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TESIS

PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHING METHODOLOGY THEY USE TO TEACH ENGLISH DURING THEIR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

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PRESENTA

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Abstract

In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), teachers' pedagogical knowledge and perceptions play a crucial role in the success of language teaching as they influence what and how they teach (Calabria, 1960; Cope & Ward, 2002). Nevertheless, little research about this topic has been done in Mexico (Ramírez, et al., 2023). For this reason, this study aims to explore pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methods and approaches they use to teach English and the factors that impact their choices. To accomplish such exploration, a qualitative case study was employed in a public university in Mexico, incorporating classroom observations forms and semi-structured interviews administered to three pre-service teachers. Interpretive analysis revealed three major findings. First, the majority of pre-service teachers are knowledgeable about the methods that they use. Second, participants expressed both positive and negative perceptions regarding the engagement and effectiveness of the methods. Lastly, pre-service teachers' methodological choices were found to be influenced by a range of factors, including the topic of the lesson, student characteristics, availability of resources and the teachers' own confidence and pedagogical knowledge. Implications include the integration of reflective practice and peer-feedback activities in teacher education programs to minimize mismatches between pre-service teachers' knowledge and practice.

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Chapter I Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In the field of language education, it has been suggested that teaching methods and approaches are at the core of English Language Teaching (Harmer, 2008; Kumaravadivelu, 1994; Richards & Renandya, 2002; Shulman, 1986). This statement has led numerous researchers to conclude that teachers' knowledge of methods and approaches is parallel to their effectiveness and the success of language teaching itself (Calabria, 1960; Park & Lee, 2006; Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009; Vélez-Rendón, 2002). Moreover, it is well known that teachers' methodological decisions are highly determined by the way they perceive different methods and approaches (Allahyar, Zarrinabadi & Reinders, 2022; Cope & Ward, 2002; Karanezi & Rapti, 2015). Nevertheless, perceptions tend to change with the experiences that people go through (Sinaga, 2017; Papadakis & Kalogiannakis, 2022). For this reason, researchers still aim to understand teachers' perceptions about different methods and approaches. That is why, some studies are discussed to exemplify researchers' efforts to understand teachers' perceptions about methods and approaches in the ELT field in the last decades.

Akramy, Habibzada and Hashemi (2023) conducted a study to explore teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Grammar-Translation Method in Afghanistan. By administering a questionnaire to 150 participants, the study revealed that teachers had positive perceptions of the Grammar-Translation Method. They claimed that teachers "considered GTM a very important method of teaching because it helped them teach grammar rules properly" (Akramy et al., 2023, p. 2). With similar results, Pohan, Andhini, Nopitasari and Levana (2016) research on teachers' perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching in Indonesia showed that teachers had

positive perceptions and wide knowledge of TBLT. However, a qualitative study carried out by Bal (2006) that aimed to evaluate teachers' perceptions and practices of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Turkey indicated that teachers were unfamiliar with the application of this approach in spite of having a good theoretical knowledge of it. In fact, he mentioned that all of his participants preferred to use the Grammar Translation method. In the same line, Zulu (2019) conducted a study to identify teachers' understanding and classroom application of CLT. The findings suggested that teachers had low to moderate understanding of said method. Moreover, most of them held negative perceptions of it. In contrast, Karim (2004) work on teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and expectations regarding CLT in Bangladesh provided evidence that teachers had deep understanding and positive perceptions about it.

While numerous studies have shown a notable relationship between teachers' perceptions, their understanding of teaching methods, and the methods they implement in their classroom, there are limitations in their studies that need to be addressed. For instance, Pohan et al., (2016) stated that to make sure of the truthfulness of teachers' understandings and perceptions, it is necessary to conduct classroom observations and deep interviews. Moreover, Karim (2004) suggests using different types of population. This is due to the fact that teachers' perceptions may be different depending on the context in which they live and work. Discrepancies in the results obtained from the studies discussed in the previous section regarding CLT suggest these differences in teachers' perceptions. In the next section, the rationale of the study is provided in light of the needs mentioned in previous studies.

1.2 Rationale of the study

As seen in the previous section, research carried out on teachers' perceptions of different methods point out that there is a correspondence between teachers' perceptions, teachers' knowledge about methods and the methods that they implement. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, the studies also present some limitations that need to be addressed regarding this topic to deepen the knowledge about it. Moreover, existing literature has provided evidence that teachers' decisions to use a certain method is not always linked to only perceptions or knowledge about methods, but also to contextual factors (Karim, 2004; Phipps & Borg, 2009). These contextual factors are discussed in the next chapter and include the characteristics of the learners, the learning environment, the curriculum and the resources.

In terms of teachers' knowledge about methods and approaches, initial teaching preparation plays a significant role in it by providing future teachers with pedagogical knowledge throughout the duration of the program (OECD, 2023; Dikdere, 2009). Moreover, initial teaching education also gives opportunities to manipulate that knowledge and obtain more through teaching practices (Banks, 2017). Therefore, it can be said that initial teacher preparation plays a significant role in the quality of prospective teachers (OECD, 2023; Jang, 2023).

Despite the recognition of the significance that teachers' perceptions and knowledge have on the methods they choose, there is little research regarding pre-service teachers' perceptions and knowledge about teaching methods in Mexico (Ramírez, Cid, Reyes & Roux, 2023). To fill this gap in the area of ELT, this research aims to explore pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methodology they use to teach English as well as the factors that impact their choices. In the next section, the purpose of the study is presented in more detail.

