Narrating the temporalities, localities, and socialities of future English teachers' professional identities

María Cristina Sarasa, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata[*]
Daniela Solís, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata

ABSTRACT

This research article explores the storied construction of future teachers' professional identity as expressed in field texts including multiple narratives and journal entries co-composed with ten students at an EL teacher education program in an Argentinean state university. Its rationale is grounded in a narrative view of identity. Its methodology is that of narrative inquiry, which studies experience as a narrated phenomenon. By narratively analyzing the collected field texts, our inquiry thematizes the process of becoming an English teacher within this initial teacher education program in the light of the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry: temporality, sociality and locality. Emerging themes are resignified considering pertinent literature to suggest implications for local university EL teacher education.
Keywords: EL teacher education; narrative identity; temporality; locality; sociality

RESUMEN

Esta investigación aborda la construcción narrada de la identidad profesional de futuros docentes, expresada en textos de campo que incluyen múltiples narrativas y entradas de diario co-compuestas con diez estudiantes de profesorado de inglés de una universidad nacional argentina. La investigación se inscribe en una visión narrativa de la identidad. Su metodología es la indagación narrativa, la cual estudia la experiencia como fenómeno narrado. Al analizar narrativamente los textos de campo recogidos, nuestra investigación tematiza el proceso de convertirse en docentes de inglés durante los primeros años del profesorado a la luz de los tres lugares comunes de la indagación narrativa: temporalidad, socialidad y localidad. Los temas emergentes se resignifican considerando la literatura pertinente para sugerir implicaciones para la formación del profesorado de inglés universitario local.
Palabras clave: formación docente inglés; identidad narrativa, temporalidad; localidad; socialidad

_____
* Corresponding author, e-mail: mcsarasa@hotmail.com

IN SPANISH-SPEAKING South America, EL teacher education programs have become relevant areas for studying prospective teachers' identity construction processes (Barahona, 2016; Renart & Banegas, 2013). The current research is part of a larger narrative inquiry whose main objective was to interpret these identity construction processes of future teachers of English at an Argentinean state university. Its central question revolved around the query: how do these students narrate their negotiation of their becoming teachers within the temporalities, socialities, and localities of their EL teacher education program? The research conceptual framework is grounded in a narrative view of identity (Clandinin, Cave, & Cave, 2011). The study implements narrative inquiry as its methodology (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Participants were originally ten sophomores, who then became juniors, attending two courses within an EL teacher education program at an Argentinean state university. Their life narratives were gathered in the form of in-class field texts (Clandinin & Caine, 2013) and at-home reflective journal entries and narratives (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014). Using these texts –entries and narratives— the students and the authors co-composed personal identity narratives emplotted thematically (Ricoeur, 2004). This paper focuses on temporality, sociality, and locality —the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, Pushor & Orr, 2007)— as expressed in these undergraduates' stories. Emerging themes shed light on how the students were immersed in a process of *becoming* teachers, negotiating their (future) professional identities as they learned how to teach (Hasinoff & Mandzuk, 2005). Our narrative analysis of the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry reveals participants' temporal negotiations, their resilience, and their social construction of knowledge during their learning processes. In this way, our paper foregrounds voices from an under-researched geographical area (Nieto Cruz & Cárdenas, 2015) and contributes to existing studies (e.g. Banegas, 2017; Costa & Norton, 2017; Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Norton, 2013; Varghese, Motha, Trent, Park, & Reeves, 2016) by narrating (future) teachers' construction of their narrative identities within the temporalities, socialities, and localities of their teacher education program.

Conceptual Framework

To develop our narrative inquiry, we need to explore briefly the concepts that illuminated our research. We can begin by saying that ELT first expressed its concern with teachers' and learners' identity with *TESOL Quarterly's* publication of its monograph issue in 1997. Its editor considered identity as the ways in which we grasp our "relationship to the world," building it temporarily and spatially while anticipating future potentialities (Norton, 1997, p. 410). Identities help us understand that, when teachers and students use language, they are (re)organizing, constructing, and negotiating "a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world" (Norton, 2013, p. 4). Shortly afterwards, and taking this definition as a starting point, Bonny Norton's (2000, re-edited 2013) groundbreaking work firmly placed her poststructuralist study of teachers' and learners' identity in the fields of ELT and ELL,

relating it to the sociological constructs of *power* and *investment* interwoven with the notions of ethnic membership, gender, and social class. The author has lately resignified *investment* as connected not simply to identity but also to ideology and capitals (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

Within EL teacher education, identity construction processes have been addressed by researchers and experts (Banegas, 2017; Johnson & Golombek, 2002, 2011). They have encouraged educators to center on praxis rather than dichotomize theory vs. practice; legitimize teachers' personal practical knowledge as part of, and deeply embedded in, their processes of identity construction and negotiation; review the concrete, physical, and virtual, digital sites and confines of teacher education and development; and engage in the recurring processes of living, teaching, learning to teach, teaching to learn, and teaching to teach (Johnson, 2006).

