others are acquired at a later time when learning a second language. In the natural approach, the acquisition of vocabulary is highly valued (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). That is, Krashen and Terrell (1983) believed that the core of a language is its lexicon.

In the natural approach, L2 learners' needs and interests play an important role. The natural approach syllabus is organized having into consideration these needs and interests including basic oral and written personal communication skills as well as oral and written academic skills (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The teaching and learning activities center on presenting comprehensible input in the target language (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). As in the Direct method, instructors focus on talking about objects in the classroom and content of pictures. Instructors play three major roles: 1) they are the main sources of comprehensible input; 2) they are responsible to provide a learning milieu that is friendly, interesting, and which is a low affective filter for language learning; 3) instructors should provide a meaningful combination of classroom activities, including various group sizes, content, and contexts (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Pursuing this further, L2 learners are encouraged to speak until they feel ready to do so (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

**2.1.6.12. Content-based instruction.**

Content-Based Instruction (CBI) is a method that integrates the learning of a language with the learning of some other content, often academic subject matter. According to Horwitz (2013) and Richards and Rodgers (2014), CBI is based on the premise that people learn a new language in the course of learning other things. For example, English learners may develop language proficiency in their content classes such as Mathematics, Science or university courses such as Introduction to Business Administration. In addition to the dual focus on content and language, content-based approaches are defined by their use of authentic materials: the same materials are used by native speakers to learn the same content rather than materials specifically designed for language learners (Horwitz, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; see also Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b). CBI requires that the content instruction be tailored to the needs of the language learners, that teachers have both content and language learning goals for their students and that teachers have the necessary preparation to work with language learners (Horwitz, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; see also Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b). In CBI, teachers take into account their speech, so that they are more comprehensible to nonnative speakers; for example, the instructional pace may be slower, visual aids are used, and very importantly, the cultural background of the learner is taken into consideration (Horwitz, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). According to Peregoy and Boyle (2013), research has shown that the rich linguistic exposure provided by content instruction is excellent for second language learning, but not sufficient for attaining native-like proficient. Therefore, CBI instructors make use of explicit instruction in components of the target language. For instance, such instruction might focus on vocabulary, grammar, or discourse strategies appropriate to particular social situations. Also, Peregoy and Boyle (2013) said that CBI supports English learners' achievement of the TESOL

standards by (1) integrating language content and learning; (2) addressing the language domains

of listening, speaking, reading, and writing; and (3) providing support for various English

language proficiency levels.

### 2.1.6.13. Task-based instruction.

In this language teaching approach, language is utilized to accomplish a concrete task.

Task-based Instruction (TBI) was presented as a communicative language teaching method

because it follows some principles of the communicative language teaching movement of the

1980s (Willis, 1996; Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).  For instance, tasks chosen for language

instruction involve real communication situations, language learning is promoted through

teaching activities in which language is utilized for accomplishing meaningful tasks, and

language that is meaningful to the L2 learners is highly valued.  Based on the task to be

accomplished, necessary expressions, vocabulary, grammatical structures are pre-taught.  Task-

based learning activities take place in three steps (1) pre-task, the teacher presents the topic and

task to work on and pre-teach the vocabulary, expressions, and appropriate grammatical

structures needed for that task; (2) task cycle, L2 learners perform the task with little guidance;

and (3) language focus, the teacher and students analyze performance and practice is provided

(Willis, 1996; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

### 2.1.6.14. Community language learning method.

Community language learning (CLL) is a language teaching method developed by

Charles A. Curran, a psychology professor at Loyola University Chicago (Richards & Rodgers,

2001).  In this language teaching method, learners work together to develop the aspects of the

target language they think are important to acquire (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).  That is,

learners try to create a learning community where they feel confident to apply the language they

are learning.  This language teaching method is also called the counseling language approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).  According to Richards and Rodgers (2001, 2014), CLL presupposes that language teachers would act as counselors and paraphrasers of the target language.  Learners, on the other hand, act as collaborators.  Since learners play an important role in deciding what language aspects are to be learned, this language teaching method is considered strictly learner centered.  Additionally, CLL allows the use of L1 among learners. The language teachers provide translation of the target language to facilitate language learning. Pursuing this further, teachers create a learning milieu in which learners feel comfortable. Lastly, learners are encouraged to use the target language when they feel ready to do so.

### 2.1.6.15. The silent way method.

The silent way language teaching method was created by Gategno in 1963 (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).  It is based on the premise that language teachers should be silent as much as possible and language learners should be encouraged to utilize the target language as much as possible (Gategno, 1963, 1972; Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).  This means that teaching has to be subordinated to learning.  The silent way method presupposes three language learning hypotheses: (1) learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is to be learned, (2) learning is facilitated by accompanying physical objects, and (3) learning is facilitated by problem solving, involving the material to be learned.  Finally, under the silent way language teaching method, students become independent, autonomous, and responsible learners as far as their language learning process (Gategno, 1963, 1972; Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014).

**2.1.6.16. Total physical response method.**

In the Total Physical Response method (TPR), the aim is to develop understanding of the spoken language before working on speaking skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; see also Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b).  Language teachers utilize imperatives, coordination of speech and actions, such as, stand up, open the door, sit down, come here, walk, and so forth, as the main language structures to transfer or communicate information; these commands become more and more complex as L2 learners progress in their language learning process (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; see also Celce-Murcia, 2001a, 2001b).  According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), instruction under the TPR method combines information and skills through the use of kinesthetic sensory system, for instance, the teacher says the imperatives and at the same time he or she performs the body movement associated to the target imperatives; the L2 learners observe and listen carefully.  In later stages, L2 learners join the teacher as he or she performs any particular imperative.  This process is repeated until students are able to understand and perform the commands they hear.  It is expected that students will start speaking when they ready to do so.

**2.1.6.17. Strands for teaching listening/speaking and reading/writing language skills.**

In addition to the language teaching approaches and methods I outlined above, second or foreign language teaching and learning can be seen from another perspective, referred by Nation (2009) and Nation and Newton (2009) as learning strands.  To this language teaching perspective, it can be added the information processing model introduced by Richards (2008b), namely, top-down processing and bottom-up processing.  These language learning and teaching views are not tied to any specific language learning theory or approach.  Actually, I think they utilize learning principles of various learning theories and language teaching approaches previously presented.  According to Nation (2009) and Nation and Newton (2009), the four

macro language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, can be taught by focusing on four strands: (1) language focused learning, (2) meaning focused input, (3) meaning focused output, and (4) language fluency. A well-balanced language program would devote the same amount of time to each strand (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009). However, depending on the level of language learners, some of these four strands can be more emphasized than others. For instance, when teaching beginner language learners, more emphasis can be placed on language focused learning and fluency development. In the same line of thought, when teaching to advanced language learners more emphasis may be given to meaning focused input and meaning focused output (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009). This means that the characteristics and learning needs of the target learners will determine the amount of time devoted to the four strands in a language program. In addition, the principles of these four strands can be utilized as lenses to evaluate teaching materials as well as to prepare lesson plans (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009).

### 2.1.6.17.1. Language focused learning.

The language-focused learning strand has to do with teaching and learning language features such as pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse in a deliberate way (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009). Among the types of teaching activities mostly utilized in this strand are, for example, word definitions, synonyms, example sentences, grammatical rules and structures, multiple choice, matching exercises, fill-in the blanks, crossword puzzles, and guess the meaning from context.

In a language lesson, the language-focused strand is used in two stages of the lesson. It is utilized in the pre-stage of each lesson to introduce key lexical and content vocabulary and key grammatical forms that help the target L2 learners to activate or develop schema regarding the topic of the lesson as well as to prepare them to understand and interact successfully in the rest of

the lesson (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009).  Focusing on language features such as the one before mentioned, prepares students for both top-down and bottom-up processing (Richards, 2008b).  The second moment in which this strand is utilized is in the after-stage of each lesson (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009).  Here the focus is to build deeper knowledge of key words and key grammatical structures present in the target listening script as well as to create opportunities for practice.

### 2.1.6.17.2.  *Meaning focused input.*

The meaning-focused input strand presupposes that the learning process occurs receptively (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009).  As stated by Nation (2009) and Nation and Newton (2009), a language course should provide enough language input to the target L2 learners.  However, the selection of this input is done in consideration of students' proficiency level, age, and the purpose that these students have for learning the target language.  Pursuing this further, the language input needs to cover topics of interest to students, topics they may want to understand, and topics that are already familiar to them (95% - 98% unfamiliar) (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009).  This strand is closely connected to the language-focused learning strand.  Among the types of teaching activities used in this strand include multiple-choice, fill in the blanks, fill in a table, add the missing information to a figure, add the missing information to a map, plan, schedule, calendar, diary, description, and so forth, short-answer questions, and note-taking (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009).  In addition, the meaning-focused input strand is the second strand covered in a language lesson.  It is covered in the during-stage part of a lesson.  It is in this strand wherein both bottom-up and top-down processing skills are mostly incorporated in a language (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 2008b).

### 2.1.6.17.3. Meaning focused output.

The third strand that must serve as a theoretical foundation in a language program is the meaning-focused output strand (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009). This strand involves utilizing the target language productively (Nation & Newton, 2009). In other words, L2 learners are expected to continue to grow their language knowledge and skills through speaking and writing. As in the other strands, there are certain types of teaching activities that can be used in a language program or lesson. However, according to Nation (2009) and Nation and Newton (2009), any speaking or writing activity utilized in this strand needs to be closely related to the language input. That is speaking and writing tasks should be connected to the language input in order to accomplish optimum effectiveness. For example, some of the types of speaking and writing activities suggested are, among others, talking in conversations, giving a lecture, writing and giving a speech, writing and telling stories, doing presentations, telling others how to do something, discussions related to the listening input, debates relate to the listening input, problem-based tasks related to the listening input, individual and group role-plays, and other individual or group projects that allow opportunities for the L2 learners to practice speaking and writing skills (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009). This strand can be integrated with other strands in different ways in a lesson or lessons. Additionally, it is used in the after-stage component of each lesson (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009).

### 2.1.6.17.4. Fluency focused teaching.

The last strand which, according to Nation (2009) and Nation and Newton (2009), needs to be part of a language program or lesson is the fluency-development strand. This strand is covered at the end of each unit in a language program. The main purpose of this strand is to assist the target L2 learners to make the best use of what they already know (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009). In other words, the language information presented to students to

practice should not be new information; otherwise, it would not possible to aim for fluency development (Nation, 2009; Nation & Newton, 2009).  Fluency teaching activities are part of the output and in order to obtain optimum results should be connected to the meaning-focused input and output strands.  It also requires that students employ the bottom-up and top-down processing skills (Richards, 2008) they have developed as they perform a variety of fluency activities.

To conclude this section, I believe that L2 learning theories and L2 teaching approaches and methods constitute a very important component of the knowledge base of EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators.  Based on my own teaching experience as an EFL teacher educator, there have been some instances in which I have used learning principles that belong to more than one language learning theory or language teaching approach.  There have also been instances when I have directed my teaching practice following a specific teaching approach or method.  However, theories and approaches to second and foreign language acquisition is not the only knowledge that EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators must have.  In order to inform readers about other types of knowledge needed in the field of EFL teaching, in the following section, I discus existing literature about EFL teachers' knowledge base which in turn serves as the foundation of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base construction, which was the central focus on this dissertation research.

## 2.2.  Foundations of EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base

### 2.2.1. EFL Teachers' Knowledge Base

In this section, I explored theoretical and empirical studies concerning EFL teachers' knowledge base and literature about teacher educators' knowledge base in general teacher education.  EFL teachers' knowledge base and teacher educators' knowledge base in general teacher education literature can be taken as the foundation of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base construction for two main reasons.  First, empirical studies about programs for preparing

EFL teacher educators are non-existent (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Koster et al., 2005; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2010). In other words, I could not find any evidence in the existing literature of teacher education programs devoted to prepare EFL teacher educators, neither in the general context of EFL teacher education nor in the specific environment where this research took place, Nicaragua. Second, the roots of knowledge, skills, and teaching experience of EFL teacher educators is informed in EFL teacher education programs and in teacher educators' knowledge base from outside EFL teacher education. In this scenario, the evidence found in the existing body of research is that ELF teacher educators commonly start becoming educators when EFL teacher education programs recruit them either because they hold advanced graduate degrees, such as Master's degrees and PhDs in areas related to teaching English as a Second or Foreign language or because they have accumulated successful teaching experience of English as a Second or Foreign language (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Fisher, 2009; Korthagen, 2000; Wilson, 2006).

Therefore, in order to understand how EFL teacher educators build their knowledge base and teaching expertise, it was necessary to start analyzing what is said about the ways EFL teachers and teacher educators outside the field of language teaching used to construct their knowledge base. I focused on three main questions to guide this review, namely, (1) what types of knowledge should EFL teachers possess? (2) how are these kinds of knowledge delivered to them in teacher education programs (EFL curriculum models)? and (3) what can we learn from general teacher education about teacher educators' knowledge base?

The main purpose of EFL teacher education is to equip teacher candidates with the knowledge base they may need in their teaching careers (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Hinkel, 2011, 2017; Richards, 1990, 2008a; Wright, 2010). But what is knowledge based in the first

place?  In general terms, knowledge base can be defined as the skills, content and theoretical

pedagogical knowledge, teaching experience, and expertise that teachers must have to perform

their work in the classrooms (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013;

Shulman, 1987).  This conceptualization of knowledge base is shared by EFL teaching

researchers when they say that EFL teachers' knowledge base has to do with the understanding,

awareness, expertise, knowledge, and skills that should equip EFL teachers to provide effective

teaching in EFL classrooms (Day, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Richards, 1998; Tedick,

2005; see also Hinkel, 2011, 2017; Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Richard, 1990; Wright, 2010).  In

other words, it is expected that pre-service EFL teachers would put into effect the knowledge

base they acquire in their teacher education programs by integrating it and transforming it to

make their EFL teaching accessible to EFL learners.

Outside the field of EFL teacher education, one of the pioneers in categorizing teachers'

knowledge base has been Shulman (1987).  Teachers, according to Shulman (1987), needed to

possess seven kinds of knowledge, namely, content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge;

curriculum knowledge; knowledge of learners; knowledge of educational contexts; knowledge of

educational ends; and pedagogical content knowledge.  This last category is very important to

Shulman (1987) because it represents "that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is

uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding" (p. 8).

That is, pedagogical content knowledge refers to the individual teaching experience, which

allows teachers to translate the knowledge of their disciplines into a form comprehensible to

students.  The translation of content and pedagogy to comprehensible forms implies a constant

self-reflection and self-negotiation that teachers perform based on their successes and failures as

they teach in real classroom environments.  Shulman's (1987) vision of teacher knowledge has

influenced many researchers and educators in the field of second and foreign language teacher education (e.g., Day 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998, 2005; Layette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998). Applying Shulman's (1987) knowledge base categories to the field of EFL teacher education, it would mean that EFL teacher education programs should provide EFL teacher candidates with real classroom teaching opportunities so they can develop not only content and theoretical knowledge of pedagogy but also pedagogical content knowledge, which would make them more complete EFL teachers by the time they graduate and enter the job market.

Table 1

*Teachers' Knowledge Base (Shulman, 1987)*

| | Knowledge category | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| General sources of teachers' knowledge base | Knowledge of educational contexts | Awareness of the functioning of schools, communities and cultures. |
| | Knowledge of learners | Capacity to understand students' psychological, cognitive, and affective characteristics as well as their developmental stages, behaviors, and interests. |
| | Knowledge of educational ends | Understanding the purposes and values of education and their philosophical and historical grounds. |
| | General pedagogical knowledge | Understanding of the central principles, methods and strategies required to make teaching and learning effective. |
| Content-specific sources of teachers' knowledge base | Curriculum knowledge | Capacity to understand and utilize curricular and instructional materials available for teaching a specific subject or content. |
| | Content knowledge | Understanding of all forms and dimensions of the academic discipline expected to be taught. |
| | Pedagogical content knowledge | Capacity and expertise to combine and transform content and pedagogy to make a subject comprehensible to learners. |

Specifically, in the field of EFL teacher education, Layette (1993) said that EFL teachers should possess three types of knowledge, namely, language proficiency, civilization and culture, and language analysis. By language proficiency, he was referring that EFL teachers are to

develop native like English proficiency to teach effectively.  As for civilization and culture, he meant that EFL teachers needed to have knowledge of issues, for instance, literature and customs, to help their L2 learners better understand people and things related to the target language.  Lastly, by language analysis, he meant that EFL teachers are to have a solid command of the target language structure as well as to have knowledge of second language acquisition theories and linguistics.  Out of these three knowledge categories, he highlighted that language proficiency plays a paramount role to be an effective language teacher.

Informed by the Layette's (1993) work, Day (1993) created a framework of the knowledge and skills that EFL teachers needed, which consisted of four types of knowledge: (a) content knowledge, knowledge of subject matter; (b) pedagogic knowledge, knowledge of practices of teaching; (c) pedagogic content knowledge, knowledge of teaching strategies for teaching the subject matter; and (d) support knowledge, knowledge of disciplines which influence language teaching, for example, linguistics and sociolinguistics.

Influenced by Shulman's (1987) conceptualization of a knowledge base, Richards (1998) thought that second and foreign language teachers' knowledge base consisted of six dimensions, namely, (1) theories of teaching, (2) teaching skills, (3) communication skills and language proficiency, (4) subject matter knowledge, (5) pedagogical reasoning and decision making, and (6) contextual knowledge (see also Hinkel, 2011).  The first dimension refers to acquiring a thoughtful understanding of the contribution to L2 teaching of major second and foreign language learning theories already discussed in this literature review, to name a few, behaviorist theory, universal grammar, Krashen's theory, cognitive theory, and socio-cultural theory (Mayer, 2011).  It adds to this dimension the values, assumptions, and beliefs of L2 teachers' own teaching philosophy (Richards, 1998).  The second dimension has to do with teaching repertoire

that L2 teachers possess. It includes high command of fundamental elements of teaching, for instance, lesson planning; effective and critical instruction; classroom management, assessment as well as advanced competence in utilizing and adapting language teaching approaches and methods (Richards, 1998), like the ones already introduced in this literature review, for example, direct approach; audio-lingual approach; comprehension-based approach; and communicative approach, among others (Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The third category, communication skills and language proficiency, denotes not only the native or native-like L2 language command English teacher should have but also the ability to communicate and convey information effectively to L2 learners (Richards, 1998). In other words, speaking English with a native or native-like fluency does not translate into effective teaching necessarily. Subject matter knowledge, the fourth dimension, revolves around the specialized disciplinary knowledge of language teaching. For example, pedagogical knowledge of syntax, grammar, phonology, morphology, semantics, and pragmatics as well as awareness of language teaching approaches, assessment, curriculum development, and teaching materials development (Faez, 2011; Richards, 1998). The fifth category, pedagogical reasoning and decision making, refers to the individual teaching expertise that L2 teachers possess to make informed decisions of how to transform content and theories and approaches of L2 learning for effective teaching (Richards, 1998). Finally, contextual knowledge has to do with understanding of how context, society, community and institutional factors influence L2 teaching (Richards, 1998). Taking into account these knowledge dimensions in EFL teacher education programs, according to Richards (1998), can allow EFL teacher candidates to graduate being more prepared to face thoughtfully and effectively their classroom teaching realities.

In the same year that Richards' (1998) EFL teachers' knowledge base was introduced, Freeman and Johnson (1998) proposed a reconceptualization of knowledge base that rejected the subject matter-learner binary view, which was the center of the debate in the literature regarding L2 teaching and teacher education (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Freeman and Johnson's (1998) knowledge base framework consisted of three interrelated domains: (1) the teacher as learner of language teaching, (2) schools and schooling as historical and socio-cultural contexts for teacher learning, and (3) the teacher's pedagogical thinking about teaching, the subject matter and its contents and the language learning process. In other words, they believed that second and foreign language teaching can be enriched by systematically examining how L2 teachers come to understand what they know as well as what they do in their teaching environment. In 2005, Tarone and Allwright criticized Freeman and Johnson's (1998) work because they thought that the difference between general teacher learning and language teacher learning was not clearly elucidated. To Tarone and Allwright (2005), L2 language teaching has its own characteristics compared to other disciplines in teacher education. That is, EFL teacher candidates learn different things and they do it in different ways. Consequently, EFL teacher preparation should draw on research that specifically pertains to second and foreign language teaching and learning (Tarone & Allwright, 2005). Second and foreign language research, according to Tarone and Allwright (2005), can help inform all the facets of EFL teachers' work, for instance, decision making on using learning theories, classroom management, teaching techniques, curriculum planning, assessment, and so forth. However, Freeman and Johnson (2005), as a response to Tarone and Allwright's (2005) critique, said that what Tarone and Allwright (2005) had pointed out as being ignored was really at the heart of their knowledge base reconceptualization, which is

implied in the question underlying their framework "who teaches what to whom, where?" (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 405).

In more current literature, Moradkhani et al. (2013) said that EFL teachers' knowledge base is composed of four types of knowledge. The first one is knowledge of language and related disciplines. This knowledge means that EFL teachers should possess a native or native-like English proficiency and have a good command of other fields that are directly or indirectly linked to English language teaching. The second category is knowledge of English language teaching theories, skills, and techniques. According to Moradkhani et al. (2013), this kind of knowledge can be defined as "knowledge of teaching language skills and components and awareness of technicalities" (p. 131). The third type of knowledge that EFL teachers possess is knowledge of class, time, and learning management. By this competence, Moradkhani et al. (2013) means that EFL teachers understand "the conditions in which they work and the way to behave with others" (p. 131). Finally, the forth competence that EFL teachers have is knowledge of context and social relations, which Moradkhani et al. (2013) defined as "knowledge of lesson planning and classroom and time management as well as differences in learning teaching among teacher candidates" (p. 132). As can be seen, this conceptual framework introduced by Moradkhani et al. (2013) differs from the ones presented, for example, by Day (1993), Richards (1998), and Freeman and Johnson (1998) in the terminology used, but the underlying meaning of the categories are somewhat similar.

In other studies, whose purpose was not necessarily to conceptualize EFL knowledge base but which examined aspects related to it, it could be seen that the general categories of knowledge base that were presented in frameworks, such as the ones introduced by Lafayette (1993), Day (1993), Freeman and Johnson (1998), and Richards (1998) kept being the

underlying knowledge base conceptualizations around which these studies revolved; even when the terminology slightly changes. For example, subject matter knowledge, theories of L2 teaching, teaching skills was investigated in Faez (2011) and Lima (2012), communication skills and language proficiency have been addressed in Faez (2011), Lima (2012), and Macías (2013), and contextual knowledge was part of the study by Faez (2011). Something that has not changed at all in the current literature and that was already mentioned when citing Layette (1993) is the fact that language proficiency continues to be considered the most important type of knowledge or competency that EFL teachers should possess to be effective EFL teachers. The implications of this for designing and implementing EFL teacher education curricula is twofold. On one hand, it means that potential students who want to pursue an EFL teacher education major should demonstrate their level of English proficiency before entering an EFL teacher education program. In this case, EFL teacher education programs would focus on developing the pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills of those EFL student teachers. On the other hand, however, there are those EFL teacher education programs which have to deal with making their EFL student teachers to acquire the English language and become EFL teachers at the same time or in the same program. This is the most common reality in countries wherein English is not the main means of communication. In this scenario, it means that EFL teacher education curricula must provide enough instructional hours and quality time of real usage of the English language by the EFL student-teachers to guarantee that they will be as proficient as possible before they start acquiring the knowledge and teaching skills that will make them EFL teachers. One more element adds to the last point, the quality and preparation of the EFL teacher educators who prepare those EFL student teachers to become effective EFL teachers.

Table 2

*EFL Teachers' Knowledge Base Frameworks*

| Knowledge Bases | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Day (1993) | Content knowledge<br>Pedagogic knowledge<br>Support knowledge<br>Pedagogic content knowledge |
| | Lafayette (1993) | Language proficiency<br>Language analysis<br>Civilization and culture |
| | Freeman & Johnson (1998) | Teacher-learner<br>Pedagogical process<br>Social context |
| | Richards (1998) | Communication skills and language proficiency<br>Subject matter knowledge<br>Theories of teaching<br>Teaching skills<br>Pedagogical reasoning and decision making<br>Contextual knowledge |
| | Moradkhani et al. (2013) | Knowledge of language and related disciplines<br>Knowledge of English language teaching theories, skills, and techniques<br>Knowledge of class, time, and learning management<br>Knowledge of context and social relations |

Up to this point in this section, I have presented several of the conceptual frameworks about the types of knowledge that integrate EFL teachers' knowledge base. This availability of frameworks is an example of the efforts that the second and foreign language research community has made to provide a view of how EFL teachers acquire and construct the knowledge and teaching experience they need to be effective English teachers. In these conceptual frameworks, knowledge base is seen as more than just enumerating discrete lists of skills and competences that EFL teachers need to have. That is, knowledge base is envisioned as an integrative and contextualized process that takes place in specific circumstances (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). In this regard, Richards (2008a) considered that EFL teachers' knowledge base needs to go beyond simply being able to make content and pedagogy accessible to L2 learners; it

needs to prepare EFL teachers to continue to construct new knowledge and theory. This reasoning resonates with Shulman's (1987) idea that teachers' knowledge base is not something definitive; it changes depending on particular circumstances. One of these circumstances that may determine the quality of EFL teachers' knowledge base is the type of curriculum or curricula models that teacher education programs adopt to organize and deliver what counts for knowledge base for them. In the section below, I discuss curriculum approaches that have been utilized in EFL teacher education programs to transmit knowledge and teaching experience so as to prepare EFL teacher candidates. The rationale of describing the types of curriculum models utilized in EFL teacher education lies in that the quality of EFL teachers and to a great degree the quality of EFL teacher educators depends on what types of knowledge and skills are valued in each one of these curriculum approaches.

## 2.2.2. Language Curriculum Models for Delivering Teachers' Knowledge Base

To a certain degree, the quality of EFL teachers is dependent upon what knowledge teacher education programs think is more important to include in the curriculum and the ways that knowledge is delivered to teacher candidates. As an EFL teacher educator, I noticed that EFL teacher education programs in Nicaragua differ in two main elements: (a) the knowledge base that comprises their curricula and (b) the curriculum approaches utilized to transmit that information to teacher candidates. Some teacher education programs, for example, provide longer practicums than others. Some value more language proficiency knowledge while others focus more on pedagogy. Some are lecture-reading based while others try to make a combination of lectures and teaching opportunities. Even though the quality of L2 teachers depends on various factors, language teacher education program designers have to think very carefully about what type of information and teaching experience they may include in the

curriculum and how teacher candidates will have access to that knowledge (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Richards, 2013). Said another way, the sources of knowledge provided to teacher candidates allow them to build different knowledge about teaching. For instance, if provided classroom teaching opportunities, teacher candidates would construct experiential knowledge (Day, 1993; Deng, & Luke, 2008; Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 2014; Shellman, 2014), on the other hand, if exposed only to lectures and reading, teacher candidates will build just received or acquired knowledge (Day, 1993).

Four approaches or models can be identified in the existing literature regarding how EFL teacher education programs are organized and delivered. These EFL teacher education approaches are the following: (1) the apprentice-expert model, (2) the rationalist model, (3) the case studies model (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Wallace, 1991), and (4) the integrative model (Day, 1993; see also Crandall, 2000). According to Freeman (1991a, 1996), the first three approaches represent three views of teaching, namely, (1) teaching as doing, a behavioral approach focusing on what EFL teachers do and giving emphasis to a skills approach of teacher education; (2) teaching as thinking and doing, a cognitive approach centered on what EFL teachers know and how they do it, emphasizing both skills and theory; and (3) teaching as knowing what to do, an interpretivist approach centered on why teachers do what they do in various teaching milieus, stressing reflection and use of frameworks of interpretation to theory and skill development in EFL teacher education. In order to see what components of knowledge each one of these approaches covered, I used Richards' (1998) knowledge base framework (see table 2, *EFL teachers' knowledge base frameworks*) because it seemed to be one of the most complete conceptualizations of the knowledge that EFL teachers should possess. This

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examination was contextualized to EFL teacher education programs in Nicaragua, where this study was conducted.

The apprentice-expert model is the oldest approach that has been utilized to deliver knowledge in language teacher education programs (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Wallace, 1991). In this model knowledge base is developed through observation, instruction, and practice as the novice language teacher candidate works closely with an expert teacher educator (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Wallace, 1991). Its use as a general model to deliver knowledge in second and foreign language teacher education is very limited (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993). However, its underlying principles have a great degree of application within EFL teacher education programs (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993). For example, it can be used in practicums where EFL teacher candidates very often work with classroom teachers, also referred to as cooperating teachers (Clarke, Triggs, & Nielsen, 2014; Zeichner, 2010). Even though being an expert teacher does not translate directly to a successful approach to teaching, the quality of teaching experience that novice teacher candidates may acquire will depend on how expert the cooperating teacher really is (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Wallace, 1991, see also Freeman, 1991a, 1996).

In examining the apprentice-expert model to determine which of the six categories of Richards' (1998) knowledge base framework it covers, of course applied to the context of Nicaragua, it is clear that it helps EFL teacher candidates to build teaching skills, subject matter knowledge, and pedagogical reasoning and decision making. However, it is not clear if all facets of theories of teaching, contextual knowledge, and communication skills and language proficiency can be treated adequately through this approach. In the context of Nicaraguan EFL teacher education, this model would not be practical as a general approach for two main reasons. First, finding expert EFL teachers to work one-to-one with teacher candidates would not be

reasonable because there is a lack of a well-prepared EFL teacher who could be utilized as models for teacher candidates. In the same line of thought, a program like this would be very expensive to carry out because EFL teacher education programs in Nicaragua commonly consist of large classes. For example, a single class may have more than sixty students. Second, language proficiency, one of most important competencies that language teachers must have (Faez, 2011; Layette, 1993; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Richards, 1998), is not treated in the apprentice-expert model. It happens that in Nicaragua, all EFL teacher education programs have to deal with both making teacher candidates proficient English speakers and equipping them with the pedagogical and teaching knowledge they would need to teach.

However, as expressed by Day (1993) and Wallace (1991), the apprentice-expert approach provides Nicaraguan EFL teacher education with the conceptual basis that can be utilized within teacher education. For instance, it can be used in practicums, once teacher candidates have mastered the English language and when they have acquired enough pedagogical knowledge and other types of knowledge required in their field. I think the biggest benefit of this model for Nicaraguan EFL teachers would be experiential knowledge (Deng, & Luke, 2008; Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 2014; Shellman, 2014), since the main responsibilities of teacher candidates are in the classroom as well as learning from observation of and discussion with the cooperating teacher.

The second curriculum model used to deliver knowledge base in EFL teacher education programs is the rationalist model. It is also known as the rationalist learn-the-theory-and- then-apply-it model (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Graves, 2008; Richards, 2013; Wallace, 1991, see also Freeman, 1991a, 1996). This model involves the teaching of scientific knowledge to teacher candidates who, in turn, are expected to apply this knowledge in their teaching. This approach is

the traditional and maybe the most utilized in language teacher education (Day, 1993; Graves, 2008; Wallace, 1991). Other names this approach has received in the existing literature are the Specialist approach (Graves, 2008) and more recently the Forward design (Richards, 2013). The rationalist approach sees teaching as a science and as such it needs to be studied rationally and objectively (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Freeman, 1991a, 1996; Richards, 2013; Wallace, 1991). In other words, it is believed that the knowledge that has been accumulated can be transferred to EFL teacher candidates by experts in the field. In this case, EFL teacher candidates are considered to be educated and ready to teach English effectively when they have mastered the scientific knowledge valued as fundamental by the experts (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Freeman, 1991a, 1996; Richards, 2013; Wallace, 1991). Commonly, the knowledge is presented to students in the form of courses or subjects, such as teaching methods, teaching listening and speaking, teaching reading and writing, phonetics, pronunciation, vocabulary, learning theories, grammar, lesson planning, assessment, material development, supervision, course design, didactics, second language acquisition, among others.

Regarding the six types of knowledge of Richards' (1998) framework, the rationalist model strongly treats subject matter knowledge, theories of teaching, contextual knowledge, and communication skills and language proficiency (Day, 1993; see also Crandall, 2000; Freeman, 1991a, 1996). However, this approach provides very limited value for teaching skills and pedagogical reasoning and decision making (Day, 1993; see also Crandall, 2000; Freeman, 1991a, 1996). Pedagogical knowledge and teaching experience is slightly presented in the mode of microteachings; pedagogic knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge is mostly conveyed through courses. According to Crandall (2000), Day (1993) and Wallace (1991), it is questionable whether any teaching skills and pedagogical reasoning and decision making can

actually be learned by just consuming findings of pedagogic research. In this regard, Freeman

and Johnson (1998) said that learning about teaching takes place through the activity of teaching.

As stated by Crandall (2000), Day (1993), and Wallace (1991), contrary to the apprentice-expert

approach, in which EFL teacher candidates build experiential knowledge, the rationalist model

provides them received knowledge through various lectures, readings, discussions, and so forth.

Unfortunately, its weakness lies in that little, if any, real teaching opportunities are provided.

Macías (2013) said that EFL teachers need to have opportunities to teach and observe EFL

classrooms in real school settings in order to reduce the mismatch they find between teacher

education programs and real classroom environments.

In the context of Nicaraguan EFL teacher education, the rationalist model predominates.

EFL teacher candidates are mostly receivers of knowledge delivered to them in the mode of

courses or subjects. The little pedagogical and teaching knowledge they build is through

microteachings in pedagogical or methodological courses. Practicums tend to be very short; the

longer ones may last up to one semester of actual teaching. Even though, the rationalist model is

the most popular one in Nicaragua, I think that EFL teacher education programs should reinvent

the way they are delivering knowledge to teacher candidates by drawing from other models. A

theoretical understanding of teaching and pedagogic reasoning and decision making and content

knowledge is only partial understanding; it needs to be complemented with real teaching

practice. Said another way, EFL teacher candidates should not know only *about* what they are

supposed to teach but also know *how* to do it by experiencing the activity of teaching.

The third approach under which EFL teacher education programs are organized and

delivered is the case studies model (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Freeman, 1991a, 1996; Wallace,

1991). This approach refers to the discussion and analysis of actual case histories that occur or

may occur in EFL classrooms (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Freeman, 1991a, 1996; Wallace, 1991). The central goals of this approach is the generalization of particular behaviors into broader understandings of the discipline (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Freeman, 1991a, 1996; Wallace, 1991). This approach has not had a major impact in EFL teacher education. In the United States, for instance, it has been utilized in fields, such as business, law, and medical schools. For instance, Harvard, one of the universities in which the case study model has been widely utilized in law and business, did not adopt it in teacher education because it lacks conceptual clarity regarding its purpose and faculty do not have enough financial and administrative support for the writing of the cases to be used (Merseth, 1991).

Out of the six types of knowledge of Richards' (1998) knowledge base conceptualization, the case studies model is a convenient way to deliver subject matter knowledge and theories of teaching (Day, 1993; see also Crandall, 2000; Freeman, 1991a, 1996). Types of knowledge such as contextual knowledge, pedagogical reasoning and decision making and communication are treated in a limited fashion (Day, 1993; see also Crandall, 2000; Freeman, 1991a, 1996). Even though, the coverage of these types of knowledge is limited, EFL teacher candidates may develop some important knowledge, specifically in some areas, for instance, planning and reviewing lessons, teacher decision-making, and teaching activities and practices. However, it lacks real teaching knowledge and experience (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Freeman, 1991a, 1996). Another important component not emphasized in this model is language proficiency. Like in the apprentice-expert model, in the case studies approach, it is expected that language teachers should have native or native-like language proficiency before starting their teacher education program. In other words, this competence is not included to be learned or acquired as the target teaching cases are examined. Lastly, like the rationalist approach, in general I would

say that the kind of knowledge teacher candidates develop is received knowledge but not experiential knowledge (Day, 1993; Deng, & Luke, 2008; Kolb, 2014; Shellman, 2014; see also Dewey, 1938).

Contextualizing the case studies model to the reality of EFL teacher education in Nicaragua, I believe that as a general model is not appropriate. However, I think it may have some useful application within a program. First, as expressed by Merseth (1991), from a financial stand point it would be a problem because EFL teacher education programs would not have enough money to prepare well-designed teaching and learning cases. On the other hand, EFL teacher candidates in Nicaragua do not speak the English language before entering their teacher education programs, which means that part of their teacher preparation is to become fluent speakers of English as they develop pedagogical and teaching knowledge and experience. But it does not mean that some cases could not be brought and analyzed in those teacher education programs. On the contrary, I would say that it would be very beneficial to teacher candidates because, as noted, case analysis would provide some knowledge on lesson planning, decision making and of course on content knowledge and theories of teaching (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Freeman, 1991a, 1996; Wallace, 1991).

Day (1993) proposed a fourth approach to organized and delivered knowledge in language teacher education what he called the integrative model, which is a combination of the strengths of all three previously mentioned models. This approach is a systematic model to second and foreign language teacher education which allows for teacher candidates to build the six types of knowledge proposed by Richards (1998), namely, subject matter knowledge, theories of teaching, teaching skills, contextual knowledge, and pedagogical reasoning and decision making through various experiences and activities. It comprises a thoughtful practice

component, which suggests a critical examination of all the experiences and activities teacher candidates are engaged in.  Such reflective thinking pursues to assist novice teacher candidates act in deliberate and intentional ways in order to create new ways of teaching and interpret practice from a new perspective.  Day (1993) highlighted that simple exposure to all types of knowledge that compose EFL teachers' knowledge base does not mean an integration of the most beneficial principles of each model occurs, it is necessary to adopt a reflective practice component that must be part of EFL teacher education programs.

A type of program like the integrative model would be more beneficial for EFL teacher education in Nicaragua.  A program in which EFL teacher candidates could not only become proficient speakers and users of English and which they could acquire the content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical reasoning, but also a program in which EFL teacher candidates could develop real teaching experience.  In other words, an integrative approach would allow for teacher candidates to develop knowledge about teaching and learning as well as experience of how effective teaching is done.

In addition to the four curriculum approaches introduced by Crandall, 2000, Day (1993), and Wallace (1991), Richards (2013) presented three curriculum models utilized specifically to teach English as a Foreign or Second Language.  These curriculum designs are: (1) the Forward curriculum design, (2) the Central curriculum design, and (3) the Backward curriculum design. The difference among these three curriculum design models revolves around the way each of them treats three main components: (1) input, content to be taught; (2) process, teaching methodology or the way content is going to be delivered; and (3) outputs, learning outcomes. Even though, Richards (2013) contextualized these three curriculum types to the field of teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language, I think that these types of curricula can be also applied

in more general terms, in EFL teacher education programs, for instance. In the context of this study, the three main elements discussed by Richards (2013) as he described the Forward, Central, and Backward curriculum designs were understood as follows. Input represented the knowledge base (see e.g., Day, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Richards, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013) that EFL teachers were supposed to acquire in teacher education programs. Process was seen as the methodology to deliver knowledge and skills in the EFL teacher education programs, for example, the knowledge base categories and skills may be represented in the mode of courses, microteachings, teaching practicums, or the use of learning theories and teaching language approaches when developing English proficiency. Lastly, outcomes were understood as the learning outputs expected to be acquired in the EFL teacher education programs.

According to Richards (2013), the Forward Design is based on the assumption that input, process, and outcomes are related in a linear way. In general education, Schiro (2013) called this kind of curriculum scholar academic ideology that centers on transmitting the knowledge that has been discovered in a discipline from one generation to another. In the same line of thought, Richards (2013) said that in Forward Design, before decisions about how knowledge is going to be transmitted to EFL teacher candidates and decisions about expected learning outcomes are taken, issues about the input of instruction need to be determined. That is, in the context of this study, the major emphasis would be on the types of knowledge EFL teacher candidates must acquire in a teacher education program. In EFL teacher education, the Forward Design is referred as the traditional approach, theory-to-practice model, to developing curricula (Crandall, 2000; Day 1993; Graves, 2008; Richards, 2013; Wallace, 1991; see also Schiro, 2013). It requires utilizing one's understanding of the knowledge base framework that EFL teacher

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candidates are to acquire as the basis for curriculum planning (Crandall, 2000; Day 1993; Richards, 2013; see also Schiro, 2013). Put differently, the essence of the curriculum is the subject, which in turn represents the accumulated knowledge in each discipline or knowledge base category considered important. For instance, considering one of the knowledge categories of Richards' (1998) knowledge base conceptual framework, communication and language proficiency, Forward EFL curriculum planners would operationalize this knowledge area to understand what knowledge integrates it and then to propose courses to cover the knowledge available that is considered essential to develop language proficiency. Example of courses that may be included in a curriculum to cover the before mentioned knowledge category might be English grammar courses, listening and speaking courses, reading and writing courses, pronunciation, and so forth. Pursuing this further, learners and methods of teaching comes second in this curriculum approach. The main role of EFL teacher educators is to transmit knowledge discover by scholars (Richards, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; see also Schiro, 2013). This means that EFL teacher candidates' main role is to learn the content presented by the teacher educators. The teaching methods mostly used in the Forward Design are the didactic discourse, supervised practice, and Socratic questioning (Richards, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; see also Schiro, 2013). According to Richards (2013), on a more specific level, when it has to do with language proficiency development, for example, EFL teacher educators utilize language teaching methods, for example, the audio-lingual method (Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014), communicative language teaching (Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Hymes, 1972; Richards & Rodgers, 2014), oral situational approach (Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014), and content-based instruction (Horwitz, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Lastly, the curriculum design process under a forward design perspective follows the following

steps: (1) content, (2) syllabus, (3) methodology, (4) outcomes, and (5) assessment (Graves, 2008; Richards, 2013).

Based on my experience as a teacher educator, I think that Forward Design is the most utilized curriculum model in EFL teacher education in Nicaragua. That is, curricula in EFL teacher preparation programs offered either in private and public universities center on content. This content is commonly presented in the curriculum in the way of courses. Courses almost always imply the types of knowledge and skills that EFL teacher candidates are to acquire. Courses are organized and thought to serve two purposes: (1) provide EFL teacher candidates the knowledge and skills for developing social and academic English proficiency and (2) provide the knowledge for them to become EFL teachers. For instance, pedagogical knowledge, language teaching theories knowledge, didactic knowledge, knowledge of assessment, knowledge of course design, knowledge of dispositions, teaching practice, and sometimes knowledge of classroom supervision and research knowledge. As stated in Richards (2013), teaching methodology and learning outcomes are less stressed. Assuming that if EFL teacher students learn the content covered in each one of the courses that comprised the curriculum, they will be prepared to teach English as a Foreign Language when they enter the work market. In general, the main methods of instruction utilized by teacher educators are the didactic discourse, supervised practice, and Socratic questioning. On a more personal level, teacher educators may adapt their teaching methods according to the type of content or course they teach. For example, if courses are intended to develop language proficiency, the teaching methods may be informed by language teaching theories such as a behaviorist perspective language learning theory (Brooks, 1960; Krashen, 1982; Lado, 1957; Mayer, 2011), the cognitivist perspective (Anderson, 1985; Karmiloff-Smith, 1987; Mayer, 2011; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996; Metchell & Myles,

2004; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Pienemann, 2003), a socio-cultural perspective (Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Mayer, 2011; Metchell & Myles, 2004; Vygotsky, 1987), or language teaching methods (Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; see also Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 2008b).