1.3 Aim of the study

As stated in the previous section, this qualitative study aims to explore pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methods and approaches they use to teach English and the factors that impact their choices. Based on the purpose of the study, the following research questions were set to guide the design of the study and the process of data collection:

- What do pre-service teachers know about the methods and approaches they use to teach English?

- What perceptions do pre-service teachers have of these methods and approaches?

- What factors influence pre-service teachers' decisions of the methods and approaches they use to teach English?

In the following section, the relevance and contributions of the present study to the ELT field is described.

1.4 Significance of the study

There are many aspects that make this research relevant for the field of English Language Teaching. First of all, the results of this research are particularly important because pre-service teachers' perceptions of their knowledge can work as an assessment of their academic programs to be able to improve and reform them (Khaled, Dukmak & Dweikat, 2017).

Second, this study addresses limitations that previous research identified when trying to understand teachers' perceptions and knowledge about teaching methods. For instance, this study included classroom observations in combination with deep interviews as Pohan et al., (2016) suggest to make sure of the truthfulness of pre-service teachers' perceptions. In addition, this study is carried out with a different population from previous studies as Karim (2004) recommends.

Third, as explained in section 1.2, there is little research regarding this topic in Hidalgo, Mexico. Therefore, this study helps to provide better understanding and interpretation of pre-service teachers' perceptions and knowledge about teaching methods and the factors that impact their choices.

Lastly, the findings of this study can be used by pre-service teachers to raise awareness of their own knowledge and perceptions about their methodological decisions as well as a valuable resource for future related academic studies.

Chapter II Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

      This second chapter reviews relevant literature to contextualize the importance of pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methodology they use to teach English during their teaching practicum. Therefore, it begins with a description of initial language teaching education, highlighting the importance that teaching practicum holds in pre-service teachers' preparation. This is followed by the concept of pre-service teachers. Then, a discussion about the different definitions of perceptions and teachers' perceptions is presented as well as its importance in the teaching practice. Subsequently, the definition of methodology is shown, including the concept and description of the most relevant teaching methods and approaches. Finally, a detailed description of the different factors that affect the choice of teaching methods is discussed.

2.2 Initial language teaching education

      In the early 90's, Mexican higher education institutions recognized the need for a degree in English language teaching due to the implementation of English as a school subject in the 1993 curriculum (Banks, 2017; Ramírez, 2020). This undergraduate degree in English language teaching in Mexico prepares students for approximately four years to become future teachers in which they usually receive two years of general education classes and two years of professional studies (Palmer, McCorkle, Durbin & O'Neill, 2001).

      These professional studies include two main components: theoretical courses that include curriculum contents and learning how to teach and school-based-teaching experience that prepares future teachers for actual field work (Dikdere, 2009). This initial teacher preparation plays a significant role in the quality of prospective teachers by providing them with opportunities to put what they learnt theoretically into practice in order to be able to develop the knowledge and skills

that are essential to teach effectively and to meet the needs of their institution and students (OECD, 2023; Jang, 2023). One key element of the initial teacher preparation is teaching practicum (Dikdere, 2009; OECD, 2023).

2.3 Teaching practicum

Numerous researchers (García-Jiménez et al., 2024; Heinz, 2024; Scortescu & Sava, 2024) have asserted that teaching practices play a significant role in the initial teacher education since they provide students with opportunities to train their teaching skills. This has much to do with the fact that teaching practicum gives pre-service teachers the opportunity to apply what they have learnt during their teaching program in a real educational context (Tuli & File, 2009; Ulla, 2016). For instance, according to Richard and Crookes (1988), the teaching practice course, also known as teaching practicum, "is the major opportunity for the student teacher to acquire the practical skills and knowledge needed to function as an effective language teacher" (p. 9). Similarly, Ulla (2016) claims it to be "an integral part of any teacher education curriculum since it is a good avenue for pre-service teachers to apply the theories they learned in the real classroom setting" (p. 2). Moreover, Tuli and File (2009) state that not only does teaching practicum help pre-service teachers to improve their teaching skills, but also can help them to understand the socio-cultural, political, and economic factors within an educational environment.

Therefore, it might be accurate to say that this practicum experience is crucial for pre-service teachers to be able to become effective and qualified English language teachers in the future. In consequence, a glance into the definition of pre-service teachers is presented in the next section. In addition, it provides an explanation of the contribution that pre-service teachers make to the field of English language teaching.

2.4 Pre-service teachers

Pre-service teachers are students who conduct their teaching practice within a teacher preparation program in order to become professional licensed teachers after the completion of a four-year teacher training (Hasdianti, 2019; Blankenship, 2020; Palmer, McCorkle, Durbin & O'Neill, 2001). According to Kennedy (1999), there are three steps in the teaching-learning process of a teacher preparation program:

> First, teachers learn what the task of teaching is through their apprenticeship of observation, then they learn their subject matter through their liberal arts courses in college, and then they develop their own technique and style through their own teaching experiences. (p. 55)

The last step that helps future teachers to develop their own technique and style of teaching occurs when they start their practicum as pre-service teachers.

As mentioned in the previous section, teacher preparation programs provide pre-service students with pedagogical knowledge, and teaching practice that allows them to obtain and manipulate the knowledge that they have acquired in different contexts. The experience they gained through their community-service learning and teaching practice helps them improve their quality as teachers (Banks, 2017; OECD, 2023). This quality that students gain during their pre-service teaching practice helps to enhance the quality of English education (Jang, 2023).