From its early beginnings, the exploration of identity in the domain of EL teacher identity has thrived, with research journals devoting specialized issues to its study. For example, at the time of revising the state of the art for our conceptual framework, we found two special publications on the topic. In the introduction to the *TESOL Quarterly* issue on language teacher identity, the editors (Varghese, Motha, Trent, Park, & Reeves, 2016) acknowledge its place within research, teaching, and policies while supporting its value for treading new paths in teacher education and development. We find that the paper "Language teacher–researcher identity negotiation: An ecological perspective" (Edwards & Burns, 2016) is particularly relevant to our inquiry since it stresses the negotiated, co-composed, and co-constructed nature of teacher identity, inscribing it in an ecological perspective which we can relate to the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Huber, 2010) developed below. Subsequently, in the introduction to the *Modern Language Journal*'s Supplement on "Transdisciplinarity and language teacher identity," its editors (Costa & Norton, 2017) relate EL teacher education to the development of good language teachers. These authors follow the pivotal, also recent, paper by the Douglas Fir Group (2016) proposing "A Transdisciplinary framework for SLA in a Multilingual World." It views language teaching and learning as involving identity work at socio-political, institutional, and personal levels which can be explored by thematic dialogues beyond disciplinary boundaries.

These conceptualizations are, in turn, related to narrative inquiry into teacher education as their founders Connelly and Clandinin originally conceived it (1990). These narrative inquirers define teachers' identities as the narrated compositions of their lives (Clandinin, Cave, & Cave, 2011) or "stories to live by" (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009, p. 141). In other words, narrative identity is a story of the self that has been internalized and is constantly developing. It includes the recreated past and the envisioned future, which are woven into a relatively articulate account to illuminate personal existences with some harmony, determination, and sense (McAdams & Pals, 2006). When we think of "life as a

story," we envisage our past, our present, and our future because we ultimately "live stories" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994, pp. 149-150).

Narrative inquiry studies identity alongside its three commonplaces. The first is temporality, i.e. experiential, lived, past-present-future continuity and transition. The second is sociality, i.e. interpersonal, relational, interactions comprising the co-protagonists and co-authors of participants' lives. The third is locality, i.e. concrete sites and boundaries for socialities and temporalities (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). These commonplaces underpin four assumptions. The first imagines teacher education as a life-long project. The second views it in historical terms. The third considers it a relational process while the fourth regards it as a coherent, progressive, whole (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994). In turn, these notions envisage six metaphors for teachers' lives and education. The first conceives of existence as "a story we live." The second draws on Dewey (1998/1938) to visualize education as self-growth related to the very notion of inquiry. The third encompasses meaning-making through stories. The fourth suggests that, when teachers understand their own education stories, they understand their students'. The fifth defines teacher education as the process of "learning to tell" teachers' and students' "educational stories." The sixth outlines teacher education as a constant dialogue with the three commonplaces, with groups, with theories, with research, and with practices. These conversations involve "tellings and retellings" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994, pp. 149-150).

In turn, specific narrative inquiry into EL teachers' identity has coined the concept of narrative knowledging (Barkhuizen, 2011), which is relevant both to this conceptual framework and to our research design below. It designates the construction of meaning and knowledge as well as the learning processes that occur while engaging in narrative inquiry and analyzing stories precisely in a narrative form. At present, the generation of narrative knowledging in EL teacher identity explores the storied composition of teachers' lives alongside three lines —i.e. actors, settings, and chronology (Archaize, 2016, 2017)— akin to the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry.

Research Design

Our research adopts the qualitative paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), while its methodology is that of narrative inquiry as founded by Connelly and Clandinin (1990). It comprises the ontological and epistemological analysis of experience conceived as story. In other words, narrative inquiry regards the telling and retelling of experiences as phenomena under study (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

The current paper is part of a larger narrative inquiry into the development of pre-service EL teachers' identity. The research participants were ten sophomores and juniors who attended two courses within an EL initial teacher education program at an Argentinean state university. One sophomore course taught advanced EL communication. The subsequent junior course taught history of England and the USA from the 18th to the 20th centuries.

Students chose the following assumed names: Alegra, Cas, Gabriela, Haven, Jazmín, Lily, Mago, Mariana, Marilyn, and Rusa. We will introduce them in the following section, before starting our narrative thematizations of the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry.

Participants' in-class oral —and at-home written— narratives were gathered during the second semesters of 2014, 2015, or 2016 in the sophomore course while at-home journal writing took place through the first semester of 2016 in the junior course. All classes where the narratives were gathered were taught exclusively in English. Class sessions in the advanced EL Communication course were led by an assistant professor in 2014 and observed by the first author as full professor. This same author personally led the 2015-2016 sessions. Both the full and the assistant professors were accompanied by teaching assistants. The History-classes, where students were assigned written questions for their reflective journals, were led by a lecturer, who was in turn accompanied by the second author as student-teacher.

The narrative instruments (re)designed for collecting in-class oral and at-home written field texts (Clandinin & Caine, 2013) were based on those currently used by life-story/identity composition interviews (McAdams, 2008); narrative inquiry into teacher education (Clandinin, Steeves, & Chung, 2008); journal writing practices in ELT and ELL narrative inquiry (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014); and textual intervention procedures for adapting narratives (Pope, 1995). During the second semesters of 2014, 2015, and 2016, in the EL Communication course, we retrieved first in-class oral, and then home-written, narratives about the following topics concerning participants' own lives: stories read, watched, and listened to; primary, secondary, and university educational and linguistic biographies; greatest teachers and real-life heroes; biggest life challenges overcome; identity essays; and a memory box activity including an object representing a life turning-point. During the first semester of 2016, in the History course, students engaged in reflective journal writing at home.