The second curriculum approach presented in Richards (2013) is the Central Design. Bruner (1966) and Stenhouse (1975) were proponents of this type of curriculum design, advocating that the first step in curriculum development should be the identification of the processes of inquiry and deliberation that determine teaching and learning. Another proponent of Central Design in general education is Schiro (2013). Schiro (2013) termed this type of curriculum development learner centered ideology, where all components of curriculum revolve around the target learners, their leaning needs and interests. According to Bruner (1966) and Stenhouse (1975), the processes to take into consideration when developing curricula include, among others, critical thinking, interpretation, decision-making reflection, co-operating with others, and investigation. Input is selected on the basis of how it encourages the development of these processes. As for learning outcomes, it is not necessary to go into too much details. That is, outcomes are in some way implied in the content chosen to be part of the curriculum. In short, in general education Central Design curricula follow a learner-centered perspective (Leung, 2012; see also Schiro, 2013).

In EFL teacher education, the Central Design presupposes that curriculum development begins with the selection of teaching activities, techniques and methods rather than with the selection of a detailed content, a specific knowledge base conceptual framework, or specification of learning outcomes (Richards, 2013; see also Schiro, 2013). As stated by Richards (2013), EFL teacher educators utilize non-input driven language teaching methods to help EFL teacher

students develop English proficiency, such as, the natural approach (Krashen & Terrell, 1983; see also Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2014), the silent way approach (Gategno, 1972), and task-based approach (Willis, 1996; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Additionally, issues related to content and learning outcomes are determined after a methodology has been chosen or during the process of teaching itself (Richards, 2013). In this curriculum approach, it is not necessary to establish clearly defined outcomes or objectives (Richards, 2013). Learning outcomes and content of an EFL teacher education program is determined based on the needs of prospective EFL teacher candidates and their particular interests (Graves, 2008; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Leung, 2012; Richards, 2013; van Lier, 2004, 2009; see also Clark, 1987; Schiro, 2013). The main purpose is to create learning experiences that allow EFL student teachers to learn by their own efforts. That is, as opposed to Forward Design where learners are information receivers, in Central Design learners are active participants in creating their own learning. In the same line of thought, the Central Design focuses on the growth of the student as an individual by the provision of different teaching-learning milieus for the learner to choose (Graves, 2008; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Leung, 2012; Richards, 2013; van Lier, 2004, 2009; see also Clark, 1987; Schiro, 2013). In this scenario, the role of EFL teacher educators is to observe their learners, EFL teacher students, and adapt the learning activities according to their needs and interests as well as facilitate their leaning process (Graves, 2008; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Leung, 2012; Richards, 2013; van Lier, 2004, 2009; see also Schiro, 2013). Lastly, the curriculum development process in Central Design follows a circular process putting in the center teaching and leaving elements, such as, content, outcomes, and assessment interacting around teaching (Richards, 2013).

Contextualizing the Central Design to the reality of Nicaraguan EFL teacher education, I would say that the Central Design is not utilized as a main curriculum model to develop teacher education programs. However, as stated in Richards (2013), on a more personal level, teacher educators widely apply the Central Design in their EFL teacher education classrooms. Put differently, teacher educators would very often first think about the teaching activities, teaching techniques and methods rather than starting their planning processes by detailed considerations of input or learning outcomes. It is very common to observe in EFL teacher education classrooms that regardless of the curriculum guidelines they are provided, they put in first place what their learners would do in during their lessons. Delineating content and learning outcomes comes second. As Freeman (1996) put it, even when teacher educators are told to follow a specific curriculum, they usually center on their particular learners and not necessarily on meeting specific objectives. In this scenario, EFL teacher educators see content blended in the teaching activities and methods they choose to deliver their teaching process.

The third type of curriculum utilized in EFL teacher education is Backward Design. As reported by Richards (2013), Backward Design centers on specifying expected learning outcomes and employs these as the foundation to develop teaching processes and input. Backward Design is a well-established practice in curriculum design and development in general education (Schiro, 2013; Taba, 1962; Tyler; 1949; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, 2006) and in recent years has become as a prominent curriculum model in language teaching (Richards, 2013). Schiro (2013) called this way of developing curricula, the social efficiency curriculum ideology, where the main purpose is to prepare individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values to be effective contributors to their society. An example of this curriculum approach in general education can be found in the work of Tyler (1949) and Taba (1962), who viewed instruction as

the specification of ends as a pre-requisite to creating the means to accomplish them, objective-based approach.  In more recent literature, Backward Design can be seen in the work of Wiggins and McTighe (2005, 2006).  According to Wiggins and McTighe (2005, 2006), curriculum development under the Backward Design perspective consists of three main stages.  Each one of these stages is guided by some central questions.  Stage one requires to identify desired results. The questions that guide this stage are: (1) what should learners know, understand, and be able to do? (2) what content is worthy of understanding? and (3) what enduring understandings are desired?  Stage two entails to determine acceptable evidence.  The guiding questions in this stage are as follows: (1) how will be need to know if learners have accomplished the desired learning outcomes? and (2) what will be accepted as evidence of learners understanding and proficiency? Courses and teaching units are thought as collected assessments.  Lastly, stage three has to do with planning learning experiences and instruction.  This stage can be fulfilled by answering the following questions: (1) what knowledge and skills will learners need to perform effectively and accomplish chosen learning outcomes? (2) what activities will equip learners with the desired knowledge and skills? (3) what will need to be taught and coached, and how should it best be taught, in light of performance goals? and (4) what materials and resources are best suited to accomplish these goals?

According to Richards (2013), in language teacher education, Backward Design begins with a careful statement of the desired learning outcomes.  The desired learning outcomes are selected by curriculum makers based on what the teacher education program wants.  Pursuing this further, EFL student teachers' language communication and pedagogical learning needs, society, and subject specialists are analyzed to determine the learning outcomes (Stufflebeam et al., 1985).  For instance, if it is determined that EFL student teachers need to develop nativelike

English proficiency, the learning outcomes would be aimed at that direction.  Once clear learning

outcomes have been selected, assessment procedures are determined (Richards, 2013).  The third

step is to select the appropriate linguistic content, teaching activities and materials and methods

to be utilized to attain the expected learning outcomes in order to produce effective and efficient

EFL teachers (Richards, 2013; Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkeerhoff, & Nelson, 1985; see also

Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, 2006).  Wiggins and McTighe's (2005) guiding questions are

followed in language teacher education when using Backward Design.

One example of Backward Design curriculum is Task-based instruction (TBI), which

follows these steps: (1) identify target tasks, (2) design teaching tasks, (3) identify language

needs, and (4) follow up instruction (Richards, 2013; Van den Branden, 2012).  Another example

is Competence-based instruction (CBI).  CBI starts curriculum development by specifying the

learning outputs in terms of competencies (Richards, 2013; Schenk, 1978; see also Burke, 1989).

That is the knowledge, skills, and behaviors EFL student teachers need and which EFL student

teachers have to demonstrate at the end of a course or program of study.  CBI follows similar

steps to TBI, for instance, (1) identify target tasks, (2) describe required competencies, (3)

identify language, skills, and knowledge demand for each competency, (4) develop syllabus, (5)

design teaching methods, and (6) learning outcomes competencies (Richards, 2013; Schenk,

1978).  Finally, another approach to Backward design are the use of standards.  Standards are

general descriptions of the learning outcomes that the target learners need to accomplish in

different areas of the curriculum content (Katz & Snow, 2009; Leung, 2012; McKay, 2000;

Richards, 2013).  An example of Backward design utilizing standards is the Common European

Framework for Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001), which provides

explicit description of objectives, content and methods of the study of foreign and second languages.

In the context of Nicaraguan EFL teacher education, Backward Design is the less utilized. However, I think this type of curriculum development would be a very appropriate fit in Nicaragua when it has to do with EFL teacher preparation. As Wiggins and McTighe's (2005) and Richards (2013) said, taking learning outcomes as the starting point to think about what types of knowledge, competencies, and dispositions EFL student teachers may need to acquire would allow them to have a clear picture of the type of professionals they are expected to be. Another advantage of this type of curriculum for Nicaraguan teacher educators would be that they would not need to rush to cover large amounts of content commonly found when implementing Forward Design curricula. In other words, the content would be well-chosen to accomplish the desired learning outcomes. Based on my experience as a Nicaraguan EFL teacher educator, I believe that content-driven curricula force teacher educators to look for ways to cover content without paying enough attention to learning outcomes. Sometimes, it is not clear why certain content is taught. Lastly, another strength of Backward Design is that teacher educators would have at their disposal tools and mechanisms to determine if their learners have met the knowledge and skills they are expected to master at the end of a course or program of study. Next, I discus existing literature regarding sources of knowledge base of teacher educators outside language teacher education.

## 2.2.3. Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base outside Language Teacher Education

In general education, teacher educators' knowledge base comes from various sources. One of these sources is teacher education programs. Even though teacher education programs are not designed to prepare teacher educators specifically, it is here where teacher educators start

building their knowledge base as they prepare to become school teachers (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Smith, 2005). It is in teacher education programs that certain types of knowledge are developed; such as, knowledge of assessment, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, knowledge of students and curricular knowledge (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Smith, 2005). In this respect, I think this also occurs in EFL teacher education. That is, language teacher education programs are the starting point for EFL teacher educators to build their knowledge base. There is no literature that talks about any specific case of teacher preparation programs devoted to prepare EFL teacher educators (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013).

A second source of teacher educators' knowledge is their teaching experience in real school settings such as elementary, secondary, and high schools (Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). In the existing literature, teaching experience is also known as pedagogical content knowledge (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Shulman, 1987) or sometimes as just pedagogical knowledge (Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005). In addition, some researchers noticed that since there are no teacher education programs to prepare teacher educators, the work of teacher education has usually been fulfilled by experienced teachers with a good teaching practice record (Fisher, 2009; Korthagen, 2000) or with advanced academic degrees (Wilson, 2006). In this regard, I think that in most cases, EFL teacher education recruits EFL teachers who either have a good English teaching record or those who hold advanced graduate degrees in areas related to teaching English either as a Foreign Language or as a Second Language in order to work as teacher educators.

A third source of knowledge of teacher educators in general education is their teaching experience in teacher education programs. According to Murray and Male (2005), novice

teacher educators' pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills, and pedagogical reasoning change when they start teaching to teacher candidates in teacher education programs. For instance, teacher educators develop a pedagogy for teaching teachers and learn how to do and make use of research to support their professional development as well as to support their student teachers in teacher education programs (Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). Again, I think that this applies to EFL teacher education as well. In fact, it is here where the transformation to become an EFL teacher educator starts to be noticed by EFL teachers. They may notice that some knowledge and previous teaching experience may transfer to the new teaching milieu, but new knowledge and new teaching skills evolve as they realize that their role and responsibility as educators goes beyond than just teaching learners to speak or communicate in English.

Additionally, Koster et al. (2005) found that teacher educators should possess four types of competences, namely, "content competencies, communicative and reflective competencies, organizational competencies, and pedagogical competencies" (p. 167). At a simple glance, these competences are not so different from Shulman's (1987) conceptualization of the knowledge base that teachers should acquire in teacher education programs (*See table 1, Teachers' Knowledge Base*) and Richards's (1998) conceptualization of EFL teachers' knowledge base (see table 2, *EFL teachers' knowledge base*) but what is different, though, is a meta-cognitive capacity that teacher educators develop (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005) and the depth on how they examine and reflect on these types of competences (Moradkhani et al., 2013).

Lastly, another aspect that deserves attention concerning teacher educators' preparation is their experiences to become teacher educators. Murray and Male (2005) explored the experiences faced by twenty-eight educators, who worked in initial teacher education (ITE) in England and who had transitioned from elementary and secondary school settings to the ITE

education program.  They found that "learning to become a teacher educator was seen as a slow, uncertain process, requiring the acquisition of new professional knowledge and understanding" (p. 130).  They found that stress, uncertainty, and anxiety of coping with the new profession as well as learning and relearning new pedagogical knowledge were some of the struggles that the ITE teacher educators experienced (Murray & Male, 2005).  In spite of the ITE teacher educators relied on their prior pedagogical knowledge during the first years as teacher educators, "there was no straightforward transfer of the pedagogical knowledge and experience acquired in school teaching" (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 130).  Murray and Male (2005) discovered that knowledge such as pedagogical knowledge and experience appropriate to being a teacher educator, the enhancement and generalization of their existing knowledge base of schooling, developing an identity as a researcher, developing ways of working with mentors in school-based settings, and acquiring pragmatic knowledge of the higher education institution and how it operated, takes the new teacher educators up to three years to develop.  Murray and Male (2005) concluded that little attention has been devoted to examine teacher educators' experiences and their pedagogical knowledge, calling for more studies to continue to develop the research body in this regard.  This need for more research to investigate the different dimensions of teacher educators is still a reality (O'Sullivan, 2010).

So far, I have presented literature that serves as a foundation for EFL teacher educators' knowledge base.  For instance, I synthesized studies that talk about language learning theories (Anderson, 1985; Brooks, 1960; Karmiloff-Smith, 1987; Krashen, 1982; Lado, 1957; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Mayer, 2011; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996; Metchell & Myles, 2004; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Pienemann, 2003), language learning approaches (Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Gategno, 1972; Horwitz, 2013; Hymes, 1972; Krashen & Terrell, 1983; Nation & Newton, 2009;

Richards, 2008b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Willis, 1996), various conceptualization of EFL

teacher's knowledge base (Day, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Richards,

1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Shulman, 1987), curriculum models used in language teacher

education (Crandall, 2000; Day, 1993; Deng, & Freeman, 1996; Graves, 2008; Katz & Snow,

2009; Kolb, 2014; Leung, 2012; Luke, 2008; McKay, 2000; Richards, 2013; Schenk, 1978;

Shellman, 2014; Stufflebeam et al., 1985; van Lier, 2009; Wallace, 1991; Wiggins & McTighe,

2005, 2006), and sources of knowledge of teacher educators outside language teacher education

(Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male,

2005; Smith, 2005).  In the next section, I present sources of knowledge from which EFL teacher

educators build their knowledge base as well as some knowledge categories found in the existing

literature regarding EFL teacher educators' knowledge base.

## 2.3.  EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base

### 2.3.1. Sources of EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base

According to Tsui (2003), to understand teacher knowledge, it is necessary to

comprehend its sources because these determine the types of knowledge teachers or educators

may possess.  These sources also determine the perceptions that teachers or educators may have

concerning teaching and learning (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Tsui, 2003; Zhang,

2008).  Based on existing literature in the field of EFL teacher education and in the field of

general teacher education, there are six possible main sources from which EFL teacher educators

may build their knowledge base (Arıoğul, 2007; Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Faez, 2011;

Grossman, 1990; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013;

Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Richards, 1998; Smith, 2005; Zhang, 2008).

These sources are: (1) professional coursework in EFL teacher education, (2) own experiences as

language learners, (3) apprenticeship of observation, (4) teaching experiences as EFL teachers, (5) teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators, and (6) research knowledge related to English language teaching.

### 2.3.1.1. Professional coursework in EFL teacher education.

Research on the relationship between language teacher education, EFL teachers' perceptions, and classroom practices have revealed that teacher education courses play an important role on EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators' knowledge base (Arıoğul, 2007; Attardo & Brown, 2005; Borg, 1998, 2005; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Poynor, 2005; Richards, 1998; Tsui, 2003; Zhang, 2008). This is also found in existing literature in general education (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). Learning to teach requires mastering the specific content language teachers are to teach as well as mastering learning and teaching methodologies for making that content available to learners (Day, 1993; Freeman, 2002; Freeman and Johnson, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998).

Teacher education coursework is usually organized taking into consideration conceptualizations of teachers' knowledge base, such as the ones introduced in Day (1993), Freeman and Johnson (1998), Moradkhani et al. (2013) and Richards (1998) (*See Table 2. EFL Teachers' Knowledge Base Frameworks).* Pursuing this further, the target content of teacher education courses is delivered through curriculum approaches, such as the ones presented in Day (1993), Richards (2013), and Wallace (1991). Language teacher education is in some way the starting point where EFL teachers start their journey as teachers. It is here where they start building the knowledge and skills they would need to teach (Arıoğul, 2007; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Macías, 2013; Richards, 2008a; Tsui, 2003; Wright, 2010; Zhang,

2008).  However, Zhang (2008) and Macías (2013) said that novice language teachers tend not to rely on knowledge and skills acquired in professional coursework but to rely more on their own experiences as language learners.  Professional coursework makes more sense for in-service student teachers or for more experience language teachers.

Depending on the context wherein ESL or EFL teacher education programs are delivered, teacher education courses may focus either on developing language teaching knowledge and skills (Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Richards, 1998, 2008a) or on helping pre-service student teachers become proficient English speakers as well as helping them become ESL/EFL teachers (Berry, 1990; Cullen, 1994; Eguiguren, 2000; Faez, 2011; Llurda, 2004; Macías, 2013; Nelson, 1992).  The former case occurs in countries where English is the official or main language of communication and pre-service student teachers are either native speakers of that language or are proficient in the target language they are expected to teach, for instance, bachelor's degrees in ESL, EFL, TESOL, or linguistics offered in the United States, Canada, England, Australia, among others.  The latter happens in countries, such as, Nicaragua, where EFL teacher education programs are offered mostly in areas where the main language of communication is Spanish and where pre-service student teachers do not speak English when they enter their teacher education programs.  This means that EFL teacher education programs in Nicaragua are designed to accomplish two major goals.  On one hand, language teacher education programs have to include courses to help pre-service student teachers develop English proficiency both to communicate and interact in everyday life situations and to interact in an academic English environment.  On the other hand, these teacher preparation programs have to incorporate courses and teaching opportunities to help pre-service student teachers acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions as EFL teachers.

**2.3.1.2. Teaching experiences as EFL teachers.**

The second source from which EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators build their knowledge base is their teaching experience as EFL teachers (Arıoğul, 2007; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Zhang, 2008). The type of knowledge acquired through actual classroom teaching is referred to by researchers as pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987), pedagogical reasoning and decision making (Richards, 1998), pedagogic content knowledge (Day, 1993), pedagogical process (Freeman & Johnson, 1998), or Knowledge of class, time, and learning management (Moradkhani et al., 2013). In general, teachers perceive teaching experience to be one of the most significant sources of knowledge as far as teaching has to do (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Grossman, 1990; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005; Tsui, 2003). In language teacher education, EFL student teachers generally start accumulating real teaching experience as they enter private or public school systems upon graduation, for instance, teaching English as Foreign Language or Second Language in elementary schools, high schools, or in intensive English programs. Additionally, as Zhang (2008) would put it, actual language classrooms provide opportunities and challenges for language teachers to reflect on and to test the knowledge and skills acquired in language teacher education courses. This pedagogical reasoning and decision making process of where to teach, what to teach, how to teach, to whom to teach, and why to teach certain content become of the domain of language teachers as they mature and better understand their teaching successes and teaching failures (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; see also Shulman, 1987).

However, novice language teachers may not count on knowledge of language learning theories, language teaching methods, or on any other pedagogical and didactic knowledge

developed in teacher education programs when they just start teaching (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2004; Faez, 2011; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Zhang, 2008). Reflection on these types of knowledge may come later as novice language teachers become more experienced teachers (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2004; Faez, 2011; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Zhang, 2008). At the beginning they tend to rely on two types of knowledge: (1) knowledge acquired vicariously or through observation from their professors (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2004; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013) and other student teachers while in their teacher education program and (2) their own experiences as language learners (Borg, 2004; Faez, 2011; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Zhang, 2008). Whether these learning experiences are successful or unsuccessful, they help language teachers shape their teaching experience.

Lastly, as for language teaching experience in the context of EFL teacher education in Nicaragua, I think that it is an important source of knowledge from which EFL teachers and teacher educators draw from to build their knowledge base. I concur with the existing literature (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2004; Faez, 2011; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Zhang, 2008) that when EFL teachers teach for the first time, they rely on teaching activities and strategies they observed their professors utilizing as well as on their own experience as English language learners. I also agree that as Nicaraguan novice EFL teachers become more experienced teachers, they may incorporate language learning theories, language teaching approaches, and other types of knowledge acquired in their pre-service teacher education program to inform their teaching practices. This accumulated language teaching experience in EFL classrooms may be transferred to teacher education classrooms. In other words, new EFL teacher educators may rely on this accumulated teaching experience to teach in language teacher education (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005;

Smith, 2005).  However, as they start getting more aware of the difference between teaching in EFL classrooms and teaching in EFL teacher education classrooms, their knowledge base starts to change (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005).

### 2.3.1.3. Own experiences as language learners.

The third source of EFL and EFL teacher educators' knowledge base is their own experience as language learners (Arıoğul, 2007; Macías, 2013; Zhang, 2008).  The impact of teachers' prior language learning experiences has been recognized in applied linguistics and language teacher education (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2003; Carter, 1990; Elbaz, 1983; Faez, 2011; Freeman, 1991b; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Meijer, Verloop, & Beijard, 2001; Numrich, 1996; Peacock, 2001; Richards, 1998; Zhang, 2008).  Borg (2003) stated, for example, that language teachers' prior learning experiences "establish cognitions about learning and language learning which form the basis of their initial conceptualizations of L2 teaching during teacher education, and which may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives" (p. 88).  In the same vein, Tsui (2003) expressed that experiences as learners allow teachers to create perceptions of what teaching is as well as what teaching should be like.

In addition, Macías (2013) found that EFL teacher educators reflected on how they acquired English proficiency and apply that experience to their teaching mainly to help their EFL student teachers to learn the English language.  Faez (2011) provided support to Macías' (2013) findings as he said that non-native EFL teachers "have often experienced a number of teaching methodologies as a student in such classrooms and therefore have developed a unique set of assumptions about language teaching theories.  They have personally experienced what does and does not work for them" (p. 38).  Examining this source of pedagogical knowledge, I think that it

is composed of two elements. On one hand, it has characteristics of vicarious learning (Bandura, 1965) that EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators acquired through observing their teachers as they were acquiring the English language. On the other hand, there is an individual element, which has to do with those techniques that the teacher candidates discovered by themselves and that facilitated the acquisition of the English language. I concur with Macías' (2013) findings because, as an English learner, I have drawn from my own English learning experience to teach in EFL classrooms as well as in EFL teacher education programs. Consequently, I think that other Nicaraguan EFL teachers and teacher educators may have experience something similar during their teaching career.

### 2.3.1.4. Apprenticeship of observation.

The fourth source of knowledge from which EFL teachers and teacher educators construct their knowledge base is what has been called apprenticeship of observation (Borg, 2004; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013). This source has to do with the knowledge that EFL student teachers accumulate through observation in their language teacher education program (Borg, 2004; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013). Bandura (1965) called this type of experience vicarious learning, where individuals observe models of behaviors and the constant reappearance of these modeled behaviors make that the observers acquire them without needing to overtly produce modeled responses. That is, apprenticeship of observation does not require explicit teaching or instruction (Macías, 2013). Instead, it occurs through simple observation of teaching activities and teaching strategies that language educators may utilize in language teacher education programs (Borg, 2004; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013). According to Tsui (2003) and Zhang (2008), apprenticeship of observation contributes to language teacher and teacher educators in various ways, for instance, it equips them with

memories of activities and strategies for teaching specific content and it may impact their knowledge of student understanding.

Pursuing this further, Macías (2013) found that at the beginning of their teaching career, new EFL teachers find a mismatch between the knowledge they overtly received in their teacher education programs and the real school settings, which makes them rely more on the teaching techniques they acquired vicariously from their teacher educators. Macías' (2013) findings apply to Nicaraguan EFL teacher education. For example, in the years I supervised teaching practicums in Nicaragua, I noticed that pre-service EFL teachers would utilize teaching techniques their teacher educators used and that they learned through observation and not necessarily the pedagogical knowledge they were taught explicitly. It does not mean, though, that all the knowledge base they acquired in their teacher education program is worthless; what it means is that due to the lack of teaching experience, novice EFL teachers find it easier to use teaching techniques and activities that do not involve much pedagogical reasoning. This, of course, changes as they become more expert EFL teachers (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2004; Richards, 1998; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Zhang, 2008; see also Shulman, 1987).

### 2.3.1.5. Teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators.

The fifth source of knowledge that may contribute to EFL teacher educators' knowledge base development is their teaching experiences as teacher educators. In this respect, the prior teaching knowledge that novice EFL teacher educators accumulated in EFL classrooms changes once they start teaching in language teacher education (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013). That is, EFL teacher educators develop a higher level of meta-cognitive capacity as they reflect on their pedagogical content knowledge, teaching environment, and on their pre-service or in-service student teachers (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005; Moradkhani et al., 2013).

Pursuing this further, in general teacher education, the source of teaching experiences as teacher educators has been recognized to play an important role in teacher educators' knowledge construction (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). For instance, Murray and Male (2005) said that novice teacher educators' pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills, and pedagogical reasoning change when they start working in teacher education programs. In other words, teacher educators grow a pedagogy for teaching student teachers (Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). In addition, Murray and Male (2005) found that "learning to become a teacher educator was seen as a slow, uncertain process, requiring the acquisition of new professional knowledge and understanding" (p. 130). They also found that "there was no straightforward transfer of the pedagogical knowledge and experience acquired in school teaching" (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 130).

As for Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators, I think they may experience something similar to what was found in the existing literature. I believe that part of their prior EFL teaching experience is transferred to their new teaching reality in language teacher education programs and that part of it is transformed as they become more experience teacher educators. An example of how Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base may change is the fact that they understand that their role is not only to teach English as Foreign or Second Language but also to help EFL student teachers become effective teachers. In this new scenario, teacher educators need to think more about what they will teach, to whom they will teach it, where they will teach it, and how they will teach it. In short, unlike EFL teachers who tend not to reflect much on their teaching practices, teacher educators develop a meta-cognitive capacity that allows them to reason about their role and work as teacher educators.

**2.3.1.6. Research knowledge related to English language teaching.**

The last source of knowledge from which EFL teacher educators build their knowledge

base is research knowledge related to English language teaching (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et

al., 2013; see also Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005). This source can be seen from two

perspectives. One, in which the EFL teachers or EFL teacher educators are consumers of

research (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013). In this case, the role of second and foreign

language related research keeps EFL teacher educators up-to-date of the existing knowledge in

the field (Macías, 2013). The second perspective has to do with EFL teachers or EFL teacher

educators being researchers themselves (Johnson, 2006; Macías, 2013). In this instance, teacher

educators examine teaching and learning issues that occur in their teaching environment and

share that research with other researchers in the field, contributing this way with new

perspectives about learning and teaching English and teacher preparation (Johnson, 2006;

Macías, 2013). As an EFL teacher educator myself, I agree that language learning and teaching

research contributes to strengthen one's knowledge base. Language research can keep us

updated of learning theories, teaching methods, teaching techniques, use of technology in EFL

classrooms, and so forth. Consequently, I think that other Nicaraguan EFL teachers may inform

their professional knowledge from existing research related to EFL/ESL teaching and research

on EFL/ESL language teacher education as well as from being producers of research themselves.



*Figure 1*. Sources of EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base

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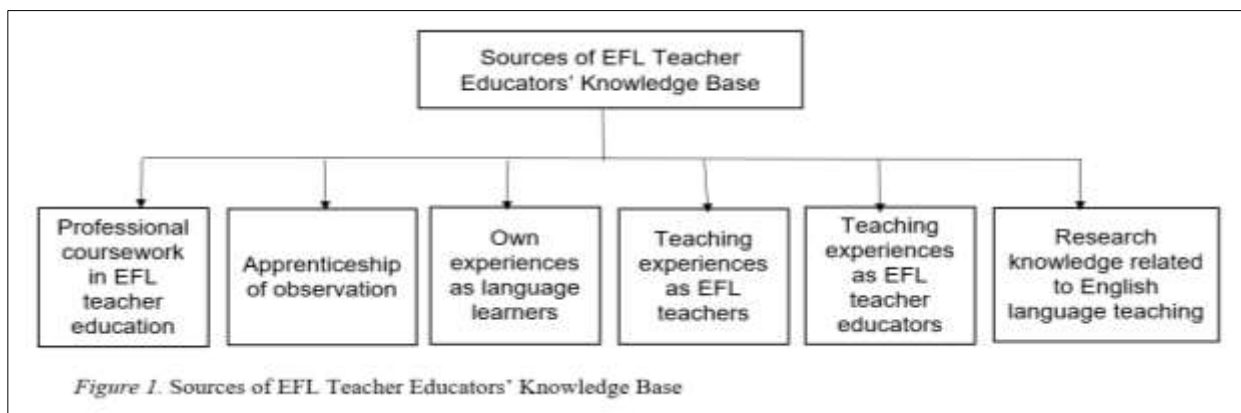
**2.3.2. Categorization of EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base**

The knowledge base of EFL teacher educators is rooted in the knowledge base of EFL teachers. However, the way this knowledge is constructed varies between EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators. Moradkhani et al. (2013), for instance, said that EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators shared some knowledge, but they differ in the depth on how they process and make use of that knowledge in their teaching task. Pursuing this further, Macías (2013) concurred with others (Fisher, 2009; Korthagen, 2000; Wilson, 2006) in that like in other fields of teacher education, the work of EFL teacher education is fulfilled with more experienced EFL teachers and EFL teachers who hold high academic degrees, such as master's degrees and Ph.D. degrees. This is exactly what happens in the EFL teacher education context in Nicaragua. Put differently, Nicaraguan EFL teacher education recruits EFL teachers to teach in teacher education programs either because they are thought to be very experienced in teaching English as Foreign Language in elementary schools, high schools, or in intensive English programs or because they hold graduate degrees. For example, master or Ph.D's degrees in areas related to teaching English as Foreign or Second Language. In other words, it has been assumed that EFL teachers may play the role of EFL teacher educators without many major difficulties. However, as shown by research (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Murray & Male, 2005), becoming an EFL teacher educator requires a more rigorous process than just being an EFL teacher. Therefore, it is necessary to understand not only the work of EFL teacher educators but also the way they build their knowledge base and categorization of this knowledge base in order to improve EFL teacher education programs and curricula devoted to prepare EFL teachers.

As for EFL teacher educators' knowledge, according to Macías (2013) and Moradkhani et al. (2013), even though the studies which investigated specifically the knowledge base of EFL

teacher educators are little and that more research is needed in this regard, there is a preliminary

conceptualization of the knowledge that EFL teacher educators should possess.  Moradkhani et

al. (2013), for instance, found that EFL teacher educators have eight types of knowledge.  For

example, EFL teacher educators possess knowledge of language and related disciplines

(Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Macías, 2013), which means that EFL teacher educators

should possess a native or native-like English proficiency and have a good command of other

fields that are directly or indirectly linked to English language teaching.

Another type of knowledge that EFL teacher educators have is knowledge of English

language teaching theories, skills, and techniques (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013).

Some of these theories were previously introduced in this literature review, for instance, the

behaviorist theory (Brooks, 1960; Krashen, 1982; Lado, 1957; Mayer, 2011), Krashen's theory

(Krashen, 1982), cognitive theory (Anderson, 1985; Karmiloff-Smith, 1987; Mayer, 2011;

McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996; Metchell & Myles, 2004; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Pienemann,

2003), and socio-cultural theory (Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Mayer, 2011; Metchell

& Myles, 2004; Vygotsky, 1987) and language teaching approaches, such as the direct approach,

audio-lingual approach, oral situational, affective-humanistic approach, comprehension-based

approach, and communicative approach (Celce-Murcia, 2001b; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; see

also Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 2008b).  According to Moradkhani et al. (2013), this

kind of knowledge can be defined as "knowledge of teaching language skills and components

and awareness of technicalities" (p. 131).

The third kind of knowledge that integrates the knowledge base of EFL teacher educators

is knowledge of context and social relations (Moradkhani et al., 2013).  This type of knowledge

is defined as "knowledge of the conditions in which teacher candidates work and the way to

behave with others" (Moradkhani et al., 2013, p. 131). In Richards' (1998) EFL knowledge base, he refers to this knowledge as contextual knowledge. Faez (2011) and Macías (2013) also found that having a good understanding of the context in which the teaching of second and foreign language occurs is really important for language teachers.

Additionally, knowledge of class, time, and learning management is also part of knowledge repertoire of EFL teacher educators (Moradkhani et al., 2013). Moradkhani et al. (2013) defined this competence as "knowledge of lesson planning and classroom and time management as well as differences in learning teaching among teacher candidates" (p. 132). Faez (2011) and Macías (2013) agree with Moradkhani et al. (2013) that it is critical that language teacher educators need a strong understanding to prepare lessons, effectively manage classroom, and comprehend learners' learning needs and differences.

Teacher educators also must have knowledge of research and professional development (Moradkhani et al., 2013). By this, Moradkhani et al. (2013) referred to understanding that EFL teachers should have regarding the different types of research and available English language teaching resources. For instance, knowledge of how to integrate technology in the classroom, ability to read quantitative and qualitative research, ability to have access to academic materials and teaching resources, knowledge beyond boundaries of books, and so forth. In this respect, Macías (2013) and Johnson (2006) thought that research awareness is beneficial for EFL teachers as well as for EFL teacher educators.

Another type of knowledge that integrates EFL teacher educators' knowledge base is what Moradkhani et al. (2013) called knowledge of practicum. By this they meant "knowledge of practical solutions which are based on theoretical underpinnings" (p. 132). Shulman (1987) called this type of teaching expertise pedagogical content knowledge, Richards (1998) named it

pedagogical reasoning and decision making, and Freeman and Johnson (1998) referred to it as pedagogical process. Regardless of the way it has been termed, this type of knowledge implies that EFL teacher educators are to be skillful in connecting theory and practice (Moradkhani et al., 2013).

The seventh category of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, according to Moradkhani et al. (2013), is knowledge of teachers and their assessment. This kind of knowledge implies that EFL teacher educators know the EFL teacher candidates to whom they teach and the way they should use assessment not only to measure their learning process but also to help teacher candidates use assessment as a tool to continue to learn (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013). In this regard, EFL teacher educators know how to motivate their student teachers to learn more effectively. They know how to provide appropriate and effective, scaffolding, feedback as well as to activate prior knowledge (Moradkhani et al., 2013). EFL teacher educators also know how to identify what Vygotsky (1987) called zones of proximal development in order to assist student teachers on acquiring those skills that they cannot develop on their own yet. This types of knowledge also suggests that EFL teacher educators must have knowledge of supervision. This knowledge is paramount for when educators supervise and observe student teachers in micro-teaching opportunities and in practicums (Moradkhani et al., 2013).

Lastly, knowledge of reflective and critical teaching is another fundamental component in EFL teacher educators' knowledge base (Moradkhani et al., 2013). This type of ability can be defined as "knowledge of the ways to be engaged in reflection and critical pedagogy" (Moradkhani et al., 2013, p. 133). Some instances of this knowledge are, for example, knowledge of oneself as EFL teacher educators, knowledge of provision of a good citizen model,

knowledge of fostering reflective teaching in teacher candidates, and knowledge of political

relations (Moradkhani et al., 2013).  According to Moradkhani et al. (2013), the four first

categories are shared by both EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators.

As can be seen, Moradkhani et al.'s (2013) EFL teacher educators' knowledge base

framework shares many similarities with the conceptual frameworks of the EFL knowledge base

presented, for example, by Richards (1998) and Freeman and Johnson (1998).  Richards (1998)

and Freeman and Johnson (1998), of course, examined their conceptualizations taking into

consideration EFL teachers.  Moradkhani et al. (2013) and Macías (2013) recognized that EFL

teachers possess similar knowledge to EFL teacher educators.  However, they differ in that the

latter possess a higher level of depth of their pedagogical knowledge and its degree of

consciousness.  Moradkhani et al. (2013) and Macías (2013) said that research regarding EFL

teacher educators' knowledge base is in its infancy, therefore, more research is needed to

continue to understand how EFL teacher educators build their knowledge base.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│    Sources of EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                         │
                         ▼
  • Professional coursework in EFL teacher education
  • Apprenticeship of observation
  • Own experiences as language learners
  • Teaching experiences as EFL teachers
  • Teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators
  • Research knowledge related to English language
    teaching
```

Result from sources of knowledge

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Categorization of EFL teacher Educators' Knowledge Base │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                         │
                         ▼
  ▪ Communication skills and language proficiency
  ▪ Theories of teaching
  ▪ Subject matter knowledge
  ▪ Teaching skills
  ▪ Pedagogical reasoning and decision making
  ▪ Knowledge of context and social relations
  ▪ Curriculum knowledge
  ▪ Knowledge of teachers and their assessment
  ▪ Knowledge of research and professional development
  ▪ Knowledge of reflective and critical teaching
  ▪ Knowledge of teacher supervision
```

*Figure 2.* Sources and Knowledge Categories of EFL Teacher Educators

## 2.4.  EFL Teacher Education in Nicaragua

In this section, I describe the educational context in which this study was carried out. First, I talk about the national educational context in Nicaragua and the role that the English language plays in schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sports as well as in other settings, such as, business.  Lastly, I describe the EFL teacher education context in which EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators are prepared.

**2.4.1. Nicaraguan Education System**

The Nicaraguan system of Education consists of a public and a private sector. The public system of education is financed by the government through the national budget. This means students can attend the public educational system for free, mainly early childhood education, elementary school, and high school (Ian Gershberg, 1999; Martinez Franzoni, 2013). Public higher education has a cost, but it is very low. For example, in some universities, such as, URACCAN University and UNAN University, students may pay about $30 a semester for tuition. On the other hand, the private sector is available for those people who do not want to attend the public education system, but unlike the public sector, students attending private schools have to pay out of their pocket for their education, which can go from $25 a month up to $500 and more a month, only for tuition (Martinez Franzoni, 2013). Both the public and private systems of education are composed of four subsystems, namely, early childhood education, elementary school, high school, and university. Early childhood education covers ages 3 to 5, elementary school covers children ranging from 6 to 11 years old, and high school education covers students from age 12 to 16 (Martinez Franzoni, 2013).

Pursuing this further, the subsystems of early childhood education, elementary school, and high school are run and coordinated by the Ministry of Education. It is the Ministry of Education who decide what is going to be taught (content); school teachers have autonomy to decide on the teaching methodologies to teach their subjects (Martinez Franzoni, 2013). There is a common core curriculum that needs to be followed by all private and public schools. The curriculum offers different subjects depending on the level of education, such as, physical education, art, mathematics, Spanish, social sciences, history, geography, natural sciences, chemistry, biology, physics, and English as a foreign language (Martinez Franzoni, 2013). As

for foreign languages, some private schools add to the common core curriculum other languages, for example, French and Chinese, among others.  The Ministry of Education also hires teachers to teach in public schools.  In the private sector, schools are in charge of recruiting their own teachers.

According to Martinez Franzoni (2013), both private and public universities have autonomy on deciding what majors or fields of study to offer.  However, they must abide by the standards set by the National Council of Universities (known as in Spanish as CNU), which is the maximum authority in change of supervising the work universities do in Nicaragua. Fields of study offered at universities range from 4 years to 5 years of study.  The types of degrees offered are mostly undergraduate and master's degrees.  Ph.D. are sometimes offered under the supervision of foreign universities.  Students interested in entering university have to take either an entrance exam or a pre-university program which consists of preparing them to survive at university level as well as to review some content in the areas of mathematics, chemistry, computer science, Spanish composition and reading comprehension, and philosophy of the respective university they choose to study.  As for entering private universities, in this case, what students do is just to register in the major of their interest and pay for fees and tuition charged by each specific university.

Lastly, the government expenditure on public education, early childhood, elementary, and high school, was 4.49 (GDP) and the total spending was 22.75 as of 2010.  Tertiary public education (university) receives the 6% of the national budget.  This 6% is divided into ten public universities.

**2.4.2. English Teaching in Nicaragua**

English has become an international language in today's world. It no longer belongs only to those countries where English is the native language; it is now the lingua franca (British Council, 2017; Fang, 2017). It is spoken by 1.75 billion people in the world, and it is estimated that by 2020 English will have 2 billion speakers (British Council, 2017). In the last decades, English as a Second Language speakers have outnumbered native speakers. Currently, there are only about 375 million native English speakers, being the United States, England, Canada, and New Zealand the countries with the majority of native speakers (The Statistics Portal, 2017). According to the British Council (2017), English is considered to be the language of communications, science, information technology, business, entertainment, tourism, and diplomacy. The number of non-native English speakers will continue to grow as more and more countries adopt English as their official language or as a second language to be taught in their education systems.

In Nicaragua, for instance, English has been taught for many decades both in the private and in the public education systems. In the private sector, English is taught in language academies, language institutes, and as part of the curricula of elementary schools, high schools, and universities. Regarding the public education system, English has been taught in high schools as well as in universities (Dávila, 2012, 2018; Chávez, 2006). Starting 2018, the Ministry of Education and the government have decided to offer English instruction to first graders nationwide. The purpose is to keep adding one grade each year until all elementary school grades receive English as a foreign language instruction. What the Ministry of Education seeks is to graduate future generations of elementary and high school students being bilinguals.

However, the quality of English teaching and learning varies from one institution to another. In general, some of these private and public language programs, mainly language academies and intensive English language programs offered by some universities, guarantee students to reach a communicative English level which allows them to interact in different environments, for instance, business, tourism, information technology, the workplace, and education.

In the public education system, English hasn't yet received enough attention.  In other words, even though, the government and the Ministry of Education have included English instruction in the curriculum, the amount of instructional hours is not sufficient (Chávez, 2006). For instance, high school students take 90 minutes of English instruction a week, split into two sessions of 45 minutes.  In addition to the insufficient time allowance for learning the English language in public elementary schools and in high schools, there are other variables which hinder the quality of teaching and learning of the English language, for example, classes are too large (35 to 60 students per class), students lack of quality learning materials, and untrained English teachers (Dávila, 2012, 2018; Velásquez, Espinoza Dixon, & Matamoros Avilés, 2016).  In most cases, high school English teachers are not able to communicate in English and they lack of pedagogical and didactic preparation (Chávez, 2006).  This means that most of the time, high school English teachers have not been trained to do such a job.

It does not mean, though, that all high schools English teachers belong to that category. There is a percentage of English teacher who either graduated from an English teacher education program or who still are taking classes in an English teacher education program to become English teachers.  Unfortunately, it occurs that sometimes those qualified English teachers are

not recruited by the Ministry of Education but by private schools or by language academies and universities.