Perceptions

Due to the importance that teachers' perceptions have within the practice of English teachers, this topic has been studied extensively over the years in different contexts. In order to understand the term perception and its significance in the field of English language teaching, this section provides a compilation of definitions found in the existent literature regarding this concept

followed by the factors that influence them and their principles. In the second subsection, an exploration of the influence that teachers' perceptions have on the teaching practice and the selection of a certain teaching methodology is also presented.

2.4.1 Definition of perceptions

There have been different attempts to define the term perceptions throughout the time across different disciplines. For instance, in philosophy, psychology, and cognitive science, perception is understood as "the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information" (Ou, 2017, p. 18). On the other hand, from a more etymological point of view, the word "perception" comes from the Latin words *perceptio* and *percipio*, and literally means the action of receiving, collecting and apprehending either with the mind or the senses (Simpson & Weiner, 1989). Similarly, Slameto (as cited in Sinaga, 2018) defines perception as a process in which messages or information enter into the human brain. Moreover, Borg (2001) argues that these perceptions can be consciously or unconsciously held.

Despite the fact that the definition of perception varies depending on the author, it seems that there is an agreement on the fact that perceptions do not just appear by themselves. That is, perceptions occur through processes and many factors that can affect one's perception leading to everyone having a different interpretation despite seeing or facing the same thing (Borg, 2001; Sinaga, 2018; Ou, 2017).

According to Ou (2017), the process of perception is divided into three steps. In the first one, perception arises because of the stimulus caught by the receptor through all of the sensations. Then, that selected stimuli is organized in categories by creating meaningful patterns. In the last step, the stimulus is interpreted and given meaning. As stated before, these perceptions can be influenced by some internal and external factors.

The former comes from the individual and depends on psychological needs including personal background, experience, personality, attitude and personal beliefs, and self-acceptance. While the latter comes from outside of an individual and includes intensity, size, contrast, movement, repetition, intimacy, and novelty (Ou, 2017).

2.4.2 Teachers' perceptions

Teachers' perceptions can be defined as the thoughts or mental images that teachers have about both their teaching practice and students that influence their professional behavior (Papadakis & Kalogiannakis, 2022). Several studies have examined the effects that teachers' perceptions have on the teaching practice covering a broad range of subtopics such as the influence of teacher perceptions on students' achievement (Seyfried, 1998; Sibomana, Ukobizaba, & Nizeyimana, 2021; Pease, 2018; Purković, & Kovačević, 2020), teacher preparedness and efficacy in the classroom (Faez, & Valeo, 2012; Moradi, & Sabeti, 2014), and teaching methodology (Allahyar, Zarrinabadi, & Reinders, 2022; Karanezi, & Rapti, 2015; Sibomana, Ukobizaba, & Nizeyimana, 2021), among others.

Extensive literature, including research carried by Allahyar et al. (2022) provided ample evidence that perceptions affect teachers' selection of topics and classroom practices and assessment (Borg, 2001), instructional decisions (Borg, 2006; Ng & Farrell, 2003), and the use of approaches, activities, and techniques (Donaghue, 2003; Li, 2008). Similarly, Johnson, (1992) suggests that teachers' perceptions have great influence on their decision to use a particular method or approach. In addition, Karanezi and Rapti (2015) state that teachers' perceptions can also impact their teaching style, selected resources, and classroom establishment. This close relationship between teachers' perceptions and the methodology they implement towards teaching can be illustrated by Cope and Ward (2002) who state:

teachers who perceive learning as the accumulation of information are more likely to view teaching as the transfer of information. Such teachers are more likely to use a teacher centred approach where the teacher imparts information to students and uses assessment techniques which encourage and test rote learning. In contrast, teachers who view learning as conceptual change are more likely to view teaching as facilitating conceptual change. Such teachers are more likely to use a student centred teaching approach where independence in learning is encouraged through discussion, debate and questioning among students, and assessment which reveals conceptual change. (p. 68)

As it can be seen from the passage above, teachers' perceptions play a significant role in the practice of English language teaching since the way in which they perceive teaching and learning can influence their teaching methodology. For instance, in the previous statement Cope and Ward (2002) mention that whether a teacher perceives the process of teaching and learning as the accumulation of information or a conceptual change, they will be more likely to implement a teacher-centered approach or a student-centered approach.

Hence, identifying the perceptions that pre-service teachers have about the methodologies they use to teach English is fundamental to improve the quality of language teaching. In order to explain what teaching methodology involves, the next section provides its definition and elements.

2.5 Teaching methodology

The science behind the methodology of teaching a second or foreign language has more than 200 years of history (Tursunovich, 2022). According to Tursunovich (2022), "if linguistics deals with the patterns of origin and movement of linguistic phenomena, the methodology answers the question of what needs to be done in order to practically use the necessary linguistic

phenomenon based on these laws" (p. 147). Stern (1983) adds that methodology is constituted by objectives, content, procedures such as strategies and techniques, materials, and evaluation. All this in order to "enhance the process of teaching English by empowering and facilitating teachers to work proficiently" (Tamura, 2006, p. 169). That is, the teaching methodology used by the teachers will facilitate the teaching and learning process.

Based on the model developed by Strevens (as cited in Stern, 1983) about the language learning/language teaching process and Ingram's model for the development of language teaching practice, among the essential features that are subsumed under teaching methodology are the teaching approaches and the teaching methods. For this reason, in the following section, the definition of teaching approaches and teaching methods is provided in addition to a brief summary of the most significant approaches and methods.