Since we are EL program faculty members, we followed two dimensions of ethics indicated for qualitative research (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). The first was procedural: we requested and obtained students' informed consent, renewing it after concluding field work. Participants' anonymity was guaranteed when they selected their above-mentioned pseudonyms. The second ethical dimension was relational (Clandinin & Murphy, 2009) based on the principles of care, attention, and commitment towards undergraduates throughout the inquiry. It also involved rendering all procedures transparent while avoiding excessive power asymmetries or the infliction of undue discomfort on students.

After the narratives and journals were gathered, each student and the two authors working together co-composed and authored ten personal identity narratives consisting of the chronological and thematic emplotment (Ricoeur, 2004) of the in-class oral and at-home written field texts. In this way, students' oral and written stories were articulated, interwoven, within a single, running, narrative text involving the ten future teachers'

personal contributions (Creswell, 2007, 2012). The first part of our narrative thematizations includes an extremely abridged version of those lengthier accounts. The second part retells the temporalities, localities, and socialities arising from these co-authored stories (Barkhuizen, 2011, 2016, 2017). Participants' own voices are reflected by quoting extracts taken from their co-composed narratives (which already incorporated the in-class oral and home-written stories and journal entries as field texts).

In agreement with the principles of narrative inquiry, these co-authored retellings involve narrative as an ontology—i.e. a narrative way of being and becoming—and as an epistemology—i.e. a narrative way of knowing about teacher identity (Barkhuizen, 2011, 2016, 2017; Bruner, 1991; Clandinin & Murphy, 2009). Thus, the two authors' and student participants' co-composing of the latter's original stories becomes a cooperative process during which they co-construct and interpret together all narrated experiences. Consequently, our narrative analysis involves the ways in which we, authors and student participants have co-emplotted accounts and negotiated viewpoints and meanings (Cortazzi, 2001). Narrative co-composition and analysis are underpinned by the concept of crystallization, "which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 963). In our paper, this process by which the narrative meanings are metaphorically refracted and dispersed through both the authors' and undergraduate participants' prisms includes all their authorial voices. In the Discussion, we establish their own dialogue between their narrative thematizations, their interpretations, and relevant literature.

Narrative Thematizations

Participants' identity narratives

As stated above, we present here a shortened version of the identity narratives co-composed with each of the ten students. In this way, we not only narrate their emerging professional identities but also introduce them to our readers.

Alegra was born in a small town in 1994. She chose her name because she feels she is a "cheerful woman, a dreamer, who has a deep understanding of herself. She is kind and charismatic, she shares everything she gets and everything she has." She enjoys spending time with her friends, her boyfriend, and her family, who are very important in her life. She entered the English Teacher Education Program (ETEP) in 2012 after studying English for nine years at a private institute. She wanted to be an educator "to see a better Argentina and contribute to the task of improving the educational system," becoming a teacher who cares about teaching English and her students' whole development. She has now graduated.

Cas was born in a suburb to the north of the federal district in 1993. Her name is short for Cassiel, an archangel from her favorite series *Supernatural*. She is an avid reader, a

music fan, and a creative writer whose schooling included wide-ranging experiences in bilingual private institutions and religious and state schools. Cas said that when she entered the ETEP in 2012 she did not trust public education: "after my disappointing experiences at public schools, I was rather skeptic about going to a public university…. However, I was pleasantly surprised and I realized that public schools and universities were worlds apart." As she loves English, she cherishes the idea of sharing her passion and her knowledge in the EL classroom. At present, she is a junior student.

Gabriela was born locally in 1995. Her name honors her sister's, whom she considers "my hero and my example". She started taking private lessons in English at the age of six. She entered the ETEP in 2013, and is now in her junior year. As regards her decision to enter the program, Gabriela said: "I signed up in this course to know what it is about and I fell in love with it." Thus, she now feels certain that she has made the right choice when she decided to become a teacher. Although she has been through very rough times at university she will continue trying and eventually improving, because some professors have helped her realize that she can "do it."

Haven was born in a small provincial town in 1994. Her pseudonym is an adaptation of Heaven from her favorite *Twilight* saga: "It is an earthlier name and it relates more to a person.... Haven is also my 'safe haven'." She took private English lessons in three different institutes since the age of six. In addition, her relationship with the language is mediated by her love of music and literature as well as by her Internet friends, for whom and with whom she writes stories. Presently a junior student, Haven started the ETEP in 2012 because she explained that "I like languages and I want to dedicate my life, for the most part, to them [while] I also like teaching."

Jazmín was born locally in 1993. Her name originates in the flower's in Spanish and in her grandmother's. This shows how important her family is to her. Moreover, Jazmin considers her parents as her real-life heroes. She studied English at a private institute for six years before entering the ETEP in 2011. She was motivated by her father, who made her listen to music in this language and awoke her interest in "finding out the meaning of lyrics and the pronunciation of certain sounds." She is currently a junior student. Even if she acknowledges that in the ETTP she has been through difficult times, Jazmin seems to be sure that, with hard work and passion, she will succeed.

Lily was born locally in 1994. Her name is that of Harry Potter's mother, whose books she loves. She learned English at a private school. As a teenager, she started learning alone through "music, TV shows, and movies." Since they were all in English, she explained that: "I felt that I was missing out on some aspects... what I was taught at school did not seem enough." Although she wanted to study musical theater in the capital she refused to leave home. She began the ETEP in 2012. Currently a junior student, "I am happy with who I am... I will continue to move forward and, step by step, I will become the person I dream of being, no matter how long it takes."