In short, even though the Ministry of Education is carrying out some efforts to incorporate the teaching of English in the elementary and high school curricula, there is still a lot do. From a personal perspective, I think if the Ministry of Education really wants students to be bilingual by the time they finish high school, the teaching of English has to be taken seriously; otherwise, the Ministry of Education can say that English is taught in Nicaraguan public schools but nothing more. That is, to learn a language in a school setting, it depends on many variables, being the most important the amount of hours of instructions, the intensity of instruction, the quality of teaching materials, class size, and the quality and preparation of the instructors (Dávila, 2012). As for instructional hours, the Common European Framework of Reference for languages, learning, teaching, assessment, estimates that to take a student from a beginner level (A1) to an independent level of English proficiency (B2), it is necessary at least 800 hours of direct instruction. These instructional hours need to be taken in an intensive way (Council of Europe, 2011). As for teacher preparation, it is not possible to teach a language if you are not proficient in that language and if you do not possess the pedagogical knowledge and skills to teach it. In other words, the Ministry of Education should require that all its English teachers should possess at least a bachelor's degree in teaching English. Also, the Ministry of Education should create professional development opportunities to systematically train its English teachers. If class size, teaching materials, instructional hours, and quality of English teacher improve, maybe then, Nicaraguan students would communicate in English by the time they finish high school.

### 2.4.3. EFL Teacher Education in Nicaragua

English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher education in Nicaragua has to do with the preparation of English teachers.  EFL teacher education programs are offered by both private and public universities.  It takes a preservice student-teacher four or five years to graduate from an EFL teacher education program.  Nicaraguan EFL teacher education programs differ from English teaching education programs offered in English speaking universities, such as, in countries like the USA, Canada, New Zeeland, and Australia, which focus only on equipping student-teachers with the pedagogical knowledge, dispositions, and skills needed to teach English.

The curricula in Nicaraguan EFL teacher education programs, commonly, are structured to provide preservice student-teachers with general knowledge in the field of education, language proficiency knowledge and skills, and pedagogical related knowledge and skills (McLean, Dávila, Henríquez, & Bush, 2010).  Pursuing this further, I think Nicaraguan EFL teacher education programs seek to accomplish to goals.  The first goal is to equip preservice student-teachers with at least an independent level of English proficiency, Level B2, (as described by the Common European Framework of Reference for languages learning, Council of Europe, 2011), before they start taking the pedagogical and didactic related courses.  The main approach of instruction to help student-teachers develop English proficiency is the communicative approach.  Mostly, EFL teacher education programs follow an intensive mode of instruction.  Students acquired the English language presented in courses based on specific skills to be developed, for instance, English listening and speaking courses, reading writing courses, grammar, vocabulary, academic English, English conversation, and so forth (McLean et al., 2010).  Also, independent learning is emphasized.  In other words, preservice student-teachers are provided with guidance

and learning materials for them to self-regulate their own learning. Once student-teachers are able to communicate in English, they start taking the subjects intended to prepare them to teach the English language.

The second goal that Nicaraguan ELF teacher education programs seek is to equip preservice student-teachers with all the types of knowledge and skills that student teachers would need to teach the English language. Among others, these types of knowledge are pedagogical, didactic knowledge, knowledge of assessment, lesson planning, course design, computer related knowledge, content knowledge, knowledge of Nicaraguan context of education, and research knowledge (McLean et al., 2010). Once students have finished taking most of their pedagogical subjects, they take their practicum wherein they apply all the knowledge and skills they developed in their teacher education program. In most universities, EFL student teachers graduate with a research study, in which they investigate a research problem related to the acquisition of the English language.

Finally, another component that is worth talking about here is the type of English teachers who are recruited to teach in Nicaraguan EFL teacher education programs. First, I would like to highlight that teacher education programs to prepare what is called in the literature as teacher educators or teachers of teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Koster et al., 2005; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2010) are nonexistent in Nicaragua. EFL teacher education programs prepare English teachers to teach at elementary, high school, and university level. Preservice student-teachers are taught to teach the English language and not to teach or train other English teachers. Since there is no any specific EFL teacher preparation program to teach preservice teachers to teach other teachers, universities in Nicaragua recruit those most experienced EFL teachers or those EFL teachers with higher

academic degrees to become EFL teacher educators. It is through actual teaching to preservice student-teachers in teacher education programs where those recruited English teachers complete the process of becoming teacher educators. Here their job is not only to teach English but also to help student-teachers develop pedagogical and didactic knowledge to teach the English language. In this scenario, it is necessary to examine how English teachers who teach in EFL teacher education programs become teacher educators. It is also necessary to understand what type of knowledge they possess.

## 2.5. Call for more Research on EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base

The literature review I conducted revealed that more research was needed to understand how teacher educators build their knowledge. In general teacher education, for instance, researchers said that it was paramount to understand how teachers of teacher candidates, as they referred to teacher educators in general, acquired the knowledge and skills they need to teach effectively in teacher education programs (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Koster, Brekelmans, Korthagen, & Wubbels, 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2010). These researchers implied that there may be a difference between the types of knowledge teachers in general have and the types of knowledge teacher educators possess. Loughran (2005) and Bullock (2009) said that teacher educators possess a higher meta-cognitive knowledge about learning and teaching theories compared to teachers. Teacher educators are more updated and more aware of the latest research on teacher education (Zeichner, 2005) as well as with teaching practices (Ariza, Pozo, & Toscano, 2002; Zeichner, 2012).

In EFL teacher education, where this study falls, the main focus of the existing body of research has been placed on investigating the types of knowledge that constitute the knowledge base of second and foreign language teachers (Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson,

1998; Layette, 1993; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Richards, 1998).  Some of the most common

frameworks can be seen in table 2 (*EFL Teachers' Knowledge Base Frameworks*).  Researchers

in the field of EFL teacher education believed that research specifically about EFL teacher

educators' preparation has been ignored.  Only a few studies closely related to this topic were

found (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013), which I have synthesized in this literature

review.  They concluded that what they found regarding EFL teacher educators' knowledge is

just the beginning.  Even though, they suggested that their findings may help inform the field of

EFL teacher educators as well as the current state of research, they called for more research

studies to examine EFL teacher educators' different dimensions of their pedagogical knowledge

and experiences to become EFL teacher educators.  In the same line of thought, Hinkle, (2005,

2011, 2017) called also for more research to continue to understand the work that language

teachers and educators do in language teacher education.  Additionally, Zhang (2008) said that

research on teachers' knowledge has to cover these three components, namely, sources of

knowledge, types of knowledge, and the relationship of teachers' knowledge and classroom

practices, in order to have a fuller understanding of how teachers' build their knowledge and the

usefulness in their teaching practice.  Research that includes only one or two of these issues

would be considered incomplete (Zhang, 2008).

      Therefore, in order to contribute to grow the research body about EFL teacher educators,

I conducted a phenomenological qualitative study to examine the shared lived experiences of

Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators regarding the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators'

knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that constructed their knowledge base, and

the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices in the context of teacher

education in Nicaragua.  To explore these issues, I examined one main research question and

three research subquestions, namely, (1) central research question: How do EFL teacher educators construct their knowledge base in an EFL teacher education program in a public university in Nicaragua? (2) Sub-questions: What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base? What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators? and How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices? More details about the procedures and research participants used to carry out this study are presented in chapter three, *Methodology*.

## 2.6. Conceptual Framework Guiding this Study

The conceptual framework that I utilized to inform this study was drawn from the literature review presented above. I drew on literature that pertains to EFL teachers' knowledge base as well as on literature that examined EFL teacher educators' preparation and preparation of educators in general education. Based on the existing literature, EFL teacher educators may build their knowledge base form six main sources (*See Figure 1. Sources of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base*) (Arıoğul, 2007; Attardo & Brown, 2005; Borg, 2004; Grossman, 1990; Koster et al., 2005; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Poynor, 2005; Tsui, 2003; Zhang, 2008). Therefore, I utilized those six areas as a departure point to better understand and describe how the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators who participated in this study acquired their knowledge and teaching experience that determined them as teacher educators. I also categorized their knowledge base and described the relationships that they found between their knowledge base and the language teacher education classrooms where they taught (*See Figure 3. Conceptual Framework of Nicaraguan EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base*). In addition, part of the conceptual framework that guided this study was Richards' (1998) framework of EFL teachers' knowledge base (*See Table 2. EFL*

*Teachers' Knowledge Base Frameworks),* Moradkhani et al.'s (2013) findings about English

language teacher educators' knowledge base (see section 2.3.2. *EFL teacher educators'*

*knowledge base*), and Day (1993) and Richards' (2013) curriculum models for delivering

knowledge base in language teacher education, namely, apprentice-expert model, rationalist

model, case studies model, and integrative model, Forward Design, Central Design, and

Backward Design.  I decided to use these frameworks because on one hand, Richards' (1998)

framework was one of the most complete conceptualizations of EFL teachers' knowledge base

and Moradkhani et al.'s (2013) findings were specifically on English language teacher educators

and because these knowledge base conceptualizations kind of adapted to the reality of EFL

teacher education in Nicaragua.  On the other hand, Day (1993) and Richards' (2013) curriculum

approaches helped explain how Nicaraguan EFL teacher education programs delivered the

knowledge base they valued more to prepare EFL teachers.  Lastly, I also utilized the literature

review in general to support the findings of this study.

Sources of EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge

Professional coursework in EFL teacher education

Apprenticeship of observation

Own experiences as language learners

Teaching experiences as EFL teachers

Teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators

Research knowledge related to English

Result from sources of knowledge

Categorization of Nicaraguan EFL teacher Educators' Knowledge

Personal knowledge base

(Filters: Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators teaching beliefs, context)

Classroom context

(Filters: Curriculum, language student teachers, teaching materials and resources, etc)

Knowledge Based and Language Teacher Education Classroom Relationships

*Figure 3.* Conceptual Framework of Nicaraguan EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base

# CHAPTER 3

## METHODOLOGY

The knowledge base that English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers should develop in EFL pre-service teacher education programs to teach English effectively has been investigated extensively (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Layette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; see also Faez, 2011; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Tedick, 2005).  However, there are few studies that have examined the types of knowledge that those professionals who prepare EFL teachers must have (e.g., Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013).  Consequently, the focus of this study will be to further investigate the types of knowledge of this group of EFL professionals, who in this study will be called EFL teacher educators.  For the purpose of this study, I define EFL teacher educators combining the definitions of EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators presented by Moradkhani et al. (2013).  That is, EFL teacher educators in the context of Nicaraguan teacher education programs can be defined as *language teaching experts who help EFL teacher candidates develop English proficiency and who provide formal instruction and support for teacher candidates to become effective English as a Foreign Language teachers*.  This study falls under a qualitative approach of inquiry (Creswell, 2014; van Manen, 1990).  It requires a focus on an iterative and thoughtful engaging process with the data (van Manen, 1990).  As a way to provide readers a sense of direction of the stages of the design of this study, I will utilize the qualitative format proposed by Creswell (2014).  Therefore, after presenting the purpose of the study and research questions, this chapter provides (a) the philosophical worldview that will inform this qualitative research, (b) the design to address the proposed research questions, (c) role of the researcher, (d) data collection procedures, (e) data analysis

procedures, (f) strategies for validating findings, (g) anticipated ethical issues, and (h) proposed narrative structure of the study.

## 3.1. Research Purpose and Research Questions

### 3.1.1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that constructed their knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices in a teacher education program at a Nicaraguan University. *EFL teacher educators' knowledge base was defined as the understanding, awareness, expertise, knowledge, and skills that equipped Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators to provide effective teaching, pedagogically and linguistically speaking.* Pursuing this further, Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators were defined as *language teaching experts who helped EFL teacher candidates develop English proficiency and who provided formal instruction and support for teacher candidates to become effective English as a Foreign Language teachers.* The phenomenon investigated in this study was Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base construction.

To explore this issue, I examined the following research questions:

### 3.1.2. Central Research Question

- How do EFL teacher educators construct their knowledge base in an EFL teacher education program in a public university in Nicaragua?

#### 3.1.2.1. Subquestions.

- What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base?

- What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators?

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- How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices?

## 3.2. Philosophical Worldview Informing this Qualitative Research

A social constructivist interpretative philosophical worldview informed this phenomenological study (Creswell, 2013). Ontologically, a social constructivist interpretative paradigm allowed me to understand the multiple realities of how the target participants had socially constructed the types of knowledge and skills that identify them as EFL teacher educators (Creswell, 2013; Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006; Merriam, 2009; van Manen, 1990). These multiple realities were reported as themes that emerged from the data gathered (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Epistemologically, I acknowledged that reality, as far as this study was concerned, were constructed collaboratively between the researcher and research participants and ultimately, that knowledge was created by individual experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2013; Lichtman, 2013; Merriam, 2009). From an axiological stance, I recognized that qualitative inquiry is value-laden; therefore, biases were always present, even when efforts for objectivity were made. However, I made an effort to be reflective in all stages of the study and used direct quotes from the data as much as possible to represent and describe what accounted as knowledge for the EFL teacher educators as far as the phenomenon under investigation had to do (Creswell, 2013). Lastly, methodologically, a social constructivist interpretative philosophical worldview allowed me to follow an inductive approach to collect and analyze the generated research data (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). In other words, the themes that became the units of analysis in this study came from the data. The existing literature was used as a support of the findings.

### 3.3. Research Design to Address the Proposed Research Questions

This study was conducted under a qualitative phenomenological research design.

Phenomenological research, according to Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2014), was first used

in philosophy and psychology.  Also, it has been used in EFL teacher education.  For instance, it

has been used to study issues related to EFL learning and teaching (Gan, 2013; Tercanlioglu,

2008; Valencia, 2009).  Phenomenology (Creswell, 2013, 2014) was an appropriate research

approach to this study because it tries to understand the meaning of lived experiences of several

research participants who have experienced the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2009, 2013, 2014;

Lichtman, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Paton, 2002; van Manen, 1990), which in this case was the

lived experiences of how EFL teacher educators constructed their knowledge base in an EFL

teacher education program in Nicaragua.  Pursuing this further, the role of qualitative

phenomenological studies lies in that the focus is not on the appearance of the phenomenon

under study, per se, but on the essences of it (Creswell, 2013; Larkin, & Thompson, 2012; Larkin

et al., 2006; Merriam, 2009; Smith, 2004, 2011; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; van Manen,

1990).  Said another way, as van Manen (1990) and Paton (2002) would put it,

phenomenological studies seek to document in a deeper and fuller way what the meaning or

essence of a phenomenon is.  In this study, that was exactly what was intended to accomplish

because the main purpose was to understand what types of knowledge and skills meant the most

for the chosen Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators in order to perform their teaching practices in

EFL teacher education classrooms.

### 3.4. Role of the Researcher

According to Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2009, 2013), even though qualitative

research is subjective, a qualitative phenomenological researcher is to be as objective as possible.

Meaning that the researcher needs to acknowledge as openly as possible his beliefs, values,

potential biases, and any experiences related to the phenomenon under investigation or any type of connections with the research participants that could influence the study. In other words, as a qualitative phenomenological researcher, I had to go beyond my personal experiences and understanding of the phenomenon I investigated so that I could interpret the target research phenomenon taking into consideration the research participants' points of view (Creswell, 2009, 2013; Moustakas, 1994).

### 3.4.1. Positionality

For starters, I would like to say that there was no power conflict with the potential research participants. The closest relationship I had with them was the fact that they might have met me at the target university where this study took place which was my workplace before I left my country. However, I did not meet them neither as students nor as colleagues. In other words, I did not teach any courses to the cohort of EFL teacher candidates to which the chosen research participants belonged. Furthermore, they were recruited as EFL teacher educators by the time I was already in the United States. It means that the potential participants worked as EFL teachers for some years in high school, elementary schools, or in intensive English programs before they were recruited as faculty for the EFL teacher education program at the target research site.

However, the fact that I was pursuing a Ph.D. in an American university might have influenced the rapport process with my prospective research participants and, to a certain degree, the quality of this study as well. In other words, in Nicaragua, it is very common that if someone holds a Ph.D. degree from an American university, that person might be seen as more educated compared with those who just hold degrees from local universities, which was the case of all potential participants. None of them had studied abroad and the highest level of education among them was a master's degree. In this regard, there was the possibility that research participants would provide little information because they might have thought that what they had experienced

in becoming teacher educators was not important.  In order to avoid that, I tried to establish good rapport in which they felt comfortable and in which they felt that they were the experts in what they were interviewed.  Besides, I told them that everything they might say about their lived experiences regarding the types of knowledge and the way they have constructed those types of knowledge and skills as EFL teacher educators was important and what it mattered was the meaning they had constructed out of those experiences, not what I, as a researcher, might think about it.

Another element that might have interfered with the quality of my study was the level of awareness that I had developed about my research topic both from my own experience as an EFL teacher educator and from the existing body of literature I had already reviewed.  In order to minimize a negative influence from the level of familiarity with my research topic, I tried not to include leading questions in my interview protocol.  I made the best effort to elicit data only from the research participants to inform the research questions of my study.  During the whole study, I stuck to analyze only the information I gathered through the interviews and document analysis.  I also utilized member check as a strategy to validate the data I collected.  Lastly, I used the literature review to support the findings of this study.

In terms of culture, I would say that being a Nicaraguan researcher and the fact that I had been part of the community where the potential participants were from helped me establish a good rapport process with them.  I understood how people behaved culturally in that specific city where the research site was located.  Therefore, I think I was able to make the potential research participants feel comfortable during the interviews because I knew what to ask and what not to from a cultural perspective.

Finally, my interviewing expertise could have been another issue that might have interfered in the quality of the data I collected from my prospective research participants. However, in an attempt to guarantee that I was going to collect meaningful data to inform the research questions of this study, I used a semi-structured interview protocol. Utilizing a semi-structured interview protocol gave me more confidence on conducting the interviews because I had a set of major questions with me the day of the interviews and the interview questions were ordered in a way that it allowed me not to get lost in the process (Lichtman, 2013). Moreover, a semi-structured interview protocol permitted me to probe or ask some other questions as data emerged during the interviews (Lichtman, 2013).

## 3.5. Data Collection Procedures

In order to gather data for this qualitative phenomenological study, I followed the data collection actions proposed by Creswell (2013). According to Creswell (2013), these are some of the activities that qualitative researchers would need to perform (a) locate the research site, (b) decide on a sample selection technique, (c) gain access to research participants, (d) explain the methods for data collection, and (e) explicate the data recording and storing process.

### 3.5.1. Research Site

To carry out this qualitative phenomenological study, the research site was purposefully selected. Purposeful research sites "purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2013, p. 156). Therefore, this study took place in an EFL teacher education program at a public university located on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. I chose this research site because this public university met a particular characteristic which was that all potential research participants graduated from the EFL teacher education program offered in this university and who later were recruited as EFL teacher

educators by the EFL teacher education program at this university.  There were other EFL teacher education programs offered at other public and private universities in Nicaragua, but their faculty graduated mostly from different universities.  I thought that recruiting a sample of EFL teacher educators who graduated from the same teacher education program would give more consistency to the findings because in some way I expected that they had lived the experience of becoming EFL teacher educators in a similar way.  For example, all participants graduated from the same pre-service teacher education program, worked as high school teachers for some time, and then were recruited to be part of the faculty in the EFL teacher education program at the university from which they graduated.

### 3.5.2.  Proposed Sample

According to Hycner (1985), in a phenomenological study, the phenomenon under investigation guides what method is to be used for both data collection and the strategy for recruiting research participants.  In regard to the strategy for recruiting potential participants for this qualitative phenomenological study, I used a purposeful sampling.  A purposeful sampling, according to Creswell (2013, 2014), permits the researcher to recruit research participants who would purposefully provide meaningful data regarding the central phenomenon of the study.  In other words, the participants were selected based on my judgment, as a researcher, and based on the purpose of the study.  For this study, I included six research participants, all of them were EFL teacher educators who worked in a pre-service EFL teacher education program in a public university in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.  This was an appropriate sample for this study because, according to Creswell (2013, 2014), phenomenological research can have sample sizes ranging from three to ten and more participants.  Furthermore, I considered that both the research site and sample met the characteristics to inform the research phenomenon of this study

(Creswell, 2014, Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990).  I would like to say that there were more than six research participants in the chose EFL teacher education program.  However, when I contacted the respective authority of the target university to ask permission to conduct this study, I asked him to share with me the list of EFL teacher educators who had three or more years of teaching experience as language teacher educators.  The decision to set this inclusion criterion to purposefully choose the research participants was informed by the existing literature that said that it takes at least three years to teachers to become teacher educators (Murray & Male, 2005).  The list of potential research participants I was provided had only six language educators who met the three year teaching experience criterion.  Then I contacted all six, and they agreed on participating in this study.

### 3.5.3. Inclusion Criteria for the Research Site and Sample

#### 3.5.3.1. The research site (target EFL teacher education program).

- Met the requirement to inform the research phenomenon that was investigated (Creswell, 2013, 2014).

- Was located in a public university in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.

- Was devoted to prepare preservice teacher candidates.

- Was intended for teacher candidates to learn English as a Foreign Language and become EFL teachers at the same time.

#### 3.5.3.2. The research participants.

- Met the characteristics to inform the research phenomenon under investigation (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990) which in this case had to do with the knowledge base that EFL teachers need to become EFL teacher educators and the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices.

- Graduated from the EFL teacher education program where they taught by the time data was collected.

- Had at least three years of teaching experience at the chosen research site. According to Murray and Male (2005), it takes the new teacher educators up to three years to develop part of their new professional knowledge as teacher educators.

- Were willing to understand the nature of their lived experiences as EFL teacher educators (Moustakas, 1994).

- Accepted to participate voluntarily (Lichtman, 2013; Moustakas, 1994).

- Allowed voluntarily the researcher to digitally record, store, and publish data (Moustakas, 1994).

### 3.5.4. Gaining Access to Research Participants

Concerning the process of obtaining research participants and other sources of information, for example, documents, for this qualitative phenomenological study, I proceeded as follows.  First, I sent an email to the Coordinator of the target EFL teacher education program at the chosen university where this study took place.  Attached to this email, I sent him a cover letter in which I asked permission to conduct research at the chosen research site, I informed him about the purpose of my study, and I asked for a list of language teacher educators who had three or more years of teaching experience in the chosen teacher education program and asked for their emails as well.  The Coordinator of the language teacher education program sent me a list of six potential research participants who might purposefully integrate the sample of this study. Additionally, I attached a copy of the interview protocol that I would use to interview potential research participants so he saw that my study did not represent any harm neither to the prospective participants nor to the target EFL teacher education program in general.

Once granted the permission to collect data and once I obtained the list of the six language teacher educators and their emails, I contacted them via email and asked them if they would be willing to participate in my research study regarding their lived experiences of becoming EFL teacher educators. All of them accepted to participate in this study. Then I sent them an informed consent letter. In the consent form, I informed them that their participation was totally voluntarily, and that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to do so. Also, I let them know the purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study, I told them that they were going to be interviewed once and that the interview would last for about 60 minutes, I informed them that the data collected were going to be used only for the purpose of this study, and I asked them permission to audiotape the interviews.

### 3.5.5. Data Collection Methods

As for data gathering, I utilized two data collection methods. I conducted semi-structured interviews with six EFL teacher educators, who represented the hundred percent of the target research participants who met the criteria to inform the research questions of this study. With regard to the appropriateness of type of interviews I conducted, according to Lichtman (2013), new qualitative interviewers find semi-structured interviews to be a useful method for data gathering because semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to follow a general set of questions and format. This type of qualitative data collection method is probing friendly (Creswell, 2013; Lichtman, 2013), which means that I was able to ask follow-up questions for clarification when needed during the interviews.

The second method for data collection that I used was document analysis (Creswell, 2014; Lichtman, 2013). In this regard, I performed a curriculum analysis of the curriculum employed to prepare pre-service EFL teachers in the target teacher education program. Pursuing

this further, I also analyzed three other types of documents: (1) six syllabi of courses taught by the target participants, (2) six lesson plans used by research participants to teach in their EFL teacher education classrooms, and (3) six pieces of assessment evidence employed to assess student learning.

I collected research data in three stages (*See Table 3. Data Collection Phases*). In stage one, I analyzed the curriculum utilized to prepare EFL student teachers in the chosen EFL teacher education program. According to the existing literature the curriculum used to prepare EFL teachers at a specific teacher education program is one of the sources of knowledge of EFL teacher educators (Arıoğul, 2007; Attardo & Brown, 2005; Borg, 1998, 2005; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Poynor, 2005; Richards, 1998; Tsui, 2003; Zhang, 2008). Therefore, the main purpose of carrying out this curriculum analysis was to have a better understanding of the types of knowledge and skills that EFL student teachers were expected to acquire in the target teacher education program. The curriculum analysis allowed me to develop a more informed semi-structured interview protocol to investigate if what the curriculum stated was aligned with the types of knowledge and skills that the target research participants thought they possessed as EFL teacher educators.

In stage two, I interviewed six EFL teacher educators about their lived experiences of becoming teacher educators. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to inform the proposed research questions regarding the sources of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that integrated that knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices as well as to inquire if what the participants said about their knowledge base construction, aligned in some way with the findings that resulted from curriculum analysis. Pursuing this further, the semi-structured interview protocol was created by

the researcher of this study under the supervision and guidance of his doctoral dissertation committee, as well as taking into account the findings of the curriculum analysis.  It consisted of an introduction, in which I introduced myself as a researcher, presented the purpose of this study, and let potential participants know that their participation was totally voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time if they wished to do so.  The interview protocol also had a background information section, where I asked for demographic information, such as, age, gender, academic level, years of teaching in EFL teacher education programs, and courses the target teacher educators taught.  In addition, it had three more sections with interview questions to inform the proposed research questions.  These sections were: (1) experiences of knowledge base construction, composed of eleven questions; (2) types of knowledge and skills that constructed Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, comprised of six questions; and (3) relationship between EFL teacher educators' knowledge base and classroom practices, composed of five questions.  There were twenty-two questions in total (see Appendix A – *Instruments*). Each interview lasted about sixty minutes.  Before administering the instruments, I used the technique known as pilot-testing to validate the interview protocols.  Since the results of the pilot test was considered appropriate, I decided to administer it to the researched.  Each participant was interviewed only one time.  Finally, I used Skype to conduct the interviews with the chosen EFL teacher educators.

In stage three, I conducted the analysis of three other types of documents.  The purpose of this document analysis was to guarantee a way of triangulation of sources of information (Creswell, 2014; Rolfe, 2006).  The three types of documents I analyzed in this stage were: (1) six syllabi, (2) six lesson plans; and (3) six pieces of assessment evidence.  The analysis of these documents was intended to collect data to investigate if what the research participants said about

the construction of their knowledge base aligned with what they did in their EFL teacher

education classrooms.  I asked each research participant to allow me access to these documents

right after the interviews.

Table 3

*Data Collection Phases*

| Phases | Source of data | Question(s) addressed |
|---|---|---|
| **Phase 1**: Analyze the EFL curriculum of the target teacher education program to examine the types of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that EFL student teachers are expected to acquire in the chosen teacher education program and as result better inform the types of questions that may be asked in the semi-structured interview protocol. | Curriculum analysis | What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base? |
| | | What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators? |
| | | How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices? |
| **Phase 2:** Gather data to investigate the sources of knowledge of Nicaraguan EFL Teacher Educators' KB, types of knowledge they possess, and relationship of this KB and classroom practices as well as to inquire to what extent these findings align with what was found in the curriculum analysis. | One-shot semi-structured interview with six EFL teacher educators | What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base? |
| | | What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators? |
| | | How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices? |
| **Phase 3**: Analyze syllabi, lessons, and assessment evidence (rubrics/exam or assignment) utilized by the target participants to investigate if what they say about the construction of their KB aligns with what they do in their EFL teacher education classrooms. | Document analysis of six syllabi, six lesson plans, and six pieces of assessment evidence | What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base? |
| | | What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators? |
| | | How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices? |

### 3.5.6.  Data Recording and Storing Process

As for data recording, I utilized a strategy known as audiotaping.  According to Creswell (2014), audiotaping is utilized to record interviews data.  Since Skype did not have any application to audiotape, I used my personal computer to audiotape the interviews.  I informed the research participants beforehand that they were going to be audiotaped and that the audio files resulting from the interviews and the transcriptions of these interviews were going to be kept safe and confidential in a folder that I created for that purpose and that I was the only person who had access to it.  With regard to data storing, I created and kept a separate Word document with the codes corresponding to the audio files, interview transcriptions, and documents provided by the research participants.  These data were kept password protected in a folder in my personal computer.  Again, I was the only one having access to it.  Finally, I let research participants know that the audiotaped interviews, transcriptions of the interviews, syllabi, lesson plans, and pieces of assessment evidence, were going to be destroyed 5 years afterwards, starting from the time the interviews took place.

### 3.6. Data Analysis Procedures

In order to analyze data, I used the Interactive Model of Qualitative Data Analysis (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014), which consists of four steps: (1) Data collection, gathering data from participants and other data sources such as documents; (2) Data condensation, coding data by process of focusing, selecting, abstracting, transforming the data that appears in the full corpus of written-up interviews; (3) Data display, an organized, compressed assembly of information that allows conclusion drawing and action, e.g., matrix, graphs, charts, and networks; and (4) Conclusions drawing/verification, examining what things meat by noting patterns, explanations, casual flows, and propositions.  Pursuing this further, this analytic process

consists of a thematic analysis, which includes both inductive coding coming from the gathered

data and deductive coding coming from the existing literature or theory (Miles et al., 2014).

### 3.6.1. The Interactive Model of Qualitative Data Analysis Applied to this Study

For the data collection stage of this model, I proceeded as described in table 3 (*Data*

*Collection Phases*). In other words, I collected data in three phases. In phase one, I proceeded

as follows. I carried out an analysis of the curriculum used in the target EFL teacher education

program to investigate the types of knowledge and skills that EFL student teachers were

expected to acquire in the chosen teacher education program. The findings of this curriculum

analysis better informed the type of questions that I asked in the semi-structured interviews,

meant to inquire if what the curriculum said was aligned with the types of knowledge and skills

that the participants thought they had as EFL teacher educators. I used Saldaña's (2013) first

cycle and second cycle coding model to analyze data from the curriculum analysis. For the first

cycle of coding, I utilized the coding method known as In Vivo coding (Miles et al., 2014;

Saldaña, 2013). In Vivo coding, according to Miles et al. (2014), fits any qualitative study, and

it is helpful when the researcher is not that experienced in coding data because In Vivo utilizes

words or short phrases used in the documents or interview transcripts being analyzed. That is to

say, I used In Vivo coding to extract statements directly from the curriculum that are considered

significant to inform the research questions. I clustered them based on their formulated meaning

to obtain themes that became units of analysis when describing findings of this curriculum

examination. I applied the data display stage at this point. That is to say, once I had coded the

data from the curriculum using In Vivo coding, I used a matrix to display all the extracted

themes clustered by related units of meaning. After that, I conducted Pattern Coding. In this

cycle, the coding developed in using In Vivo was condensed to a smaller number of themes, which then became the units of analysis when writing the findings report.

As for the conclusions drawing/verification stage in this curriculum analysis, I integrated the findings into an in-depth description of the phenomenon being researched. In order to better inform each research question of this study and as a way of increasing credibility (Creswell, 2013, 2014), I used direct quotes from the data taken from the curriculum analysis. In chapter 5, I related the findings to the existing literature and conceptual framework that informed this study (Arıoğul, 2007; Attardo & Brown, 2005; Borg, 2004; Day, 1993; Grossman, 1990; Koster et al., 2005; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Poynor, 2005; Richards, 1998, 2013; Tsui, 2003; Zhang, 2008).

To analyze data collected in phase two and three of the data gathering process (*See Table 3. Data Collection Phases*), I applied the same four stages of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) Model of Qualitative Data Analysis. With regard to the data collection stage, I first conducted the semi-structured interviews with six EFL teacher educators. I transcribed the audiotaped interviews using a Microsoft word processor and double-checked the transcriptions and the audio recordings to ensure an accurate transcription of the data. Second, I obtained from each participant a syllabus, a lesson plan, and a piece of assessment evidence used to teach in the target teacher education program for the document analysis. The semi-structured interviews analysis was meant to inquire if what participants said about their knowledge base construction was related to what was found in the curriculum analysis. The document analysis was to examine if the knowledge and skills that the research participants said they possessed was related to what they did in the EFL teacher education classrooms.

As for the condensation stage to code the data from the semi-structured interviews and the document analysis, I also used Saldaña's (2013) first cycle and second cycle coding model. I utilized In Vivo coding to extract statements directly from the interview transcripts and from the syllabi, lesson plans, and pieces of assessment evidence that were considered relevant to inform the research questions. I grouped them depending on their formulated meaning to obtain themes or categories common to all participants represented in the interview transcripts and documents analyzed. The data display stage was used at this point. That is the extracted codes using In Vivo coding were displayed in a matrix, clustered by related units of meaning. After that, I used Pattern Coding. In this cycle the coding developed in using In Vivo was condensed to a smaller number of categories or themes, which then became the units of analysis when writing the findings report.

Finally, in the conclusions drawing/verification stage, I integrated the findings into an in-depth description of the phenomenon being researched. To increase the credibility of this study (Creswell, 2013, 2014), I used direct quotes from the interview transcriptions and document analysis. Also, to make this study more credible, I utilized member checks to validate the findings with the participants (Creswell, 2013, 2014). Lastly, in chapter 5, I related the findings to the existing literature and conceptual framework that informed this study (Arıoğul, 2007; Attardo & Brown, 2005; Borg, 2004; Day, 1993; Grossman, 1990; Koster et al., 2005; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Poynor, 2005; Richards, 1998, 2013; Tsui, 2003; Zhang, 2008).

### 3.7. Strategies for Validating Findings

In an attempt to guarantee rigor and trustworthiness of the findings of this qualitative phenomenological study, I proceeded as follows. In order to secure credibility, I utilized

triangulation of data sources to collect data (Creswell, 2014; Rolfe, 2006). For example, in the three phases in which I collected data (*See Table 3. Data Collection Phases*), I conducted a curriculum analysis, used semi-structured interviews with six EFL teacher educators, and performed a document analysis to six syllabi, six lesson plans, and six pieces of assessment evidence to build a coherent justification for the themes I found in the data. I also used member checks with the research participants to determine the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2014). In this regard, I sent them the transcripts of the interviews so they could verify that what I was going to use as direct quotes and as data for the findings report was what they had said regarding the research problem under investigation. I tried to guarantee transferability by providing a thick description of the findings (Creswell, 2014; Rolfe, 2006). I supported this thick description with direct quotes from the data and with citations from the existing literature. Dependability and confirmability was addressed by using constant reflexivity in all stages of the study (Creswell, 2014; Rolfe, 2006).

### 3.8. Anticipated Ethical Issues

I took into account some ethical considerations as I conducted this qualitative phenomenological study. For instance, prior to gathering data from my potential research participants, I sought approval from the Institutional Research Board (IRB) at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) to collect data (Creswell, 2014). I informed the IRB at SIUC that I would utilize semi-structured interviews to gather data from six EFL teacher educators and that I would request from each participant some documents that I would use as sources of data collection, namely, a course syllabus, a lesson plan, and a piece of assessment evidence that the potential participants had used when teaching in their EFL teacher education classrooms in the target research site. The SIU IRB was informed as well that I, as a researcher, did not have any

conflict of power with the research participants and that my study did not represent any harm to the researched.  I also informed them that I would use pseudonyms as a way to protect the privacy and anonymity of the potential participants.  The pseudonyms I used to replace the actual names of my research participants were: Roder, Andres, Diego, Carmen, Josseling, and Esther.  These names will appear in the findings and discussion chapters.  I informed them that to conduct my study I would first ask permission from the coordinator of the target teacher education program at the chosen university.  Lastly, I informed them that I was going to use informed consent forms to recruit research participants.

### 3.9. Proposed Narrative Structure of the Study

To report and discuss the findings of this qualitative phenomenological study, I used a thick description of the lived experiences (Creswell, 2014; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990) that the research participants had in becoming EFL teacher educators.  I utilized the first grammatical person *I* in the narration (Creswell, 2014).  I used a three-step model to present the narration, which I titled the 'TSS' narration model.  The 'T' stood for *tell*.  In this step of the TSS narration model, I told the findings.  This part also established the context of the quotations presented as support in step two of this model and made reference to research participants or sources of data, for instance, documents.  Additionally, the first 'S' stood for *show*.  In this step, I supported the findings introduced in step one with direct quotes (Creswell, 2014) from the data.  Lastly, the last 'S' in the TSS narration model stood for *support*.  In this step, I first provided comments to stress important parts of the quotes as well as citations from the existing literature to support the findings.  These comments were twofold: (1) to tie back the findings or direct quotes to the theme I was building or (2) to move forward to the next paragraph of the description.

To sum up, in this chapter, I described how I conducted this qualitative phenomenological study.  I presented the philosophical worldview that informed this qualitative research.  I also described the research design to address the proposed research questions.  I talked about my role as a researcher.  I elucidated the data collection and data analysis procedures.  I explained the strategies I used for validating findings.  I covered some anticipated ethical issues as well.  Lastly, I explained the proposed narrative structure to present and discuss the findings of this study.  In chapter 4, I present and discuss the results of this study.  In chapter 5, I present a summary of the findings, pedagogical implications, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

**CHAPTER 4**

**DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

In this chapter, I present and discuss the findings of this qualitative phenomenological study that was conducted with six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators in a teacher education program at a public university in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. The main purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the lived experiences that those six EFL teacher educators had lived regarding the sources of knowledge from which they built their knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that constructed their knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and their EFL teacher education classroom practices. The phenomenon under investigation was Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base construction. In this study, I defined Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base as the understanding, awareness, expertise, knowledge, and skills that should equip teacher educators to provide effective teaching, pedagogically and linguistically speaking, in EFL teacher education programs. There were four research questions guiding this study: a central research question: how do EFL teacher educators construct their knowledge base in an EFL teacher education program in a public university in Nicaragua? and three sub-questions: (1) what are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base? (2) what types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators? and (3) how do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices?

This chapter consists of three main sections. First, I describe and discuss the findings of a curriculum analysis that I conducted to have a better understanding of the types of knowledge and skills that EFL student teachers were expected to acquire as well as the possible evidence of sources from which EFL student teachers develop their knowledge base in the chosen teacher

education program where this study took place.  The aim of this curriculum analysis was twofold: to inform the proposed research questions and to develop more informed questions that were used in the semi-structured interviews with the six EFL teacher educators who participated in this study.  Second, I describe the lived experiences of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators about what they believed were the sources of knowledge from which they built their knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that integrated this knowledge base, and the relationship they thought there was between their knowledge base and their classroom practices.  Those lived experiences were informed with findings that resulted from the data of the semi-structured interviews.  Lastly, I describe and discuss the findings of a document analysis to six syllabi, six lesson plans, and six pieces of assessment evidence.  This document analysis was intended to inquire to what extent the knowledge base that the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators said they possessed was related to their actual classroom practices.

As a way to provide a direction for the readers to make sense of the way I presented the description of the findings, I used what I called in Chapter 3, the TSS narration model.

### 4.1. Knowledge and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum

In this section, I present an in-depth description of a content analysis to the EFL curriculum used in the target EFL teacher education where this study took place. The title of this EFL curriculum was "*Curriculum: Bachelor of Sciences of Education in Teaching English as a Foreign Language*" (McLean et al., 2010).  In addition to partially informing the proposed research questions, this curriculum analysis was intended to better inform the semi-structured interview protocol used with the six EFL teacher educators who participated in this study.  To carry out this curriculum analysis, I utilized the proposed research questions in this study as a way to provide directions of what to focus on.  In the rest of this section, I organized the

description of the findings around seven main themes: (1) evidence of some sources from which EFL teacher educators build their knowledge base, (2) knowledge and skills expected as learning outcomes in the target EFL curriculum, (3) role of EFL student-teachers, (4) role of content, (5) teaching methods suggested to deliver content, (6) assessment of student learning, and (7) competences and role of the EFL teacher educators in charge of implementing the EFL curriculum in the target language teacher education program.

### 4.1.1. Evidence of Sources of Knowledge in the EFL Curriculum

#### 4.1.1.1. Courses that integrate the EFL curriculum.

Based on the EFL curriculum analyzed here, there was evidence of two sources of knowledge from which teacher educators built part of their knowledge base. The first evidence of sources of knowledge was the courses that integrated the curriculum itself. Moradkhani et al. (2013) and Macías (2013) said that courses taken in pre-service teacher education programs are the foundations of EFL teachers and teacher educators' knowledge base. Consequently, it would be expected that novice language teachers would use the knowledges and skills acquired in undergraduate teacher education programs at some point in their teaching careers. As for the target EFL curriculum I analyzed, I found that EFL student teachers were expected to meet two main goals by the time they graduated as EFL teachers. First, they were to develop social and academic English communication skills. Take, for example, this quote from the curriculum analyzed, EFL teacher candidates have "to develop native-like English communication proficiency in the four language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, to successfully interact in social and academic settings" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 25). Lastly, they had to develop pedagogical and didactic knowledge and skills to be effective EFL teachers. As is clear in the following direct quote from the curriculum, "EFL teacher candidates have to

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develop knowledge on language learning theories, teaching approaches and strategies as well as knowledge and skills on how to develop lesson plans, teaching materials, assessment, and language courses" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 25). It is evident that the target curriculum was designed taking into consideration existing knowledge base frameworks which recommend that language teachers need to possess certain knowledges and skills to provide effective teaching in EFL classrooms, for instance, native or native-like social and academic English proficiency, English communication skills, content knowledge, theories of teaching, teaching skills, knowledge of learners, pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of the context wherein the teaching and learning take place (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Lima, 2012; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; see also Faez, 2011; Macías, 2013).

Pursuing this further, to accomplish those two goals, the target curriculum required fifty courses to be taken in fourteen semesters. These fifty courses were grouped into four areas of knowledge (*See Table 4. Knowledge Areas Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*). As can be seen in the following excerpt, "the Curriculum in Teaching English as a Foreign Language consists of 50 required courses: 6 in the basic knowledge area, 5 in the general knowledge area, 12 in the pedagogical area, and 27 in the specialty area" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 35). According to the target EFL curriculum, the basic knowledge area was intended for EFL student teachers to develop skills on using computers as well as to acquire knowledge on research approaches, for example, mixed, qualitative, and quantitative research methodologies (McLean et al., 2010). The general knowledge area was meant to develop general knowledge in Nicaraguan history, intercultural society, environment protection, and professional ethics (McLean et al., 2010). As for the pedagogical knowledge area, this area of knowledge referred to the knowledge and skills developed to become EFL teachers. For instance, pedagogical and didactic knowledge and skills

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for utilizing language learning theories and approaches as well as technology to prepare lesson plans, prepare and use assessment in the EFL classrooms, evaluate and develop teaching materials, and transform teaching content to the learning needs of EFL students (McLean et al., 2010). Lastly, the specialty knowledge area pursued the development and acquisition of native-like English proficiency as well as the development of knowledge in disciplines related to the field of second language acquisition, for example, English applied linguistics, English phonetics, sociolinguistics, and contrastive analysis of English and Spanish (McLean et al., 2010). The four areas of knowledge sought to be developed by the implementation of the target curriculum were related to the knowledge base categorization proposed by Moradkhani et al. (2013) and Richards (1998). That is the main focus was on equipping language teacher candidates with the pedagogical, teaching, and linguistic knowledge and skills needed to provide effective EFL teaching.