2.5.1 Teaching approaches and methods

Anthony (as cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2006), defined an approach as "a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language and the nature of language teaching and learning. It describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught. It states a point of view, a philosophy, an article of faith" (p. 84). Similarly, Molina, Cañado and Agulló (2005) state that an approach can be viewed as the integration of linguistic, psychological and pedagogical theories that inspire the teaching practice. On the other hand, a method is defined by Richards and Rodgers (2014) as "a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning" (p. 3). Likewise, Larsen-Freeman (2000) mentions that a method is a coherent set between thoughts (principles) and actions (techniques), "in the sense that there should be some theoretical or philosophical compatibility among the links" (p. 3).

Before the twentieth century, language teaching methodology was based on two main types of approaches: one that consisted in getting learners to use a language by understanding it and speaking it, and the other consisting in getting learners to analyze a language by learning its grammatical rules (Celce-Murcia, 2001). It was until the second third of the twentieth century that teachers saw the importance of linking the meaning and structure of words and phrases in verbal and situational contexts (Kelly, 1969).

Below is a summary of the most significant methods and approaches that have influenced the practice of language teaching throughout history.

Grammar-Translation Method. Since the English language was viewed as a set of grammatical rules, the main goal of education was that students gain grammatical knowledge to be able to read its literature (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, & Pincas, 2003; Tursunovich, 2022; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). For this reason, the focus of the grammar-translation method is on reading and writing while little attention is paid to speaking or listening (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In addition, much of the lessons consist of presenting grammar rules to be able to translate texts into and out of the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). For the teacher to be able to explain the grammatical rules, the native language of students plays an important role in the lessons since it is used as the medium of instruction (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Moreover, most of the interaction in the classroom is from the teacher to the students, where the teacher is the authority in the classroom while the students are empty vessels that have to be filled with grammar rules (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011); Lewis, 2002). When students make errors while translating or do not know the grammar rules, the teacher provides the correct answer to the students (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). This method is teacher-centered and

emphasizes the explicit use of grammatical rules. The use of students' first language is employed to deliver the class.

The Direct Method. In contrast to the grammar-translation method, the main goal of the Direct Method is that students communicate in the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Moreover, one of its basic rules is that no translation is allowed (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Instead, grammar is taught inductively through conversations, and demonstrated through the use of realia, pictures, or pantomime (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, & Pincas, 2003; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

For this reason, it is important that the students' native language is not used during the lessons (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). In addition, even though the teacher still directs the activities done in class, the student role is less passive than in the grammar-translation method and the teacher-student interaction is more like partners in the process of teaching and learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). As a result, when students need to be corrected, the teacher employs a variety of techniques to make the students correct themselves (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). This method highlights the use of the target language as the means of instruction and students play a more active role since the purpose is on communication.

Communicative Language Teaching. This approach sees communicative competence as the goal of language teaching so that students can communicate and interact with others in the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). To accomplish this, the teacher has to be a facilitator of communication by establishing situations that are likely to promote communication in the classroom (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Since this method is student centered and their primary role is being communicators, the focus of the activities is on the students and their ability to communicate real messages (Hall, 2017, Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Some of the common activities that are implemented when using this method are information-gap exercises, role-plays and problem-solving tasks (Hall, 2017). During the activities, the teacher acts as an advisor by answering the questions that the students may have and by monitoring their performance (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). The errors that may occur during fluency-based activities are seen as natural outcomes of the process of developing communication skills (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Hence, they are tolerated during these stages to return to them later in an accuracy-based activity (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

In addition, Harmer (2007) suggests two main guiding principles of CLT. The first principle is that language involves language functions that students should learn how to perform by using a variety of language exponents. The second principle emphasizes that "if students get enough exposure to language, and opportunities for language use - and if they are motivated - then language learning will take care of itself" (p. 50). For this reason, although the students' native language is not forbidden, the target language should be used during the entire lesson (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). This approach stresses the importance of communication since students are expected to be exposed to the language adopting an active role.

Content-based language teaching. Content-Based Instruction also known as CBI is defined by Richards and Rodgers (2014) as "an approach to second language teaching in which teaching is organized around the content or subject matter that students will acquire, such as history or social studies, rather than around a linguistic or other type of syllabus" (p. 116). Similarly, Larsen-Freeman (2000) states that "the special contribution of content-based instruction is that it

integrates the learning of language with the learning of some other content, often academic subject matter" (p.137).

To be able to implement this method properly, the teacher is responsible for guiding the students through their learning process by giving them the correct answers when they make errors or by allowing the students to correct themselves (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Moreover, the teacher has to create activities that include both elements, content and language (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). These activities are meant to "stimulate students to think and learn through the use of the target language" (Stoller, 2002, p. 108) with the use of authentic reading materials and forums where students can work collaboratively as they play an active role in their learning (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Molina, Cañado & Agulló, 2005; Stoller, 2002). This approach is used to teach both content subject and English and the use of authentic material plays an important role because it facilitates the learning and teaching process.

Suggestopedia. This method is defined by Larsen-Freeman (2000) as "the application of the study of suggestion to pedagogy" (p. 73). Its main goal is to accelerate the process of conversational proficiency (Tamura, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). To reach this goal, the teacher, who is the authority in the classroom (Larsen-Freeman, 2000), is the "responsible for presenting in class a large amount of information while taking away learning obstacles and students' inhibitions" (Tamura, 2006, p. 175).