Mago (Wizard) was born in 1990 in Alegra's town. He chose his name since he felt it embodied "my love for fantastic literature and magic. It also represents my favorite class in role games." His passion for literature is evident: when he was seventeen, he wrote a novel that was "a much-needed healing process" since he underwent a deep depression due to personal and family problems. In 2011, he decided to enter the ETEP. He never studied English at an institute before entering the program: "I was happy with learning through entertainment because I felt I had a purpose for that". He taught himself English playing video games, listening to music, and watching series. He is now a junior student.

Mariana was born locally in 1994. Her pseudonym is her second name, which she chose simply because "I never use it." In first grade at school she started her English and Italian classes. She emphasizes the importance that her mother has had in her life as a role model. When she was ten, her mother suggested she begin studying English at a private institute. Mariana entered the ETEP, with some reservations, in 2012. She claimed that she even "had another option in mind in case I did not like" the program. It was in her sophomore year, when she taught her first practicums, that she became certain about her decision to become a teacher. She is currently a junior student.

Marilyn was born locally in 1992. Her pseudonym alludes to Marilyn Monroe, who said that "a wise girl kisses but doesn't love, listens but doesn't believe, and leaves before she is left." She always loved music and films in English but it was when she started private lessons at an institute at twelve that she really started enjoying learning about all aspects of the language. The institute's principal has made a lasting impression on her: "I realized that I wanted to become a teacher and be like Laura. I dreamt of working at school, sharing my knowledge and being a caring teacher." Marilyn entered the ETEP in 2010. Combining her studies with different work-related activities, she remains a junior student.

Rusa (Russian) was born locally in 1991. Because she is fair-haired and blue-eyed her family have always called her *Rusa*. She began private lessons at nine to help her with English at school. One of her tutor's classes were "dynamic… I never got bored, which I think is one of the most significant aspects I would like to… achieve as a future teacher. My tutor made me… love English, which I had not enjoyed at school." With this role model in mind, she started the ETEP in 2010. Although her freshman year was trying, since "I missed school, my friends, and it was difficult to adapt to the new rhythm," she has found her way as a senior student.

The three commonplaces of initial teacher education

Next, by foregrounding extracts from students' narratives and journal entries, we begin to inscribe the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry —defined in our conceptual framework (Clandinin, 2006; Clandinin & Huber, 2010; Clandinin, Pushor & Orr, 2007) — in our university EL teacher education program. This program constitutes a site where temporality,

locality, and sociality are interconnected and where these students struggle to negotiate what the process of becoming teachers means to them.

The first commonplace, i.e. *temporality*, concerns the experiential continuum past-present-future with a focus on the meanings participants co-constructed vis-à-vis temporality, understood as their own inner, experiential, lived time (Ricoeur, 2004). It contrasts with the external, prescribed schedule for courses (Kyndt, Berghmans, Dochy, & Bulckens, 2014).

To begin with, lived time at university can turn into a source of anxiety. Gabriela indicated that "my only fear is lacking time" to study. Marilyn was overwhelmed when she missed the first History lecture, exclaiming in her journal "Oh my…! I couldn't attend Cristina's first class last Monday… I knew I would be lost [during the second class]!" This apprehension can be mingled with anticipation that everything will eventually turn out for the best. Haven explained that "I am the kind of person that needs to be given time to feel prepared before jumping into the 'pool' so I hope that these four months will help me build up confidence to go after my dreams [being a student assistant in the preceding history course]."

In the same vein, the initial temporal anxiety became part of a struggle crowned by victory, when Rusa explained that:

> I felt identified with them [classmates] when they told us that they had gone through a crisis the day before we presented our works. However, after many hours of work, once we presented our topics, I think that all of us enjoyed it and found the other topics really interesting and clearly explained.

Likewise, Mago experienced a deep sense of accomplishment when he confessed that:

> It feels good to actually come on top when you give your all. As… tiredness keeps piling up…, it becomes harder and harder to keep pushing myself. I believe the strength I find in these challenges will shape me into a person capable of anything.

Cas summed up her trajectory from disquiet to attainment. She wrote that "time has been one of the biggest, of not the biggest, challenges we have faced… Keeping a careful balance and doing everything efficiently has proved difficult but commitment on both parts has been key to our success."

Other students are aware of time as a resource to be administered carefully according to their own principles. Alegra always plans in advance, so she admitted that "I try to keep ahead of the schedule so as not to lose track with the readings." Next, Jazmín tries to balance the academic and the personal, revealing that "I don't want to be stressed out about university; I want to take my time for each subject and enjoy the ride. That's why I'm only taking two subjects this semester." Mariana captured the ephemeral value of personal time when she reflected on how:

It is hard to choose our 'best moments' at college because we live very intensely… one day we take a midterm and two days later we sit for another one; we finish one course and start thinking strategically which course to attend the following semester.

Finally, Lily provided her meaning of time with words ringing with Dewey's notion on the continuity of experience (1998/1938). She indicated that:

I believe that experience is the best way to learn, and that every assignment can set a new challenge and a precedent. We push ourselves beyond what we are and what we can do today, and no matter the result, we have something to look back on next time. I learned that baby steps can take you farther that just one leap.

In this way, temporality revealed the meanings participants co-negotiated.

Students narrated their anxiety and their efforts to overcome it, the value of personal and academic time as a resource, and the nature of the continuity of experience.