Table 4

*Knowledge Areas Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*

| Basic knowledge area | General knowledge area | Pedagogical knowledge area | Specialty knowledge area |
|---|---|---|---|
| ✓ Education and gender equality<br>✓ Introduction to computers<br>✓ Descriptive statistics<br>✓ Research methods I<br>✓ Research methods II<br>✓ Thesis seminar | ✓ History of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua (CCN)<br>✓ Sex education<br>✓ Natural resources of the CCN and community development<br>✓ Intercultural society<br>✓ Professional ethics | ✓ Intercultural pedagogy<br>✓ ESL methods and approaches I<br>✓ ESL methods and approaches II<br>✓ Social-emotional development<br>✓ Didactics I<br>✓ Didactics II<br>✓ Didactics III<br>✓ English acquisition assessment<br>✓ Lesson planning and classroom management<br>✓ Teaching practicum<br>✓ Second language acquisition<br>✓ Course design | ✓ English integrated skills I - V: Listening and speaking<br>✓ English integrated skills I - V: Reading and writing<br>✓ English grammar I, II, III<br>✓ Basic writing I, II<br>✓ Academic writing I, II<br>✓ Critical reading<br>✓ Contrastive analysis<br>✓ Applied English linguistics<br>✓ Applied Creole linguistics<br>✓ History of the Caribbean English/Creole speaking countries<br>✓ Sociolinguistics<br>✓ TOEFL training<br>✓ History of the English language<br>✓ English-Spanish translation<br>✓ English-Spanish interpretation |

### 4.1.1.2. Teaching practicum.

The second evidence of sources of knowledge from which the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators built part of their knowledge base while they were in their EFL teacher education program was a teaching practicum. As is stated in the following quote from the curriculum, "a fundamental component of this EFL teaching curriculum is a teaching practicum" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49). According to this curriculum, the teaching practicum was planned to take place in EFL classrooms at the high school level. The Department of Sciences of Education, wherein the target EFL teacher education program was located in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Culture, assigned mentor teachers to EFL student teacher candidates to do their teaching practicum. This can be observed in this quotation, "EFL student teachers will be assigned to high schools during their teaching practicum" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 50). I found that EFL student teachers were to perform three main activities during their teaching practicum: (1) to observe their mentor teachers for 18 hours of EFL instruction, (2) to co-plan English lessons, co-teach, and co-assess EFL classes with their mentor teachers for 18 hours, and (3) to teach independently in EFL classrooms for 28 hours (McLean et al., 2010). I also found that there was an expectation that EFL student teachers would use the theoretical knowledge they acquired in the courses as teaching lenses to inform their teaching in EFL classrooms during their teaching practicum as well as when they entered the work market. As can be seen in the excerpt from the curriculum, "EFL student teachers are expected to apply pedagogical and didactic knowledge to adapt their teaching to the learning characteristics of their English learners" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 25). Professional courses and the teaching practicum sought to develop both knowledge and skills for EFL student teachers to become effective English teachers.

According to Crandall (2000) and Richards (2013), the quality of teachers depends a lot on what knowledges, skills, and content is delivered in preservice language teacher education programs as well as on the way those knowledges, skills, and content are delivered to teacher candidates. In other words, the foundations of pedagogical knowledge, subject knowledge, teaching knowledge, and linguistic proficiency is dependent upon what is emphasized in the curricula implemented in language teacher education programs. In the findings presented above, it was appreciated that the target EFL curriculum emphasized theoretical pedagogical knowledge more than practical teaching knowledge. Evidence to support these findings can be seen in the short number of hours devoted for the teaching practicum, sixty hours only. From my point of view, preservice EFL student teachers would become stronger teachers if more teaching opportunities were created as part of their undergraduate teacher preparation. Anderson (1985) and McLaughlin and Heredia (1996) said that it is necessary to make a balance between declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge when teaching or when delivering content. That is in the context of becoming an English teacher, real teaching opportunities would help EFL student teachers develop a stronger pedagogical reasoning and decision making capacity as far as teaching the English language is concerned (Richards, 1998).

Next, I present the types of knowledge and skills that, according to the target curriculum, EFL student teachers needed to acquire in the chosen language teacher education program.

### 4.1.2. Knowledge and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum

#### 4.1.2.1. Types of Knowledge expected to be acquired.

##### 4.1.2.1.1. English language proficiency.

As for knowledge development, in the curriculum analysis, I found that EFL student teachers were expected to develop twelve types of knowledge (*See Figure 4. Knowledge and*

*Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*).  One of these types of knowledge was English language proficiency.  In this regard, I observed that the curriculum focused on the acquisition of the four English language skills, for example, listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as on English grammar (McLean et al., 2010).  To accomplish this type of knowledge, the curriculum devoted 1,216 hours of instruction, distributed into 19 courses of 64 hours each (McLean et al., 2010).  Among these courses there were: five English listening and speaking integrated courses, five English reading and writing integrated courses, three grammar courses, two basic writing courses, two academic writing courses, a critical reading course, and a course for TOEFL training (McLean et al., 2010).  According to the EFL curriculum, these 19 courses have to be taken in the first 5 semesters, prior to taking pedagogical and didactic related courses (McLean et al., 2010).  Take, for instance, the excerpt from the curriculum describing the importance of English proficiency development, "a major change in this EFL curriculum is that student teachers will need to acquire native-like English communication fluency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in the first five semesters of their program before registering in pedagogical courses" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 20).  In addition to listening, speaking, reading, and writing fluency, the results revealed that the main goal, as far as English skills development is concerned, is to guarantee that EFL student teacher candidates develop social and academic English proficiency.  As is clear in this quotation from the curriculum, student teachers are "to successfully interact in social and academic settings" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 25).  According to existing research, English proficiency both social and academic is seen as one of the most important skills that English teachers must possess (Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998).

Even though the target curriculum said in a general way that one of the purposes was to make student teachers reach a native-like English proficiency level, I could not find any indication of the criteria that were taken into consideration to measure the level of English proficiency of student teachers once they have received those 1,216 hours of English instruction. However, I think that even when this curriculum did not say whether or not students had to demonstrate their English proficiency by taking a standardized English proficiency test, for example, iBT TOEFL, IELTS or the CPE proficiency test administered by Cambridge, it is possible that those student teachers achieved that goal because of the amount of hours of English instruction received. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Language learning (CEFR), English learners would need about 1,200 contact hours to reach a C2 Level of English proficiency, which is basically native-like proficiency (Council of Europe, 2001). As we can see, the amount of instructional hours suggested by the CEFR is similar to the one in the curriculum I analyzed. Something else that may have helped might be the fact that those student teachers would continue to practice and use their English skills as they continued to take their pedagogical and didactic coursework.

### 4.1.2.1.2. *Pedagogical knowledge.*

The second type of knowledge that EFL student teachers were to develop in the chosen EFL teacher education program, based on the curriculum analysis, was pedagogical knowledge. I found that the pedagogical knowledge that student teachers were expected to grow revolved around language learning theories and language teaching approaches and methods. As can be seen in the following quote from the curriculum "by the end of this teacher education program student teachers will possess an understanding of second and foreign language learning theories, teaching approaches, methods, and strategies" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 28). The learning

theories targeted in this curriculum were, for example, "behaviorist theories: contrastive analysis hypothesis; universal grammar theory; monitor theory, cognitive theory, meaningful learning theory and socio-cultural theory" (McLean et al., 2010, pp. 45-46). Pursuing this further, student teachers were expected to learn about traditional language teaching approaches and methods, such as, "grammar translation, direct approach, reading approach, audio-lingual approach, community language learning, the silent way method, and total physical response method" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 46) as well as communicative teaching approaches, for instance, communicative language teaching, task-based learning, cooperative learning, content-based learning, and the natural approach (McLean et al., 2010, p. 47). EFL student teachers would need to focus on the "advantages and limitations" (McLean et al., 2010, pp. 45-47) of these learning theories and teaching approaches and methods. Lastly, I observed that there were four courses to achieve pedagogical knowledge, namely, intercultural pedagogy, second language acquisition, ESL methods and approaches I and II, and social-emotional development (McLean et al., 2010). These findings were supported by existing research on language teacher education. It was said that pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of learning and instructional theories are knowledges that EFL teachers need to acquire (Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998).

### 4.1.2.1.3. Didactic knowledge.

According to the curriculum analysis, the third type of knowledge expected to be developed in the target EFL teacher education program was didactic knowledge. Findings showed that this type of knowledge referred to the act of learning to teach the four skills of the English language, such as, listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as demonstrating teaching skills through micro-teaching opportunities. As is clear in the following excerpts from

the curriculum, EFL student teachers "develop mastery and demonstrate skills in teaching listening and speaking, focusing on rhythm, intonation, pronunciation, vocabulary development, fluency, comprehension, and information processing" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 48) and learn to "teach reading and writing and practice these skills before their classmates" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 48).

Additionally, didactic knowledge revolved around learning to prepare lessons based on the characteristics of the learners, target language skills to be taught, and context where teaching and learning may take place as well as learning to develop and evaluate teaching materials. Take, for example, the following quote describing lesson planning and teaching materials, "teacher candidates practice different models of creating lesson plans and selecting teaching materials, considering the teaching context, the learners, materials at their disposal, language skills to develop, expected learning outcomes, time of instruction, the classroom, and content" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49). I observed that there were four courses and a teaching practicum meant to achieve this purpose, namely, didactics I, didactics II, didactics III, and lesson planning and classroom management (McLean et al., 2010). The results showed that the teaching practicum was the most meaningful opportunity for student teachers to develop teaching experience and knowledge while in the teacher education program because they taught in actual EFL classrooms. As can be observed in this quotation from the curriculum, "EFL teacher candidates will be assigned to high schools during their teaching practicum" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 50). These findings also found support in the existing literature as some researchers said that teaching knowledge and teaching reasoning need to be built in language teacher education programs (Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998;).

### 4.1.2.1.4. Content knowledge.

The fourth type of knowledge that Nicaraguan EFL student teachers were to grow in the target language teacher education program was content knowledge. According to some researchers, subject knowledge, for example, content knowledge of English grammar, English pronunciation, reading, phonology, phonetics, speaking, listening, and so forth, is a type of knowledge that must be delivered and developed in preservice student teacher programs (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; see also Shulman, 1987). Evidence for this finding can be seen in this quote, "teacher candidates will need to develop mastery of the language they will teach" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 53). The results revealed that content knowledge started to grow as EFL student teachers began acquiring the English language when taking the nineteen courses devoted to develop English proficiency, namely, the five English listening and speaking integrated courses, the five English reading and writing integrated courses, the three grammar courses, the two basic writing courses, the two academic writing courses, the critical reading course, and the course for TOEFL training (McLean et al., 2010). It continued to develop when taking the three courses titled "didactics I, II, and III" (McLean et al., 2010, pp. 47-49), which were meant to gain mastery in teaching English grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Pursuing this further, this type of knowledge kept on growing in a "teaching practicum" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49), in which it was expected that student teachers would teach subjects, such as, English grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading, listening, and speaking.

I totally agree that curricula designed to prepare EFL student teachers need to include the development of subject knowledge. In other words, EFL student teacher preparation curricula need to include at least the subject knowledge that EFL student teachers would need to teach the

English language.  I also agree that there will be some subjects in which student teachers will not be able to develop a deep level of content knowledge while they are in their language teacher education programs because of time constraints or because of the purpose of such courses.  However, content knowledge on those courses can be mastered as they start teaching them either through practicum or beyond, once they are in service.  For instance, one may learn about sociolinguistics in his or her teacher education program; however, real understanding of content knowledge of sociolinguistics as a subject may be developed as you begin teaching it.

### 4.1.2.1.5. Assessment knowledge.

Assessment knowledge, according to the target EFL curriculum, was the fifth type of knowledge that Nicaraguan EFL student teachers were to develop in the chosen language teacher education program.  In this regard, I found that student teacher candidates grow assessment knowledge on three types of assessments, namely, "diagnostic assessment," "summative assessment," and "formative assessment" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49).  Take, for instance, these excerpts from the curriculum describing what student teachers were expected to learn about assessment, "they [student teachers] will acquire theoretical and practical knowledge of diagnostic, summative, and formative assessment to assess student learning" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49), "more emphasis will be given to developing knowledge and skills on formative assessment" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49), and "they [student teachers] will learn to create assessment tools, based on the type of assessment needed and the content to be assessed" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49).

These findings found support in the existing body of research which said that ELF teachers need to develop student learning assessment knowledge (Lam, 2015; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 2013).  Habib (2016) added that assessment plays an

important role in the EFL teaching process because it helps language teachers gather information

regarding learners' leaning needs, weaknesses, and difficulties so actions can be taken to help

EFL students learn better.  Pursuing this further, analyzing those quotations presented above, I

could infer that, as far as assessment knowledge is concerned, formative assessment was more

valued than the other two types of assessment in the target EFL teacher education program.  This

means that the target EFL teacher education program was more concerned in the quality of the

teaching and learning process offered to preservice language student teachers.  According to

some researchers, the assessing student learning in a formative way is gaining more and more

emphasis in today's EFL classrooms because formative assessment provides teachers and

learners with information that can be used to create more effective language learning

opportunities.  For instance, creating a more relaxed teaching and learning milieu, providing

feedback and scaffolding oriented to language skills development, and creating a more student-

centered assessment process in which students can also actively participate in assessing their

own learning process (Bayat, Jamshidipour, & Hashemi, 2017; Iraji, Enayat, & Momeni, 2016;

Lam, 2016).  However, Burner (2016) said that it is necessary to be mindful when planning and

implementing formative assessment in EFL classrooms because some contradictions may arise if

formative assessment is not thoughtfully planned.  For example, some of those contradictions

can revolve around the quality of feedback, the quality of scaffolding, the criteria for determining

what is acceptable knowledge or skills, grades given to assignments, and the quality of peer and

self-assessment.

Lastly, based on the curriculum analysis I learned that there was only one course that

was specifically to build assessment knowledge.  That course was titled "English acquisition

assessment" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49).  However, I think that this type of knowledge might

have been addressed and reinforced in other pedagogical courses as well, such as, Second language acquisition, ESL methods and approaches I and II, and in the curses Didactic I, II, and III, which were developed to learn to teach the English language.

### 4.1.2.1.6. Course design knowledge.

As stated on the EFL curriculum that I analyzed, course design knowledge was the sixth type of knowledge that Nicaraguan EFL student teachers needed to acquire in the target language teacher education program where this study took place. Some researchers and educators supported this research result as they said that teachers and educators need to have curriculum development knowledge (Lengkanawati, 2015; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Shulman, 1987). I found that different models of course design were targeted to foster this type of knowledge. For instance, models used in general education and models informed by language learning approaches, such as, audio-lingual programs, content-based courses, competence-based courses, task-based courses, thematic or situational-based programs, and communicative programs (McLean et al., 2010). As is clear in this quote from the curriculum, "teacher candidates will possess an understanding of various models to design language programs," (McLean et al., 2010, p. 28). Pursuing this further, this curriculum analysis revealed that in addition to the knowledge drawn from language teaching approaches to design English programs, emphasis was placed on other curricular elements. Take, for example, the following excerpt outlining what EFL teacher educators should do regarding the development of course design knowledge, "when teaching course design, educators will center on the role of learners, teachers, content, educational context, teaching methods, teaching materials, objectives of language programs, time of instruction, program evaluation, and cost of implementation of English programs" (McLean et

al., 2010, p. 50). To accomplish course design knowledge, there was only one course in the curriculum, which was titled "course design" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 50).

### *4.1.2.1.7. Knowledge of language learning related disciplines.*

The seventh type of knowledge that Nicaraguan EFL student teachers needed to acquire was knowledge of disciplines related to language learning. This type of knowledge was delivered in the form of three courses, namely, "applied English linguistics," "sociolinguistics," and "contrastive analysis" of English and Spanish (McLean et al., 2010, pp. 57-58). I found that the applied English linguistics course contributed to the development of this type of knowledge by teaching preservice student teachers about the contribution of English phonology, syntax, semantics, and morphology in the acquisition of the English language. As can be seen in this quote from the curriculum outlining what was expected to learn in the applied English course, "applied English linguistics allows students to learn about the role of four language systems in EFL classrooms: phonology, semantics, morphology, and syntax" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 57). As for sociolinguistics, the results showed that this discipline provided student teachers knowledge about how the English language is used in different social and cultural contexts as well as changes that this language suffers from one English speaking country to another or from one group of speakers to another (McLean et al., 2010). Take, for instance, the quotation describing what was to be acquired in this course, "sociolinguistics engages learners in an analysis of how English as an international language varies depending on where it is spoken or by whom it is spoken" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 58). Furthermore, knowledge of disciplines related to language learning was further developed in the contrastive analysis course, in which the purpose was to make a comparison between English and Spanish: this analysis revolved around the phonological, syntactic, semantic, and morphological systems of both languages to

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facilitate the acquisition of English in EFL classrooms.  As is observed in this excerpt from the curriculum, "English learning difficulties can be overcome by teaching based on linguistic similarities and differences between English and Spanish" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 57).

The existing body of research on language teacher education offered support to these findings as it was mentioned that language teachers are to possess knowledge of disciplines related to language teaching (Day 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; Sparks & Deacon, 2015). Among those disciplines, according to these researchers were: second language acquisition, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, phonology, semantics, syntax, morphology, pragmatics, and so forth.  I think this makes sense because if an EFL or ESL teacher understands, for instance, how the phonological system of the English language works, he or she can use that knowledge to better help English learners to develop skills, such as, phonological awareness and reading skills (Bryant & Goswami, 2016; Eide, 2012; Pan et al., 2016; Rahman, 2016) as well as pronunciation, listening skills, and speaking skills.

### *4.1.2.1.8. Knowledge of the Nicaraguan educational context.*

In addition, Nicaraguan EFL student teachers, as shown in the EFL curriculum analyzed, were expected to obtain knowledge of the Nicaraguan educational context in their language teacher education program.  In this regard, the curriculum analysis that I carried out revealed that Nicaraguan student teachers learn about how the Nicaraguan education system is structured and how it works (McLean et al., 2010).  I found that preservice student teachers analyze the role of English in schools and in other contexts as well as they learn what is expected of them as EFL teachers (McLean et al., 2010).  This can be seen in this quotation describing the context in which EFL teachers were expected to teach, "this language teacher education program seeks to

graduate qualified EFL teachers to work in public or private schools nationwide" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 15).  I observed that among the courses that may contribute to this type of knowledge were: "education and gender equality," "intercultural society," and "professional ethics" (McLean et al., 2010, pp. 42-45).  It was also possible that this type of knowledge was addressed in pedagogical courses in which the English curriculum used in public schools is commonly analyzed.  Some researchers and educators provided support for these research results as they said that contextual knowledge and knowledge of educational ends must be part of the knowledge base of teachers and educators (Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; Shulman, 1987).

### 4.1.2.1.9. Research knowledge.

*Research knowledge* was the ninth type of knowledge that Nicaraguan EFL student teachers were to gain as a result of the implementation of the EFL curriculum analyzed.  I found that as far as this type of knowledge had to do, student teachers were expected to develop knowledge of how to investigate issues related to EFL learning and teaching utilizing the three most common research approaches, for instance, "qualitative", "quantitative", or "mixed methods" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 43).  The curriculum analysis showed that in order to guarantee the development of research knowledge, student teachers must take four courses, namely, "research methods I and II," "descriptive statistics," and "thesis seminar" (McLean et al., 2010, pp. 42-43).  The results revealed that research knowledge was built systematically: in research methods I and descriptive statistics, student teachers were introduced to the three research approaches and descriptive statistical analysis; in research methods II, they were assisted to develop a research proposal using either of those research approaches; and in thesis seminar, they collected and analyzed data (McLean et al., 2010).  Take, for example, this quote

describing the research requirement for graduation in the target EFL teacher education program that makes reference to this type of knowledge, "students will need to defend a research project prior to graduation, in which they investigate an issue related to the acquisition of English in EFL classrooms" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 62). Lastly, based on the target EFL curriculum I found that EFL student teachers could choose either a quantitative, a qualitative, or a mixed research approach to conduct their undergraduate research studies (McLean et al., 2010).

According to Macías (2013) and Moradkhani et al. (2013), English teachers need to possess research knowledge. Research knowledge can be seen from two perspectives: 1) English teachers can be researchers of issues related to EFL or ESL teaching and learning and 2) they can be research consumers. I think that even though EFL student teachers of the chosen teacher education program had to conduct research studies to graduate, that was maybe the only time they were involved in doing research. As you will learn later when I present the findings of the interviews with the six research participants, Nicaraguan English teachers are mostly research consumers because of the nature of their work contracts. That is they devote one hundred percent of their time to teaching.

### 4.1.2.1.10. Technology related knowledge.

The tenth kind of knowledge sought to develop in the EFL curriculum that I analyzed was knowledge related to technology. This type of knowledge was of two types: (1) computer use related knowledge, for example, how to use Word, Excel, PowerPoint, internet surfing, and (2) application of technology to facilitate the English language learning process, for instance, English learning websites, English YouTube videos, English learning applications, and English software (McLean et al., 2010). Take, for instance, these extracts from the curriculum describing what student teachers were expected to learn about technology, "students will learn how to use

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computers as information processing tools" and "students will learn how to integrate technology in EFL classrooms" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 42).  As for the courses devoted to foster this type of knowledge, I found that there was only one course, which was titled "introduction to computers" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 42).  These findings found were supported by some researchers who said that using technology in EFL classroom and outside the classroom to learn English is beneficial to English learners (Ahn, 2018; Cavus & Ibrahim, 2017; Kaur & Pahuja, 2017; Murugan & Sai, 2017; Tseng, 2017).  Consequently, it makes sense that nowadays EFL teacher education curricula include the study and analysis of how to integrate technology in language classroom to assist learners in acquiring the target languages.

### 4.1.2.1.11. English-Spanish interpretation techniques knowledge.

Additionally, I found that Nicaraguan EFL student teachers were expected to grow in an eleventh type of knowledge, being in this case, knowledge about English-Spanish interpretation techniques, as a consequence of the implementation of the EFL curriculum that I analyzed.  I found that this type of knowledge was developed through the delivery of a course entitled "English-Spanish interpretation" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59).  This type of knowledge was built by providing preservice student teachers opportunities to practice two kinds of interpretation techniques, for instance, "consecutive interpreting" and "simultaneous interpreting" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59).  This can be seen in this quote, "students will acquire knowledge and skills on simultaneous and consecutive interpreting" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59).  According to the curriculum analysis, this type of knowledge was included in the target EFL curriculum because English teachers in Nicaragua may perform Spanish-English or English-Spanish interpretation jobs as tourism and business in English grow more and more in the country (McLean et al., 2010).  As is clear in the following quote from the curriculum, "business people and companies

that need interpretation services mostly seek English teachers to assist them in such type of services because of their language skills both in English and Spanish" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59).

In the existing body of literature in the field of EFL and ESL teacher education, English-Spanish interpreting was not addressed or recommended as one of the types of knowledge that EFL or ESL teachers must possess (Day 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998). However, from my perspective as an English teacher and English teacher educator I think that in the context where this study took place possessing this type of knowledge opens more work related doors to EFL teachers as well as for student teachers. That is they could teach courses related to English-Spanish interpreting as well as they could become interpreters of these two languages. Another benefit of this type of knowledge is that they further develop their English proficiency skills as well as they increase their level of awareness of the Spanish language. This is because they have to understand how both languages work to be able to communicate meaning and information to audiences from one language to the other.

### 4.1.2.1.12. English-Spanish translation techniques knowledge.

The last type of knowledge, according to the curriculum analysis I conducted, that Nicaraguan EFL student teachers needed to develop in their language teacher education program was knowledge of English-Spanish translation techniques. I found that this type of knowledge was grown by learning two translation techniques, namely, "oblique translation techniques" and "direct translation techniques" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59). Take, for instance, this extract from the curriculum mentioning the types of translation techniques that student teachers were to learn, "student teachers will develop knowledge and skills on direct and oblique translation techniques"

(McLean et al., 2010, p. 59).  This curriculum analysis showed that there was only one course meant to develop this type of knowledge.  This course was entitled "English-Spanish translation" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59).

According to the existing body of research and language teachers' knowledge base frameworks English-Spanish translation knowledge (Day 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998) was not one of the knowledges that EFL or ESL teachers must have.  However, I think that this type of knowledge is beneficial to Nicaraguan English teachers because besides further improving their English and Spanish linguistic skills and knowledge, they also can have more job opportunities if they develop strong skills to translate texts from English to Spanish and vice versa.  In addition, developing English-Spanish translation knowledge and skills may help Nicaraguan EFL teachers to be more Effective teachers when teaching to Spanish speakers because they possess an over understanding of how English and Spanish work.  This knowledge can be transferred to teaching because Nicaraguan EFL teachers could contrast and compare both languages to help their learners acquire some aspects the English language, for example, grammar and meaning of words and structures based on cultural and social contexts.

In addition to the types of knowledge that EFL student teachers were expected to develop as a result of the implementation of the target EFL curriculum, the curriculum analysis I conducted suggested that student teachers were also expected to acquire some skills.  These skills are described in the next section.

**4.1.2.2. Skills expected to be acquired.**

*4.1.2.2.1. English language skills.*

According to the curriculum analysis I conducted, I found that Nicaraguan EFL teachers were expected to acquire seven types of skills in their pre-service teacher education programs (*See figure 4. Knowledge and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*).  The first type of skills to be acquired as result of the implementation of the EFL curriculum I analyzed was English language skills (McLean et al., 2010).  In this regard, EFL student teachers were to develop four types of language skills, for instance, be able to listen and understand oral English, be able to read and understand what they read, be able to write fluently in English, and be able to produce spoken English fluently and accurately (McLean et al., 2010).  Support for these findings can be seen in these quotes from the curriculum, "students will develop mastery of the four English skills, listening, reading, writing, and speaking" and "will demonstrate social and academic listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills throughout their teacher education program" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 20).  Also, support for these results, can be found in the nineteen courses devoted to the development of these four English skills (*See table 4, Knowledge Areas Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*).  A good example of the type of content to grow listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills can be observed in the following excerpt from the curriculum describing the topics or situations in which EFL student teachers were to develop these English language skills:

> Students will acquire language proficiency in speaking, reading, listening, and writing on various topics, for example, names and titles, describing people, clothes, time, dates, sports and exercise, locations, the family, entertainment, prices, small talks, vacations, apartment living, movies, the weather, shopping, using the telephone, describing things,

directions, people we know, places, health, school, the weekend, city transportation, renting a car, parties, restaurants, air travel, work and jobs, keeping fit, invitations, hobbies and pastimes, shopping problems, hotel services, movies, fears, telephone messages, touring a city, airports, hotels, traffic, roommates and travel, part-time jobs, successful business, gadgets and machines, technology, the internet, character traits, cooking, housing, apartment problems, nature, global warming, friendship, television, cities, urban life, special days, fashion, preferences, phone messages, past events, vacations, the news, opinions, famous people, food and nutrition, predicaments and global issues, culture, university life, literature, and the media. (McLean et al., 2010, pp. 50-52)

Again, each one of these topics or situations represented an opportunity for the development of the four macro English skills, to be specific, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The findings implied that micro skills, such as, English pronunciation, accent reduction, meaning negotiation, intonation, rhythm, and fluency were covered as the micro skills were tackled. I did not find any evidence of how English language skills were going to be measured or determined (McLean et al., 2010).

These findings were supported by the existing body of research as it was said that native-like or native English proficiency was one of the most important skills that EFL and ESL teachers must possess (Day 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998). Even though the target curriculum did not mention how English proficiency of the preservice EFL teachers was measured, it is possible that they might have develop an advanced level of English proficiency based on the number of hours of instructors they received, 1216 hours. According to the CEFR, English learners would

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need about 1200 hours of instruction to reach a C2 level, which is a native-like level of English proficiency (Council of Europe, 2001).

   *4.1.2.2.2. English communication skills*.

   The second type of skills that EFL student teachers were to acquire as the result of the implementation of the target EFL curriculum was English communication skills (McLean et al., 2010). Even when these skills were related to English language skills, the purpose of these skills appeared to be different. In other words, preservice student teachers were expected not only to possess linguistic skills but also to be able to communicate their thoughts and ideas as a result of those language skills (McLean et al., 2010). Based on the findings, English communication skills were of two kinds. On one hand, EFL student teachers must be capable of communicating effectively at a social level in everyday situations using the English language (McLean et al., 2010). On the other hand, they must be capable of communicating successfully in academic settings both in writing and speaking (McLean et al., 2010). As is clear in this quotation from the curriculum, student teachers are "to successfully interact in social and academic settings" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 25). Pursuing this further, more support regarding academic English skills can be seen in the following quote from the curriculum describing the types of situations in which student teachers may apply academic listening, speaking, reading, and writing, "students will interact in academic English situations, for example, lectures, presentations, conferences, round table discussions, debates, conversations, notetaking, academic essays, academic research papers, article critiques, and critical reading" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 53). Regarding evidence of how English communication skills were going to be measured or determined, I did not find any in the curriculum analysis I conducted (McLean et al., 2010).

Richards (1998) agreed with these findings because, to him, EFL or ESL teachers must not only be proficient in English but also be good communicators. In other words, possessing social and academic English proficiency as English teacher is not enough. It is necessary to develop the capacity to convey information in English to students. From my perspective, this capacity does not necessarily get fully developed in EFL teacher education programs. I think it develops as English teachers gain more and more teaching experience. In other words, the more and more they get exposed to speaking in front of their leaners, they become better communicators.

### 4.1.2.2.3. Teaching skills.

The third type of skills that EFL student teachers were expected to develop in the target EFL teacher education program was teaching skills (McLean et al., 2010). Teaching skills consisted of five other related skills, for instance, ability to prepare lesson plans, ability to make content accessible to EFL students based on their learning needs and language development, skills to create and apply language assessment tools in EFL classrooms, ability to create and evaluate teaching materials, and ability to manage EFL classrooms (McLean et al., 2010). As for lesson planning and ability to make content accessible to EFL students, student teachers learned how to develop and how to apply lessons to teach the four micro English skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Student teachers demonstrated their teaching skills in "micro-teaching opportunities" as well as in their "teaching practicum" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 50). Take, for instance, the following quotes from the curriculum describing lesson planning skills that student teachers were to acquire and practice, "learners will use theoretical and practical knowledge to prepare lessons to teach listening, speaking, reading, and writing" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49), "when planning to teach listening and speaking, emphasis will be

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placed on rhythm, intonation, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 47),

and "when planning to teach reading and writing, emphasis will be placed on meaning, structure,

conciseness, sentence variety, effective paragraphing, and correct spelling and grammar"

(McLean et al., 2010, p. 48).  Regarding assessment skills, student teachers were to learn how to

develop and utilize assessment tools to determine student learning process.  These skills were

focused on learning how to employ three types of assessments, namely, diagnostic assessment,

formative assessment, and summative assessment.  Among these kinds of assessment, formative

assessment was more valued.  As is clear in these quotes from the curriculum, "students will

apply theoretical and practical knowledge to create and use assessment tools to measure EFL

student learning" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49) "students will learn and apply diagnostic,

summative, and formative assessment" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49), and "formative assessment

will be more emphasized to allow EFL learners to continue to grow their English language

skills" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49).  Concerning the ability to create and evaluate teaching

materials, student teachers informed their decisions taking into account language learning

theories, students' characteristics, and the target English skills they were to teach.  This can be

seen in this excerpt from the curriculum:

> Students [student teachers] will learn to create teaching materials as well as evaluate the
>
> appropriateness and effectiveness of existing teaching materials, such as, textbooks,
>
> language websites, English software, videos, movies, news items, documentaries, and TV
>
> programs based on the language skills to be taught and the learning needs of the students.
>
> (McLean et al., 2010, p. 48)

As for EFL classroom management skills, EFL student teachers needed to learn various

strategies and techniques to manage large and small classes.  These classroom management

strategies focused on six components, for instance, voice tone when teaching, time to speak, verbal and non-verbal signals, using learners' first language so they understand how they must behave in the classroom, quickness to address issues that may interfere with the development of the lessons, and always having a well-planned lesson. Take, for example, this quote from the curriculum naming some of the techniques to manage EFL classrooms, "use a natural voice, speak when students are quiet and ready, utilize hand signals and other non-verbal communication, employ students' L1 when giving classroom management directions to beginners, address behavior issues quickly and wisely, and have a well-designed and engaging lesson" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 49). Lastly, I found that teaching skills were developed in eleven pedagogical and didactic courses and in a teaching practicum (*See table 4, Knowledge Areas Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*).

Researchers in the field of language teacher education asserted that some of the types of skills that language teachers need to develop and possess are teaching skills (Day 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998). In this regard, possessing teaching skills means being able to transform and deliver knowledge, skills, and content to students in effective ways. In addition, it includes knowing how to prepare lesson plans, understanding students' characteristics and learning needs, knowing how to manage classrooms, knowing how to conduct assessment, knowing how to create and adapt learning materials, developing the capacity to constantly reason on how to improve classroom practices, and so forth. However, I believe that to develop teaching skills that incorporate all those subskills mentioned, it is necessary to provide opportunities for EFL preservice student teachers put into effect the theoretical pedagogical knowledge they acquire in their language teacher programs. That is, from my view, a 60-hour teaching practicum is not

enough.  Nicaraguan EFL student teachers should do longer teaching practicums so they can develop stronger teaching skills before they graduate as English teachers.  That would facilitate their transition from their teacher education programs to the work market.

### 4.1.2.2.4. Critical thinking skills.

The fourth type of skills EFL student teachers were to acquire, according to the curriculum analysis, was critical thinking skills.  I found that there was only one course which addressed these kind of skills, being in this case, "critical reading" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 56) see table 4 (*Knowledge Areas Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*).  According to the curriculum analysis, preservice student teachers needed to develop both oral and written critical thinking skills (McLean et al., 2010).  In other words, even though there was only one course developed specifically to develop critical thinking skills, it is implied in the curriculum that critical thinking skills were further developed and practiced in other courses as well.  As is clear in the following excerpts from the curriculum describing the type of critical thinking skills student teachers had to acquire, "students will develop critical thinking through critical reading" and "will improve their oral and written English skills practicing critical thinking skills by critically analyzing articles, books, and news items related to education" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 56).

Moradkhani et al. (2013) and Richards (1998) concurred with these results because, according to them, language teachers have to build and possess pedagogical reasoning skills.  In other words, they should be able to determine best ways to teach the target language.  This pedagogical reasoning capacity gets develop through teaching experience.  Teaching experience in this scenario is not seen as the accumulation of years of teaching but as the ability to critically reflect on successful and unsuccessful teaching interventions so as to plan and deliver more effective lessons.

#### *4.1.2.2.5. Computer use kills.*

The fifth type of skills targeted at the curriculum I analyzed was computer use skills (McLean et al., 2010). Computer use skills were of two types. On one hand, student teachers had to demonstrate skills on using Microsoft Office applications, such as, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint (McLean et al., 2010). As is clear in this quote from the curriculum describing the competencies student teachers were to gain related to computer use, "students will demonstrate competences in using Word, Excel, and PowerPoint" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 42). On the other hand, student teachers needed to develop skills to use computers to have access to technology related to English learning and teaching, for example, utilizing computers and internet as a means to have access to English learning websites, English learning and teaching YouTube videos, electronic English dictionaries, and other online sources (McLean et al., 2010). Take, for instance, this quotation from the curriculum outlining how student teachers might use computers as a means to grow their own English language learning, "students will use computers and internet to have access to online sources that may assist them in the acquisition of the English language" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 42). I found that these types of skills were expected to be developed in the first semester in the target EFL teacher education program, and it was expected that preservice student teachers were to continue to use these skills throughout their pre-service teacher education training (McLean et al., 2010). According to the target curriculum, there was only one course devoted to grow these skills. This course was entitled, "Introduction to computers" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 42) see table 4 (*Knowledge and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*).

Language teachers' knowledge base categorizations do not make direct reference that language teachers need to develop skills related to using technology in the classroom; however, I

agree with Ahn (2018) and Tseng (2017) that using technology to facilitate the process of learning English is beneficial to students.  Nowadays, there are a lot of technology related English learning sources that can be integrated in the EFL classrooms, such as TED Talks, YouTube videos, electronic books, online dictionaries, English language corpora, English learning websites, English learning Apps and so forth.  Students and teachers can have access to some of these sources for free as well as inside and outside the classroom.  These sources also provide opportunities to practice and develop all micro English skills, namely, reading, listening, speaking, writing, as well as subskills, such as, pronunciation, accent, intonation, rhythm, grammar, vocabulary, and so forth.  Additionally, through technology, preservice student teachers can have access to sources to build other types of knowledge and skills, for example, pedagogical knowledge, teaching knowledge, subject knowledge, etc.

### 4.1.2.2.6. English-Spanish interpretation skills.

The sixth type of skills targeted at the curriculum I analyzed was English-Spanish interpretation skills (McLean et al., 2010).  As stated in the target EFL curriculum, student teachers needed to gain English-Spanish and Spanish-English simultaneous and consecutive interpreting skills (McLean et al., 2010).  As can be seen in this extract from the curriculum mentioning these two types of language interpretation techniques, "students will acquire knowledge and skills on simultaneous and consecutive interpreting" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59). I found that the content used to develop these language skills covered different topics and language complexity.  See, for instance, this quote from the curriculum talking about the types of scenarios for fostering the development of these skills, "the topics or situations used for practicing consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills will vary in content and linguistic difficulty" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59).  These findings imply that student teachers were to

develop a deep understanding and conscious knowledge of the grammatical structures of their

first language, Spanish, and the grammatical structures of target language, English, in order to

covey meaning from one language to the other as accurate as possible.  Lastly, I observed that

there was only one course meant to grow these types of kills, namely, "English-Spanish

interpretation" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59) see table 4 above (*Knowledge and Skills Targeted at

the EFL Curriculum*).  Even though possessing these skills was not recommended in none of the

language teachers' knowledge base frameworks, I think these skills were an added value to the

quality of Nicaraguan EFL student teachers because instead of causing any weaknesses to their

preparation, these skills strengthened their professional knowledge base which in turn prepared

them for other work scenarios, such as becoming English-Spanish interpreters.

### 4.1.2.2.7.  *English-Spanish translation techniques skills.*

The last type of skills targeted at the curriculum I analyzed was English-Spanish

translation skills.  In this regard, preservice EFL student teachers were expected to acquire the

ability to translate written texts from both English to Spanish and texts from Spanish to English

(McLean et al., 2010).  I found that there was only one course intended to develop translation

skills, being in this case, "English-Spanish translation" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 59).  According

to the findings, two translation techniques were expected to be acquired and used as student-

teachers translated written texts.  See, for example, this extract from the curriculum, "students

will develop knowledge and skills on direct translation techniques: borrowing, calque and literal

translation and knowledge and skills on oblique translation techniques: transposition,

modulation, reformulation or equivalence, adaptation and compensation" (McLean et al., 2010,

p. 59).  These results imply that student-teachers needed to acquire a deep understanding of their

first language, Spanish, and of the target language, English, as well as a good understanding of

the sociocultural and linguistic environment wherein the target texts to be translated were written

in order to covey meaning from one language to the other as accurate as possible. Translation

skills was not mentioned in the existing body of literature as some of the skills that language

teachers need to possess. Again, I think these skills were an added value to the quality of

Nicaraguan EFL student teachers. These skills may open new work opportunities to those EFL

student teachers, such as working as English-Spanish translators.



Figure 4. Knowledges and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum
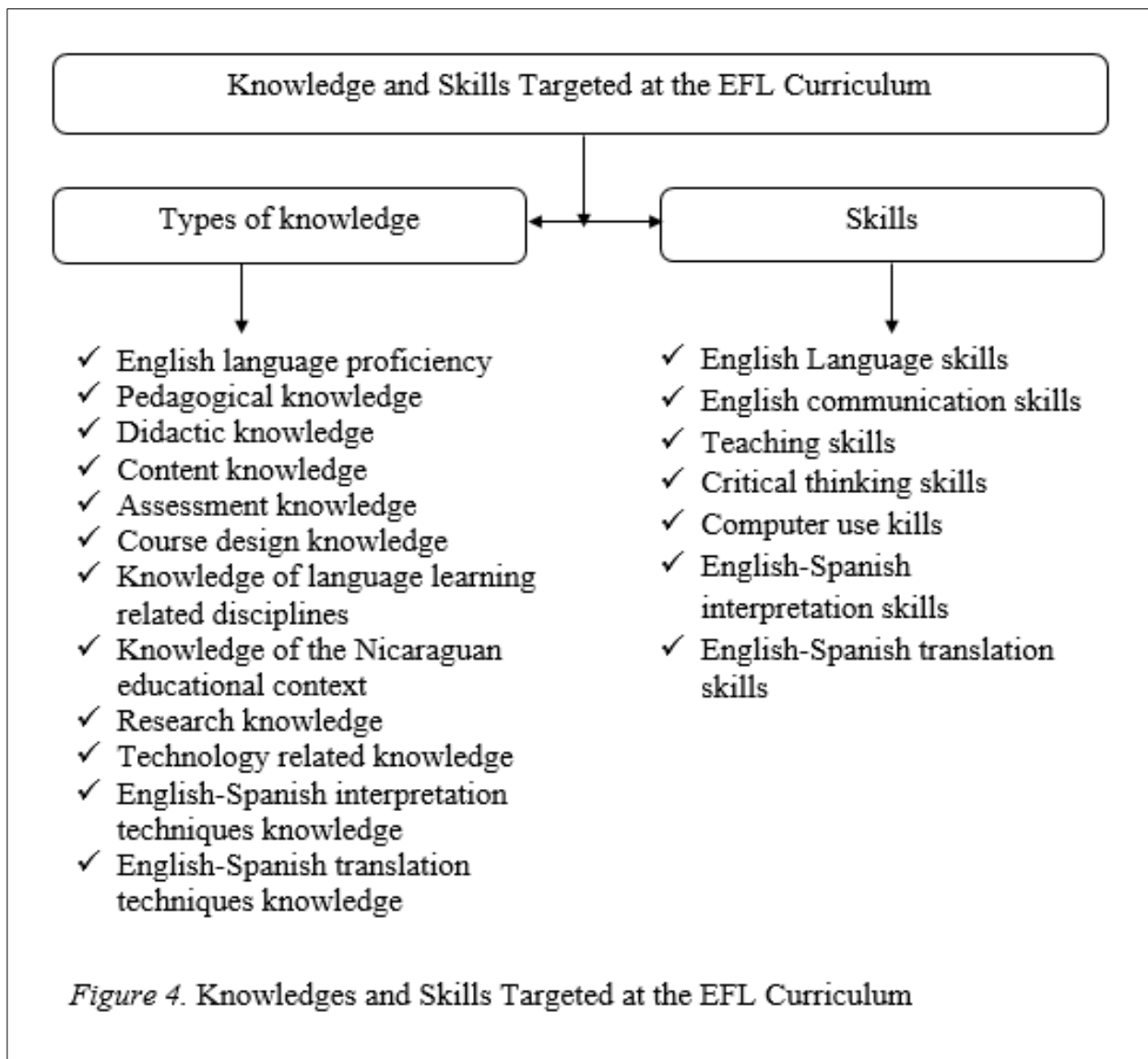
Next, I present findings regarding other themes, such as, role of the learners in the target EFL curriculum, role of content, teaching methods, assessment of student learning, and competences and role of EFL teacher educators who were to implement this curriculum that I analyzed.