The teacher should also make students feel comfortable in the classroom so that they do not feel scared of making mistakes (Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). For this reason, the teacher corrects all the errors that students make during the activities gently by using a soft voice (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Examples of the materials and activities

that the teacher can implement in class are primarily text and audio that students listen, watch and then perform (Tamura, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Moreover, as the students' native language and the target language are seen as pairs, translating texts after reading them is a common technique to clarify their meaning in order to foster students' comprehension (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Molina, Cañado & Agulló, 2005). The students' native language can also be used in class when necessary, and as the lessons proceed, its use declines (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). This method promotes a nice environment in the classroom which involves the use of baroque music to help students feel at ease when interacting with other students.

Total Physical Response. James Asher developed this method, also known as TPR, on the basis that the fastest and least stressful way for students to understand any target language is by following commands given by the instructor without the corresponding native language translation (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). For this reason, the students' native language is used only in the introduction of the lesson since the meaning of the vocabulary is made clear through body movements that the teacher assigns to each command (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Asher also claims that students have to physically respond to those commands before being able to produce verbal responses (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Taking these characteristics into consideration, a lesson that follows this method starts with the teacher giving commands to the students for them to perform the actions. After the students have learned to respond to those commands, they learn to read and write them. Finally, when they are ready to speak, they are the ones who give the commands. In this stage, the students are expected to make errors so they should be tolerated and only major errors should be corrected (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). As it can be seen, the teacher's role is one of a director of

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all the students' behavior, while the students are performers or imitators of their teacher's nonverbal model (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). This method is based on the use of commands to teach the language where students are expected to follow the instructions by demonstrating their understanding of the target language.

Task-based language teaching. The goal of this approach, also known as TBLT, is to provide a natural context for the learners to use the target language by using tasks as the core unit of planning a lesson (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Being TBLT part of the communicative language teaching, the emphasis of this approach is not on the language, but on a real-life task that consists of three stages: pre-task, task cycle and language focus (Harmer, 2007). Therefore, the teacher's role is to create authentic and meaning-focused tasks for the learners to collaborate and use the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Moreover, this method is student centered so all the process from the initial planning, through the implementation of it, to the assessment and the evaluation has to be built around the students' needs (Nunan, 2004).

As mentioned before, a task-based lesson is organized in three stages: pre-task, task cycle and language focus or post-task (Hall, 2017). In the first stage, the topic is introduced, students' already-existing schemata is activated and new vocabulary, grammar and language functions are presented (Beglar & Hunt, 2002; Hall, 2017). The second stage consists of three parts where the students first carry out the task, then plan their report to the whole group and lastly make those reports (Hall, 2017). The task has to be meaningful and relevant for the students, they have to be able to relate those tasks to real-life situations that they can encounter (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

Students have to be also actively engaged with the task while the teacher monitors them during their performance and corrects the errors that students make through recasts, modeling, or

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brief grammar explanations (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Finally, in the last stage the students analyze and practice the language that they used to reinforce their learning or to solve any problems that may have arisen during the second stage (Hall, 2017; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). This method may take different forms, but the emphasis is on the use of tasks in which students have to collaborate actively to provide solutions to a given problem.

Post-method teaching. This eclectic method is implemented by teachers based on their intuitive ability and experiential knowledge of what works in the classroom (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). This is because even though teachers know that methods are useful, they need to go beyond them as they claim that methods are deficient when meeting the challenges of everyday teaching (Bell, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

However, Bell (2003) claims that post-method teaching, "rather than going beyond method, may be understood as a synthesis of various methods under the umbrella of CLT" (p. 332). On the other hand, Kumaravadivelu (2006) suggests that post-method pedagogy can be seen as a three-dimensional system that consists of three pedagogic parameters: particularity (it has to be constructed with a holistic interpretation for a specific context), practicality (based on their insights and intuition, teachers have to consider, analyze, and evaluate alternatives, and then choose the best available one), and possibility (teacher and students' experiences may alter classroom goals and activities). This method places teacher autonomy at the core so that teachers can make decisions to teach the language based on the characteristics of the teaching context and the parameters mentioned above.

In order to have a better understanding of the elements that have an influence on the teachers' methodological choices, this section will move to the next of two subsections, teacher factors and contextual factors.

2.6 Factors that influence the choice of teaching methods

As seen in previous sections, the perceptions that teachers have towards teaching and learning are some of the reasons for them to choose the method or approach that they implement in their classes (Cope and Ward, 2002). Nevertheless, this is not the only factor that influences the decisions they make. Numerous researchers (Adhikari, 2017; Hasdianti, 2019; Olayinka, 2019) have studied the factors behind teachers' methodological decisions throughout time. Many elements have emerged from such investigations seeking the reasons that lead teachers to choose a teaching method. For the purpose of a better understanding, this section will explain the factors that influence the teaching method choices under two categories, factors related to the teachers and factors related to the teaching context.