The second commonplace is *locality*. Our teacher education program constitutes a terrain where students construct different types of knowledge and display resilience (Day, C., Stobart, Sammons, Kington, Gu, Q., Smees & Mujtaba, 2006) while struggling to become teachers.

Some narratives dwell on obstacles encountered during the freshman year and the ways in which they were overcome. This was Rusa's experience until she managed to construct her sense of becoming an English teacher:

My first year was difficult, since I missed school, my friends, and it was difficult to adapt to the new rhythm of study. However, as time went by, I started to find the subjects more interesting and enjoyable. I will never forget a piece of advice a teacher gave to some classmates and me during our first year at University. She told us that throughout this course of study we were going to encounter many obstacles and that she was sure we were going to be able to overcome them… After going through my first teaching experiences, I realized that I really enjoy teaching. I confirmed that… I am on the right track.

For her part, Jazmín made a faster transition from her initial apprehensions towards building self-confidence:

I enrolled at the English Teacher Training Course… At the beginning of the semester I was terrified about exams. I took me a few weeks to get used to university life. After that, I think I did pretty well the following years. I truly enjoyed most of the classes.

Next, Mago wrote about his shortcomings when he entered the program. He claimed he had conquered them through perseverance:

When I started this course of study… I realized how lacking in speaking abilities I was. I was not going to let my deficiency be my downfall. I practiced… as at every waking moment. I recorded myself… trying to find out the most common mistakes I had made; I watched movies and series paying attention not only to the meaning of what they were saying but also to *how* they expressed it. With a lot of time and dedication I was able to achieve a certain command of the language.

The following narrative explains how Marilyn negotiated her own trajectory. When "I took four courses that were highly demanding… I ended up dropping college and started looking for other [tertiary] institutions, when I asked myself why I wouldn't be able to get a [state] university degree." She determinedly returned and did very well the next year. Likewise, Cas discerned the value of Argentinean state university education, which she had underestimated because of poor experiences in state high schools:

I realized that public schools and universities were worlds apart. I cannot say I have enjoyed every single course I have taken, but I can certainly claim that they have all been useful. The constant evaluation through oral presentations and exams has made me become more relaxed when speaking in public, and I believe it is beneficial in both academic and non-academic contexts. The daily debates that take place during class are constant invitations to reflect and reevaluate ourselves… I am motivated by the passion that drives most of the teachers in the course and their apparently endless desire to keep on researching and learning.

Other narratives considered the EL teacher education program as a locality for knowledge construction. Sometimes this knowledge is disciplinary and formal. This is Mariana's insight when she remarked that:

On many occasions not knowing what happened in a certain period of time affected my performance in other subjects… During this course, I hope to learn the necessary contents… and to be able to relate them with one another as well as to other non-academic stuff such as novels [taught in other courses or read for pleasure], TV series, or the news.

Along these lines, Haven wrote a poem on the first page of her journal from which we quote the title and opening verses.

'Welcome to the Historical Circux Redux'
The banner just receives (*me*)
An eager, willing, and dutiful subject
Of the *arts innumerable*
And *knowledge inconsumable*
'Be ready to learn, my dear,

…'

The knowledge that the students wish to construct, or have been constructing, is not always content-oriented but relates to the best methods for carrying out that process. Alegra, who graduated in December 2016, evaluated her trajectory in the following way:

> In previous years, I lacked a lot of knowledge. I thought of myself as a very cultivated person. But I discovered that I knew very little!! What a shame! Yet, all these four to five years I spent at university have opened up my mind. It's incredible how much I've learnt! Today, I can say that I have experienced a cultural growth and that I've gained a lot of strategies. I've developed a lot of strategies to cope with studying, reading, and whatever I need for college.

Not all knowledge is formal. Sometimes it is more implicit (Jackson, 1999) as when Lily reached the conclusion that:

> This subject has helped me build my self-confidence. In the past, I was so unsure every time I handed in an assignment or had an exam. Now, at least for [this subject], I know that I know. I *know* that I can do it and trust myself. In the end, I think that's one of the best things I can take from a subject, I have never been very confident. Today, I can say I am.

Finally, Gabriela placed some of the responsibilities for constructing knowledge on teachers' shoulders. She expressed veiled disapproval when she wrote that:

> Teachers should allow and prepare students to *think* and to form strong and well-founded opinions. Whatever ideal they agree with, they should be conscious of its characteristics. Their readings of reality, society, and the world should be *informed*, as well as their criticisms. (her emphasis)

In this manner, participants disclosed their complex senses of the local EL teacher education locality. It is a public site where obstacles need to be surmounted, shortcomings overcome, and knowledge constructed mostly by students but also involving teachers' obligations.

The third and last commonplace is *sociality*. We will direct our attention mostly to these students' peers as co-authors and 'co-stars', or co-protagonists (McAdams, 2013), in the performances of their partners' journeys towards becoming English teachers.

Many participants underscored the importance of working with their partners. It allowed them to mitigate their distress, as was Lily's case when she described how after "the first assignment… a period of fear began. I was on the edge of a very scary fall. Luckily, I had a really good partner [Cas] working with. That was the moment we realized how well we worked together." For Mariana, peer and group work was, on the one hand, part of her teacher education and, on the other, crucial sustenance. She reflected that "I realized that I

took working in groups for granted and that it would be extremely hard to do these assignments on our own."