### 4.1.3. Role of EFL Student Teachers

The third theme that emerged from the curriculum analysis I conducted to the EFL curriculum used in the target language teacher education program revolved around the role that EFL preservice student teachers had to play in the curriculum. I found that student teachers were expected to play an active role in the EFL teacher education classrooms (McLean et al., 2010). They had to adopt and keep an interactive role in building the types of knowledge and skills that would identify them as effective English teachers (McLean et al., 2010). In addition to the academic competences they were meant to acquire (*See figure 4. Knowledge and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*), they were to develop values, such as, "ethic values, responsibility, honesty, critical and analytical attitude, sense of social justice, respect, solidarity, commitment with their profession, commitment to treat their EFL learners with respect and equality, and to develop a sense of creativeness and entrepreneurship" (McLean et al., 2010, pp. 22-23). Cummins and Asempapa (2013) agreed with this findings to a certain degree because they said that in addition to the professional knowledge base that preservice student teachers are to develop in their teacher education programs, they should also practice and develop some dispositions, such as, collaboration, inclusion, and professionalism. In the same way, I think that practicing and cultivating values in preservice language teacher education programs, such as the ones found in this study, is important to prepare more well-rounded EFL teachers. In other

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words, as the findings implied, EFL teachers equipped with these kinds of values would make their teaching practice fair, of quality, respectful, and equal to all EFL students.

### 4.1.4. Role of Content

The fourth theme that emerged from the curriculum analysis I conducted to the EFL curriculum used in the target language teacher education program had to do with how content was envisioned in the curriculum analyzed. According to this curriculum analysis, content is highly valued in the EFL curriculum analyzed. Evidence that support the value that content received in this curriculum can be found in the fifty courses that integrated the target EFL curriculum (McLean et al., 2010) see table 4 above (*Knowledge and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*). The descriptors of these courses indicated that this EFL curriculum was content driven (Crandall, 200; Day, 1993; Graves, 2008; Richards, 2013). Take, for instance, this quote from the curriculum outlining the topics of the content that should be studied in the course titled "Integrated Skills I: Listening and Speaking"

> Names and titles, describing people, clothes, time, dates, jobs, sports and exercise, locations, the family, entertainment, prices, restaurant, small talks, vacations, apartment living, movies, the weather, shopping, using the telephone, describing things, directions, people we know, places and health. (McLean et al., 2010, p. 50)

All these topics were contained in a single book titled "Basic Tactics for Listening, 2nd Edition, Oxford University Press by Jack C. Richards (2003)" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 51). As can be seen in this quote, there were twenty-three content topics to be covered just in sixty-four hours of instruction (McLean et al., 2010). An EFL teacher educator implementing one of these courses of this EFL curriculum might find himself or herself running to be able to cover all the content targeted on this book.

### 4.1.5. Teaching Methods Suggested to Deliver Content

The fifth theme that emerged from the curriculum analysis of the EFL curriculum used in the target language teacher education program revolved around the teaching methods suggested to deliver content in the chosen EFL teacher education program. In this regard, this curriculum analysis showed that the main teaching method used by Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators to deliver content was didactic discourse, which consisted mostly of "lectures from teacher educators to transfer knowledge and skills to student teachers" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 18). In addition, other methodological strategies utilized to implement the EFL curriculum were discussions, debates, presentations, micro-teachings, and a supervised teaching practicum (McLean et al., 2010). Regarding the ways of how knowledge, skills, and content were delivered, I would say the target EFL curriculum followed a hybrid approach. It had characteristics of the rationalist learn-the-theory-and-then-apply-it curriculum model (Crandall, 200; Day, 1993; Graves, 2008; Wallace, 1991); also, known in language teacher education as the Forward curriculum design (Richards, 2013) because knowledge and skills were delivered in the form of courses. Additionally, it showed characteristics of the Central Design curriculum model proposed by Richards (2013) because some teaching methodologies were stated, such as, lectures, debates, micro-teachings, and the communicative approach, which was also mentioned in the curriculum. For example, as for the development of English proficiency, I found that the target curriculum recommended teacher educators to employ the "communicative language teaching approach" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 18). I found that among the theoretical principles informing the communicative language teaching approach suggested in the curriculum analyzed were:

An emphasis on the phonological, syntactical, and morphological systems of the English language, use the English language to communicate in real situations, assisting EFL student teachers to discover strategies that may speed up their English acquisitions, teacher educators should prepare interactive and creative lessons based on authentic situations wherein the English language is used as a means of communication, and teacher educators should assist student teachers in developing English skills that can be utilized in real life scenarios outside the EFL teacher education classrooms. (McLean et al., 2010, p. 18)

Pursuing this further, I observed that, even though, the communicative language teaching approach was suggested as one of the main approaches to help student teachers acquire the English language, the curriculum analysis revealed that other language teaching methods and approaches were recommended, for example, "the reading comprehension method, the total physical response (TPR) method, task-based instruction (TBI)" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 19). The curriculum also suggested teacher educators to create an "English immersion environment in the classroom" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 19).  Again, this was an indication that the target curriculum followed characteristics of a Central Design curriculum (Richards, 2013), which focuses on teaching methodologies to deliver content, knowledge, and skills.  Take, for instance, this excerpt from the curriculum calling the attention to teacher educators to use more than one teaching methods to assist student teachers grow their English proficiency skills, "EFL teacher educators implementing this curriculum should not adopt any specific teaching method or approach, instead, it is recommended to adapt the teaching practice to the characteristics and language learning needs of student teachers" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 19).

**4.1.6. Assessment of Student Learning**

The sixth theme that resulted from the curriculum analysis of the EFL curriculum used in the target language teacher education program had to do with how assessment of student learning was conceived in the curriculum analyzed. As stated in the curriculum analyzed, assessment was envisioned as a systematic, dynamic, and permanent process (McLean et al., 2010). As is clear in this quote from the curriculum describing how assessment was seen in this curriculum:

> Assessment in this language teacher education program is a systematic and permanent process whose purpose is to seek information from various sources about the quality of student learning and the quality of the assessment tools utilized by teacher educators to examine if the learning objectives have been achieved as well as to assist students to continue to learn. (McLean et al., 2010, p. 23)

Furthermore, I found that the target EFL curriculum recommended teacher educators to employ three types of assessments, to be specific, "diagnostic, summative, and formative assessment" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 24). I observed that the diagnostic assessment was intended to determine the skills and content knowledge as well as the limitations of the student teachers at the beginning of a course (McLean et al., 2010). Informed by this type of assessment, teacher educators would make decisions about adapting their syllabi and lessons (McLean et al., 2010). As for summative assessment, according to the curriculum analysis, it was meant to make decisions whether or not student-teachers passed a course (McLean et al., 2010). That is, it was utilized to determine if student teachers had acquired the knowledge and skills they were expected to obtain in a specific course (McLean et al., 2010). Pursuing this further, the target curriculum suggested using a numerical scale from 0 to 100, in which 60 was the minimum score to pass and 100 was the maximum score (McLean et al., 2010). Concerning formative

assessment, this was planned to keep a constant understanding of the growth student teachers were making regarding their English acquisition skills as well as the knowledge and skills they needed to become EFL teachers (McLean et al., 2010). Take, for example, this quotation from the curriculum describing the purpose of the way formative assessment was thought in this curriculum, "we do not teach to assess, we assess to teach and to assist students' learning" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 23). This excerpt implies that the purpose of the type of formative assessment suggested in this curriculum was twofold. On one hand, it was used to inform teacher educators whether or not student teachers were making progress in their learning process. On the other hand, it was used to help student teachers to continue to learn more.

Lastly, in terms of the role that assessment played in the target curriculum, I would say this curriculum showed characteristics of the Backward curriculum design proposed by Richards (2013), which states that after selecting desired learning outcomes, assessment evidence must be determined to make sure if learners are acquiring or have acquired those expected learning outcomes. Furthermore, it was also found that formative assessment was valued in the curriculum. As was stated in one of the quotes presented above, formative assessment was seen as a way to enhance learning. In this regard, these findings found support in the existing body of research as it was said that formative assessment should be a contact practice in the classroom (Bayat, Jamshidipour, & Hashemi, 2017; Iraji, Enayat, & Momeni, 2016; Lam, 2016).

**4.1.7. Competences and role of the EFL Teacher Educators Applying the EFL curriculum**

The last theme that arose from the analysis of the EFL curriculum used in the target language teacher education program revolved around the teaching competences and role of the EFL teacher educators who were going to implement the curriculum. As for competences, teacher educators recruited to teach in the target EFL teacher education program should possess a

native-like English proficiency as well as a deep understanding and experience in utilizing the communicative language teaching approaches in EFL classrooms (McLean et al., 2010). Macías (2013) and Moradkhani et al. (2013) concurred with these findings because they said that language teacher educators must possess native or native-like English proficiency to teach the English language in a more natural way (see also Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Richards, 1998). As is clear in the following quote from the curriculum addressing the competencies that EFL teacher educators should have to teach in the target language teacher education program, "professors teaching in this teacher education program need to speak, read, write, and understand English at a native-like level as well as demonstrate mastery of communicative language teaching methods to teach English as a Foreign Language" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 12). Furthermore, I found that teacher educators should be very knowledgeable about the content they were expected to teach. Take, for instance, this extract from the curriculum, "professors need to demonstrate mastery of the content of the courses they teach" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 12). Moradkhani et al. (2013) found that subject knowledge was one of the kinds of knowledge that teacher educators are to have because, according to them, in the same way that knowledges, such as, pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills, and English proficiency play an important role in the teaching and learning process, subject expertise is also fundamental because that is what is going to be delivered to learners.

Concerning the role of EFL teacher educators in the target EFL curriculum, I found that they were expected to be "mediators between the curriculum and the student teachers" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 21). They were expected to be teacher educators as well as researchers (McLean et al., 2010). In addition, teacher educators were expected to keep a constant motivation and interest in professional development (McLean et al., 2010). In the same line of thought, I

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observed that teacher educators should foster the practice of values, such as, "respect, honesty, responsibility, commitment to the EFL teaching profession, creativity, equality, attitude to continue to learn, and ethical values" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 21). Also, the results revealed that teacher educators should practice and engage student teachers in critical thinking processes regarding their learning process (McLean et al., 2010). They needed to behave as teacher models before their student teachers (McLean et al., 2010). Finally, teacher educators had to show commitment with the mission statement of the target language teacher education program, which part of it made reference to preparing "qualified EFL teachers, equipped with knowledge, skills, and values, for example, social, cultural, and ethical values, to practice the EFL teaching profession with dignity and success" (McLean et al., 2010, p. 22).

In conclusion, Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators start their journey of becoming teacher educators in their teacher education programs, wherein they first become EFL teachers. The curriculum analysis showed some of the sources from which Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators build their knowledge base. It also revealed that, at least in this target teacher education program, Nicaraguan teacher educators were to develop twelve types of knowledge and seven types of skills that would equip them to be successful EFL teachers and possibly successful teacher educators (*See figure 4. Knowledge and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*). Consequently, it would be expected that the target EFL teacher educators who participated in study would possess the types of knowledge and skills found in this curriculum analysis because they were prepared as EFL teachers under this very same curriculum and language teacher education program. In the following section, I present the findings of the semi-structured interview protocol that was informed by taking into account the findings of this curriculum analysis which was intended to further investigate Nicaraguan EFL teacher

educators' lived experiences regarding their knowledge base construction as well as the

relationship that existed between their knowledge base and their classroom practices.

## 4.2. Nicaraguan EFL Teacher Educators' Knowledge Base

In this section of chapter 4, I present and discuss the findings of six semi-structured

interviews with the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators who participated in this study.  The

semi-structured interviews were meant to inform the three proposed research sub-questions,

namely:

1. What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base?

2. What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher

   educators? and

3. How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their

   classroom practices?

As a way to give voice to the researched, I used their own words to name the themes

about the types of knowledge and skills they said they had based on the data.  In addition, as a

way to protect their identity, I used pseudonyms to replace their actual names.  The pseudonyms

for each participant are: *Roder*, *Andres*, *Diego*, *Carmen*, *Josseling*, and *Esther*.  I decided to use

first name pseudonyms because in the context where I collected data for this research that was

how EFL teacher educators addressed one another.  That is, they did not address others by their

last names.

Furthermore, the knowledge base and skills themes that emerged from the data were

grouped in the following categories.  The first category has to do with the sources of knowledge

of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators.  Under this category, I describe the types of knowledge

and skills that were built from each source.  The second category has to do with the relationship

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of their knowledge base and classroom practices. The last category has to do with the knowledge base and skills categorization, here I summarize in a figure the knowledge base and skills that resulted from the data and that will be discussed in the first category. Next, I present the findings that support each one of these themes, but first, I describe the teaching experience of the research participants so you have an idea of their expertise as EFL teacher educators.

### 4.2.1. Teaching Experience of the Six EFL Teacher Educators

One of the criteria to recruit research participants was that they should have at least 3 years of teaching experience in EFL teacher education programs. This criterion was determined because, according to existing research, it may take up to three years to novice teacher educators to build their new professional knowledge base (Murray & Male, 2005; see also Moradkhani et al., 2013). In this regard, the teaching experience of the research participants ranged from 3 to 9 years. Roder was the most experienced of the six EFL teacher educators with 9 years of teaching experience. Among the courses he had taught were: Pronunciation, critical reading, applied English linguistics, assessment, integrated English skills, English grammar, reading and writing, research methods, ESL teaching methods, didactics, SLA, lesson planning and classroom management, and English-Spanish translation. The second most experienced EFL teacher educator was Andres with 8 years of teaching experience. He had taught courses, such as, English grammar, English integrated skills, course design, basic writing, academic writing, didactics, English pedagogy, SLA, ESL teaching methods, sociolinguistics, lesson planning and classroom management, TOEFL training, course design, and critical reading. The third most experienced EFL teacher educator was Carmen with 5 years of teaching experience. Carmen had taught many courses, such as, research methods, course design, applied English linguistics, thesis seminar, English grammar, English integrated skills, applied English linguistics, English-Spanish interpretation, ESL teaching methods, academic writing, and lesson planning and classroom

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management.  Diego, Josseling, and Esther had taught for 3 years each.  Diego had taught

English integrated skills, basic writing, academic writing, ESL teaching methods, SLA, and

grammar.  Josseling had taught courses like English integrated skills, English grammar, and

basic writing.  In the case of Esther, she had taught courses, for example, English grammar and

English integrated skills.  Lastly, as for their level of education, most of them hold a Master's

degree diploma, except for Diego, who was a Ph.D. student by the time I interviewed him.

**4.2.2. Sources of Knowledge and Knowledge Base of Nicaraguan EFL Teacher Educators**

According to Tsui (2003), to understand teacher knowledge, it is important to understand

its sources because sources of knowledge determine the knowledges and skills that teachers and

educators may possess.  In this respect, I found that the target research participants built their

knowledge base from 8 sources of knowledge.  I also found that from those 8 sources of

knowledge they developed 16 types of knowledge and 14 skills (*See Figure 5. Knowledge Base,*

*Skills Categories, and Classroom Relationship*).

The results showed that the knowledge base of the target language teacher educators was

constructed and accumulated throughout time.  Additionally, I found that different sources

contributed to the development of the same types of knowledge as well as it happened that

different kinds of knowledge were built from the same source of knowledge.  You will find

evidence of this in the in-depth description I will provide as I elucidate each source of knowledge

below.  But, first, let me share with you what the research participants said when I asked them

about the existence of language teacher education programs devoted specifically to prepare EFL

teacher educators in Nicaragua.

One hundred percent of the research participants said that EFL teacher education

programs desinged to prepare language teacher educators did not exist in the Nicaraguan

education system.  They said that what Nicaraguan universities offered were bachelor's degrees

in sciences of education in teaching English.  However, those programs were designed to prepare

English teachers only, not educators, as defined in this study.  In this research, I defined

Nicaraguan language teacher educators as "language teaching experts who help EFL teacher

candidates develop English proficiency and who provide formal instruction and support for

teacher candidates to become effective English as a Foreign Language teachers."  As evidence of

these findings, take, for example, the following quotes from the interviews.  Roder said, "I

became a teacher of future English teachers because I had an M.A. in teaching English, uh, but,

uh, I wish I could have had direct preparation to train other teachers when I did my undergrad

studies."  Carmen said, "if you're a good English teacher or if you have studied a master's

program in fields, like, ESL, applied linguistics, TESOL, or EFL, you may get a job in a

bachelor's degree program to teach English teachers."  In addition, Andres added, "I've always

wanted to be a teacher trainer.  That is why, I studied an M.A. in TESOL but even there I kept

studying how to teach English not how to teach to teach."  Esther also expressed, "now that you

asked me if I am a teacher educator, it is that I see the difference between just teaching English

and teaching to future teachers.  In Nicaragua, we don't study to be educators."  Pursuing this

further, Diego mentioned, "I entered university to learn how to speak English and to learn how to

teach it, but I was never told that I could teach other English teachers after graduating."  Lastly,

Josseling said, "the only programs you find in universities here are bachelor's degrees in

teaching English but not in becoming a teacher trainer."  All those direct quotations stated clearly

that in Nicaragua EFL teacher educators build their professional knowledge and identity

throughout time and that their only formal academic preparation may come from preservice

language teacher education programs or from graduate programs focused on teaching English but not on teacher training.

These results found support in the existing literature which said that teacher education programs specifically devoted to train preservice EFL or ESL student teacher educators are nonexistent yet (Moradkhani et al, 2013; see also Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005). In addition, these researchers also asserted that becoming a language teacher educator is a long and challenging process taking novice teachers three and more years of teaching experience in teacher education programs to develop their new professional knowledge base. Additionally, some researchers said since teacher education programs devoted to preparing teacher educators are nonexistent, what universities do is recruit those who they think are more experienced teachers (Fisher, 2009; Korthagen, 2000) or those who possess advanced academic degrees, such as master's and Ph.ds degrees (Wilson, 2006).

Next, I begin discussion the sources of knowledge from which the target research participants constructed their knowledge base.

### 4.2.2.1. Coursework in EFL teacher education programs.

The first source of knowledge from which the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators who participated in this study built their knowledge base and skills was the professional coursework they took in their language teacher education program in which they became EFL teachers. One hundred percent of them said that their preparation as EFL teacher educators had been the accumulation of teaching experiences, reflection as teachers, and their studies both as undergraduate and graduate students. All of them said their journey to become EFL teacher educators began in their preservice teacher education program and acknowledged that their undergraduate studies were one of the most important steps in their professional lives as language teacher educators. Research on language teacher education showed that the

professional coursework that student teachers take in their preservice teacher education programs plays an important role on building their knowledge base (Arıoğul, 2007; Attardo & Brown, 2005; Borg, 1998, 2005; Macías, 2013; Poynor, 2005; Richards, 2008a, 1998; Tsui, 2003; Zhang, 2008). In this respect, Moradkhani et al. (2013) in their grounded theory study about the knowledge base of English language teacher educators found that undergraduate courses are the starting point for English teachers to become language teacher educators (see also Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). More support for these results can be seen in the following quotations taken from the interviews data. Esther said, "you know, my bachelor's degree wasn't to learn how to teach to other teachers, um, but I think it was there where I learned English and where I learned to teach English." Diego expressed, "a lot of my knowledge came from all the courses I studied when I was a college student. Basically, that was my beginning as a teacher." Additionally, Josseling asserted, "I learned to speak English at university. And, uh, also teaching, but at that time my interest was to speak English well." In the same line of thought, Andres mentioned, "well, even though I wasn't mature enough as a teacher at that time, I believe that my college major [teacher education program] was the first step for being a teacher. There I learned the English language. I studied about many topics." In addition, Carmen said, "all the classes I studied when I was a university student prepared me to be an English teacher. Um, I wasn't the best one but learned to speak and write in English and studied about how to teach English." Lastly, Roder added, "…with the courses in the university … I could learn to communicate in English. Then, I learned about teaching through the courses I took, and I had opportunities to teach in my practicum."

These findings showed that these six EFL teacher educators did not receive specific

training to be teacher educators; they were trained to be English teachers only. Their master's

degrees were not focused on preparing them to be EFL teacher educators either. As Roder

expressed:

In 2008, I had the opportunity to do a two-year Master's degree program in teaching

English in an American University, but, again, it was just focused on teaching English.

All the classes were, like, on how to teach grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading, and

methods of teaching. I thought I was going to learn how to be a teacher trainer because

that was what I wanted. Uh, but, it wasn't like that. I think it would be great to create a

program where you study how to train both new teachers and teachers with experience.

### 4.2.2.1.1. Types of knowledge built from this source of knowledge.

Findings also revealed that from the source of knowledge entitled coursework in EFL

teacher education programs, the target research participants developed thirteen types of

knowledge, namely, English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge,

knowledge of language related disciplines, lesson planning, material development, classroom

management, assessment knowledge, teaching knowledge, knowledge of the Nicaraguan

education context, course design knowledge, technology related knowledge, and research

knowledge. Take the following quotes by Roder, Carmen, and Andres as evidence. Roder said,

"in my major, I learned to communicate in English. I learned all the process to teach, evaluate,

plan lessons, and choose teaching materials. And to understand how schools work in Nicaragua

and other subjects." By other subjects he meant disciplines related to teaching, such as,

linguistics, psycholinguistics, English phonology, second language acquisition, phonetics,

technology in the classroom, sociolinguistics, syntax, English-Spanish interpretation and

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translation (McLean et al., 2010). Carmen expressed, "…there were two main objectives… one: to learn English and two: to be an English teacher. But I took courses about research, teaching methods, uh, linguistics, sociolinguistics, and, and, how to use technology to teach English, etc." Finally, Andres mentioned, "I learned to speak English well, how to teach, about translation, investigation, to evaluate what students learn, to choose good books to teach. Too, uh, and other classes like ethics, SLA, grammar, writing, linguistics, etc."

The existing body of literature provided support to the findings presented above. For instance, some researchers said that learning to teach in preservice teacher education programs entails mastering several types of knowledge and skills, such as, developing content knowledge, developing teaching skills, understanding teaching theories, developing pedagogical reasoning, and mastering learning and teaching methodologies (Freeman, 2002; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Macías, 2013; Richards, 1998).

### 4.2.2.1.2. Skills built from this source of knowledge.

The findings revealed that Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators developed nine skills from the coursework taken in preservice teacher education programs, namely, social English language skills, academic English language skills, lesson planning skills, creating and adapting teaching material skills, assessment kills, skills to use technology in the classroom, and teaching skills. Carmen said, for instance, "in my teaching program, I learned how teach and speak English." Similarly, Esther added, "I was lucky because in my bachelor's degree my teachers taught me all related to teaching like planning English lessons, choosing materials from books and from the internet, using rubrics to evaluate students, um, and, um, to speak English." In the same line of thought, Diego said, "as college student [student teacher], I learned skills like speaking English fluently, designing lessons, using technology, using rubrics to evaluate learning, selecting books

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to teach, and teaching the four English skills, mainly in the teaching practicum." However, not all these skills get developed at the same level of awareness and mastery. For example, Andres and Roder said that the skills in which they developed more mastery were their English language skills. They expressed that the reason their abilities to communicate in English both in academic and in everyday situations got more developed was because they had more opportunities to practice those skills in their undergraduate studies. The following direct quotations from the interview data provided support to this finding. Andres mentioned:

At university, I acquired a good level of English, like, when I graduated, I was able to speak and write English fluently. But I learned how to do other skills, too, like, you know, to create lesson plans, to evaluate books to teach, and I did some teaching, too. But, to tell you the truth, my English proficiency was way much better than my teaching skills. The thing is, you know, you don't get to teach a lot, only in the practicum. My practicum was short, but, you know, it was where I taught for the first time to real students.

Likewise, Roder said:

In English teaching programs, you study about many subjects and learn how to do several things related to teaching English. I remember I took a lot of courses. Uh, in my case, I paid more attention to how to speak English well because, you know, I thought if I'm going to be an English teacher, I need to speak well. At the end of program [end of his bachelor's degree], I got to teach for sixty hours in a high school. My teaching skills kept improving as I kept teaching. I wish I had more practice on, like, teaching, creating lessons, etc.

Based on existing research, even though the researched said that they developed all those knowledges and skills mentioned above in their language teacher education programs, as Macías (2013) put it, undergraduate coursework is just a starting point for those knowledges and skills to get mastered. This means that language teachers continue to master those types of knowledge and skills as they increase their level of teaching experience.

In conclusion, findings demonstrated that the research participants acknowledged that the coursework they took in their preservice teacher education program was the foundation of their knowledge base as EFL teacher educators. I found that the coursework of the target language teacher education program was meant to achieve to main goals: 1) to prepare preservice teacher educators with a native-like English proficiency and 2) to equip them with the pedagogical knowledge, subject knowledge, and teaching experience needed to provide effective teaching in EFL classrooms. However, the research participants recognized that there was little emphasis on actual teaching. I also found that the chosen language teacher education programs was focused only on preparing EFL teachers, not teacher educators. Even the master's degrees that the research participants held were focused on teaching English, not on learning how to teach teachers. Next, I discuss the findings related to the second source of knowledge from which the participants built their knowledge base as language teacher educators.

**4.2.2.2. Apprenticeship of observation.**

According to the findings, the second source of knowledge that helped Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators build their knowledge base was apprenticeship of observation. Apprenticeship of observation refers to the type of knowledge that is learned indirectly through observation in language teacher education programs. That is, it is knowledge that is not taught directly to student teachers. It may include English teaching techniques, strategies, and learning activities

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that language teacher educators may use as they teach communicative and academic English skills to preservice student teachers as well as other courses (Borg, 2004; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013).

The findings revealed that even though the target EFL teacher educators recognized that their courses taken in their undergraduate programs were the foundations of the construction of their knowledge base and teaching skills, they did not rely too much on the knowledge and skills they were taught directly in their preservice language teaching programs at the beginning of their teaching careers. They affirmed that they trusted more on techniques and teaching activities their teachers used with them at university. The existing research supported these findings. For instance, some researchers said that new English teachers begin reasoning on the knowledge and skills they learned in their preservice teacher education programs later in their teaching careers. However, at the very beginning they depend on what they have observed from their professors (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Zhang, 2008).

According to Roder, when he began teaching in his practicum, he used some teaching activities that his professors utilized to teach him. For example, he stated, "in my teaching practicum, I remember I used some activities used by my teachers to teach vocabulary and pronunciation. That was much easier for me because it was my first time teaching." Pursuing this further, Josseling and Esther said that observing their professors they not only learned some teaching activities but also how to organize EFL classrooms. This can be seen in these direct quotations, Josseling affirmed, "from my professors I learned some strategies to teach English, uh, and, also, how to manage a classroom," and Esther added, "I still remember that the first day I taught I asked my students to repeat after me what I wrote on the board. … I used some information cards to call their names. This was something that my teachers did." In the same

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line of thought, Carmen mentioned, "I learned a lot just from watching my teachers teach, like, techniques, how to use the whiteboard and work with students."

Now, you may wonder why the target research participants relied more on apprenticeship of observation knowledge, knowledge that Bandura (1965) would call vicarious knowledge, at the beginning of their teaching careers. This might be because most of the pedagogical and didactic knowledge that was delivered to the research participants as student teachers was mainly declarative knowledge (Anderson, 1985; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996). According to the findings, a sixty-hour teaching practicum was the only real opportunity in which the target researched applied their teaching knowledge and skills during their EFL teacher education programs (McLean et al., 2010). In other words, when declarative pedagogical knowledge is not applied to real teaching situations, it may tend to fade as time goes by, which at the same time it may become more difficult to remember and use. However, the researched may have retrieved in an easier way teaching techniques and teaching activities used by their professors to teach English communication skills because they learned the "know how" part of that type of knowledge as their professors applied them (Anderson, 1985; Macías, 2013; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Zhang, 2008).

Pursuing this further, I would like to highlight something that caught my attention regarding observational knowledge, from which I believe Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators could learn a lot so as to help their student teachers kindle their interest to acquire procedural pedagogical knowledge from courses which are not necessarily meant to develop such knowledge. According to Diego, while he was taking undergraduate courses intended to develop communicative English skills, he would take notes of the procedures of some of the teaching techniques and activities his professors used to teach English communications skills. Later,

when he had to teach for the first time in his teaching practicum, he went back to those notes and used them to inform his teaching. Diego did that without any guidance, moved maybe only by his interest of becoming a good English teacher in the future. To illustrate, see the following excerpt from the interview with Diego:

> As you know, when you start teaching is hard, but something that helped me were the notes I took over the years when I was learning English at university [as a student teacher]. I used to take notes on how my teachers taught me English. In the paper sheets with learning activities that my teachers gave me to learn English, like, to learn vocabulary or grammar, I wrote how my teachers taught those activities. But, uh, I, you know, didn't take notes of all the activities my teachers used but only about some of them. Uh, then, when I was told I had to do my practicum, I looked for the handouts I had from when I learned English. I remember I used many of those activities; I even made some copies because in the high school I taught they didn't have books to teach. You know, I think that helped me. I remember some of my friends where very nervous because they didn't know what to do. With some of them, we got together to plan our classes using the handouts and notes I had kept from my English classes.

From what Diego did, as an EFL student teacher, Nicaraguan language teacher educators could learn two things. First, it is clear that not all students are like Diego with self-motivation and curiosity for learning; consequently, it is necessary that language teacher educators create that motivation for learning in all students. Second, Diego made observational knowledge more overt to him as he took notes and possibly later reflected on those notes to improve his pedagogical knowledge. In this regard, I think that a powerful way to help new generations of Nicaraguan English teachers become better teachers is by making apprenticeship learning (Borg,

2004; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013) or vicarious learning (Bandura, 1965) available to them in a more overt manner. For example, when Nicaraguan language teacher educators teach courses to develop English skills, they could take advantage of that time as well to explain to student teachers the teaching strategies, techniques, and activities they will use to develop certain English skills and knowledge. Student teachers could be asked to create a paper or digital diary or notebook in which they could take reflective notes about teaching methodologies used by their professors to teach communicative English skills. Later in their teaching careers, they could do something similar to what Diego did. That is they could utilize their diaries or notebooks as sources of knowledge and information to inform their teaching practices. Additionally, I believe that teaching students from an early stage in their teacher education programs that they could learn by observing their professors teaching may help Nicaraguan universities graduate better English teachers equipped with a high level of critical thinking and decision-making skills.

Lastly, even though the research participants did not overtly state it, I think that another reason why they might have relied on apprenticeship knowledge when they just started to teach was because they might have experienced a mismatch between what they learned in their preservice language teacher education programs and what they were expected to do in real life EFL classrooms. According to Macías (2013), at the beginning of their teaching careers new EFL teachers find incongruity between the knowledge they were overtly taught in their preservice teacher education programs and the real school environments, which makes them rely more on the teaching techniques they acquired vicariously from their teacher educators. In other words, in the case of the target researched, it is possible that they, as novice English teachers, had a wrong perception of what it meant to teach English in real classroom situations since

Nicaraguan EFL preservice teacher education programs are mostly designed to delivered theoretical knowledge, relegating hands-on teaching knowledge and skills to a second position.

### 4.2.2.2.1. Types of knowledge built from this source of knowledge.

Pursuing this further, the findings revealed that the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators in this study developed three kinds of knowledge from the source of knowledge entitled "apprenticeship of observation." These three kinds of knowledge were teaching knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and classroom management knowledge. According to the findings, these types of knowledge were acquired through two types of observation, namely, passive observation and active observation. An example of passive observation would be what Roder, Josseling, Esther, and Carmen did when they were doing their teaching practicum. That is, while they were acquiring the English language in their teacher education programs, their brains received and stored some of the teaching and learning activities that their professors utilized to teach the English language. Later, when they had to teach for the first time in their teaching practicum, their brains retrieved some of those teaching and learning activities and techniques so they could use them. The level of mastery of the pedagogical, teaching, and classroom management knowledge grown from apprenticeship of observation may not seem very solid, but it is a tool that novice teachers, as the findings showed, utilized when they teach for the first time.

Active observation happened as in Diego's case, when he decided to take notes of some of the teaching techniques and teaching activities used by his professors. That allowed him to develop a higher level of awareness of pedagogical knowledge, classroom management knowledge, and teaching knowledge compared to the other research participants who just observed their professors teaching but did not take any further actions. Put differently, if

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Nicaraguan preservice EFL student teachers followed Diego's idea of taking notes of the teaching and learning activities as well as of the teaching techniques and strategies employed by their professors when teaching them English, they would develop a deeper understanding of those types of knowledge. As a teacher educator, I think that what Diego did was brilliant. I think we could learn a lot from Diego's experience. If Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators encouraged their student teachers to be critical learners, the quality of English teachers would improve a lot because EFL student teachers would start developing their pedagogical and didactic knowledge even when taking courses which are not meant to develop such types of knowledge. If student teachers were told to keep a diary to take notes and reflect on those notes, as Diego did, of those teaching activities, teaching techniques, and strategies utilized by their teacher educators in courses devoted to develop English proficiency, I am sure that by the time student teachers start taking pedagogical and didactic courses and by the time they start teaching, they would possess a stronger level of awareness of their pedagogical knowledge and teaching.

However, it would not be enough just to ask student teachers to reflect on what they observe. I think it would be much more effective if language teacher educators devoted some time to make students aware of the teaching techniques and methods they apply when teaching. For instance, if the target skill to be taught was 'speaking' and let us say that the topic of the target lesson is 'pronunciation of English vowels', the language teacher educator would first let students know what the expected learning outcomes are, what evidence of learning will be considered, how those expected learning outcomes would be accomplished (teaching techniques, teaching activities, learning materials, methods of instruction) and then he/she would discuss with the student teachers the effectiveness of the methods of instruction, teaching techniques, and the appropriateness of assessment tools used. In my perspective, this would be a win-win

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scenario both for student teachers and for language teacher educators. Student teachers would become stronger and more thoughtful English teachers, and language teacher educators could validate in some way the effectiveness of their pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Put differently, if as language teacher educators, we could make each class a case to be analyzed and to reflect upon, our student teachers would not only become better English teachers but also more critical professionals.

### *4.2.2.2.2. Skills built from this source of knowledge.*

As for skills built from apprenticeship of observation, findings did not show any specific skills that the target EFL teacher educators constructed from this source of knowledge. This might be because apprenticeship of observation provided student teachers only with observational knowledge. In other words, by observing their professors teaching, the target EFL teacher educators, as preservice student teachers, developed only declarative knowledge; knowing about teaching (Anderson, 1985; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996); however, they did not develop procedural knowledge (Anderson, 1985; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996) because they were not exposed to hands-on teaching opportunities as they observed (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Zhang, 2008). As it was described and explained before, however, the target language teacher educators benefited from this source of knowledge in the way that their pedagogical knowledge, classroom management knowledge, and teaching knowledge grew as they observed their professors teaching courses devoted to develop the four English skills.

In conclusion, as for observational knowledge, I found that the target research participants said that apprenticeship knowledge was important for them at the beginning of their EFL teaching careers. However, as they became more and more experienced English teachers they began to use other sources of knowledge, including the knowledge and skills they overtly

received in their undergraduate programs.  In the next section, I talk about own experiences as English language learners, which the research participants identified as another source of knowledge from which they built their knowledge base.

### 4.2.2.3. Own experiences as language learners.

This study showed that the third source of knowledge from which the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators constructed their knowledge base was their own experiences as English language learners.  I found that 100% of the research participants asserted that reflecting on the ways they learned English helped them make decisions on how to teach and on how to help their students to acquire the English language.  Arıoğul (2007), Faez (2011), Macías (2013), and Zhang (2008) supported these findings as they said that novice English teachers based their pedagogical decisions on how to teach English taking into consideration successful and unsuccessful ways they experienced when acquiring the English language.  In addition, Borg (2003) expressed that language teachers' prior learning experiences "establish cognitions about language learning which form the basis of their initial conceptualizations of L2 teaching during teacher education, and which may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives" (p. 88).

Furthermore, all six research participants agreed that being and becoming an independent learner as you acquire English as a foreign language (EFL) in a language teacher education program is paramount.  They said that if an EFL student teacher does not play an active role outside the classroom, his/her English skills may not develop as fast or as effective if he or she stays only with what is taught in the EFL teacher education classroom.  In the same line of thought, they affirmed that they shared their own learning experiences with their EFL students and EFL student teachers to help them learn faster and more efficiently.  According to exiting

research, the impact of teachers' prior language learning knowledge has been recognized in applied linguistics as well as in language teacher education (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2003; Carter, 1990; Elbaz, 1983; Faez, 2011; Freeman, 1991b; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lima, 2012; Macías, 2013; Meijer, Verloop, & Beijard, 2001; Numrich, 1996; Peacock, 2001; Richards, 1998; Zhang, 2008).

The participants asserted that an advantage that had helped them to be more effective in sharing their lived English learning experiences with their students was that their students possessed similar characteristics compared to them, for instance, they spoke the same first language (Spanish), belonged to the same culture, and the learning process occurred in similar settings, EFL contexts. In other words, teaching to students with similar characteristics to them had facilitated the process of making decisions on what to teach, how to teach, how to accomplish expected English skills, and how to assess student learning. In this regard, Tsui (2003) said that experiences as language learners allow teachers to create perceptions of what teaching is as well as what teaching should be like.

Additionally, the participants added that using their own English learning experiences to inform their teaching had helped them better connect with their learners and at the same time make them feel more motivated to see that acquiring English proficiency in an EFL setting is an attainable goal. According to Macías (2013), EFL teacher educators very often reflect on how they developed English proficiency and use those experiences to make decisions on how to teach and on how to kindle their students' motivation to learn the English language. In the same vein, Faez (2011) affirmed that non-native EFL teachers have often experienced a number of teaching methodologies as students in such classrooms and therefore have developed a unique set of assumptions about language teaching theories. In other words, according to Faez (2011), EFL

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teachers' own language learning experiences are so powerful because they have personally experienced what works and what does not work as far as learning the English language is concerned. This means that the target Nicaraguan EFL language teacher educators may have enhanced their teaching by reflecting and using those successful learning experiences that worked for them as EFL learners. The following direct quotations provided more support to the findings presented above, for example, Esther stated:

> Something that has helped me to become the kind of professional that I am now, is, uh, is being an independent learner. … that is something I have shared with my students. I tell them that it is necessary to go beyond what you learn in the classroom. I always think about how I became fluent in English and share that with them. … um, like, I share with them how to use the internet and phone and tablet applications to study and show them how to maximize their time and skills to learn better.

Furthermore, Josseling added to this line of thought as she said that "learning English here [learning context wherein the target university was located] means that you will use all what is available to you, like, speaking English in the community, using YouTube and phone applications to improve the four English skills, watching documentaries and news in English, reading online sources, and creating your own English environment at home." Likewise, Andres, Carmen, and Roder affirmed that meditating on how one acquires a language provides valuable ideas to help others learn in a more efficient way. To illustrate, take these quotes by these three research participants. Diego said, "as a language learner, you need to take everything around you and turn it into opportunities to learn, not only what you're given in class;" Carmen added, "building habits to study independently is hard but rewarding at the end. I set myself as an example and, um, … guide my students the way I learned English," and Roder expressed, … I

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tell my students to practice passive and active learning.  I mean to listen but to practice speaking and writing, too, like, to listen first and to echo what they hear, and to compare their speaking with what they hear."

Additionally, Diego stated that:

If you don't study on your own when, um, you are studying to be an English teacher, you may not become a strong English teacher.  Now that I am training future teachers, I think, I often think about the way I learned English to help my students to speak this language easier.  Some of the strategies I teach my students to use are to keep a personal diary in which they can write about their own learning as a way to improve their writing skills. Besides that, to improve listening, I share with them online sites and English Apps [applications] that are free.  For speaking, I teach them how to repeat after speaking models to improve fluency and pronunciation.  Too, uh, and, I recommend them to build habits for learning, like, reading aloud for ten to fifteen minutes a day.

To sum up, I totally agree with these findings because as an English teacher educator I have used and continue to use strategies and techniques that I used myself when I was an English learner.  I reflect on those successful and unsuccessful learning experiences when I am preparing my lesson plans as well as when I am teaching.  One of the elements that I always analyze and stress with my students is how to become an independent learner.  I help them think about the ways they like to learn and based on that I help them develop study plans to follow outside the classroom.  For example, if my students are visual learners, I choose videos, movies, picture dictionaries, vocabulary illustrated with pictures or images, illustrated story books for them to study independently.  Of course, I provide some scaffolding of the steps and procedures they may perform to study more efficiently.  Self-regulated learning is powerful and teachers should

take advantage of it. As EFL teacher educators, we cannot expect that students will accomplish English proficiency only with what is taught in the classroom. I think other language teacher educators may agree with me that most of the English learning process occurs outside the classroom.

### *4.2.2.3.1. Types of knowledge built from this source of knowledge.*

Additionally, from the source of knowledge entitled in this study as "own experiences as language learners," findings revealed that Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators built mainly subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching knowledge. As for subject knowledge, the participants asserted that as a language learner, you develop a deep understanding and awareness of how the target language works from a semantical, phonological, morphological, and syntactical point of view. They expressed that as they learned to communicate in English, they learned to overtly understand its grammar and lexicon as well as how to use its sound system to be intelligible to the ears of native speakers as well as to the ears of other non-native English speakers. Even though "you may make linguistic mistakes when speaking, you know when a sentence or word has been misspoken;" therefore, "you can help your students improve those speaking errors the same way you did as when you were learning English," Esther said. Correspondingly, this level of language awareness acquired when the research participants were student teachers contributed to enrich their pedagogical and teaching knowledge because, as they expressed, some of their decisions on how to teach and on how to guide their student teachers to acquire the English language had been influenced by the way they learned English.

Faez (2011), Macías (2013), and Moradkhani et al. (2013) all agreed on that EFL teachers or teacher educators who have experienced the process of learning English can develop a special understanding and level of awareness that make them better understand how to help

others learn the English language in more effective ways utilizing those techniques and strategies that worked for them. More support to these findings came from the direct quotations from the following three language teacher educators, Carmen, Josseling, and Roder. Carmen said:

> One of the advantages of teaching English to Spanish speakers is that you understand two things. You have experienced yourself the process of learning English, and, you know, you speak the language of your students. And that makes it easier to help students to learn English. It's, like, when you teach, say, uh, grammar or vocabulary, you kind of do it in the same way you learned.