2.6.1 Teacher factors

It has been suggested that teachers' views and beliefs about how learners should learn (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards, & Rodgers, 2014; Tekin, 2013), the needs of the learners, their ways of learning and the best method of motivating them (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, & Pincas, 2003) can consciously or unconsciously have great impact on teachers' decisions regarding which methods to employ in their teaching (Broughton et al., 2003). Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (2014) claim:

> According to Anthony's model, approach is the level at which assumptions and beliefs about language and language learning are specified; method is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, the content to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented. (p. 21)

Hence, if a teacher thinks that students learn more through real-life activities, he or she will be more likely to adopt a method or an approach that will include those types of activities (Olayinka, 2019). Celce-Murcia (2001) agrees with this statement by claiming that "a good teacher cannot help but bring his or her own sense of good learning or teaching into the classroom" (p. 404). While Celce-Murcia (2001) used the term "sense" to refer to teacher perceptions, Larsen-Freeman (2000) claims that teachers' decisions about the method that they should use in their classroom are influenced by their own knowledge about teaching methods and pedagogy in general. In fact, Tursunovich (2022) highlights the importance of teacher knowledge by stating that effective language teaching requires knowledge of its methodology. For instance, according to Celce-Murcia (2001), this "includes knowledge of theories of second language acquisition and learner characteristics (…) as well as familiarity with both historical and current trends in second language pedagogy" (p. 404). Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill and Pincas (2003) add that teachers' knowledge of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and pedagogy combined with practical experience can produce a suitable teaching methodology for their classes. However, they also mention that even when a teacher has not studied the theories, his methods inevitably reflect assumptions about how language is learned.

Another factor related to teachers is their previous experience either as a teacher or as a student (Olayinka, 2019). For instance, regarding teachers' decisions about methods, Richards and Rodgers (2014) claim that "from their experience and understanding of teaching as well as from the methods they have experienced, teachers develop a set of personal values and beliefs that shape their approach to teaching" (p. 353). On the other hand, Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill and Pincas (2003) mention that it is common that teachers teach with the same methods that were used by the teachers who taught them. Nevertheless, Larsen-Freeman (2000) states that teachers can

choose to teach differently from the way they were taught and make informed decisions based on proper knowledge about methods. As it can be seen, these factors of teachers' perceptions, knowledge and experience about teaching and learning are in some way related to their methodological decisions. This is because as previously mentioned, teachers' can develop their own perceptions regarding what methods to use based on their experience of being a teacher and a learner plus their pedagogical knowledge.

2.6.2 Contextual factors

Oftentimes, when teachers do not implement a methodology based on their own views and beliefs about teaching as seen above is due to the exigencies inside the classroom or school where they teach (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Many researchers have pointed out that there are plenty of contextual variables that contradict teachers' perceptions. This discrepancy between the method that teachers want to use according to their perceptions and the method that should be used according to the context can limit them to make a decision based on their perceptions (Fang, 1996; Tekin, 2013).

Among the contextual factors that influence teachers' methodological decisions are the subject or topic of the lesson (Olayinka, 2019), the learning characteristics of the learners, the socio-cultural environment in which the students are (Vin-Mbah, 2012) as well as the need of the teachers to follow a prescribed curriculum, the lack of suitable resources, and the ability levels of the students (Richards, 1994). This is because according to Olayinka (2019), "one cannot use just one method and implement it to all grades or all students" (p. 325). To provide a more detailed picture of it, Celce-Murcia (2001) states:

when creating a lesson, a teacher must consider the background of the students, the objectives of the lesson, the skills to be taught, the activities, the materials and texts, the time constraints and the connections to previous and future lessons. (p. 404)

Hence, as Richards and Rodgers (2014) point out, teachers can also see methods and approaches as resources that can be adapted to their needs by reviewing, selecting, and blending different methods and approaches.

Hasdianti (2019) carried out a qualitative study in order to know the factors that influence pre-service teachers' teaching method choices in Indonesia. The results of the study revealed that the students, the availability of resources, the learning goals and the teachers themselves influence their decisions. Similarly, Adhikari (2017) conducted a study that aimed to investigate the factors that influenced the selection of English language teaching methods in Nepal. With the help of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews they found that classroom size, teachers' beliefs, and resources availability are the major factors that teachers take into consideration when choosing a method. Likewise, research carried out by Cheruiyot (2019) intended to identify the teacher factors that influence the choice of teaching methods in Kenya. Findings revealed that 90% of the participants select the teaching methods according to the availability of the learning materials.

In addition, Khalil and Semono-Eke (2020) administered questionnaires to investigate the reasons behind teachers' use of a particular method. The results suggest that teachers use a specific method based on the students' needs. A similar study carried out by Walsh and Wyatt (2014) in southern England found through interviews that learners' characteristics and needs have a great impact on their participants' methodological decisions.

Numerous researchers have pointed out the importance of selecting methods that meet students' needs (Suparman & Irsandi, 2022). This is because every student has unique preferences and needs (Suparman & Irsandi, 2022) including characteristics of "language proficiency, motivation, learning style, interaction, language acquisition and attention" (Raza, 2018, p. 19). In fact, Suparman and Irsandi (2022) state that understanding students' individual needs such as learning styles is crucial for academic success. For this reason, Hnoievska et al. (2022) state that teachers need to meet everyone's learning needs, taking into account pupils' individual abilities and contributing to the maximum possible extent for these children to succeed.

2.7 Summary

This chapter highlighted the importance that initial teaching education holds within the quality of the English language teaching field and the relevance of understanding teachers' perceptions of the methods and approaches they use to teach. Several factors such as the characteristics of the teacher and the learners can influence teachers' decisions when choosing a method or an approach to be used in the classroom. However, little research has been done in the particular context where this study takes place, which is in the Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades (ICSHu), a university located in Hidalgo, Mexico. For this reason, as stated in the previous chapter, this study aims to explore pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methodology they use to teach English as well as the factors that impact their choices, using classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to address the limitations of previous studies (Pohan et al., 2016).