Other participants considered the affective and academic bonds shared with peers. Marilyn wrote that "I had to do assignment one with [Jazmín]. We always laugh at the fact that we talk more with each other than with our boyfriends. We generally communicate through WhatsApp and through the chat of Google docs." Jazmín explained that "I like to study by myself and make my own summaries, but I'm also a social student, that is, I like meeting with another student and going through the different topics. I am usually the one who likes explaining the topic." Gabriela was happy because "last year I found a great classmate to work with [Mago]. I have never been so connected with someone when it comes to doing assignments before." Rusa admitted that "as regards assignments, I think that S[…] and I complement each other very well. As we are friends, we feel really confident to work with each other on a team… Moreover, S[…] is a great editor, so working together is great."

Next, students reflected on the opportunities that classes offer for learning, unlearning, and deterring. In the first instance, Cas alluded to the social construction of knowledge: "what I liked the most about hearing about my peers' research was learning how different and yet how connected our topics are… It was nice to see that… teamwork can be extremely valuable when people compromise and commit." In the second instance, Mago 'removed' knowledge from an experience when he admitted that "I am no one to criticize my peers because I'm far from perfect. But that presentation was a good learning experience of what not to do when you are discussing a topic with a whole class." In the third instance, during her senior year, Alegra stated that she hoped to overcome her fears: "I would like to be able to speak openly and participate in class without being afraid of what my classmates would think of my mistakes or questions."

Lastly, other co-protagonists of students' trajectories may be found not in college, but at home. Haven wondered: "[Do] I carry my father's education on my back? I don't like making mistakes... I guess I don't like disappointing the people I admire; I fear not being up to expectations." In her case, she reached outside university to find partners in her journey towards becoming.

This thematization of the sociality of EL teacher education mostly includes students' peers. During these interpersonal exchanges, knowledge concerning what to (un)do and what to avoid is co-constructed and thus shared.

Discussion

We now re-examine our research question concerning how participants narrate their negotiation of becoming teachers within the temporalities, socialities, and localities of their university EL teacher education program. Our analysis is thematic since it focuses mostly on

narratives' content (Riessman, 1993) and on the ways in which it can converse with relevant literature.

The inner, lived —*Ricoeurian*— temporality (Ricoeur, 2004) of students' experiences overrides its external, mandated, counterpart in the local program's courses (Camilloni, 2001; Kyndt, Berghmans, Dochy, & Bulckens, 2014). Lived academic time could be a source of private *fear*, *loss*, or uneasiness tinged with hope as Gabriela's and Haven's and Marilyn's words evinced. In turn, Mago, Cas, and Rusa experienced the management of time as an epic struggle (McAdams & Pals, 2006), indicating *crises* or *challenges* they felt proud of overcoming not only in action but through classroom (re)tellings. Next, Mariana, Jazmín, and Alegra felt that time is a resource akin to Norton's (2013) category of investment—*keeping ahead of the schedule* (Alegra), *taking only two subjects* to prevent stress (Gabriela) and *thinking strategically* about semester schedules (Mariana). The co-lived nature of this time was suggested in several narratives by the use of the first-person plural. Finally, Lily captured the Deweyan notion (1998/1938) of the past-present-future continuity of experience, understood not merely as action but as thinking, reflecting, reconstructing, and re-living: experiences *set new challenges and precedents*.

Locality involves the university as a physical, public space and the EL teacher education program as an academic territory. Both constitute sites where participants engage in heroic combats to stay in college and eventually succeed in becoming teachers, after surmounting obstacles. This inclemency of university and program terrains has been reported for Argentinean state universities (Carli, 2012). These future teachers have navigated their identities through these harsh conditions. The most exacting segments of the journey were the initial ones, where Rusa missed her *high school friends* and former *rhythm of study*; Jazmín was *terrified about exams*; Mago realized that his *deficiencies* could lead to his *downfall*; and Marilyn *ended up dropping out*. Inversely, Cas found that her former, disappointing, state *high school* experiences *were worlds apart* from the more rewarding ones offered by the state university, which Marilyn also valued at the expense of tertiary *institutions*. Rusa and Cas found professors' support and guidance, while Mago and Marilyn narrated the development of their resilience (Day, C., Stobart, Sammons, Kington, Gu, Q., Smees & Mujtaba, 2006).

The second connotation of locality regards the co-construction of knowledge. One type of knowledge has been traditionally categorized as exclusively 'content' (Shulman, 1986) — e.g. Mariana expressed her *hopes to learn the necessary contents* to *integrate* and *relate them to other non-academic stuff*. Haven was eager to *learn knowledge inconsumable*; Alegra has experienced *cultural growth*. Content knowledge is not simply subject matter. It can take the strategic form that allowed Alegra to *cope with studying, reading, and whatever* she *needed for college*. Cas and Gabriela indicated that teachers also build knowledge. The former noticed the *passion that drives most of the teachers* together with *their desire to keep on researching and learning* contents. The latter indicated the category of 'pedagogical

content knowledge' in two forms: a principled one, since professors' interpretations should be *informed*, and a normative one because it is their moral duty *to prepare students to think.* Another type of co-constructed knowledge is 'personal practical knowledge' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988), emerging from the thoughtful and continuous experience Lily defined. She identified the knowledge gained in a subject as the *capacity to build* her *self-confidence*, to *know that she knows* and to *trust* herself.