> Likewise, Josseling mentioned:

> … sometimes when I am planning my listening and speaking classes, I think about some techniques I, myself, used when I was at university [in her student teacher education program]. Like, I have my students listen to short videos, songs, and podcasts recorded by native or native-like English speakers. One of my favorite activities is to have my students imitate the way those speakers speak and then to videotape or record themselves saying the same scripts. That worked for me, and, you know, I've seen it's worked for my students, too.

Finally, Diego and Andres also said that their experience as English learners had informed their teaching decisions. For instance, Diego stressed, "part of the knowledge I have and that I use … when I teach English grammar, … vocabulary, pronunciation came from what studied when I was a student. I use only what I think it worked for me." To finish, Andres added, "… I listened to podcasts… repeated them to improve my speaking, pronunciation, and fluency. I read and talked about what I read in a mirror to gain confidence and fluency. … wrote when I could. … I use these techniques with my students."

### 4.2.2.3.2. Skills built from this source of knowledge.

According to the findings, some of the skills that resulted from the source of knowledge entitled "own experiences as language learners" were social English skills, academic English skills, skills to select and assess learning materials, and some teaching skills. The direct quotes I described above implied that when the six EFL teacher educators were English learners, they acquired English skills, both oral and written, in the classroom and as independent learners. In that process they constructed skills to select and assess learning materials. Possibly, they did that by trial and error. That is, they might have experimented with various types of English sources such as, English speaking people, English podcasts, music in English, grammar books, videos, documentaries, Apps for learning English, and so forth, until they found those which worked for them to learn the English language. Now, as they asserted, their own English learning experiences influenced the decisions they made regarding teaching the English language in EFL teacher education classrooms (Faez, 2011; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013).

In concussion, findings demonstrated that the fact that the participants experienced the process of acquiring the English language had helped them better inform their teaching in EFL teacher education classrooms. These findings were supported by the existing body of research which recognized the value that learning a language and then teaching it has. That is, language teachers who have had the experienced of learning a second language may develop an overt understanding of how that language works and how it can be learned and taught to others. However, as findings reveled there were other sources of knowledge from which the research constructed their knowledge base. Below I discuss how the teaching experiences as EFL teachers contributed to develop part of the knowledge base and teaching skills of the research participants.

### 4.2.2.4. Teaching experiences as EFL teachers.

Teaching experiences as EFL teachers was the fourth source of knowledge from which the research participants built the knowledge base that defined them as EFL teacher educators. They said it was until they started to teach English in their teaching practicum and then either in high schools or in intensive English programs that their teaching knowledge and skills began to develop. Consequently, they acknowledged that their EFL teaching experiences was a very important component in their teaching careers. Researchers both from general education and from language teacher education found that teachers perceived teaching experiences to be one of the most significant sources of knowledge as far as teaching was concerned (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Grossman, 1990; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005; Tsui, 2003). As a language teacher educator myself, who graduated and worked in similar EFL teaching milieus in Nicaragua compared to the participants, I totally agree with them that EFL teaching plays a significant role in developing one's pedagogical content knowledge or pedagogical reasoning as defined by some researchers (Day, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998, see also Shulman, 1987) as well as developing other types of knowledge such as, assessment knowledge, knowledge of students, classroom management, subject knowledge, and so forth.

However, findings showed that the transition from preservice language teacher education programs to EFL teaching settings was not an easy task for the participants at the beginning. They recognized that they thought that all the knowledge and skills they had acquired in their preservice EFL teacher education programs had prepared them to face all issues related to teaching English, but as soon as they started to teach in EFL classrooms, mainly at high school level, they realized that there were some challenges and difficulties to overcome. For instance, some of the difficulties they encountered as EFL teachers both during their teaching practicum

and after their teaching practicum were, for instance, dealing with large classes (in some cases, 60 students per class), lack of teaching materials, lack of interest from students to learn English, not enough time for teaching and learning, teaching with an outdated and grammar focused curriculum, and not knowing how to deal with students' learning needs. They said that in the best case scenario they had just read or talked about those types of issues in their bachelor's degree programs because the curriculum of their teacher education programs did not include teaching opportunities in which they could experience teaching under such conditions. As stated by Macías (2013), Moradkhani et al. (2013), and Zhang (2008) most of the time novice EFL teachers find a discrepancy between what they learn in their teacher education programs and what happens in real teaching settings. According to them, this occurs because preservice language teacher education programs emphasize theoretical knowledge over practical knowledge, mainly when it has to do with teaching. Consequently, preservice language teacher education programs should make an effort to design and plan education which includes both declarative and procedural teaching knowledge (Anderson, 1985; McLaughlin & Heredia, 1996).

Pursuing this further, I agree with Macías (2013), Moradkhani et al. (2013), and Zhang (2008) in that preservice EFL teacher education programs need to make a balance of theory and practice to make the transition of novice EFL teachers to teaching jobs smoother. This is something that can be accomplished by either planning for longer teaching practicums in high schools or in intensive English programs or by creating a teaching laboratory as part of the curricula of language teacher education programs where student teachers could apply the theoretical knowledge they acquire in their coursework from an early stage in their programs. To some researchers reasoning on theoretical pedagogical and teaching knowledge acquired in language teacher education programs comes later as novice language teachers become more

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experienced teachers (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2004; Faez, 2011; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Zhang, 2008).

As I explained in previous sections in this study, novice EFL teachers, including the target research participants, tend to rely on two types of knowledge at the beginning of their teaching careers to face issues that may arise in EFL classrooms, namely, observational knowledge (Arıoğul, 2007; Borg, 2004; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013) and their own experiences as language learners (Borg, 2004; Faez, 2011; Grossman, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Macías, 2013; Zhang, 2008). Whether or not these learning experiences are successful, they help language teachers inform their teaching. As stated by Zhang (2008), actual language classroom teaching offer opportunities and challenges for language teachers to reflect on and to test the knowledge and skills acquired in language teacher education programs. This pedagogical reasoning and decision making process of where to teach, what to teach, how to teach, to whom to teach, and why to teach certain content become of the domain of language teachers as they mature and better understand their teaching successes and teaching failures (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; see also Shulman, 1987).

Lastly, the target research participants also asserted that teaching in intensive English programs was much more rewarding and easier compared to teaching at the high school level. For instance, they affirmed that what makes teaching easier in intensive English programs was the fact that class sizes were smaller than class sizes in high schools, there was a better curriculum, both students and teachers had access to learning materials, students were more interested in learning, teachers had professional development opportunities, the time for learning and teaching was more, and teachers felt the need to do a better job because they were supervised when teaching.

More support for these findings came from the interviews.  For example, take the direct quotations by Diego and Josseling.  Diego said:

My first teaching experience as an English teacher was in my teaching practicum and then as a high school teacher. [It] wasn't easy at all.  You know, I felt really nervous... But, [I] felt confident, too, because I spoke English well and … spoke Spanish [L1 of his target students].  I had to teach sixty hours in my practicum.  Each lesson was of forty-five minutes… only two times a week.  I went to the school I was assigned and met my mentor teacher.  I spoke to her in English, but she answered in Spanish.  I asked her where she had graduated from and told me that she had taken only a two-week English workshop offered by the Ministry of Education at the beginning of 1990.  I remember she told me to teach only grammar and vocabulary because students didn't care about English. … the school didn't have books to teach, so I used materials I could get for free online and some handouts I had from the time I studied English at university [his language teacher education program].  When I met my students, they were excited to meet a new teacher.  I remember the first day I taught them a song.  They said they had never had an activity like that.  During my practicum, I tried to plan interactive lessons, … used activities that my teachers used with me, [and] activities that I, myself, used to learn English.  I remember that something they liked about my class was that I evaluated their speaking skills using songs, videos, and their cellphones.  I was expected to use only English during my practicum, but that didn't work. … students didn't understand anything in English so I used Spanish to explain to them grammar rules and directions.  At the end of my practicum, students were more motivated about learning English. … but it was hard to work with so many students. … but my practicum gave me an

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opportunity to teach in a real classroom and to work with real students, not like in

university that we had just teaching demonstrations in front of our teachers or classmates.

Diego went on to say:

As a high school teacher in the same school …, I grew a lot.  Reality is very different,

though. … learned to deal with many problems, like, working with a lot of students, like

50 or 60, understanding what students want, sometimes they don't want to learn, …

students don't have books, … the curriculum is very old [dated].  Also, [I] worked at a

university.  It was very different, … had fewer students, and, you know, they were more

interested in learning English.  Something good in that university were the workshops we

had … and sharing with other teachers, too.

Pursuing this further, Josseling also provided support to the findings described before as

she said, "my teaching experience began in my teaching practicum. … then four years … in high

school."  Additionally, she added:

…at the beginning … in high school, I used teaching methods that I learned at university

from my teachers and from reading and strategies I used to learn English by myself.

Sometimes, I didn't know what to do. … felt like I didn't know how to teach.  Maybe, I

felt like that because I had many students … and sometimes there was no enough time to

teach.  But now that I look back I believe it was because at university we didn't get to

teach real students, just fake situations [teaching demonstrations only].

Furthermore, Esther, Andres, and Roder also mentioned that part of the knowledge they

had now as language teacher educators came from their teaching experiences as EFL teachers.

For instance, Esther said, "… teaching in high school and in an English program for five years

made it easier for me to teach … in this program [target preservice EFL teacher education

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program]. … my sixty-hour teaching practicum helped me, too."  Also, Andres expressed, "after my practicum which was the first time I taught, I taught communicative English at university level.  There I had to plan classes, teach the four skills, and, uh, also, evaluate my students."  Lastly, Roder added:

> … my teaching experience has been mostly with future teachers in this university.  First, I taught in my teaching practicum.  It was short, only sixty hours: twenty for observing my tutor teacher [cooperating teacher], twenty for teaching with my tutor teacher, and twenty for teaching myself. … After that, I worked as a high school teacher for a year.  Then I went to the United States to study a master's degree; when I came back, I was offered a fulltime position in this university.  … teaching here is very different than teaching in high school.  … students expect a lot from you.

### 4.2.2.4.1. Types of knowledge built from this source of knowledge.

Pursuing this further, based on the findings, I concluded that from the source of knowledge entitled "teaching experiences as EFL teachers," the research participants built mostly teaching knowledge as EFL teachers, material development knowledge, lesson planning knowledge, classroom management knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, subject knowledge, knowledge of students' L1, and assessment knowledge.  Most of the participants affirmed that their teaching experiences in intensive English programs and at university level contributed more to the development of their knowledge base than their teaching experiences at the high level.  That is, it seems that teaching at the high school level, for some of them was not as enriching as they expected because of issues such as, lack of students interests in acquiring the English language, large classes, lack of teaching materials, insufficient time for teaching, and so forth.  Lastly, the types of knowledge developed when working as EFL teachers in the teaching

practicum, high schools or in language centers in universities were complemented with the linguistic, pedagogical, and teaching knowledge that the research participants had developed in their preservice English program as well as the ones they had acquired as independent language learners.

Besides the direct quotes presented in the section above, to support these findings take as evidence what the two following language teacher educators said when I asked them about the types of knowledge they developed as EFL teachers. Andres said:

I think when I taught in high schools and in other English programs I improved my teaching experience. Of course, now I think my knowledge is better, but at that time I did my best. I think that, um, I improved my English a little bit. … I learned different techniques to teach, like, teaching grammar in a communicative way, teaching vocabulary with flash cards and songs, teaching pronunciation with phonetic symbols, oral presentations about different topics. Sometimes, I used rubrics to evaluate my students, etc.

Likewise, Esther added, "I think that as an English teacher I started to learn to teach English, … learned to plan lessons, to evaluate my students, to create materials to teach, also, to use the communicative method in university programs [English language programs]."

Lastly, in all the direct quotes presented, it can be appreciated that the participants highlighted that their teaching and subject knowledge increased. I think that makes sense because as you get more and more familiar with courses or content you teach, your level of expertise, both in terms of content mastery and teaching reasoning, also augments. These findings were supported by the existing body of research both from general education and from language teacher education. For instance, Shulman (1987) said that actual teaching contributes

to develop what he called pedagogical content knowledge which is the capacity and skills to reflect on successful and unsuccessful teaching experiences to inform wisely future teaching practices. This knowledge, according to him, is personal, and is related to other types of knowledge as knowing how your students learn, understanding what to teach, how to teach, why to teach that way, how to assess if students are obtaining the expected learning outcomes, managing classroom effectively, and so forth. Likewise, researchers from language teaching agreed with the findings as they said that it is with each interaction and contact with actual language classrooms that language teachers develop pedagogical reasoning and decision making knowledge and skills (Day, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998).

### 4.2.2.4.2. Skills built from this source of knowledge.

Finally, from the source of knowledge entitled "teaching experiences as EFL teachers," the researched constructed mainly lesson planning skills, assessment skills, classroom management skills, creating and adapting teaching material skills, and teaching skills. All these skills were built by teaching either at the high school level or in intensive communicative English programs. To illustrate, take the following direct quotes by Josseling, Andres, and Carmen, which support these findings. Andres said, "well, … skills, uh, …, I kind of learned how to create lesson plans, … materials to teach … those schools didn't have books; also, you know, how to work with many students in the same classroom." Likewise, Josseling added, "some skills like… teaching, planning; another skill … evaluation [student learning assessment] and choosing books and activities to teach, using different strategies to teach very large classes." Lastly, Carmen said, "I used to teach, evaluate students, plan my lessons, and look for teaching materials."

To sum up, the six target Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators said that their work experience as EFL teachers contributed a lot to the development of their knowledge base. Nevertheless, since the curricula of their preservice language teacher education programs did not include that many opportunities in which they could apply the theoretical pedagogical and content knowledge as well as skills acquired as preservice student teachers, they found transitioning from their language teacher education programs to EFL teaching settings a somewhat difficult process. Existing research supported those findings in the sense that the mismatch that the target researched may have experienced at the beginning of their teaching careers was overcome as they became more and more experienced. However, I do think that if preservice teacher education programs curricula included longer and more teaching opportunities in real EFL contexts, novice English teachers would graduate more prepared. Next, I discuss the fifth source of knowledge for Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, namely, teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators.

### 4.2.2.5. Teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators.

The fifth source of knowledge, based on the findings of this study, from which the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators built their knowledge base was their teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators. According to the results, they asserted that their teaching experiences in the target preservice language teacher education program was one of the most important stages in their teaching careers that helped them become language educators. To point out, Esther said, "…but the most important experience has been teaching to future English teachers here in this university". In like manner, Josseling expressed, "… Teaching here has been definitely essential in my teaching career. It's been amazing. … I've learned many things, like for example, working with future teachers." Research both in general teacher education and in language

teacher education recognized that teaching experiences in teacher education programs is essential

in teacher educators' teaching careers.  Actually, they said that it is in teacher education

programs wherein teachers become teacher educators (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes,

& Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith,

2005).  As an EFL teacher educator, I concur with both the findings of this study and the findings

of existing research in that teaching experiences in language teacher education programs enrich

and strengthen novice language educators' knowledge base as well as their professional identity.

In other words, at least for now it is only through teaching in language teacher education

programs that language teachers can become language educators, and I say for now because of

two main reasons: 1) currently, according to the findings and according to research (Moradkhani

et al, 2013; see also Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005) there are no teacher education

programs to train preservice teacher educators and 2) in the future, as a result of this type of

studies, we might see universities and curricularists interested in designing and offering pre-

service as well as graduate programs devoted specifically to prepare teacher trainers.  That is it is

evident, and findings of this study supported it, that being an EFL teacher is not the same as

being an EFL teacher educator.  For instance, Roder stated:

> I think that what makes me different from when I taught in other English programs is that
>
> now I think more about what I do, and I think I care more about being a good teacher.  …
>
> I would've liked to learn to work on programs like this when I was at university.  But I
>
> only learned about teaching English.  I mean.  I'm not saying that my program wasn't
>
> good. What I'm saying is that I should've received better training…

Josseling added:

I would say that I am a different English teacher now, more prepared. … I'm still

learning. …but in the three years I've been teaching in this university; I've learned many

things, like for example, working with future teachers. … These students are very

interested in learning English and learning to be teachers. … I wish my teachers could

have taught me some strategies to work in teaching training programs. That would've

made my job here easier.

Esther said:

… Unfortunately, I didn't receive any training to work with this kind of students

[preservice EFL students]. I had to learn here. You know, it isn't the same like working

in high school where you only teach English. … here we teach English but at higher

level; also, you know, we train them to be teachers. That's the difference. I've been

working here for three years, and every day I learn new things.

As we can see, the participants quoted stated succinctly that the types of language

teacher education programs offered in Nicaraguan universities now focused only on training

language teachers but not on equipping those language teachers with teaching knowledges and

skills that can be utilized as language teacher educators as well. Consequently, training both pre-

service and in-service teacher trainers deserves more attention from universities and curriculum

developers.

Moreover, findings demonstrated that transitioning from EFL teaching settings to the

EFL teacher education settings was not an easy process and that entailed not only knowing how

to teach the English language but also how to teach other subjects related to teaching English.

Some researchers agreed with these findings as they said that becoming a teacher educator is a

long and sometimes stressful process (Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). The research

participants said that they thought that all what they had to do was to transfer their teaching

experiences as EFL teachers to the new teaching milieu, but they soon realized that teaching to

student teachers was totally different.  According to Murray and Male (2005), there is no a

straightforward transfer of the pedagogical knowledge and teaching experiences constructed in

school teaching to teacher education programs.  This means that the acquired pedagogical

content knowledge that the target language teacher educators developed as English teachers had

to be transformed or adapted.  Findings showed that the researched acknowledged that teaching

in language teacher education programs required more preparation in terms of content

knowledge of subjects to develop English skills, for example, listening, reading, grammar,

pronunciation, writing, and speaking, content knowledge of courses to develop pedagogical

knowledge and skills, for instance, second language acquisition, learning theories, EFL teaching

approaches, lesson planning, assessment, classroom management, etc., content knowledge of

other disciplines such as applied linguistics, research relating to teaching and learning English,

sociolinguistics, curriculum development, phonology, phonetics, etcetera.  It required also

preparation in terms of pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills to work with preservice

student teachers.  Additionally, it was necessary to know how to assess student teachers'

learning, to possess a higher level of English proficiency, to understand the curriculum goals and

educational ends regarding the types of professionals intended to prepare, to participate

systematically in professional development opportunities such as teacher training workshops and

English teaching related conferences, and so forth.  In short, these findings mean that the

research participants had to change and transform the teaching practices they had built as EFL

teachers.  They realized that part of their teaching experiences and teaching knowledge needed to

be adapted to their new teaching setting and that other knowledges had to be learned or acquired

to be more prepared and effective in that new language teaching context.  The results

demonstrated that the new knowledge and skills, for example, content knowledge on subjects

other than English courses, were developed by either own efforts or in professional development

opportunities created in the target university.  The following direct excerpts from the data

exemplify these findings.  Carmen, for instance, said that she became a more complete language

educator as a result of her teaching experiences in the target teacher education program.  She

acknowledged that she had not only taught English courses but also subjects to develop

pedagogical and didactic knowledge and skills.  To point out, she stated:

> … I like to work in this program 'cause I've had the chance to become a more complete
>
> English teacher.  … here I've taught grammar, listening and speaking, reading, writing,
>
> and teaching courses like didactics, lesson planning, classroom management; also, …
>
> teaching methods.  …my students are always interested in learning. … that makes me
>
> feel great 'cause it's a way for me to improve.  Every time I enter a classroom, I make
>
> sure I'm ready.

In the same vein of thought, Esther asserted, "I've been teaching here [target preservice

teacher education program] for three years now … sometimes I'm given new courses to teach,

like, phonology, phonetics, SLA, and research.  As soon as, I'm told which courses I'm going to

teach, I begin revising all the topics … prepare myself about those topics" and "You know, it

isn't the same like working in high school where you only teach English. … here we teach

English but at higher level; also, you know, we train them [student teachers] to be teachers.  She

went on to add:

> …teaching English here [target teacher education program] has made me a stronger
>
> teacher.  I speak English better. … my classes are more interactive. … use technology to

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help my students learn faster, like, online English materials, YouTube videos, Apps, songs; sometimes, I use Moodle or Google Classroom to share information with my students. Also, every time I teach; I have clear objectives. … think a lot in the methods I'll use, like, learner centered classes. … I choose materials to teach very carefully. Even when I'm teaching pedagogical classes, I encourage my students to improve their English. I want them to learn English well because high schools in Nicaragua need better teachers. … The workshops and presentations we make every semester have helped a lot. In those workshops, we talk about teaching strategies, problems that we face in our classrooms, and about ways to make our classes more effective. You know, I also read articles and books to learn more. …

Pursuing this further, Andres stated, "I like to show my students that I'm always prepared. … always practice my speaking skills, learn new things about the English language, about teaching, … the more prepared I am, the more confident I feel when teaching." In addition, Roder highlighted how his knowledge base had changed as he started to teach in EFL teacher education programs. He expressed:

Definitely, my teaching knowledge has changed since I began teaching here. I feel more prepared than when I was teaching in other programs. I'm more reflective on what I do. Now, I think I know how to prepare more effective lessons. I have learned to use technology in my class, like, YouTube videos, English Apps, online teaching materials, Google Classroom, Moodle, etc. … I think about why I'm going to use certain learning activities or materials. I think a lot about the competences and knowledge my students need to learn and ways they can learn them better. Like, if I'm teaching English, I like to use different activities. I do warm-ups to activate their previous knowledge, … activities

to present the new topics, … activities to practice the four skills [listening, speaking, reading, and writing], … and activities to evaluate what I teach. … I think I have improved my teaching because I know how to work with this type of students [student teachers]. I remember that some years ago I thought it was going to be the same, like, teaching in high school, … you know, very soon I realized I was wrong. To teach to future teachers you need to read more. … now before teaching I make sure I know what I am going to do, … prepare extra activities [planning for unexpected situations], … after my lessons I think about what I can improve in the next class… I think that what makes me different from when I taught in other English programs is that now I think more about what I do, and I think I care more about being a good teacher. … Now I don't just teach the English language. I teach other classes, like, using technology in the classroom, contrastive analysis between Spanish and English, SLA, English-Spanish translation and interpretation, applied linguistics, and research.

Lastly, Josseling said:

… I am a different English teacher now, more prepared. … I'm still learning. …but in the three years I've been teaching in this university; I've learned many things, like for example, working with future teachers. Teaching here has been definitely essential in my teaching career. … These students are very interested in learning English and learning to be teachers. I study a lot to do a good job here. It hasn't been easy. I wish my teachers could have taught me some strategies to work in teaching training programs. That would've made my job here easier. I always try to think about my students learning needs. That's important for me, you know. Um, also now I plan my lessons very carefully, thinking in those lessons that have been successful and in those which haven't

been so successful. I try to reinvent my teaching as often as possible. Now I know more about assessment. Here we do formative assessment, summative, and at the beginning of each semester, we do diagnostic assessment. But it's been hard for me because sometimes I feel frustrated because some of my teaching strategies don't work. But, you know, I think that's part of this job. You know, sometimes your students like your class; sometimes they don't. Now I have more opportunities to practice my English, too. I speak English with my students and with other teachers. I read a lot to improve my vocabulary, … listen to English news, documentaries, songs, … watch movies to improve my listening skills. Also, I practice to improve my accent because that is important for teachers. I go to the NICA-TESOL conference every year to learn from other teachers. I like to participate in the workshops we organize here. I learn from my colleagues, and they learn from me. … I'm a different kind of English teacher; I feel more professional, more prepared, but also more committed to my job. Now I care how my students see me; I like them to see me as an example of what a good and responsible teacher is both inside and outside the classroom. Here, I have learned to work with other teachers, too. I have observed them; they have observed me. … sometimes we planned lessons together.

These findings found support in the exiting research which said that the prior teaching knowledge that novice EFL teacher educators accumulate in EFL classrooms changes once they begin teaching in language teacher education programs and continue to mature throughout time (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013). In other words, the teaching and learning characteristics of teacher education programs makes EFL teacher educators grow to a deeper level of meta-cognitive capacity as they reflect on their pedagogical content knowledge, teaching environment, educational goals of the language teacher education

programs, and on their pre-service student teachers (Bullock, 2009; Loughran, 2005; Moradkhani et al., 2013). Changes on the knowledge base of novice teacher educators has been observed as well in research in general education which said that novice teacher educators' pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills, and pedagogical reasoning change as they start constructing teaching experiences with preservice student teachers (Murray & Male, 2005). In other words, novice teacher educators build a pedagogy for teaching student teachers as they become more mature educators (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). However, becoming a language teacher educator is a slow and sometimes an uncertain process which requires a lot thinking and meditation on how to teach more effectively (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). For example, Esther affirmed, "I've been working here for three years, and every day I learn new things." Likewise, Josseling said, "… I'm still learning. …but in the three years I've been teaching in this university; I've learned many things." In a similar manner, Roder, Carmen, and Diego who were among the more experienced of the six research participants recognized that they were still mastering the art of being language educators.

Furthermore, findings showed that the target EFL language educators not only further developed their knowledge base as language educators but also their professional identity changed. For instance, they said that they cared about the perceptions that their student teachers had about them as language educators. That is why they prepared as well as possible pedagogically and in terms of content knowledge when they were going to teach. As stated before, they also took care of the ways they behaved in front of their students because they wanted their learners to see them as teaching role models that could be imitated or followed in the future. For example, Diego said, "I like them to see me as a mirror 'cause they will be

teachers in the future. … I prepare better classes now, care about my students' learning …"

Similarly, Esther affirmed, "… in this university, I try to do a good job. … I like to be seen as a

responsible English teacher; someone who cares for students and for her job."

Moradkhani et al. (2013) agreed with these findings in that they said that when

transitioning from one teaching setting to another one not only the knowledge base of language

teacher educators changes but also their professional identity (see also Macías, 2013; Koster et

al., 2005). I also concur with these findings because it makes sense that each level of education

has it owns demands in terms of the qualifications needed to do a job and the way one must

behave in that context. That is teaching English in high schools or in intensive English programs

requires different standards compared with teaching in EFL teacher education programs where

the main goal is to prepare professionals for the field of English teaching.

### 4.2.2.5.1. Types of knowledge built from this source of knowledge.

According to the findings, the six EFL teacher educators asserted that teaching in

preservice EFL teacher education programs was different from teaching English in other levels

of education. Additionally, they expressed that their teaching experiences at this level had

allowed them to improve and develop new knowledges, for instance, pedagogical knowledge,

teaching expertise working with student teachers, lesson planning knowledge, assessment

knowledge, evaluating and developing teaching and learning materials, incorporating technology

in the classroom, subject knowledge, knowledge of working in teams, and English proficiency

knowledge. Part of this knowledge was related directly to teaching in EFL teacher education

classrooms and another part is related to actions they undertook to improve, such as, reading

pedagogical articles and books, workshops, and working in teams with other workmates.

Support of these findings can be found in the quotes I presented above. For instance, see below some excerpts of those quotations:

Esther said, "as soon as, I'm told which courses I'm going to teach, I begin revising all the topics … prepare myself about those topics." She went on to express, "I speak English better. … my classes are more interactive. … use technology, … have clear objectives, … think a lot in the methods I'll use, … [and] choose materials to teach very careful." Andres added, "my English has improved, … prepare better classes, … care about my students' learning, … read articles and books about teaching." Additionally, Diego mentioned, "I always practice my speaking skills, learn new things about the English language, about teaching, … the more prepared I am, the more confident I feel when teaching." In the same line of thought, Carmen expressed, "I've taught grammar, listening and speaking, reading, writing, and teaching courses like didactics, lesson planning; also, … teaching methods." Also, Roder said, "[I] prepare more effective lessons, … think about why I'm going to use certain learning activities or materials, … [and] evaluate what I teach." Last but not least, Josseling asserted, "[I] do formative assessment, summative, and diagnostic assessment. … learned to work with other teachers. I have observed them; they have observed me. … sometimes we planned lessons together."

### 4.2.2.5.2. Skills built from this source of knowledge.

As far as skills was concerned, based on the findings, it seems that the target EFL teacher educators built more mastery in some of the skills they possessed before teaching in the target teaching education program as well as they developed new skills. For example, some of the skills they improved were: teaching English skills, lesson planning skills, technology skills as related to integrating technology in the classroom, English language skills, English communication skills, and creating and evaluating learning and teaching material skills. Some of

the skills they developed in the target EFL teacher education program were: teaching skills to teach to student teachers, lesson planning skills to teach to student teachers, assessment skills to assess student teachers' learning, team work skills with other language teacher educators, and skills to relearn new things regarding teaching in preservice EFL teacher education programs. They also built critical thinking skills as they thought about how to transform and deliver content, knowledge, and competences to their students.

In conclusion, the results of this study demonstrated that the target research participants recognized that their teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators was one of the most important sources of knowledge from which they constructed their knowledge base. In addition, it was found that their knowledge base as well as their professional identity changed as they transitioned from being English teachers to becoming EFL teacher educators. In other words, the researched said that their level of awareness regarding their pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and teaching skills augmented throughout the years of teaching in the target language teacher education program. Lastly, it was also revealed that the process of learning to become a language teacher educator was a slow process that required a lot of individual effort, team work, and constant meta-cognitive analysis of successful and unsuccessful teaching practices. Next, I elucidate the sixth source of knowledge identified by the researched from which they constructed their knowledge base and teaching skills.

**4.2.2.6. Research knowledge related to English language teaching.**

The sixth source of knowledge from which the target EFL teacher educators grew their knowledge base was what I entitled "research knowledge related to English language teaching". In this respect, the participants said that they were not researchers but consumers of research. In other words, they affirmed that even though they would have liked to conduct research, they did

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not have time to do it because they devoted 100 percent of their time to teaching. The findings showed that they utilized published research to read and learn about teaching methods, teaching techniques, and teaching activities that they could apply in their classrooms. Furthermore, I found that through reading published research, the research participants augmented their knowledge about disciplines related to language acquisition. For instance, they read about phonetics, second language acquisition, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, English phonology, computer assisted leaning language, accent reduction, pronunciation, and English grammar. Lastly, some of them asserted that they had built some knowledge relating to research because they had taken research courses and because they had taught some research courses as part of their duties as language teacher educators.

To exemplify, Andres said:

… [I] haven't published any research studies. My contract here is as a teacher. But I do have some knowledge about research. In the university, I took some research classes and did a short study to graduate. … I like to read articles and books about English teaching, about how to use the English sounds and phonetics to teach pronunciation, about communicative grammar and vocabulary development. This kind of information makes me a better teacher. Basically, I would say that I would like to do research, but I teach fulltime. Maybe someday. But now the more I can do now is to read about research in case my students ask me about it or in case I have to teach a research course and, of course, to read published information that helps me with my teaching job.

Existing research on language teacher education found that research is a source of knowledge out of which language educators grow their knowledge base (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005). According to

them, research as a source of knowledge can be seen from two standpoints. On one hand, language educators can be research consumers (Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013). This was the case of the research participants of this study, who said that they mostly used research as source to be up-to-date of the current knowledge related to teaching and learning the English language. On the other hand, research as a source of knowledge can be used to investigate and disseminate teaching and learning issues that occur in their EFL teacher education classrooms, contributing this way with new perspectives about learning and teaching English and teacher preparation (Johnson, 2006; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013). This second perspective does not apply to the knowledge base of the six Nicaraguan language teacher educators who took part in this study because the findings revealed that they were not researchers because of the nature of the job contracts.

### 4.2.2.6.1. Types of Knowledge and Skills built from this source of knowledge.

As for knowledge and skills developed from research as source of knowledge of the target language teacher educators, the findings showed that various types of knowledge were built, for instance, pedagogical knowledge, assessment knowledge, knowledge about disciplines related to language acquisition, content knowledge in some areas of the English language, knowledge related to technology, and curriculum development. However, the findings did not show indications of specific skills constructed from this source of knowledge. Possibly, they might continue to develop their critical thinking skills related to English teaching as a result of reading research. This might be because the target language teacher educators used research as a way to have access to declarative knowledge only; that is there were no hands-on practice to conduct research. This does not mean, though, that these types of knowledge were not important

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to them; on the contrary, part of those knowledges strengthened their teaching skills as they incorporated what they read to their daily teaching practices.

In conclusion, findings revealed that the target language teacher educators used research as a way to be updated on information about teaching and learning the English language. They acknowledged that they did not conducted research because they were devoted mostly to teaching. Next, I describe the last two sources of knowledge from which the research participants grew their knowledge base which were not mentioned in the existing body of research as types of sources of knowledge from which language teacher educators grow their knowledge base.

### 4.2.2.7. Technology related to English language teaching and learning.

The seventh source of knowledge from which the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators built their knowledge base and teaching skills was what I called "technology related to English language teaching and learning." Pursuing this further, technology related knowledges and skills as was seen by the research participants did not have to do with developing scientific or technical knowledge on developing technological tools, rather it was perceived as how to integrate existing educational technologies to the EFL teacher education classrooms. In this regard, the results of this study revealed that the types of knowledge and skills that were created from this source of knowledge had to do directly with learning how to use online sources to help students to learn the English language faster and in more interactive ways. To illustrate, among the technology related sources that the researched used to teach were. 1) YouTube: YouTube was used as a source where language educators had access to videos about learning and teaching English by native and non-nave speakers. 2) English teaching websites, for example, VOA learning English, Randall's lab, BBC learning English, ESLPodcast, ManyThings; TED talks; and online

news items.  Those websites were also used to make their English teaching practices more effective and interactive. 3) English Apps: Apps were used with the same purpose, among the ones mentioned were: English 5000 Words with Pictures, 500 English conversations, collocation dictionaries, 3650 phrasal verbs, Antonyms and Synonyms, 4000 Essential English Words, Word Bit, Confusing Words, Most Common Idioms in English, VOA, TED ED, and Listen AudioBooks.  4) Additionally, they utilized some online learning management systems to deliver content to their students, such as, Moodle, Google Classroom, and Google Sites.  5) The results showed as well that the target language teacher educators used internet to help students have access to other online sources such as articles and books about teaching English.  Lastly, the participants affirmed that they used a computer laboratory to teach English.  To illustrate, Carmen stated:

> … I have used technology in my class since I started teaching here.  Since I have access to internet in the classroom in this university, you know, I like to use videos from YouTube or English websites, like VOA, ESLPodcast, TED Talks, ManyThings, and English news.  I like to use Apps that are for free like Antonyms and Synonyms, 4000 Essential English Words, Listen AudioBooks, Word Bit, 500 English conversations, collocation dictionaries, and 3650 phrasal verbs.  These materials help me a lot because my students can learn native pronunciation, accent, intonation, and how other speakers from around the world speak English.  In this university, many of teachers use Moodle, Google sites or Google Classroom to teach.  That way our students can have access to learning materials from their homes or cellphones.  I share with my students English information to learn English and to learn to teach English.  On my Google Classroom courses, I like to post questions for students to write about; every week I ask them to

videotape themselves talking about something and then they share their videos with me

and other students on Google Classroom.  As a teacher in this program, I have learned to

use computers, too.  Part of our courses include lab classes, and you know, where I have

my students to practice their English skills.

Pursuing this further, Esther added:

... now you need to use technology in your classroom.  It's evaluated in teacher

observations here.  But I think I try to use technology because it helps me to teach more

interactive classes.  In our program, all teachers created a list of online sources to use,

like, English websites, like, Randall's lab, VOA, ESLPodcast, TED talks, etc.  I also use

videos from YouTube a lot for my students and for me, too. … I teach my students how

to find articles and books which are for free and that they can use to learn.  Also, I

encourage my students to use Apps like VOA learning English, TED ED, English 5000

Words with Pictures, Word Bit, Confusing Words, Most Common Idioms in English, and

Listen AudioBooks.  As a requirement of our department, we have to use either Google

Classroom, Google Sites or Moodle to share course content information with our

students.  In my case, I like Google classroom; sometimes I use Google Sites to create

blogs with my students.  Here, I also learned how to work in the language lab we have

here.  It helps my students to practice their English.  I think access to technology has

helped me improve my teaching in this program.

Technology as a source of knowledge that contributed to the development of EFL teacher

educators' knowledge base was included neither in the knowledge base frameworks presented by

researchers who have categorized the knowledge base of English teachers (Day, 1993; Freeman

& Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Richards, 1998) nor in the categorization of the knowledge

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base that EFL language educators should possessed (Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005).  However, other language researchers have pointed out that technology assisted language learning is beneficial for English learners, including online sources and mobile Apps (Ahn, 2018; Cavus & Ibrahim, 2017; Kaur & Pahuja, 2017; Murugan & Sai, 2017; Tseng, 2017).

Lastly, I have to acknowledge that I was surprised with these findings because in 2010 when I left Nicaragua to go to the United States to pursue my master's and doctoral studies, access to technology such as smartphones, tablets, or internet was available only to few people, only to those who were able to pay for it.  However, judging from what the research participants said it seems that as time goes by technology has become more accessible in Nicaragua, in this case, including EFL student teachers.  This means that if EFL preservice student teachers have access to internet, phones, tablets and access to free online English sources such as English Apps, English learning websites, audiobooks, podcasts, videos, documentaries, dictionaries, articles, and so forth, the acquisition of the English language may get easier and possibly contextualized to more real social and cultural situations in which the English language is used. A decade ago, Nicaraguan EFL student teachers had some access only to printed books.  I would say that language educators were the only English-speaking source in the classroom.  However, with access to the type of technological tools the researched mentioned, preservice student teachers may develop their English proficiency skills much faster and in a more solid way as well as they may develop other knowledges such as pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge related to their field of study.

*4.2.2.7.1. Types of Knowledge and Skills built from this source of knowledge.*

I found that from this source of knowledge the target research participants constructed technology related pedagogical knowledge, knowledge to choose online learning materials, knowledge to use existing online sources, such as websites, Apps, and learning management systems. As for skills, the results revealed that the researched developed skills to evaluate online teaching and learning sources, skills to develop technology related materials, for example, creating PowerPoint presentations, creating course content to delivered it through some learning management systems, and skills to use language labs. In short, these knowledge and skills were developed as the research participants learned to integrate those technology related tools in their classrooms. It is possible as well that as they got in contact with those tools, they learned to make sound and wise decisions of what technological tools were worth using.

To sum up, findings revealed that technology related tools were also a source of knowledge for Nicaraguan language educators. Mostly they used free online sources and mobile English Apps to help their student teachers acquire the English languages as well as to have access to other types of knowledge such as pedagogical, didactic, and content knowledge of subjects related to teaching. Next I describe the last source of knowledge from which the target language educators constructed their knowledge base.

**4.2.2.8. Professional development opportunities.**

The last source of knowledge from which the six target Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators constructed their knowledge base was from professional development opportunities. According to the results of this study, the chosen research participants said that there were two types of professional development opportunities from that contributed to the development of their knowledge base. The first type of professional development opportunities were

conferences.  They asserted that to improve their pedagogical and didactic knowledge and skills, they participated in annual TESOL conferences, English teaching congresses.  The second type of professional development opportunities in which they took part was pedagogical workshops organized and developed in the university where they taught.  Additionally, the results showed that in those conferences and workshops the target language educators participated as presenters and as participants.  For example, Esther stated:

… I've learned a lot in NICATESOL conferences.  I go there every year.  I have presented many times.  I like to go because you meet and learn from other English teachers.  The presentations are about teaching activities, techniques, and methods.  I've been also in two congresses.  I didn't present. … I was there as a participant.  Where I have presented a lot is in the pedagogical workshops we develop every semester in our department.  Sometimes, we have workshops three or four times a semester.  It's great because I can learn from more experienced teachers.

Likewise, Andres affirmed:

… conferences and workshops are very helpful.  I've learned various techniques to teach English, like for example, in the last conference I went, I learned how to plan lessons integrating the four English skills.  Also, here in our department all the teachers organize workshops.  These workshops are very helpful because, you know, you learn how to teach future student teachers.  I share my teaching experiences and learn from others, too.

Lastly, Josseling said, "… I've presented in the TESOL conference in Managua [capital of Nicaragua] and in the pedagogical workshops in this university.  I think I've learned various teaching strategies from other teachers."

Moreover, I asked the research participants if in those conferences they talked about the job that language teacher educators do in preservice teacher education programs. They affirmed that those conferences covered only topics about how to teach the English language. However, they said that in the pedagogical workshops served in the target university, they analyzed issues related to EFL teacher education classrooms, both issues about how to help preservice student teachers to learn English better and issues on how to assist student teachers to become better English teachers. For instance, Roder said:

> … the difference between conferences, like for example, the NICATESOL conferences and the workshops we have in this university is that in the workshops we share teaching techniques, teaching activities, and methodologies to teach English and to teach other courses to student teachers. I've never been in a conference in which they present about how to work in teacher preparation programs, like, this one.

In a similar way, Diego said, " … [in] the workshops … in this university, I've learned strategies to work with my students, like, teaching techniques, classroom management strategies, lesson planning, and how to use technology."

Finally, professional development as a source of knowledge that contributed to the development of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base was included neither in the knowledge base frameworks of English teachers (Day, 1993; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1993; Richards, 1998) nor in the categorization of the knowledge base of EFL language educators should possessed (Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Smith, 2005). However, Moradkhani et al. (2013) said that language teacher educators need to possess knowledge of professional development. They did not see it as source of knowledge but as a type of knowledge. Yet, other

language researchers, including (Moradkhani et al., 2013) have stressed that professional development is fundamental for language teachers. They said that not all related to teaching the English language can be taught and learn in language teacher education programs; consequently, it is necessary to participate in professional development opportunities such as conferences, workshops, and in onsite and online learning communities (Atay, Kurt, & Kaşlıoğlu, 2017; Grau, Calcagni, Preiss, & Ortiz, 2017; Hubbard, 2018; Liu, 2017; Pawan, Fan, & Miao, 2017; Wang, 2017). I concur with these researchers because as it was found in this study, independent learning is paramount when it has to do with acquiring new knowledges and skills, and in the same vain participating in professional development is necessary for language teacher educators to be updated with the current knowledge in the field of language teacher education.

### *4.2.2.8.1. Types of Knowledge and Skills built from this source of knowledge.*

Now what types of knowledge and skills did the target EFL teacher educators build from professional development? In this respect, it seems that from conferences the research participants constructed general pedagogical knowledge, lesson planning knowledge, classroom management knowledge, teaching material development knowledge, and teaching skills related to teaching English. That is they said that conferences were mostly focused on teaching techniques, teaching activities, or teaching methods to teach the English language. From the teacher training workshops offered to them in the target university the researched developed knowledge and teaching skills specifically related to working with EFL preservice student teachers.

In conclusion, findings showed that the research participants built their knowledge base from eight sources of knowledge, namely, coursework taken in their preservice teacher education programs, own experiences as EFL learners, their teaching experiences as EFL teachers, their

teaching experiences as teacher educators, professional development, technology related knowledge, apprenticeship of observation, and research related knowledge.  Out of those eight sources of knowledge 16 types of knowledge and 14 skills were developed throughout time.  It was also found that not only the knowledge base of target language teacher educators changed but also their professional identity.  In other words, they developed a new professional identity as EFL language teacher educators.  They said that the most notorious difference between being an English teacher and being an English teacher educator was their level of awareness of their pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge they had grown as a result of working with student teachers.  Lastly, the research participants identified as most important sources of knowledge the coursework taken in their preservice teacher education programs, their own experiences as language learners, their teaching experiences as EFL teachers, and their teaching experiences as teacher educators.  In the next section, I discuss the findings relating to the relationship of language teacher educators' knowledge base and classroom practices found in this study.