Chapter III Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodological procedures of the present study. In the first section, the research approach that guided this research is discussed and justified. Then, a description of the setting and participants is presented. After that, the instruments used to collect the data are detailed and the rationale for using them is explained. Finally, the process carried out to pilot the instruments, and to collect and analyze the data are explained in sections 3.6 and 3.7.

3.2 Research approach, worldview, and design

The present research adopts a constructivist worldview with a qualitative approach based on a case study design to explore pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methodology they use to teach English and the factors that impact their choices. This methodological selection was made because a qualitative approach aims to explore and understand the meaning that individuals ascribe to a social phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Moreover, in the late 1920's, researchers found that a constructivist worldview allows researchers to better understand and explore people's worlds by relying as much as possible on the participants' views of it (Heigham & Croker, 2009; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Hence, in order to gather pre-service teachers' perceptions and knowledge about the methods they use, this study adopted a qualitative approach based upon the constructivists view of the world that claims that,

individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences—meanings directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look

for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 8).

Moreover, as a way to identify the factors that influence pre-service teachers' methodological decisions, this research was conducted with case study design. This type of design allowed the present research as Heigham and Croker (2009) suggested, to concentrate on a few cases to describe this particular phenomenon in great detail. Likewise, a case study design provides an in-depth description and analysis of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context in order to provide a picture of it and the factors that influence such a situation (Yin, 2014; Heigham & Croker, 2009; Opie, 2004).

3.3 Setting

One of the main characteristics of a qualitative approach is that it occurs in a natural setting. This is because this type of research focuses on understanding and describing the way in which participants experience and interact with a phenomenon in the context in which it naturally occurs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Heigham & Croker, 2009; Dornyei, 2007). Heigham and Croker (2009) state that qualitative researchers "are interested in the ordinary, everyday worlds of their participants – where they live, work, and study. These natural settings include such places as homes and workplaces, staff rooms, classrooms and self-access centers, and online chat rooms" (p. 7). Likewise, a case study "investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in its real-world context" (Yin, 2014); p. 2). For these reasons, students who are doing their teaching practicum within a teacher preparation program provided the setting for the present study.

As mentioned in the Literature Review chapter, teaching practicum is key in the preparation of an English language teacher (Dikdere, 2009; OECD, 2023). Moreover, it is one of the participants' requirements to obtain the Bachelor's degree according to the faculty program in

which they are enrolled. This undergraduate program belongs to the Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades (ICSHu) located in Pachuca, Hidalgo. It is part of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, which is the oldest university in Hidalgo, Mexico founded in the 1960's.

The undergraduate program in ELT is a four-year program and students have to take 37 courses. Eight of them are taught in Spanish and the rest in English. Teachers adopt different research methods and approaches to teach their classes, but they are expected to follow the principles of constructivism because that is the theoretical framework that supports the educational model of this institution.

As stated before, the BA program of English Language Teaching in which the participants are enrolled asks them to carry out their teaching practicum as part of a subject called professional practice. It consists of two aspects that are connected and involve different tasks that students have to accomplish in order to pass the subject. The first aspect is the academic one where students have to attend classes that help them to succeed in the second element, their Teaching practicum. As part of this second feature, students have to do a minimum of 496 hours of teaching practicum. They are free to choose any school level from elementary to higher education. Moreover, each student is assigned an academic mentor at the beginning of the course that will guide them through their practicum.

The purpose of the Teaching Practice course is to provide students with guidance and support to improve their practice. Students are observed three times during the course through video recordings. For each observation, students create a lesson plan that they share with their academic mentors in order to reflect upon them and improve them. Once students feel confident with their lesson plan, they deliver the class and record the lesson in their teaching context. Then, the students have to share the recordings with their mentors in order to get feedback.

3.4 Participants

The participants were three pre-service teachers from eighth semester studying the undergraduate program in English Language Teaching. They did their professional practicum during the school term August-December 2023. All students doing their practicum at the time were invited to participate and three students volunteered to participate in the study. This selection is justified by the fact that qualitative studies usually use a small sample size to be able to obtain and understand even subtle information about the phenomenon being studied by focusing on each participant in detail (Creswell, & Creswell, 2018; Dörnyei, 2007; Heigham, & Croker, 2009). In addition, the participants were selected by using a convenience sampling procedure. As Dörnyei (207) mentions, this type of sampling "is the most common non-probability sampling type in L2 research, where an important criterion of sample selection is the convenience to and resources of the researcher" (p. 98).

By following the recommendations given by Dörnyei (2007), the sampling strategy used in this study allowed to select participants whose experience was according to the research focus. As Dörnyei (2007) suggests, this profile allowed to gather the typical experiences of a standard pre-service teacher. Moreover, Dörnyei (2007) asserts that the willing participants, who are another result of this sample strategy, are a prerequisite to having a rich and valuable data.

As stated in the previous section, the university in which this study takes place gives pre-service teachers the freedom to choose any level for them to teach from basic to higher education. In this case, two of my participants chose to teach at a primary school, with students whose ages ranged from 6 to 12 years. The other participant chose a school for blind children in which she was given one child per lesson instead of a group of kids, her students' ages ranged from 6 to 12 years.

In order to address any ethical issue, the participants were given a participant information sheet with all the information regarding the procedure of data collection. After the participants made their informed decision of taking part in the research, they were asked to sign a form where they give their consent to the present study to collect data from them.