As regards sociality, we have studied our students' narratives where they develop their identities in dialogue with the co-protagonists and co-authors (McAdams, 2013a) who accompany them alongside their itineraries towards becoming EL teachers. In this sense, the class can be considered as a reflective collaborative community (Stone Wiske, with Rennebohm Franz & Breit, 2006) where identities work together. A community is a group or people acknowledging and respecting similarities and differences, sharing a commitment to their wellbeing, and displaying trust. It is collaborative because it is supportive: Lily *worked together* with her *good partner;* Mariana found out *group work* was the only way to *do assignments*; Marilyn and Jazmín *talked online* and shared explanations; Gabriela felt academically *connected* to Mago; and Rusa found a *great editor* in her partner. Communities are also reflective because interactions have allowed participants to negotiate new meanings and to re-examine learning experiences. Cas pondered on the fact that group work and topics were *different* yet *connected*. Mago also deliberated, albeit on *what not to do* when *discussing a topic* before a *class*. For her part, Alegra considered an aspect that true communities must *not* exhibit, i.e. unkindness, when she hoped she would stop *being afraid of classmates'* opinions on her *mistakes or questions.* Finally, Haven pointed at the family as a learning group whose *expectations* could be both supportive and hindering.

Conclusion

The narratives we have gathered, co-constructed, and discussed allow us to understand how undergraduates (re)negotiate their (future) identities throughout their intricate academic journeys towards becoming EL teachers. Our research contributes to inquiries on EL teacher education identity development that have been held in other geographical locations (e.g. Costa & Norton, 2017; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Johnson & Golombek, 2011; Norton, 2013; Varghese, Motha, Trent, Park, & Reeves, 2016). We cannot help but contrast these continually, simultaneously shaping and shaped, processes alongside the route of becoming a teacher with the vocational model of training which presents the graduate as an adaptation to the expectations and directives of professors and supervisors who promote the acquisition of predetermined skills (Britzman, 2003).

The inscription of our narrative analysis in the three commonplaces of EL teacher education discloses temporalities, localities, and socialities where participants struggle to articulate and negotiate the time-based, spatial, and social meanings they have brought from home and school. Challenging a sequential, restricted, and isolating program for their

education, these participants display temporal resources, exhibit resilience, and engage in the social construction of knowledge. Their education thus becomes a lived trajectory, or life course, metaphorically alluded to by the Latin verb *currere* (Pinar, 1994) with the contingent times, places, and communities our narratives have endeavored to capture.

This inquiry has restricted itself to a small number of participants to probe into their identity compositions. It embraces a narrative definition of teacher identity with the concomitant ontology and epistemology of narrative inquiry, and it remains pertinent to EL teacher education practice and research. Our narrative thematizations of the three commonplaces of the local EL teacher education program indicate that our field should investigate in depth future teachers' identity construction trajectories from the beginning of their initial education. Thus, research should collect a great variety of field texts from larger cohorts of future teachers, and encourage practices to generate narrative knowledge within EL teacher education.

Our narrative inquiry carries implications for EL teachers and teacher educators in South America, where expressions from our 'Southern Cone' have remained mostly unheard in the specialized literature (Banegas, 2017; Barahona, 2016; Nieto Cruz & Cárdenas, 2015). In conclusion, this paper endeavored to foreground some of these voices by narrating (future) teachers' construction of their narrative identities within the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry as they pertain to their university education.

Acknowledgements

References

Banegas, D. L. (2017). Introduction. In D. L. Banegas (Ed.), *Initial English language teacher education: International perspectives on research, curriculum and practice* (pp. 1-11). London/New York: Bloomsbury.

Barahona, M. (2016). *English language teacher education in Chile: A cultural historical activity theory*. New York: Routledge.

Barkhuizen, G. (2011). Narrative knowledging in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly, 45*(3), 391-414.

Barkhuizen, G. (2016). A short story approach to analyzing teacher (imagined) identities over time. *TESOL Quarterly, 50*(3), 655-683.

Barkhuizen, G. (2017). Investigating language tutor social inclusion identities. The *Modern Language Journal, 101*(S1), 61-75.

Barkhuizen, G., Benson, P., & Chik, A. (2014). *Narrative inquiry in language teaching and learning research*. New York: Routledge.

Britzman, D. P. (2003). *Practice makes practice. A critical study of learning to teach.* Revised edition. New York: State University of New York Press.

Bruner, J. (1991). The narrative construction of reality. *Critical Inquiry, 18*(1), 1-21.

Camilloni, A. (2001). Modalidades y proyectos de cambio curricular. In *Aportes para el cambio curricular en Argentina 2001* (pp. 23-52). Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires.

Carli, S. (2012). *El estudiante universitario hacia una historia del presente de la educación pública*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI.

Clandinin, D. J., & Caine, V. (2013). Narrative inquiry. In A. A. Trainor & E. Graue (Eds.), *Reviewing qualitative research in the social sciences* (pp. 166-179). New York: Routledge.

Clandinin, D. J., Cave, M. T., & Cave, A. (2011). Narrative reflective practice in medical education for residents: composing shifting identities. *Advances in Medical Education and Practice, 2*, 1-7.

Clandinin, D. J., Downey, C.A., & Huber, J. (2009). Attending to changing landscapes: Shaping the interwoven identities of teachers and teacher educators. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 37*(2), 141-154.

Clandinin, D. J., & Huber, J. (2010). Narrative inquiry. In B. McGaw, E. Baker & P. P. Peterson (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (pp. 436-441). New York: Elsevier.