**4.2.3. Relationship of Knowledge Base and Classroom Practices**

In this section, I discus relevant findings to inform the last research question which examined the relationship of the knowledge base of the six Nicaraguan teacher educators who participated in this study and their classroom practices.  In 2008, Zhang affirmed that research about teacher's knowledge need to include an analysis of classroom practices to have a better picture of the knowledge base possessed and how that knowledge base is applied or used in the classroom.  However, I would like to acknowledge that this study had some limitations and one of them was the fact that the findings about classroom practices would have been stronger if I had conducted classroom observations.  Unfortunately, that was not possible by the time I

collected data.  Consequently, evidence of classroom practices was gathered in the form of document analysis of six sample lesson plans, six syllabi, and six assessment instruments used by the researched to teach some of their courses. To see a sample syllabus, a sample lesson plan, and a sample assessment tool (*See Appendix B*).

Both findings from the semi-structured interviews and from the document analysis of six syllabi, six lesson plans, and six assessment tools used by the research participants revealed two major elements that influenced the relationship of their knowledge base and their classroom practices.  These two elements were: personal knowledge base and EFL teacher education classroom context.  Additionally, these two components played the role of filters as the target EFL teacher educators prepared for each teaching intervention in their EFL teacher education classrooms.  Researchers and educators both from general education (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Shulman, 1987; Smith, 2005) and from language teacher education (Bullock, 2009; Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman, 2002; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Loughran, 2005; Leung, 2012; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 1998, 2013; van Lier, 2009) concurred with these findings as they said that teaching practices, successful or unsuccessful, are closely dependent on teacher's knowledge base and on the teaching context.

### 4.2.3.1. Filter 1: Personal knowledge.

Findings demonstrated that classroom practices in preservice Nicaraguan EFL teacher education programs depended mostly on each EFL teacher educator's personal knowledge. According to the results, this filter was comprised of two main elements that guided classroom practices: 1) their teaching beliefs and 2) the Nicaraguan educational context.  This means that the knowledge base possessed by the six EFL teacher educators who took part in this research

was shaped by their teaching philosophies and by the role that student teachers were expected to play in the Nicaraguan education system.  Existing research supported these findings as it has been highlighted that the more teaching experiences teachers and educators have accumulated in their teaching careers, the more effective their classroom practices may be.  One clarification needs to be done, though.  According to the findings and according to existing research (Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Koster et al., 2005; Leung, 2012; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards, 1998, Shulman, 1987), teaching experience is not measured by the number of years one can accumulate in his or her teaching career, but, including the context of this research, it should be measured by the level of awareness you may have constructed about your students, the teaching milieu, educational goals of the target language teacher education program, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge of the courses you teach, commitment to your profession as well as the capacity to reason and reflect both on successful and unsuccessful teaching practices so as to impact your student learning in the best and more effective ways possible.  Furthermore, I found that language educators' personal knowledge base and teaching experience, also called in the literature, pedagogical content knowledge (Day, 1993; Shulman, 1987), pedagogical process (Freeman & Johnson, 1998), pedagogical reasoning and decision making (Richards, 1998), knowledge of class, time, and learning management and knowledge of practicum (Moradkhani et al., 2013) is something that do not stay steady, but something that changes and gets transformed on particular circumstances such as teacher's knowledge and the teaching environment (Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; Shulman, 1987).

### 4.2.3.1.1. Teaching beliefs.

Pursuing this further, findings showed that the target EFL teacher educators' own teaching beliefs determined how they taught and, to a certain extent, what they taught in the target EFL teacher education program. Additionally, I found that those teaching beliefs were influenced by their own personal lived experiences English learners (Faez, 2011) as well as by their own personal lived teaching experiences with student teachers (Moradkhani et al., 2013). For instance, with regard to both teaching communicative and academic English skills as well as teaching pedagogical and didactic knowledge and skills, classroom practices were influenced by a combination of the participants' own language learning experiences and their teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators. For example, Esther, one of the research participants, stated that as she prepared to teach, her teaching and learning objectives, the target content, teaching materials, and the teaching methodology were transformed and guided by prior teaching experiences with student teachers as well as by the ways she had acquired the English language. She highlighted that both successful and unsuccessful learning and teaching lived experiences informed the way she made classroom practices decisions (Faez, 2011; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 2013; Shulman, 1987). She asserted, "I always think about how I became fluent in English and share that with them [student teachers]. … um, like, I share with them how to use the internet to study and show them how to maximize their time and skills to learn better."

She went on to say:

… to prepare my lessons and to teach them, I think, you know, about those teaching experiences that I think have gone well and in those that my students didn't respond as I expected. I think you become a good teacher when you take into account your failures and successes.

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Josseling added that to help her students acquire the English language more efficiently, she encouraged them to use "all what is available [to them], like, speaking English in the community, using YouTube and Apps to improve the four English skills, watching documentaries and news in English, reading online sources, and creating [their] own English environment at home."  Some researches agreed with these findings in that they said that motivating independent leaning by integrating technology and online sources is important to improve classroom practices (Ahn, 2018; Cavus & Ibrahim, 2017; Kaur & Pahuja, 2017; Murugan & Sai, 2017; Tseng, 2017).  Furthermore, as can be appreciated in the following quote by Carmen, it can be seen once again that educators' teaching beliefs help inform the decisions taken to teach (Faez, 2011; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 2013; Shulman, 1987).  It can be noticed also that she used different approaches and methods to teach, for example, the communicative approach (Halliday, 1973; Hymes, 1972; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001, 2014) as well as she acted as a role model for her students to learn English (Faez, 2011).

Carmen mentioned:

… I set myself as an example, and, um, I guide my students the way I learned English.  I always think about what worked for me when I was learning English.  I also use methods, like, the communicative approach to teach English.  I definitely like to create student centered classes.  I try to speak English as well as possible because I know if I speak with mistakes, my students will speak with mistakes, too.  I spend a lot of time on lesson preparation.  Experience has taught me that to have good results in my classroom, I need to prepare good lesson plans.  I know that sometimes as teachers we have to improvise,

but I've also learned that evaluating all scenarios when preparing my classes helps me be more prepared to teach.

Additionally, the results of this study demonstrated that EFL teacher educators' teaching beliefs influenced their classroom practices regarding what they considered important to be learned and taught. In other words, the research participants saw two things as a priority: 1) to become proficient English users and 2) to become good English teachers. As for becoming proficient English users, language teacher educators believed that student teachers needed to develop a clear and standard English pronunciation, an advanced grammar knowledge and use, an advanced lexicon, effective conversation strategies, social and academic English skills, and an accent which is intelligible both to native English speakers and to other native-like English speakers. These findings were supported by existing research which stated that one of the fundamental skills that language teachers and language educators must possess is the capacity to communicate in a native or native-like manner in the language they teach (Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998).

In a similar way, to become good English teachers, EFL student teachers, according to the research participants, have to develop content knowledge in all systems of the English language, for example, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, teaching related disciplines such as phonology, phonetics, second language acquisition, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and so forth (Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998). In addition, student teachers need to learn about learning and teaching theories and methods (Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998). That is, they must know how to plan lessons, how to select and create teaching materials, and how to teach the four English skills. That is why, according to the

results, the participants asserted they acted as teaching role models in front of their student teachers both when using the English language and when teaching them to learn how to teach the English language.

Roder said that for him student teachers must speak English as perfectly as possible. Also, he added that student teachers have to learn well what they teach. Roder said that when he was a high school student, his English teachers didn't speak English well. However, he stated that the purpose for learning English has changed in Nicaragua, and now English teachers in Nicaragua are expected to possess a strong command of English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and a strong command of content knowledge. Again, this language teacher educator has revealed what language educators and researchers have said about the linguistic and teaching capacity that preservice student teachers must develop to carry out effective English teaching (Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998). Support to these findings can be seen in the following direct quotation by Roder as he stated:

> … I believe that students have to become very fluent in English. They have to learn how to pronounce English words very clearly. … I encourage them to develop a good accent; you know, if you speak with a good accent native speakers understand you better. Speaking good English … they may get better teaching jobs. I believe, too, that future English teachers have to know very well what they will teach, like, English grammar, pronunciation rules, know how to teach vocabulary, know how to teach listening and reading comprehension, know how to teach writing. … I believe English teachers should know how plan lessons, create materials to teach, know their students, and know the communicative method to teach their students to speak not only grammar. I encourage

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my students to read and learn about subjects like phonetics, phonology, pragmatics, morphology, semantics, etc. I pay attention to my behaviors as well in front of my students. I like them to see me like someone they can imitate in the future. … I like to be well-prepared all the time. In this university, we follow a curriculum; but we can decide how and what to stress more in the classrooms.

To sum up, I found that language teacher educators' personal knowledge base is influenced and shaped by personal beliefs concerning the way they envisioned learning and teaching. Consequently, those personal ways of seeing how teaching and learning must occur impacted their classroom practices. That is depending on their personal learning and teaching beliefs, the target EFL teacher educators decided to prioritize certain content, knowledge, skills, and values as far as their classroom practices was concerned. Next, I discuss how the Nicaraguan educational context influenced the decisions the target language educators made when teaching in EFL teacher education classrooms.

### 4.2.3.1.2. Nicaraguan educational context.

Findings revealed that the personal knowledge base of the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators who participated in this study was influenced by the Nicaraguan educational context regarding. That impacted teacher education classroom practices as well. According to the findings, the research participants affirmed that what they taught and how they taught in the target teacher education classrooms was dependent on what student teachers needed to acquire and develop in terms of English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge to deliver effective EFL instruction in the Nicaraguan educational system. These research results found support in the existing body of research which said that national educational ends and goals determines what preservice student teachers must learn and master in teacher education

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programs (Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; see also Carlson & Gess-Newsome, 2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013;; Shulman, 1987).  Moradkhani et al. (2013), Richards (1998), and Shulman (1987) said that educators need to be up-to-date regarding the education ends where the teaching and learning process takes place; on the contrary, the education that preservice student teachers receives may be decontextualized.

The research participants confirmed this as they asserted that two decades ago in Nicaragua, neither elementary nor high schools paid attention to how well-qualified English teachers were.  They continued to add that at that time, universities were the only institutions that were a little bit more demanding about the qualifications that EFL teachers should have to be recruited as university teachers.  However, according to them, nowadays, things have changed. Now Nicaragua is in the process of becoming a bilingual country.  That is why, the Ministry of Education has started a project which will make Nicaragua a bilingual country step by step. According to the findings, starting 2018, all elementary schools in Nicaragua incorporated English as a Foreign Language (EFL) with communicative purposes in the first-grade curriculum nationwide.  Pursuing this further, they said that the Ministry of Education and schools was going to continue to add one more grade every year until they covered all six grades of elementary schools.  The purpose was that by the time students entered high school they should be able to communicate in English.  However, they affirmed that the English curriculum used at high school level was grammar focused, outdated, and that needed revision and improvement. As can be noticed, this new reality in the Nicaraguan English teaching context demands from future generations of English teachers to be proficient English users and possess a good command of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching skills to deliver effective

EFL instruction.  That is, the personal knowledge base and classroom practices of EFL

Nicaraguan educators is and will continue to be shaped by the educational tendencies of the

types of English teachers that the country may need.  For instance, Diego said:

> … in the last years, English has become very important in Nicaragua, like, for jobs, for
>
> studying, and tourism.  And schools are interested in providing communicative English
>
> programs.  … for example, the Ministry of Education now is recruiting English teachers
>
> to teach to first graders.  The government has said that they will include English in all
>
> elementary schools in 2018.  That is good.  … also there are more and more language
>
> schools all over Nicaragua that need good English teachers, including universities.  As
>
> you can see, … the way I teach in this program … has to do with what the Nicaraguan
>
> education system needs.

In conclusion, findings showed that the Nicaraguan educational context influenced the

personal knowledge base and classroom practices of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators.  In other

words, what is taught and how is taught in EFL teacher education classrooms is conditioned to

the linguistic and teaching qualifications that future English teachers need to have to teach in

Nicaraguan schools.  Next, I discuss the filter which according to the findings influenced

classroom practices of the target research participants.

### 4.2.3.2. Filter 2: ELF teacher education classroom context.

According to the findings, the second filter which influenced the classroom practices of

the six Nicaraguan language teacher educators was the EFL teacher education classroom context

wherein they taught.  Research both from general teacher education (Carlson & Gess-Newsome,

2013; Helmes, & Stokes, 2013; Koster et al., 2005; Leung, 2012; Shulman, 1987) and from

language teacher education (Day, 1993; Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Macías, 2013;

Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998) supported these findings as they indicated that classroom practices are conditioned to the characteristics of the teacher education program in which the teaching and learning process takes place.  According to the research participants, their teaching experiences with student teachers accumulated over the years helped them build the knowledge and teaching expertise to know and understand how their student teachers learned based on their learning characteristics, needs and interests.  It also helped them develop awareness of what worked and what did not work regarding their teaching methodologies to deliver knowledge, skills, and content.  Second, they said that the specific teaching context where they taught allowed them to grow awareness of the curriculum implemented in target EFL teacher education program.  That level of awareness guided them to strengthen their knowledge base and teaching skills with student teachers.  Additionally, it helped them to increase their pedagogical reasoning capacity to make decisions of what knowledges to utilize and how to use them when planning their teaching-learning process as well as when delivering their lesson plans in their classrooms.

As an EFL teacher educator, I totally agree with those findings because during my teaching career as an EFL teacher and as an EFL teacher educator I have found that teaching interventions are dependents on the characteristics of the teaching milieu, the characteristics of your students, and the characteristics of the language program.  That is to say, when you are planning any teaching intervention, it is necessary to take into account many elements, for example, the curriculum goals, your students, the syllabi, teaching and learning materials available, methods of instruction, teaching context, learning opportunities that may happen outside the classroom, knowledge and skills to be developed, and so forth.  All of those elements are analyzed and filtered through the knowledge and pedagogical capacity that one develops

through teaching experiences.  This means that successful and unsuccessful teaching practices are brought and analyzed every time you get ready to prepare your new classroom practices.  As Moradkhani et al. (2013), Richards (1998), and Shulman (1987) indicated, classroom practices are in constant transformation; Josseling, one of the research participants, affirmed it as she said, "… learning to teach is an endless process."

Pursuing this further, I found that out of the sixteen types of knowledge that the target language educators said they possessed, the findings revealed they tended to use more ten of those knowledges when it had to do with their classroom practices, namely, English proficiency, own learning language learning experiences, technology knowledge, subject knowledge, curriculum and syllabus design knowledge, student teachers learning and assessment knowledge, knowledge to adapt and create teaching materials, lesson planning knowledge, classroom management knowledge, and teaching knowledge with student teachers.  This was concluded based on data from the semi-structured interviews and document analysis of the six syllabi, six lesson plans, and the six assessment instruments I analyzed.

Furthermore, the participants expressed that they used all those ten knowledges in different moments and in different stages of their teaching.  For instance, they asserted that as they became more experienced EFL teacher educators over the years, their capacity to make wise decisions about how to teach developed more and in some way became more automatic.  Some researchers have also found that pedagogical content knowledge also known as pedagogical reasoning improves with each teaching experience that educators may have (Koster et al., 2005; Leung, 2012; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005; Richards, 1998; Shulman, 1987; Zang, 2008). That is why, according to the research participants, sometimes they did not need to think about which knowledge they were using when planning or teaching.  That

is, the integration and application of those knowledges to certain planning and teaching situations

occurred automatically.  However, this does not mean that they were not able to identify what

knowledges or skills they applied to teach the target knowledge, skills, and content aimed in their

courses.  They affirmed that part of their growth as language teacher educators was that they had

acquired a higher level of awareness of their knowledge base and teaching skills compared with

their teaching experiences in other levels of education, for example, in high schools or in

intensive English programs.  This has also been found by other researchers who have examined

how teacher educators build their knowledge base (Koster et al., 2005; Moradkhani et al., 2013;

Murray & Male, 2005).  Additionally, they asserted that some other elements that influenced and

shaped their classroom practices, besides the curriculum and the syllabi they taught were, for

example, learning materials availability, nature of the courses they taught, their teaching

experiences with student teachers, and learning opportunities student might have outside their

classrooms.  In short, the findings presented above demonstrated that classroom practices of the

target language teacher educators were dependent on the characteristics of the EFL teacher

education program where they taught.  To illustrate, Carmen said:

> … the kinds of knowledge I use when teaching depend on the course I'm given to teach.
>
> For example, if I'm going to teach courses to develop English skills, I think very hard in
>
> what materials I'm going to use.  I think about the most effective learning activities and
>
> techniques I have used in the past and that worked, I used a communicative approach to
>
> design my syllabus and my lessons, and I create many opportunities for my students to
>
> learn and practice the four English skills (*See Appendix B for a sample syllabus and a*
>
> *sample lesson plan designed by this EFL teacher educator*).  … if I'm teaching more
>
> theoretical courses, I sometimes lecture, and most of the time I use techniques, like,

debates, round table discussions, oral presentations, mini-lesson presentations, panel discussions, group work, essays, blog discussions, case analysis, etc. … it depends on my students and my courses. Like in all classes, I use formative assessment, too. I like to plan my lessons very well because that is part of the process to teach my students. If they see that I prepared good lesson plans, they will follow my example, too, in the future.

Furthermore, Diego stated:

… my only purpose during the whole process of teaching is to design a good syllabus, prepare good lessons, and teach meaningful and effective classes. … it's not always easy, but I try. I make sure that my English is appropriate to the level of my students; I try to speak the best I can. I know that if I sound native-like to my students, they'll trust me as a teacher. … I also try to know very well the course I'm going to teach. If there's something I don't know, I investigate it first before entering the classroom. … my favorite assessment type is formative assessment; I use rubrics to evaluate my students' English skills, like, for example, writing, listening, reading, and speaking (S*ee Appendix B for a sample writing assessment tool adapted by this EFL teacher educator*). Since I'm an English learner, too, I sometimes use some of the techniques that have worked for me to help my students learn English faster. I like to give my student feedback and allow them to peer assess each other.

Pursuing this further, I would like to highlight that part of what the research participants mentioned about the relationship between their knowledge base and classroom practices was supported by the findings from the document analysis I conducted of the six lesson plans, the six syllabi, and the six assessment instruments that I gathered from them. Thus, from my personal

perspective as an EFL teacher educator, I would say that the syllabi, lesson plans, and assessment tools analyzed could be considered of good quality based on some criteria suggested in the exiting literature.  For instance, I found that the lesson plan created by Carmen followed the four strands model of lesson planning and course design presented by Nation and Newton (2009).  It also followed principles of the top-down and bottom-up processing information model presented by (Richards, 2008).  In a similar way, the assessment tool adapted by Diego followed some of those principles, too.  It was also evident that lesson plans and assessment tools followed language learning standards suggested by the Common European Framework of Reference for Language learning, known as CEFR (Council of Europe, 2011) (*See Appendix B for a sample syllabus, a sample lesson plan, and a sample assessment instrument designed by some of the EFL teacher educators who participated in this study*).  As for the syllabi, below is a summary of the general structure of the syllabi analyzed.

### 4.2.3.2.1. Structure of the analyzed syllabi.

- General description of the course and the level for which the course was intended

- Expected learning objectives per unit

- Target content

- Methodology to deliver content: lab, lecture, and student-centered activities, communicative approach

- For courses focused on developing pedagogical and didactic knowledge, the teaching methodology was more lecture driven as well as debates, conversations, panel discussions, projects, papers, etc.

- Description of teaching and learning materials: books, webpages, etc.

- Assessment: diagnostic, summative, and formative

- Class calendar: one academic semester

The research participants affirmed that when they design their syllabi, they have in mind the expected learning objectives, assessment they would use, their learners' characteristics, the characteristics of the teaching environment, teaching materials, and other learning opportunities that student may have inside and outside the classroom.  All these elements could be observed in each syllabus (*See Appendix B for a sample syllabus designed by one of the EFL teacher educators who participated in this study*).  Existing research once again supported these findings as it been found that when planning language teaching courses or teaching interventions those elements described above have to be considered (Moradkhani et al., 2013; Nation & Newton, 2009).  Consequently, I would say that even though the syllabi, lesson plans, and assessment instruments analyzed might not be the best ones, the target EFL teacher educators demonstrated a good reasoning capacity to make decisions of what to teach, how to teach, when to teach, and may why to teach certain content, knowledge, skills.

More evidence that what was found in the document analysis was related to what the researched said can be noticed in the following quotations by Josseling.  For example, Josseling expressed, "… what I take into account to create my syllabus is: my students, the objectives of my course, the content, the time for teaching, teaching materials, the way I'll evaluate my students, and where I teach."

Additionally, I found that the lesson plans I analyzed showed evident that all six language educators employed high level of pedagogical reasoning to develop their lesson plans.  I observed that different types of knowledge and skills were applied, for example, knowledge of their students as they included activities to activate prior knowledge, learning activities to grow students' interest in the new lesson, and learning activities that allowed learners to acquire all

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English skills, such as vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Another sign of good pedagogical content knowledge (Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998; Shulman, 1987) was that all lesson plans contained learning activities with sufficient scaffolding, and based on my experience as a language educator, I would say that those learning activities were in the zone of proximal development of the learners (Lantolf, 1994; Lantolf & Appel, 1994; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Metchell & Myles, 2004; Vygotsky, 1987). Assessment was also present, including self-assessment. According to the lesson plans, student teachers were given the chance to peer assess their learning process.

In short, I would say that knowledge of learning and teaching theories (Council of Europe, 2011; Halliday, 1973; Hymes, 1972; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation & Newton, 2009; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Richards, 2008) were evident in the lesson plans as well as teaching expertise (Faez, 2011; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Richards, 1998). In other words, what the research participants said they did in their classrooms was demonstrated in their lessons for example using formative assessment, integrating the four English skills, having their students in mind when teaching, and so forth. However, this level of pedagogical reasoning did not develop all of sudden; the researched affirmed that it took them many years to construct it and still they were in the process of perfecting it. Some researchers agreed with these findings as well because they said that professional knowledge of educators grows as they get more and more in contact with classroom practices (Koster et al., 2005; Macías, 2013; Moradkhani et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005). As Roder expressed, "now I'm a better teacher, but I learn new things every day. I think a lot in my students when I'm planning and teaching. I've become a better English teacher here because of my students." More evidence and support to these findings can be notice in one of the lesson plans I attached in

appendix B (*A sample lesson designed by Carmen*) which integrated language learning principles found in research proposed by Nation and Newton (2009), who said that English courses and lesson plans need to integrate the four English skills in the form of four language strands, namely, meaning focused input, meaning focused output, language focused learning, and fluency development as well as theoretical language learning principles such as the top-down and bottom-up processing information model presented by Richards (2008).  Richards' (2008) information processing model was applied to the listening comprehension questions Carmen created to assess students understanding of a listening passage in her lesson.  Below you can see the general structure of the lesson plans I analyzed:

### *4.2.3.2.2. Structure of the analyzed lesson plans.*

Stages of the Lesson

Pre-stage

- Vocabulary building

- Activating schema questions

- Making predictions

During Stage

- Listen for details

- Listen for main ideas

- Check your predictions

After stage

- Further vocabulary building

- Speaking task

Appendix

- Answer key

- Listening script

- Sources (references)

Regarding assessment, the findings presented above revealed that the EFL teacher educators used different types of assessment, including formative assessment, diagnostic assessment, and summative assessment.  Support for these findings can be seen in the following direct quotes from one of the syllabi analyzed "… [According to the target university] it is also mandatory that professors put into effect different ways to assess their students' learning process such as diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment."  Furthermore, depending on the nature of the courses, other ways of assessment were recommended in the syllabi, such as systematic or continuing assessment.  Finally, more evidence to support what the target language educators said about assessment can be observed in the assessment instrument shared by Diego (S*ee Appendix B for a sample writing assessment instrument adapted by this language educator*), which demonstrated the teaching expertise possessed by most of the Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators who participated in this study.

In conclusion, findings showed that possessing certain amount of knowledge and skills as teacher educators does not translate in successful classroom practices or that all the knowledges and teaching skills you may accumulate over time will be applied to all classroom situations.  In other words, as it was found there might be instances that regardless of your teaching expertise, lessons may not work as expected.  It was also found, however, that EFL teacher educators can definitely strengthen their pedagogical content knowledge through constant and systematic reasoning about successful and unsuccessful lived teaching experiences.  Pursuing this further,

the findings revealed that the relationship the target EFL teacher educators regarding their knowledge base and skills and classrooms practices had to do directly with a permanent reflection and transformation of target content, target expected learning goals, target knowledge and skills, teaching methods, strategies, and teaching activities. That relationship had to do as well with developing awareness and expertise to design good syllabi, to prepare effective lesson plans, to understand the learning needs and characteristics of student teachers, to choose appropriate teaching and learning materials, and to guide student teachers on how to become independent learners. Added to this, the results revealed that classroom practices in EFL teacher education programs are influenced and conditioned to your own personal knowledge base and teaching beliefs as well as on the education context where you are teaching. That is to say, I found that all six teacher educators shared some similar knowledges and skills but they differed in that their daily classroom practices were conditioned to their personal pedagogical content knowledge that as Shulman (1987) said it is somewhat difficult to be passed on from one teacher educator to another.

**4.2.4. Knowledge Base and Skills Categorization of Nicaraguan EFL Teacher Educators**

Sources of Knowledge of Nicaraguan EFL Teacher Educators

- Coursework in their EFL teacher education programs
- Apprenticeship of observation
- Own experiences as language learners
- Teaching experiences as EFL teachers
- Technology related to English language teaching and learning

- Research knowledge related to English language teaching
- Teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators
- Professional development opportunities

Result from sources of knowledge

Categorization of Nicaraguan EFL teacher Educators' Knowledge Base

**Types of knowledge**

✓ English language proficiency
✓ Pedagogical knowledge
✓ Subject knowledge
✓ Lesson planning knowledge
✓ Knowledge on creating teaching materials
✓ Classroom management knowledge
✓ Course design knowledge
✓ Knowledge of the Nicaraguan educational context
✓ Research knowledge
✓ Technology related knowledge
✓ Knowledge of students' L1
✓ Knowledge of language learning related disciplines
✓ Teaching knowledge in EFL teacher education programs
✓ Assessment knowledge of student-teachers' learning
✓ Teacher observation knowledge
✓ Knowledge of professional development

**Skills**

✓ Social English Language skills
✓ Academic English Language skills
✓ English communication skills
✓ Lesson planning skills
✓ Creating and adapting teaching materials skills
✓ Teaching skills
✓ Assessment skills
✓ Classroom management skills
✓ Skills to design English language programs
✓ Critical thinking skills
✓ Skills to use technology in the classroom
✓ L1 proficiency skills
✓ Teamwork skills
✓ Skills to relearn

**Filter 1: Personal knowledge base**

(Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators teaching beliefs, educational context)

**Filter 2: Classroom context**

(Curriculum, language student teachers, teaching materials and resources, etc.)

Knowledge Based
and
Language Teacher Education
Classroom Relationships

*Figure 5*. Knowledge Base, Skill Categories, and Classroom Relationships

In this chapter, I discussed the main findings that resulted from three modes of data: 1) data from a curriculum analysis, 2) data from six one-shot semi-structure interviews, and 3) data from a document analysis I carried out of six syllabi, six lesson plans, and six assessment instruments.  All these data was examined to inform the research questions that guided this study which had to do with discovering the sources of knowledge from which six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators built their knowledge base, categorizing the types of knowledge and skills that were constructed from the identified sources of knowledge, and the relationship that existed between the knowledge base of the target language educators and their classroom practices.  In the next chapter, I present a summary of the findings, conclusions reached as a result of this study, pedagogical implications and recommendations to different audiences who I think may find some theoretical or practical applications of the findings to improve the work that EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators do, and recommendations for future research.

# CHAPTER 5

## SUMMARY, PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS,

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, the types of knowledge and skills that constructed their knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices in a teacher education program at a Nicaraguan University. I collected data from six EFL teacher educators whose teaching experience in preservice language teacher education programs ranged from 3 to 9 years. Informed by the existing body of literature in the field of EFL teacher education, I defined Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators as language teaching experts who helped EFL teacher candidates develop English proficiency and who provided formal instruction and support for teacher candidates to become effective English as a Foreign Language teachers. The phenomenon investigated in this research was Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base construction. An attempt was made to understand and describe their shared lived experiences of the knowledge and skills language teacher educators possess in Nicaragua. I examined this research problem through one main research question and three subquestions, namely, central question: How do EFL teacher educators construct their knowledge base in an EFL teacher education program in a public university in Nicaragua? and subquestions: What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base? What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators? and How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices? The findings of this research make no claims of generalizability to other EFL teacher educators. However, the results about the knowledge base of the six

researched offer an opportunity for reflection and understanding how EFL teacher educators

build their knowledge base and valuable insights implied in the findings regarding the fact that

being an EFL teacher is different from being an EFL teacher educator.

In this chapter, I first present a summary of the findings for each research question.

Second, I provide the most important conclusions I reached based on the results of this study.

After that, I describe some pedagogical implications of the findings.  Lastly, based on the

findings, I make some recommendations to Nicaraguan universities, EFL teacher educators, EFL

teachers, NICA TESOL Conference Organizers about what they might do to improve the quality

of language educators in Nicaragua as well as I also make some recommendations for future

research in the field of EFL teacher education.

## 5.1. Summary of Findings

This study examined one main research questions, namely, How do EFL teacher

educators construct their knowledge base in an EFL teacher education program in a public

university in Nicaragua?  Below I present a summary of the findings guided by the three sub-

questions used to answer the central research question of this study.

### 5.1.1. Research Question 1

What are the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base?

Regarding the sources of knowledge that constructed the knowledge base of the six

Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators who participated in this study, I found that these language

educators built their knowledge base and skills from eight sources of knowledge.  These sources

of knowledge were: the coursework they took in their EFL teacher education programs,

apprenticeship of observation, their own experiences as English language learners, their teaching

experiences as EFL teachers, their teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators, research

knowledge related to English language teaching and learning, technology related to English

language teaching and learning, and professional development opportunities. These results

suggested that becoming a language educator takes many years, including the four or five years

of study in which language educators become English teachers, mainly because as the researched

asserted teacher education programs devoted specifically to prepare language educators do not

exist in the system of education in Nicaragua.

However, the long process that those six EFL teacher educators experienced to become

language educators does not have to be the only way to follow for those who want to be teacher

educators. These educators believed that it is time that Nicaraguan universities start thinking

about the idea of designing undergraduate and graduate programs to train EFL teacher educators.

In other words, in the same way that there are preservice EFL teacher preparation programs,

universities should offer preservice EFL teacher educator preparation programs as well. The

researched agreed that they would have liked to receive training in their undergraduate programs

on how to teach to student teachers. They said that maybe their experiences of becoming

language educators would have been much easier if they would have been trained to work in

preservice EFL teacher education programs because they would have had some more solid

notions on how to work with student teachers. Additionally, some of the researched said that

when they just started to teach in preservice EFL teacher education programs, they thought that

all what they needed to do was to teach English in the same way they did in high schools or in

English language centers. Nevertheless, they soon realized that that was not true at all. That is,

they had to transform and readjust their teaching methodologies to the needs of their student

teachers and to the goals of the target teacher education program. Among the things they

changed were, for instance, they began to read more about best practices of teaching and learning

second languages, started to develop more mastery of the subjects they were teaching, behaved as teacher models in front of their student teachers, felt the need of being aware of the Nicaraguan educational context, participated more often in professional development opportunities, such as, conferences, looked for ways to increase their English proficiency level, and became more concerned of preparing better lesson plans, teaching materials, and assessment. They said that, as a language teacher educator, your responsibility goes beyond than just teaching English.  In other words, teaching to future teachers requires from you developing a whole new professional identity and responsibility because you have in your hands the quality of future generations of English teachers.

Furthermore, out of those eight sources of knowledge, the researched highlighted as the most important ones their own experiences as language learners, professional courses taken in their undergraduate teaching programs, their teaching experience as EFL teachers, and their teaching experience as teacher educators.  It does not mean, though, that the other sources of knowledge are not essential to them.  What it means is that the eight sources of knowledge contribute in different degrees to the development of the knowledge base and skills of Nicaraguan language teacher educators.  To illustrate this, let us take the sources of knowledge of research related to language teaching and learning and their teaching experiences with student teachers.  The former is definitely a means from which language educators learn about the most updated advancements regarding teaching and learning the English language as well as knowledge on how to prepare language student teachers; however, from the latter, language educators learn how to actually teach in preservice EFL teacher education programs.  That is, it seems that Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators value more the procedural knowledge than the declarative knowledge that they may build from the sources of knowledge found in this study.

Finally, I found that different types of knowledge can be built from the same source of knowledge. Also, it is possible that the same kind of knowledge can be constructed from different sources of knowledge. For example, from the source of knowledge 'teaching experiences as EFL teacher educators', language educators can build teaching knowledge, content knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge. From the sources of knowledge 'apprenticeship of observation' and 'their own experiences as language learners', EFL teacher educators can construct pedagogical knowledge. In a like manner, different skills can result from a single source of knowledge and a single skill can be constructed from more than one source of knowledge. For instance, lesson planning skills and social and academic English language skills can be acquired from the source of knowledge entitled in this study as 'coursework taken in their teacher education programs', and English communication skills can be developed from the sources of knowledge 'teaching experiences as EFL teacher educator' and 'teaching experiences as EFL teachers'.

### 5.1.2. Research Question 2

What types of knowledge and skills build the knowledge base of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators?

As for knowledge and skills, the findings from the semi-structured interviews revealed that the knowledge base of these six EFL teacher educators is integrated by sixteen types of knowledge and fourteen skills. Pursuing this further, the curriculum analysis I conducted showed that twelve of those types of knowledge and seven skills start to develop in their preservice EFL teacher education programs (McLean et al., 2010) see figure 4 (*Knowledge and Skills Targeted at the EFL Curriculum*). In the same way that some sources of knowledge were considered to be more important than others, I found that Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators

valued more some types of knowledge and skills over the others.  To illustrate this, they believed that the knowledges entitled in this study as 'English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, subject knowledge, knowledge of students' first language (L1), teaching knowledge in EFL teacher education programs, classroom management knowledge, own experience as language learning, technology related knowledge, course design knowledge, and knowledge of student-teachers assessment were more necessary than the other kinds of knowledge, such as, technology related knowledge or knowledge of professional development.  Likewise, the skills, namely, 'social and academic English skills, English communication skills, lesson planning skills for student-teachers, teaching skills in teacher education programs, and student-teachers assessment skills' held more value for Nicaraguan language educators.

Lastly, the target EFL teacher educators saw themselves as a different kind of language professionals compared with the type of professional they were before they began teaching in preservice EFL teacher education programs.  They asserted that even though Nicaraguan EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators share some knowledges and skills, such as, pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, English proficiency, teaching experience in high school or in English academies, they also differ in the degree of awareness of those knowledges and skills and in other types of knowledges and skills, for example, teaching experience with EFL student teachers and knowledge of how to assess student teachers' learning.

### 5.1.3.  Research Question 3

How do Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators think their knowledge base is related to their classroom practices?

As for the relationship between the knowledge base and teacher education classrooms, Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators agreed that teaching student teachers is a challenging process.

First, they have to deal with student teachers' expectations in terms of the preparation or qualifications that language educators have to demonstrate in EFL teacher education classrooms. In this regard, Nicaraguan EFL student teachers expect that language educators would demonstrate mastery in knowledge and skills, such as, subject knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and native or native-like English proficiency. For example, according to the research participants, if student teachers notice that your English spoken skills are not native or native-like or if you are not knowledgeable enough in the subjects that you teach, they may not trust you as a language educator. That is why they try to be as prepared as possible any time they enter an EFL teacher education classroom to teach because if student teachers perceive them as unprepared or unqualified, it would be hard to make student teachers to trust them again as EFL teacher educators. In short, Nicaraguan language educators' decisions on how to teach is greatly influenced by the types of student teachers they may have in their classrooms.

Second, besides student teachers' expectations, the research participants identified two more components that influenced the relationship of their knowledge base and their classroom practices. These two components were their personal knowledge as EFL teacher educators and the educational context where they taught. They said that the educational context where that taught determined in some way the types of English teachers needed and their personal knowledge allowed them to prepare those types of English teachers. According to the participants, teaching in teacher education classrooms requires a constant reflection process. This reflection includes a systematic meditation what might or might not work in terms of teaching and learning as well as a permanent reflection of what knowledge and skills you, as language educator and the curriculum, expect your student teachers to develop, how you will assess them, what content you will prioritize, how you will teach the target skills, knowledge,

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and content, and finally, reflect on the 'why' of their EFL teaching profession. That thoughtful decision-making process that the researched talked about was revealed in the document analysis I conducted to the lesson plans, assessment tools, and syllabi that were part of the data in study.

Lastly, even though the research participants said they possess 16 types of knowledge and 14 skills, I found that when it has to do with their classroom practices the knowledges and skills they valued more were their English proficiency, their experiences as language learners, their knowledge about syllabus design, subject knowledge, knowledge of student teachers learning and assessment, development of teaching materials, lesson planning, and their teaching experience in teacher education programs. All these types of knowledge and skills combined with the Nicaraguan EFL education context determined the work the target EFL teacher educators did in their teacher education classrooms.

## 5.2. Pedagogical Implications

This qualitative phenomenological study showed support to the existing literature in that becoming an EFL teacher educator takes many years and that the knowledge base that language educators may possess is built from different sources, such as, coursework taken in EFL teacher education programs, teaching experience in high schools and in intensive English centers, apprenticeship of observation, and teaching in preservice EFL teacher education programs (Moradkhani et al., 2013; see also Murray & Male, 2005). Consequently, the findings of this study implicate several useful trends as far as EFL teacher educators' knowledge base has to do.

Findings revealed that there is a difference between Nicaraguan EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators. On one hand, EFL teachers are prepared to teach the English language, either with communicative or with academic purposes. On the other hand, EFL teacher educators perform two main roles: 1) they teach the English language and 2) they prepare student teachers

with the pedagogical and didactic knowledge and skills they need to teach English in Nicaragua. This means that if these two groups of professionals are different in terms of their knowledge base and in terms of what they do, the preparation of EFL teacher educators deserves some attention by universities that are offering some type of language teacher preparation. According to the findings, currently in the Nicaraguan EFL teacher education context there are not any teacher education programs devoted to prepare language teacher educators. EFL teacher educators become English teachers first and then through time and teaching experience in teacher education programs they become language educators. However, as this study has shown, it is possible to determine what knowledge and skills language educators possess.

Pursuing this further, this study revealed that it is possible to categorize and synthesize language educators' knowledge base in a way that can be organized to be delivered in undergraduate and graduate programs in the same way other fields of study are offered like a bachelor's degree in TESOL, EFL, ESL, or Applied Linguistics. However, right now I think that more research is needed, both qualitative and quantitative studies, to better understand the types of knowledge and skills language educators possess and the way they develop those knowledges and skills as well as how they apply them in the EFL teacher education classrooms. Once a clear understanding of EFL teacher educators' knowledge base is achieved, I totally believe that the field of language teaching would greatly improve if either graduate or under graduate programs to prepare language teacher educators are created.

The results of this study also provide some pedagogical implications that can be used to improve current preservice EFL teacher education programs in Nicaragua and in other countries as well. For instance, first, EFL teacher educators need to develop awareness of the knowledge base and skills they possess. Then, they could share their knowledge and skills in the teacher

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education programs where they teach. Additionally, they could share their knowledge base and skills in professional development opportunities, such as, conferences, workshops, seminars, and congresses which English teachers and other language educators attend. Doing so, future and current generations of English teachers would face fewer difficulties in becoming EFL teacher educators.

In the same line of thought, another short-term solution to prepare stronger English teachers is that Nicaraguan universities could design undergraduate and graduate EFL teacher education programs with a mixed approach in which student teachers not only become English teachers but also in which they can learn and analyze part of the knowledge base and skills of language teacher educators. That way, if they have the opportunity to teach in teacher education programs in their future teaching career, it will be easier for them to acquire their new professional identity as language educators as well as do a better job as EFL teacher educators.

Finally, the findings of study suggest some pedagogical implications for current Nicaraguan English teachers who want to become language educators. First, they need to understand that being an English teacher is different from being an English teacher educator. Second, they need to become aware EFL teacher educators' knowledge base and how that knowledge base is built. Third, if possible, they should try to find opportunities to volunteer to teach or to co-teach or just to observe the work language teacher educators do in preservice teacher education programs. That way, if they are offered an opportunity to be recruited as teacher educators, the process of becoming a language teacher educator would be much easier and more effective.

### 5.3. Conclusions of the Study

As a result of the analysis of the data I collected from six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators about how they build their knowledge base and how that knowledge base is related to

what they do in EFL teacher education classrooms, I came to the following conclusions. First, in Nicaragua EFL teacher education programs to prepare language teacher educators are nonexistent. What exists is preservice programs to prepare EFL teachers. These programs are content-driven. Based on the curriculum analysis and syllabi analysis I conducted, I found that teaching and learning revolves around content. It seems that the more content is covered, the better. Additionally, the purpose of undergraduate teacher training programs is twofold. On one hand, they are designed to help preservice student teachers to develop English proficiency both to communicate in everyday-life situations and in academic settings. On the other hand, preservice student teachers are trained to teach the English language. However, they do not receive any training on how to teach other teachers. Consequently, according to this study's results, the professional knowledge and professional identity of EFL teacher educators is developed through time as they teach in different educational scenarios, including preservice teacher education programs. Lastly, the researched agreed that they would have liked to be trained to become EFL teacher educators in their preservice teacher education program.

Second, not all English teachers who graduate from EFL teacher education programs in Nicaragua can become EFL teacher educators or can be considered teacher educators as defined in this study, only those who are recruited to teach in language teacher education programs are the one who, with time, become language educators. According to the researched, one thing is just to teach students in elementary or high schools or in language centers where the focus is to develop social and academic English communication skills, and another thing is to prepare future English teachers. Being a teacher of future English teachers not only it requires possessing a native or native-like English proficiency, but also it entails possessing a higher level of awareness of other types of knowledges, such as, knowing how to teach to preservice EFL

student teachers, understanding how they learn and why they learn, understanding how to assess their learning process, being thoughtful all time, knowing how to transform and transmit content effectively, utilizing every single teaching opportunity as a unit of analysis so student teachers learn how to teach English, being aware of current teaching methodologies and strategies, being able to relearn and evolve your teaching practices and so forth. The findings revealed that it may take many years for English teachers to turn into educators. The process begins with the professional coursework that EFL teacher educators study in undergraduate programs where they first become English teachers. After that, teaching experience is added. First, some teaching experience developed in teaching practicums as high school teachers in the public education system. Then their teaching expertise grows more as they continue to teach either in public or private high schools or in language centers. However, their knowledge and skills, including their teaching experience, are transformed as soon as they begin teaching in preservice teacher education programs. It is in preservice teacher education programs where the whole cycle of becoming an EFL teacher educator ends.