Clandinin, D.J., & Murphy, M.S. (2009). Comments on Coulter and Smith: Relational ontological commitments in narrative research. *Educational Researcher, 38*(8), 598-602.

Clandinin, D. J., Pushor, D., & Orr, A. M. (2007). Navigating sites for narrative inquiry. *Journal of Teacher Education, 58*(1), 21-35.

Clandinin, D. J., Steeves, P., & Chung, S. (2008). Creando espacios de investigación narrativa en la formación del profesorado. In L. Porta & M. C. Sarasa (Eds.), *Formación y desarrollo de la profesión docente en el profesorado: Las buenas prácticas y sus narrativas* (pp. 59-83). Mar del Plata: Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1988). *Teachers as curriculum planners: Narratives of experience*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1994). Telling teaching stories. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *21*(1), 145-158.

Cortazzi, M. (2001). Narrative analysis in ethnography. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 384-395). London: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research. Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research.* Boston: Pearson.

Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2015). Language, identity, and investment in the twenty-first century. In T. L. McCarty & S. May (Eds.), *Language policy and political issues in education* (pp. 1-15). Berlin: Springer International Publishing AG.

Day, C., Stobart, G., Sammons, P., Kington, A., Gu, Q., Smees, R., & Mujtaba, T. (2006). *Variations in teachers' work, lives and effectiveness* (Vol. 743). London: Department for Education and Skills.

Costa, P. I., & Norton, B. (2017). Introduction: Identity, transdisciplinarity, and the good language teacher. *Modern Language Journal, 101*(S1), 3-14.

Denzin, N. K. (2011/1989). *Interpretive interactionism.* A*pplied social research methods series. Volume 16.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction. The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). (pp. 1-32). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Dewey J. (1998/1938). *Experience and education.* Indianapolis, IN: Kappa Delta Pi.

Douglas Fir Group (2016). A transdisciplinary framework for SLA in a multilingual world. *Modern Language Journal, 100*(S1), 19-47.

Edwards, E., & Burns, A. (2016). Language teacher–researcher identity negotiation: An ecological perspective. *TESOL Quarterly, 50*(3), 735-745.

Guillemin, M., & Gillam, L. (2004). Ethics, reflexivity, and "ethically important moments" in research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 10*(2), 261-280.

Hasinoff, S., & Mandzuk, D. (2005). Bonding, bridging, and becoming a teacher: Student cohorts and teacher identity. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 51*(3), 231-245.

Jackson, P. W. (1999). *Enseñanzas implícitas.* Buenos Aires: Amorrortu.

Johnson, K. E. (2006). The sociocultural turn and its challenges for second language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly, 40*(1), 235-257.

Johnson, K. E. & Golombek, P. R. (2002). Inquiry into experience. Teachers' personal and professional growth. In K. E. Johnson & P. R. Golombek (Eds.), *Teachers' narrative inquiry as professional development* (pp. 1-14). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Johnson, K. E. & Golombek, P. R. (Eds.). (2011). *Research on second language teacher education. A sociocultural perspective on professional development.* New York: Routledge.

Kyndt, E., Berghmans, I., Dochy, F., & Bulckens, L. (2014). "Time is not enough." Workload in higher education: A student perspective. *Higher Education Research & Development, 33*(4), 684-698.

McAdams, D. P. (1996). Narrating the self in adulthood. In G. Kenyon, J. E. Birren, J-E. Ruth, J. J. F. Schroots & T. Svensson (Eds.), *Aging and biography: Explorations in adult development* (pp. 131-148). New York: Springer.

McAdams, D. P. (2008). *The life story interview.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern University.

McAdams, D. P. (2013). The psychological self as actor, agent, and author. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *8*(3), 272-295.

McAdams, D. P., & Pals, J. L. (2006). A new Big Five: Fundamental principles for an integrative science of personality. *American Psychologist*, *61*(3), 204-217.

Nieto Cruz, M. C., & Cárdenas, M. L. (2015). Editorial. Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 17(1), 7-9

Norton, B. (1997). Language, identity, and the ownership of English. TESOL Quarterly, 31(3), 409-429.

Norton, B. (2000). Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity and educational change. Harlow, Essex, UK: Pearson Education.

Norton, B. (2013). Identity and language learning. Extending the conversation (2nd ed.). Bristol-Buffalo-Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

Pinar, W.F. (1994). The method of 'Currere' (1975). *Counterpoints, 2*, 19-27.

Pope, R. (1995). *Textual intervention*. London: Routledge.

Renart, L., & Banegas, D. L. (Eds.). (2013). *Roots & routes in language education. Bi/multi/plurilingualism, interculturality and identity. Selected papers from the 38th FAAPI Conference*. Buenos Aires: APIBA.

Richardson, L., & E. A. St. Pierre (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research. Third edition* (pp. 959-978). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Riessman, C. K. (Ed.). (1993). *Narrative analysis* (Vol. 30). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Ricoeur, P. (2004). *Tiempo y narración I. Configuración del tiempo en el relato histórico.* Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI.

Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, *15*(2), 4-14.

Stone Wiske, M., Rennebohm Franz, K., & & Breit, L. (2006). *Enseñar para la comprensión con nuevas tecnologías*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.

Varghese, M. M., Motha, S., Trent, J., Park, G., & Reeves, J. (2016). Language teacher identity in multilingual settings. *TESOL Quarterly, 50*(3), 545-571.