Pursuing this further, this study concluded that EFL teacher educators used two filters to transform their knowledge base and skills to carry out teaching interventions in preservice teacher education classrooms. The first filter is their personal knowledge, which includes their teaching beliefs and their knowledge of the Nicaraguan educational context. The second filter is their teaching experience acquired in EFL teacher education classroom contexts, which involves transforming several types of knowledge and skills, for example, English proficiency, curriculum knowledge, knowledge of student-teachers learning and assessment, knowledge of teaching material development, lesson planning, and pedagogical content knowledge. It is through these

two lenses that they examine which part of their knowledge and skills they will use to teach, and in what ways they will implement it in their classrooms with their student teachers.

Finally, it was concluded that part of the knowledge base and skills that the six Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators said they had was evident in their syllabi, lesson plans, and assessment instruments that I analyzed in this study. In other words, even though I did not use other more rigorous instruments to measure the research participants' actual knowledge and skills as teacher educators, the syllabi, lesson plans, and assessment evidence I collected for analysis demonstrated that they put into effect their teaching experience and skills to create them. From my perspective as an EFL teacher educator, I think that the syllabi, lesson plans, and assessment tools the research participants shared with me met the requirements to accomplish the purpose for which they were created.

## 5.4. Recommendations

According to the findings of this study and the existing body of literature, there is a difference between EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators. On one hand, EFL teachers are professionals who teach the English language; on the other hand, EFL teacher educators not only teach the English language but also train student-teachers to become English teachers (Moradkhani et al., 2013). Consequently, based on the findings and conclusions of this qualitative phenomenological study, here I make some recommendations to some stakeholders in Nicaragua as related to EFL teacher education.

### 5.4.1. Nicaraguan Universities

Understanding that EFL teachers and EFL teacher educators are different types of professionals, it would be interesting and beneficial for the field of Nicaraguan EFL teacher education if Nicaraguan universities could design curricula to prepare EFL teacher educators. Those curricula could be informed by research-based findings in the existing literature as well

the findings of this study.  As a teacher educator who constructed his professional knowledge and skills through time, I think that it is time that universities take the first step to create teacher education programs devoted specifically to the preparation of language teacher educators.  We cannot expect that language teacher education programs designed to train English teachers, such as, bachelor's degrees or master's degrees or even Ph.Ds. would give answers to the need of having qualified language teacher educators.  Part of the findings in this study revealed that the research participants thought that even master's programs in TESOL continue to be focused only on teaching English not on preparing teacher trainers.  In other words, the field of EFL teacher educators should be treated like that a related but different field of study.  Therefore, it deserves to have its own space for those who want to become language teacher educators.  As in other fields of study, programs for preparing EFL teacher educators could be offered at different levels, such as, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and even Ph.Ds.

Pursuing this further, since language teacher education programs to prepare educators are non-existent currently in Nicaraguan universities, a partial solution to graduate more qualified English teachers would be that universities expose Nicaraguan preservice English student teachers to existing literature about how EFL teacher educators grow their professional knowledge and skills.  Additionally, universities should give more advanced preservice English student teachers the opportunity to work as teaching assistants under the supervision of experienced language educators in preservice EFL teacher education programs.  That way they would build some knowledge and skills as educators as well as English teachers.

Lastly, universities should encourage EFL teacher educators to conduct research about the work they do to prepare future English teachers.  Research on the work language educators do could give valuable insights to universities to make decisions either on how to improve their

existing preservice English teaching programs or on how to create a program to specifically

prepare EFL teacher educators.

### 5.4.2. Nicaraguan EFL Teacher Educators

I would recommend to Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators to start sharing their lived

experiences as language educators at National and local conferences and congresses so

universities realize that being a language educator is different from being a language teacher.

Consequently, they may understand that creating programs to prepare language educators would

benefit the Nicaraguan EFL teacher education field.  Language educators could also start

conducting more research to investigate what they do in teacher education classrooms as well as

the ways they build their professional knowledge and identity as educators.  Lastly, as a partial

solution to prepare more qualified Nicaraguan English teachers who may become educators in

the future, I would recommend to current language teacher educators to share their lived

experiences as educators with their preservice student teachers so they understand that there is

more than just being an English teacher in their field of study.  That is, becoming a teacher

educator or teacher trainer could be studied as a major as well.  Of course, those types of

programs need to be created first by curricularists working in universities.

### 5.4.3. Nicaraguan EFL Teachers

Those in-service and preservice Nicaraguan English teachers interested in becoming

teacher educators should take advantage of the existing literature about learning how EFL

teacher educators construct their professional knowledge and skills.  That would give them some

direction and guidance of what to do and possibly how to do it as far as becoming an educator is

concerned.

### 5.4.4. Nicaraguan TESOL Conference

My recommendation for the Nicaraguan TESOL conference organizers is to start including spaces to analyze the role of EFL teacher educators, working in language teacher education programs. EFL teacher educators should be encouraged to share their lived experiences as language educators. For example, they could give presentations on strategies and techniques they use to teach English to student-teachers, presentations on teaching methods to transmit pedagogical, didactic, and pedagogical content knowledge to future English teachers, and so on. I am sure that conversations and discussions at the yearly NICA TESOL Conference about the knowledge base and skills possessed by language educators may help universities on designing curricula to prepare EFL teacher educators.

### 5.4.5. Recommendations for Future Research

Taking into consideration the limitations and findings of this study, more research is needed in the field of Nicaraguan EFL teacher education both qualitative and quantitative research. It is necessary to continue to examine the lived experiences of other samples of EFL teacher educators about the way they build their knowledge base and skills so as to improve Nicaraguan EFL teachers' quality and preparation. As a researcher, I acknowledge that this phonological study had some limitations, such as, instruments used, the time allowance to collect and process data as well as the small sample chosen. Increasing the number of participants and using other instruments for data collection such as classroom observations, focus groups, content knowledge tests, pedagogical and didactic tests, and English proficiency tests may reveal the actual knowledge and skills possessed by Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators. Regarding qualitative approaches that could be used to continue to examine the knowledge base of language teacher educators in Nicaragua could be in-depth phenomenology and grounded theory; these types of research may uncover valuable results about how language teacher educators build their

knowledge base and how that knowledge base is put into practice in teacher education

classrooms.  Also, quantitative and mixed experimental and non-experimental longitudinal

studies may also help explain how Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators construct their knowledge

base as well as the implications of that knowledge base in classrooms.  Finally, it would be

interesting to conduct a longitudinal experimental study to compare the effectiveness of EFL

teacher educators who began the process of becoming educators as EFL teachers and a group of

educators who received training specifically to become EFL teacher educators.  Findings from

such studies may contribute positively with the development of future generations of Nicaraguan

EFL teacher educators and EFL teachers.

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APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A - INSTRUMENTS

## INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Dear participants,

      My name is **Angel M. Dávila**.  Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research project.  I greatly appreciate your time and effort.  Before I start this interview, I would like to inform you that I am pursuing a Ph.D. in Education with concentration in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, in the United States of America.  As a partial requirement to fulfill my Ph.D. program, I have to conduct a dissertation research.  That is why your participation in this interview is highly valued.  However, I want you to know that your participation is completely free and voluntary; that you may decide not to respond to any questions; and that you may withdraw this study at any time.  The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to understand and describe the sources of Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base, the types of knowledge that construct their knowledge base, and the relationship of this knowledge base and classroom practices.  Findings from this research may help improve the curricula in EFL teacher education programs in Nicaragua.  I want you to know that everything you say in this interview will be utilized only for the purpose of this study and will not be shared with anyone. While the researcher's Dissertation Chair may see the data, individual participants will not be identifiable.  That is, you as an individual EFL teacher educator will not be identifiable. The data will be reported anonymously.  Finally, I want to remind you once again that this interview will be recorded.  However, everything you say will be kept in a password-protected folder in my personal computer to which I will be the only person to have access to.

      This interview will last about 60 minutes. Do you have any questions before we start with the interview?

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Age: _____25-35       _____36-46        _____ 47 and older
- Female_____    Male_____
- What is the highest academic degree you have completed? _____
- How long have you been teaching in the EFL teacher education program where you teach? _____
- Which courses do you teach? _____

## SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TO INFORM THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- *Experience of knowledge base construction*

  1. If possible, can you describe the process you went through to become an EFL teacher educator, starting with your teacher education program up until now?
  2. What are the sources from which you have built your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator?

3. How did the courses you studied in your teacher education program contribute to the development of your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator?
4. How did observing your professors teach you English in your teacher education program contribute to the development of your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator?
5. How did the teaching practicum you did in your teacher education program contribute to the development of your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator?
6. How has your own experience as an English learner informed your work as an EFL teacher educator?
7. How has research (either research you may have conducted or language teaching related research conducted by others) contributed to the growth of your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator?
8. How has your teaching experience in EFL classrooms (either in elementary, high school, or in intensive English programs) contributed to the growth of your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator?
9. How has your teaching experience with student teachers contributed to the growth of your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator?
10. How has technology contributed to the development of your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator?
11. Which ones of these elements have contributed more to the growth of your knowledge and skills as an EFL teacher educator: *(the courses you took in your teacher education program, observing your professors teach you English, your own experience as an English learner, your teaching practicum, research, your teaching experience with EFL learners, your teaching experience with student teachers, technology)*? Explain.

- ***Types of knowledge and skills that construct EFL teacher educators' knowledge base***

12. What types of knowledge do you think you developed in your pre-service teacher education program? Explain, which ones you think are more important?
13. How were these types of knowledge delivered to you in your teacher education program?
14. What types of knowledge do you think you possess now as an EFL teacher educator? Explain, how you have developed those types of knowledge?
15. What types of skills do you think you developed in your pre-service teacher education program? Explain, which ones you think are more important?
16. How were these types of skills delivered to you in your teacher education program?
17. What types of skills do you think you possess now as an EFL teacher educator? Explain, how you have developed those types of skills?

- **Relationship between Nicaraguan EFL teacher educators' knowledge base and classroom practices**

  18. Can you walk me through the steps you follow to design the syllabi of the courses you teach? Explain why each step is important. Give examples.
  19. What would you say are the criteria you follow to inform your decisions to select the teaching materials you utilize to teach your student teachers? Give examples.
  20. Can you walk me through the steps you follow to prepare the lesson plans for the courses you teach? Explain why each step is important. Give examples.
  21. Imagine you are going to give a class to your student teachers, can you walk me through the steps and activities you would follow and do, since the moment you enter the classroom until you leave the classroom? If possible, say the name of the course you are teaching, the duration of the lesson, and teaching method/s you would use.
  22. Can you walk me through the steps you follow to assess the knowledge, skills, or content you teach to your student teachers? Explain why each step is important. Give examples.

- **End of the Interview**

Thank you so much again for your time and participation.

**Reminder:** After each interview, I will ask each research participant to allow me access to three documents:

- A syllabus of any of the courses they have taught in the teacher education where they teach.
- A lesson plan they used to deliver content of the syllabus they have chosen, and
- A piece of assessment that they have used to assess the knowledge, skills, or content they have taught to their student teachers. It could be a **rubric** for assessing a test, quiz, or paper. If rubrics are not available, it could be any piece of assessment, for example, a quiz, test, or paper student teachers have done.

**SAMPLE SYLLABUS, SAMPLE LESSON PLAN, AND SAMPLE WRITING ASSESSMENT**

I.       **Appendix B: Sample Syllabus**

Syllabus

Course: English Integrated Skills V: Listening and Speaking

(CEFR Level B2)

**INTRODUCTION**

The course **Integrated Skills V: Listening and Speaking** is intended to master the skills of listening and speaking to an intermediate level, engaging students to listen to lectures and take notes effectively, and to communicate with other students in group discussions. This comprehensive preparation will enable students continue facing their studies armed with strategies they need to listen, take notes, and discuss ideas independently and confidently. Therefore, it is necessary that English professors address the teaching-learning process through communicative approaches and methodologies that allow students to interact orally during the whole course.

The students will listen and discus on various academic topics such as: lectures, conferences, conversations, discussions, debates, and note-taking.

According to the curriculum 2010, of the Bachelor's degree in English Language Teaching and knowledge areas that comprise it, the course **English Integrated Skills V: Listening and Speaking** is located in the area of specialization. Furthermore, this subject is in the fifth semester of the curriculum and it is the last course intended to develop the listening and speaking skills to an intermediate level.

The importance of this course is because after taken it the students will undertake the rest of their study plan with ease. Therefore, in order to make more effective the teaching-learning process

of the listening and speaking skills, professors will make use of English as a medium of communication and social interaction in the classroom, regardless of the level of difficulty and errors in the use and management language at this time.

**GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

Provide students a comprehensive course based on mastering the listening and speaking skills to an intermediate level that permits them acquire the tools for them to succeed in the rest of their major, such us note taking and discussion of ideas independently and confidently.

Encourage students to practice personal and academic responsibility, mutual respect among each member of URACCAN University and their community and to recognize the capacities, rights and duties of men and women of our society through the teaching-learning process of listening and speaking skills.

**Course Plan**

| No. | UNITS | Organization of the Teaching-learning Process (Estimated Hours) | | | Total No. Hours |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | THEORY | PRACTICE | | |
| | | Lecturing | Laboratory | Oral Production | |
| 1 | Marketing | 4 | 4 | 4 | 12 |
| 2 | Social science | 4 | 4 | 4 | 12 |
| 3 | Science | 4 | 4 | 4 | 12 |
| 4 | Media studies | 4 | 4 | 4 | 12 |
| 5 | Linguistics | 4 | 4 | 4 | 12 |
| | Midterm and Final Exams | | | | 4 |
| Total | | | | | 64 |

# UNIT SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

### *FIRST UNIT:* Marketing

*During this unit, the students will:*

- Learn about differences in how men and women spend money and how this affects marketing.
- Recognize lecture language that signals the topic and big picture of a lecture.
- Write down the key words and ideas in a lecture.
- Enter a discussion about the ideas in a lecture.
- Learn about the reasons behind recent increases in advertising.
- Contribute your ideas to a discussion.
- Use an informal outline for note-taking.

### *SECOND UNIT:* Sociology

*During this unit, the students will:*

- Learn and discuss about current trends in local and international work habits.
- Recognize lecture language that signals a transition between ideas.
- Use symbols to stand for words and ideas.
- Learn how to interrupt and ask for clarification during a discussion.
- Learn about current trends in leisure activity.
- Use abbreviations to stand for words and ideas.
- Lear how to ask for more information during a discussion.

### THIRD UNIT: *Science*

*During this unit, the students will:*

- Learn about some of the reasons behind food choice.
- Recognize lecture language that signals an example and an explanation of an idea.
- Organize key material in visual from.
- Learn how to agree and disagree during a discussion.
- Discuss about some unique solutions to pollution.
- Describe the graphics used in a lecture.
- Learn how to support your opinions during a discussion.

### FOURTH UNIT: *Media studies*

*During this unit, the students will:*

- Learn about the current trend away from newspaper news and toward internet news.
- Learn how to recognize lecture language that signals when information is important.

- Learn how to highlight key ideas.
- Acquire the ability to connect your ideas to other people's ideas in a discussion.
- Debate about themes and stereotyping in television entertainment and the concept of media literacy.
- Recognize non-verbal signals that indicate when information is important.
- Acquire the ability to keep the discussion focused on the topic.

### *FITH UNIT:* Linguistics

During this unit, the students will:

- Learn about the origins and use of slang in English.
- Recognize changes in pronunciation that signal when information is important.
- Learn how to edit your notes.
- Encourage other students to participate during a discussion.
- Learn about people's attitudes toward English around the world.
- Bring a group to a consensus during a discussion.

## CONTENT PLAN

### *FIRST UNIT:* Marketing

- Differences in how men and women spend money and how this affects marketing.
- Lecture language that signals the topic and big picture of a lecture.
- Key words and ideas in a lecture.
- Entering a discussion about the ideas in a lecture.
- Reasons behind recent increases in advertising.
- Contributing your ideas to a discussion.
- Using an informal outline for note-taking.

### *SECOND UNIT:* Social science

- Current trends in local and international work habits.
- Lecture language that signals a transition between ideas.
- Using symbols to stand for words and ideas.
- Interrupting and asking for clarification during a discussion.
- Current trends in leisure activity.
- Using abbreviations to stand for words and ideas.
- Asking for more information during a discussion.

### THIRD UNIT: *Science*

- Some of the reasons behind food choice.
- Lecture language that signals an example and an explanation of an idea.
- Organizing key material in visual from.
- Discussing about some unique solutions to pollution.

- Describing the graphics used in a lecture.
- Supporting your opinions during a discussion.

### FOURTH UNIT: *Media studies*

- Use of internet today.
- Current trend away from newspaper news and toward internet news.
- Recognizing lecture language that signals when information is important.
- Highlighting key ideas.
- Connecting your ideas to other people's ideas in a discussion.
- Themes and stereotyping in television entertainment and the concept of media literacy.
- Recognizing non-verbal signals that indicate when information is important.
- Keeping the discussion focused on the topic.

### *FITH UNIT:* Linguistics

- Origins and use of slang in English.
- Changes in pronunciation that signal when information is important.
- Editing your notes.
- Encouraging other students to participate during a discussion.
- People's attitudes toward English around the world.
- Bringing a group to a consensus during a discussion.

## TEACHING METHODOLOGY

It is recommended that English teachers follow a communicative approach to facilitate the teaching-learning process of this course, taking into consideration that the communicative approach in language teaching starts from a theory of language as communication. According to Hymes (1972) and Richards (2006) the goal of language teaching is to develop communicative competence.

Some of the characteristics to have in mind are:
- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate.

- Prior experiences of the students are important.

- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.

- Fluency is an important dimension of communication.

- Communication involves the integration of different language skills (listening-speaking and writing-reading)

- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error.

The Pedagogical Model of [target] University underlines other significant suggestions to carry out the teaching-learning process, for instance, teachers have to "encourage and promote research, guide their work based on student's prior knowledge and experiences, promote entrepreneurship and creativity, and promote the development of classroom environments where the student meets the most important role in the classroom, through their active participation. ([target university], 2004, p. 17)

In conclusion, it is suggested to use authentic materials such as books with audio CDs recorded and designed by nave speakers, movies tackling important topics, English language laboratory, board games, websites, visit of English peaking people -available in the community-, dictionaries and other sources found in the community and that are easy for the students to use. Moreover, to make the oral production more meaningful, the students and teachers will use the English Language as a medium of communication and interaction inside and outside the classroom.

**TEACHING SOURCES**

English teachers will use the following teaching materials in order to meet the objectives of this course:

### Bibliography:

- Lecture Ready 2: Strategies for Academic Listening, Note-taking, and Discussion (2006) by Peg Sarosy and Kathy Sherak. Oxford University Press. This text integrates academic listening and speaking. It is intended for students to meet their listening and speaking challenges in and beyond the language classroom. It is equipped with audio CDs and DVs.
### Other means and Teaching materials:

- Tape recorders

- Computers to be used in the classroom.
- Data shows
- TV
- DVD player
- Audio CDs
- DVDs
- Internet
- Language Laboratory.
- Monolingual English dictionary
- English-Spanish dictionary
- Grammar books
- Head projectors
- Classroom with chairs, whiteboards, light, tables, and projectors

**ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The assessment process in this course will be accomplished by taking into consideration a wide variety of teaching strategies and techniques, for instance, lectures, note-taking, oral presentations, listening exercises, debates, small talks, conversations, tours, simultaneous interpretation exercises, tour guide exercises and discussions of issues.

Moreover, English professors must pay attention to what [target] university's Pedagogical Model suggests regarding evaluation "the assessment is a continuous process that must accompany the learning process as both are inseparable. ([target university], 2004, p. 17)

Thus, some strategies suggested are:

a. Take into consideration the students' needs to the extent that their motivation is the engine that drives learning.

b. Use interactive activities looking for meaningful interaction.

c. Take into account the contexts in which the students interact and their own experiences when teaching.

d. Understand that through errors the students also can learn.

e. Apply techniques for individual and group work.

f. Encourage students to be self-taught.

It means that, it is also mandatory that professors put into effect different ways to assess their students' learning process such as diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment.

Finally, the English teachers have to know that in order to decide if a student passes or fails the course, they have to provide a quantitative grade. According to [target] University, its grading system is a numeric scale from 0 to 100; the minimum grade for approval requires 60%. However, it is suggested that the assessment process of this course be carried out on basis of cumulative and individually work done by the students.

## IX. BASIC AND COMPLEMENTARY BOOKS

- Sarosy P. & Sherak K. (2006). *Lecture Ready 2: Strategies for Academic Listening, Note-taking, and Discussion*. Oxford University Press.
- ***WEBSITES:*** Professors can use the Websites below to enrich their Teaching-learning process and to encourage their students to self-study. These websites provide materials to help students develop the four English skills, listening and speaking and writing and reading.
    - ✓ http://www.voanews.com/learningenglish/home/words-stories/: Listening, Reading, speaking exercises; vocabulary exercises, videos. You can find a wide range of topics to master the English language.
    - ✓ http://www.virginia.edu/uvapodcast/search.php?category=1&submit=true#: This website provides academic lectures about different topics. Teachers and students can download the audio on MP3 format to use it in and out of the classroom. The lecturers are professors from University of Virginia.
    - ✓ http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/llonline/quickrefs/13-lectures.xml: Here you can find information about note-taking abbreviations.
    - ✓ http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/talkaboutenglish/2009/04/090427_tae_al.shtml: Useful for academic lectures.
    - ✓ http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/resforteach/pragmatics.html: Teaching Pragmatics explores the teaching of pragmatics, which is the ability of language users to match to find socially appropriate language for the situations that they encounter.

- ✓ https://www.ted.com: Listening, speaking, reading, critical thinking, and education in general.
- ✓ YouTube: Listening, speaking, reading, grammar, writing, pronunciation, critical thinking, teaching, and learning.

## II. Appendix B: Sample Lesson Plan

### Lesson Plan

**Course:** English Integraded Skillls V – Listening and Speaking (CEFR – B2 Level)
**Time:** This lesson will be developed in three sessions of 2 hours each.
**Bachelor's degree:** Sciences of Education in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

### Title of the lesson: Internet Adiction

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

a) know the meanings and pronunciation of the following words: addiction, wilderness, urge to, restless, compulsive, agitated, anxious, neglect, curtail, and mask.

b) know the following collocations and be able to use them:
(resist/feel/fight/overcome/suppress/satisfy) + (the/an) + urge + to + verb and abstain + from + verb (-ing).

c) use bottom-up listening skills to understand information, such a numbers, and details from the script.

d) use top-down listening skills to understand the general focus of the listening script, for example, main ideas.

e) practice their interactional and transaction speaking skills through a role-play and pair work activities.

f) practice attentive listening through bottom-up and top-down tasks, and through a peer feedback task.

**Stages of the Lesson**
> **Pre-stage**
>> Vocabulary Building
>> Activating Schema Questions
>> Making Predictions
> **During Stage**
>> Listen for Details
>> Listen for Main Ideas
>> Check your predictions
> **After stage**
>> Further Vocabulary Building
>> Speaking Task
> **Appendix**
>> Answer Key
>> Listening Script
>> Sources

**Pre-Stage: Getting ready to listen**

> **Vocabulary Building**
> **Activity One:** Key words

**A)** The following words are important for understanding the listening input in this lesson. Let us make sure that you know **what they mean** and **how to say them**.

| Words | Part of speech | Definitions |
|-------|----------------|-------------|
| addiction | Noun | **A:** A strong and harmful need to regularly have something or do something |
| wilderness | Noun | **B:** A natural area, without human civilization nearby |
| urge to | Noun + preposition | **C:** A strong need or desire to have or do something |
| restless | Adjective | **D:** Having little or no rest or sleep |
| compulsive | Adjective | **E:** Not able to stop or control doing something |
| agitated | Adjective | **F:** Feeling stressed and restless |
| anxious | Adjective | **G:** Wanting or eager to do or have something very much especially because of fear or nervousness |
| neglect | Verb | **H:** To fail to take care of or to give attention to someone or something |
| curtail | Verb | **I:** To reduce or limit (something) |
| mask | Verb | **J:** To hide something from sight; to keep something from being known or noticed |

**B)** Work with a partner to fill in the blanks **the best word** for the context. If for some blanks there is more than one possible choice, write **all acceptable choices**. We will check the answers by reading aloud the sentences.

1) Some people tend to use the internet to _____ feelings of depression, guilt, and anxiety.
2) You need to _____ the amount of time you spend online if you do not want to become an internet addict.
3) If you _____ to do so, you will not be allowed any online involvement for three days.
4) After several days offline, she was very _____ that she had missed a lot of Facebook posts.
5) Spending long hours on the Internet makes one feel _____.
6) I must say, I am a _____ internet user. I just cannot live without it.
7) Having spent two whole days online, she collapsed into _____ sleep.
8) I have been online for six hours now, and I still feel the _____ to continue to chat with my Facebook friends.
9) The airplane crashed in a very remote area of the Alaskan _____.
10) Her internet _____ has caused her to neglect her studies.

➢ **Creating a Purpose for Listening**

**Activity One:** Answer the following questions



Do you like to surf the internet? Why?

How often do you surf the internet?

What are two of the activities you do when surfing the internet?

**Activity Two:** Making Predictions

The following statements are related to the listening input of this lesson. Talk to a partner and decide whether or not they are characteristics of internet addiction. We will return to your predictions after listening the script.



| Before Listening True or False | | Statements | After Listening True or False | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **T** | **F** | 1) Having email, Facebook, and Twitter accounts. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 2) **Masking** feelings of depression, guilt and anxiety. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 3) Trying and failing to **curtail** the amount of time you spend online. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 4) Feeling **anxious**, **restless**, and **agitated** when you're not online. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 5) Having friends who are **compulsive** Internet users. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 6) **Neglecting** real real-life responsibilities because of the internet. | **T** | **F** |

**Activity One: Listening for Details**

**Direction:** Listen to the recording and select the best answer to each question.

1) **Dr. Kimberly Young's debut paper was entitled:**

   a. Internet Addiction: The Emergence of a New Disorder
   b. The Internet is the Emergence of a New Disorder
   c. The American Psychology Association

2) **Some symptoms of internet addiction are…**

   a. Talking for extended amounts of time about what you read on the internet
   b. Sending emails every often to your friends
   c. Feeling restless, agitated and anxious when offline and lying to friends about the time you spend online

3) **Some effects of internet addiction are…**

   a. Failing to mask feelings of depression and guilt
   b. Failing to take care of real-life relationships and responsibilities
   c. Facilitating real-life relationships and responsibilities

4) **It's time to seek help when...**

   a. Your time online is making you increasingly depressed.
   b. You spend more than 10 hours a day online.
   c. Your internet use is having a negative effect on your life.

5) **The largest population facing internet addiction are people . . .**

   a. Of age group 8 -12
   b. Of age group 13-19
   c. Of age group 20-30

6) **Some treatment options to help internet addicts are…**

   a. To go to the wilderness and connect to the internet for short amount of time from there
   b. To stop totally the use of internet and stay for a long time in the wilderness away from technology
   c. To spend a long time taking individual and group therapy through the internet

7) **According to research, Korea is a hotbed of internet addition in children, with…**

   a. 6,800 young addicts between the ages of 10 and 19
   b. 680,000 young addicts between the ages of 10 and 19
   c. 6,800,000 young addicts between the ages of 10 and 19

8) **The treatment used in Korea is especially effective because...**

    a. Kids learn to be more conscious of their decisions in life.

    b. It requires a lot of patience and time to master.

    c. There's both a physical activity and an emotional connection with a living being.

9) **The purpose of internet should be…**

    a. To improve life, not replace it

    b. To enhance the life of computers

    c. To replace other technologies that damage life

## Activity Two: Listening for Main Ideas

**Directions:** Listen to the recording and select the best answer.

10) **Which of the following best summarizes the listening passage?**

    a. The damage that internet addiction does to our relationships and society.

    b. The signs of internet addiction and treatment options.

    c. The various causes of internet addiction.

## Activity Three: Check your predictions

**Directions:** Check the predictions you made before listening. Correct your answers based on the listening passage.  Be able to explain why the statements are True or False.



| Before Listening True or False | | Statements | After Listening True or False | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **T** | **F** | 1) Having email, Facebook, and Twitter accounts. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 2) **Masking** feelings of depression, guilt and anxiety. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 3) Trying and failing to **curtail** the amount of time you spend online. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 4) Feeling **anxious**, **restless**, and **agitated** when you're not online. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 5) Having friends who are **compulsive** Internet users. | **T** | **F** |
| **T** | **F** | 6) **Neglecting** real real-life responsibilities because of the internet. | **T** | **F** |

➢ **Further Vocabulary Building**

**Activity One:** Collocations that can be used when giving advice about internet addiction

**Directions:**

In pairs, read the sentences below and try to determine the common collations in which the noun *URGE* occurs. Enter your conclusions in Table 1 below.

Common collocations with the noun **URGE**

**Example Sentences**

1) In order to **resist the urge to text and twit**, you might want to consider turning off instant notifications from email and social media.

2) If you very often **feel an urge to use** the internet, you could try reading a book instead.

3) If you want to **overcome the urge to be** online all day long, you could perhaps think about doing outdoor activities.

4) They **have an urge to purchase** to play online games all the time.

5) She could **fight her urge to be** online all day long by doing outdoor activities, such as hiking and birdwatching.

6) He always **suppresses his urge to spend** too much time online by working out at the recreation center.

**Table 1**

| Verbs that often occur with URGE in the meaning of "*to experience*" | Determiners after the verbs | | Verb Form after URGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) _____<br>2) _____ | | | |
| Verbs that often occur with URGE in the meaning of "*to get rid of*". | | | |
| 1) _____<br>2) _____<br>3) _____<br>4) _____ | | URGE | |

**Directions:**
In pairs, read the sentences below and try to determine the common collations in which the verb *ABSTAIN* occurs.  Answer the questions after the sentences.

Common collocations with the verb **ABSTAIN**

**Example Sentences**

1) You may **abstain from spending** too much time online by planning carefully the activities that really need internet use.
2) I advise you to **abstain from turning** on too many social media applications at the time to curtail the amount of time you spend online.
3) In order to **abstain from becoming** an internet addict, you should think about spending more time with friends offline.

**Questions**

1) Which preposition follows the verb ABSTAIN?

   _____

2) What is important to remember about the verb that follows the preposition FROM?

   _____

⟵━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━⟶

**Activity Two:** Practice what you discovered and learned

**Directions**

**A)** In this activity, you will apply what you learned in activity **1** to answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1) Have you ever **had/felt an urge to do** something?
   _____

2) Have you ever failed **to suppress an urge to do** something? Explain.
   _____

3) Have you ever **overcome an urge to do** something? How?
   _____

4) Do you know someone who has tried **to abstain from doing** something and failed? Explain.
   _____

5) Do you know someone who has tried **to abstain from doing** something and was successful? How?
   _____

**B)** Give advice to somebody who wants **to overcome the urge to** spend endless hours on the Internet. Use the verb **suppress** and the verb **abstain** in your advice sentences.
   1) _____
   2) _____

**Speaking Task:** Role-play for two students



*Background*

You and your classmates are members of a community which is believed to be facing a problem of internet addiction. As members of this community, you need some counseling to learn whether or not this issue is affecting you.



*Who you are*

**Student A:** A certified addictions counselor trained in identification and treatment of internet addiction

**Student B:** A client (Member of the community)



*What you should do*
Work in pairs and take turns to interview each other
### As counselors
- Ask the questions below and take notes
- Report your findings and conclusions
- Give your client advice about how to **suppress** or **overcome** his/her internet addiction
### As clients
- Answer the questions asked

## Internet Use Survey

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Y | N | 1) | Do you **spend** more time online than you think you should? |
| Y | N | 2) | Do you **feel an urge to** spend more time on the Internet? |
| Y | N | 3) | Do you find difficulty in **abstaining from using** the Internet in your free time? |
| Y | N | 4) | Do you feel **restless, agitated** and **anxious** if you are offline? |
| Y | N | 5) | Have you used the internet **to mask** feelings of depression, guilt, anxiety or hopelessness? |
| Y | N | 6) | Have you tried, unsuccessfully, **to curtail** the amount of time you spend online? |
| Y | N | 7) | Have you **lied to** people close to you about the amount of time you spend online? |
| Y | N | 8) | Have either your real-life relationships (friends) or responsibilities (work, study) been **neglected** as a result of spending too much time on the internet? |

## Conclusions?

**A)** *Now, get ready to report the information you gathered and offer advice if necessary. Based on the client's answers above, fill in the following summary sheet.*

**Internet addictions Counselor's Conclusion**

No … addiction
mild … addiction
serious …

My client _____has (a) _____ internet _____.

*The evidence that makes me come to this conclusion is that my client shows the following*

*internet addiction related symptoms, for example, he/she _____*

Based on the questions

_____, he/she _____

_____, he/she _____, ect.

### Based on the above results, my three pieces of advice to my client are:

1) (abstain from) _____

_____

_____

2) (resist the/an/his/her urge to) _____

_____

_____

Use the collocations in parentheses to give advice.

3) (Overcome the/an/his/her urge to) _____

_____

_____

**B)** *Counselors will present their conclusions to the other counselors. sheet.*

# Peer Evaluation Form

Presenter's name: _____ Date: _____

Evaluator's name: _____

Evaluate your peers' speaking performance by checking (✓) the option that best matches your opinion. Provide some comments in the given spaces.

**Scale:**     1 = agree          2 = somewhat agree          3 = disagree

| Presenters | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Task | 1. Reported information about the *Yes* answers. | | | |
| | 2. Reported information about the *No* answers. | | | |
| | 3. Reported conclusions about his/her client's internet addiction issue. | | | |
| | 4. Gave his/her client advice of possible treatments based on his/her conclusions. | | | |
| Vocabulary Use | 5. Reported the survey findings using vocabulary utilized in the questions. | | | |
| Grammatical Accuracy | 6. Used correct collocations of **urge** and **abstain.** | | | |
| Pronunciation and intonation | 7. Spoke with clear pronunciation. | | | |
| | 8. Was easy to hear and understand. | | | |
| Fluency | 9. Spoke fluently all utterances. | | | |

1. Say two positive things about the presenter

   _____
   _____

2. What would you suggest the presenter for him/her to improve?

   _____
   _____
   _____

**Answer Key**

| Pre-Stage: Getting ready to listen | During Stage: Listening |
|---|---|
| *Creating a Purpose for Listening*<br>  ➢ Activity One: Answers will vary<br>  ➢ Activity Two: Prediction Task<br>    1) False<br>    2) True<br>    3) True<br>    4) False<br>    5) True<br>*Vocabulary Building Activity*<br>  ➢ Activity One: Key Words and phrases<br>    1. J<br>    2. I<br>    3. H<br>    4. G<br>    5. F<br>    6. E<br>    7. D<br>    8. C<br>    9. B<br>    10. A |   ➢ Activity One: Listening for details<br>  1) A<br>  2) C<br>  3) B<br>  4) C<br>  5) B<br>  6) B<br>  7) B<br>  8) C<br>  9) A<br>  ➢ Activity Two: Listening for main ideas<br><br>  10) B<br>  ➢ Activity Three: Revisiting the prediction task<br>  1) False<br>  2) True<br>  3) True<br>  4) True<br>  5) False<br>  6) True |

**After-Stage: Further Practice**

Activity One: Part one – Collocations patterns of URGE and ABSTAIN

| Verbs that often occur with URGE in the meaning of "*to experience*" | Determiners after the verbs | | Verb Form after URGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) feel<br>2) have | **Indefinite and definite articles**<br>the<br>an | URGE | |
| Verbs that often occur with URGE in the meaning of "to get rid of".<br><br>1) resist<br>2) overcome<br>3) fight<br>4) suppress | **Possessive Adjectives**<br>his<br>her | | Infinitive<br>To + verb |

**Activity One**: Part two – Collocations patterns of ABSTAIN
- Question 1: From (abstain from)
- Question 2: the verb after the preposition from are expressed in the -ing form (V + -ing)

**Activity two**: Part A and Part B – Answers will vary

**Speaking Task**: Role-play for two students
- Answers will vary (Presentations)

## Listening Script – Internet Addiction



Internet addiction was first recognized in 1996 by Dr. Kimberley Young. Her debut paper on the subject was entitled "Internet Addiction: The Emergence of a New Disorder" and was presented at the American Psychological Association's annual conference in Toronto. Since those early days, there has been a mountain of further research, as internet addiction has taken more of a grip than even Dr. Young might have imagined.

So, what are the signs or symptoms of internet addiction? You might think that it would be difficult to separate reliance on the internet (which most of us would probably admit to) from internet addiction. This is true to some degree, but there are actually several clear markers that indicate a bona fide addiction.

These include an urge to increase the percentage of your day spent online over time, and an inability to curtail the amount of time you spend online, despite concerted efforts. You could be addicted to the internet if you feel restless, agitated and anxious if you are offline – or if you lie to people close to you about the amount of time you spend online.

Perhaps the most worrying sign of addiction is using the internet to mask feelings of depression, guilt, anxiety or hopelessness. Some internet addicts even reach the point of neglecting real-life relationships and responsibilities due to their online involvement. When compulsive internet use begins to interfere with daily life, it's time to seek help.

There are a range of treatment options, especially for teens, who represent the largest age group suffering from internet addiction. Some programs involve disconnecting completely and spending a long period of time in the wilderness away from technology. Other treatment options include individual, group and family therapy, offline recreation and artistic expression and even, interestingly, equine therapy! In Korea, young internet addicts have been encouraged to take up horseback riding to help guide them away from the lures of the online world.

Studies have shown that Korea is a hotbed of internet addiction in children, with 680,000 young addicts between the ages of 10 and 19 – and equine therapy has proven successful in creating a new, healthier passion. According to a doctor of child psychiatry at Samsung Medical Centre, the fact that riding and caring for horses involves both a physical activity and an emotional connection with a living being makes it especially effective in overcoming internet addiction.

Professionals generally agree that controlling internet use and setting healthy boundaries is better than abstaining from it entirely. The internet should enhance real life, not replace it. A few ways to limit your screen time include turning off instant notifications from email and social media, calling or visiting friends rather than interacting online, and setting (and sticking to!) time limits for your internet usage.

**Source:**
Oliveira, S (2014). *Espresso English*. Retrieved from https://www.espressoenglish.net/
Davies, Mark. (2016) *The corpus of contemporary American English.* Retrieved from
        http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/
Oliveira, S (2014). *Espresso English*. Retrieved from https://www.espressoenglish.net/

### III. Appendix B: Sample Writing Assessment

**Course:** Academic Writing I

**Midterm exam: Opinion Essay**

- **Level**: B1 (CEFR)
- **Time:** 2 academic hours
- **Bachelor's degree:** Sciences of Education in Teaching English as a Foreign Language
- **Expected Learning Outcomes:** Students will demonstrate their academic writing skills by wring an opinion essay.

**Essay Prompt and Directions**

Write a five-paragraph opinion essay to answer the following question. *Should Nicaraguan English teachers use Spanish with beginning English students? Why? Why not?* Do not forget to use the opinion essay structure we practice in class. Do not use contractions. Use simple, compound, complex, and compound complex sentences. Also, use some of the connectors we practice to make your essay more coherent and cohesive. You can use information from the articles you read in class related to this topic, but do not forget to cite it appropriately using the APA citation style.

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# Midterm exam: Opinion Essay

Student name: _____     Date: _____

Course: _____     Total score: ___/100

Instructor name: _____

## Opinion Essay Checklist
(Use this rubric for assessing students' wring skills)

**Thesis statements:    score: ____/10**

____ Thesis is clear
____ Thesis has point of view
____ Thesis answers essay question
____ Thesis has no errors

____ Thesis is surprising (interesting)
____ Every paragraph relates to thesis
____ Every paragraph supports thesis

**Organization/Cohesion:    score: ____/10**

____ Clear introduction, body, conclusion
____ Connections between paragraphs

____ Clear, logical order of paragraphs
____ All sentences connect to each other

**Introduction:    score: ____/10**

____ Hook sentence catches attention
____ No too general statements
____ No new or redundant information

____ Thesis statement is easy to find
____ Controlling ideas stated in the thesis

**Body:    score: ____/10**

____ Each paragraph has only one point
____ Logical, convincing points support thesis
____ Topic sentences in every paragraph
____ Topic sentences relate to thesis
____ Topic sentences have point of view
____ Sufficient supp. points in each para.
____ Supporting points are in logical order
____ Source information is introduced
____ Use of specific details as support

____ Support is explained/analyzed
____ Balanced source info and own ideas
____ Each paragraph explains "why/how"
____ Specific explanations
____ No repetition of ideas
____ No irrelevant ideas or information
____ Appropriate concluding sentences
____ Each para. proves its topic sentence
____ Source information is integrated

**Conclusion:    score: ____/10**

____ Connects to last body paragraph
____ Summarizes thesis and main points
____ Enough background info about topic

____ Shows importance of topic
____ Effective closing statement ("wow")

Other comments:
_____
_____
_____

**Adapted from**: Academic writing guide: A step-by-step guide to writing academic papers by Anne Whitaker (2010).

VITA

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Angel María Dávila

E-mail: mangeld79@fulbrightmail.org

University of the Autonomous Regions of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast
High School English as a Foreign Language Teacher, 2004

Martin Lutero University
Bachelor of Science of Education in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, 2005

University of the Autonomous Regions of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast
Master of Sciences of Education in Teaching at University Level, 2011

Southern Illinois University Carbondale, the United States of America
Masters of Art in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and Applied Linguistics, 2013

Special Honors and Awards:

*YUELI Scholarship*, York University English Language Institute, Canada, 2007
*SUMMA CUM LAUDE*, M.S.Ed. in Teaching at University Level, URACCAN University, 2011
*Fulbright Grant*, Fulbright Faculty Development Program, LASPAU, 2011-2013
*The Dissertation Research Assistantship Award*, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 2016-2017

Dissertation Title:

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Major Professor:  Dr. D. John McIntyre

Publications:

Dávila, A. M. (2018). Pronunciation acquisition of the inflectional morpheme –ed in English by Nicaraguan Spanish Speakers. *Open Science Journal*, *3(1)*, 1-22.

Dávila, A. M. (2013). Spanish speakers' reading production of English past tense inflectional morpheme -ed. (Order No. 1548898, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale). *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses,* 60. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1475221589?accountid=13864. (1475221589).

Dávila, A. M. (2012). Pertinencia del currículo para la enseñanza del idioma inglés en la licenciatura en Administración de Empresas. *Ciencia E Interculturalidad, 11*(2)*,* 47-59.