3.5 Instruments

Two different instruments were used to gather the data for this research. This decision was made taking into consideration that multiple data collection methods offer a richer picture of the participants' perceptions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Heigham, & Croker, 2009).

The first instrument used was a structured observation form conducted with the help of the participants' first and second video-recorded lessons. The observation format (Appendix A) was created and conducted to take descriptive notes about the methodology that the participants of this study used to teach. It helped to "demystify what is actually going on as opposed to what one might hope or assume is happening" (Anderson, Herr, & Nihlen, 1994, p. 129) in the classroom. This type of tool is used, as Heigham and Croker (2009) mention, "to collect information about participants' external behavior, which can be further explored casually in conversation or more formally in interviews, with questions about participants' inner ideas, beliefs, and values" (p. 17). For this reason, the second form of data collection was through interviews.

Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions are great tools to explore people's perceptions, opinions, ideas and experiences by providing rich and valuable data about them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Heigham, & Croker, 2009; Opie, 2004). This type of interview was chosen because it offers advantages of both the structured and unstructured interviews. It provides guidance and direction while letting the interviewee elaborate on the issues raised during the interview (Dörnyei, 2007). Moreover, a sequence of three interviews with the same participant

offers more in-depth data than a one-shot interview (Dörnyei, 2007). For this reason, an initial interview was conducted before the participants sent their videos (Appendix B). Then, the second and third interviews were administered after they sent each video (Appendix C). The first interview allowed me to not only build rapport with the participants but also to gather their general opinions about the methods that they were going to use in their practicum. The interviews that were conducted after I observed the videos were focused on the methods that they used in each class. By doing so, the participants were able to give more detailed descriptions of the methods that they implemented and the factors behind their methodological decision in each class.

3.6 Piloting

To ensure that an interview is well-designed, it is necessary to pilot it. This testing process gives the opportunity to evaluate the interviews in order to improve the questions, the format, and the instructions by eliminating any ambiguity and to guarantee that the questions elicit sufficiently rich data for the study (Opie, 2004; Dörnyei, 2007). Moreover, Heigham and Croker (2009) suggest that giving two or three trials to the interviews with some colleagues or friends can also help to refine some techniques on how to approach the interviews and to build confidence as an interviewer. For these reasons, the two interviews used in this research were tested two times with the help of graduated teachers before conducting them to the participants. Some questions were modified during the pilot testing process of the interviews.

3.7 Data analysis

In order to be able to answer the research questions of this research, the data obtained from the interviews was analyzed through interpretive analysis. This type of analysis allows the researcher to "paint a richly descriptive picture of their participants' worlds – the participants

themselves, the setting, and the major and minor events that happen there" (Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 9).

According to Okoko, Tunison and Walker (2023), the first step of conducting an interpretive analysis is the data preparation. This preparation consists of observational notes and transcriptions from recordings of the interviews that will be divided into meaning units through a process of coding.

Similarly, Creswell and Creswell (2017) state that the process of qualitative data analysis requires three sub sequential steps. The first step consists of transcribing the interviews as a preparation for the analysis. The second step involves reading all the data to provide a general view of the information to be able to reflect on it. In the last step, the researcher starts coding the data.

Coding is the process in which the researcher aims to "identify categories, themes, and patterns that help explain the phenomena under consideration and the contexts in which they occur" (Heigham & Croker, 2009, p. 78). It is done by "aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information, seeking evidence for the code from different databases being used in a study, and then assigning a label to the code" (Creswell, 2013, p. 206). Codes are words or phrases that represent the key ideas of a section of language-based or visual data (Saldaña, 2009). Bingham (2023) breaks the coding process into five phases: organizing the data, sorting the data, understanding the data, interpreting the data and explaining the data. The result of this process shapes the basis of the inferences made throughout the study and supports the claims made by the researcher in the conclusion part (Heigham & Croker, 2009). The process of coding for this study followed the five phases proposed by Bingham (2023). The codes were obtained from the interviews as they were the main source of data. The observations, on the other hand, was a

resource to ensure that there were not any discrepancies between the participants' answers during the interviews and their practices in the classroom. After the interviews were conducted and transcribed, the data was organized according to the participant and the number of the interview. This first phase "makes it easier for the researcher to keep track of the data and to identify sources of evidence" (Bingham, 2023, p. 4). Then, after reading the transcripts, preliminary topic codes were developed according to the research questions of the present study. According to Bingham (2023), this phase helps to filter the data that is not relevant to the research questions. During the third phase, the codes were created while reading and analyzing the data. In the next phase, the coded data from the third phase was reviewed to develop themes. Saldaña (2009) describes themes as higher-level ideas that emerge from grouping and analyzing the codes. Lastly, after analyzing the observation formats to find any discrepancies between them and the interviews, existing literature was aligned to the findings.

3.8 Summary

In the first section of this chapter the research approach, paradigm and worldview were presented as well as the rationale behind the selection of them. After that, the context in which this research takes place is explained and a glimpse into the participants' subject of teaching practicum is provided. The next subsection includes a description of the participants and the process taken to select them. In sections 3.5 and 3.6, a detailed description of the instruments used to collect the data is provided and the pilot testing process of them. Finally, the last section explained the process in which the data was analyzed in order to answer the research questions set for this study.

Chapter IV Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis described in Chapter III. This analysis of the data led to the identification of three main themes. The first theme is knowledge about the methods, which includes knowledge about techniques, teacher and students' role, students' native language and correction techniques. The second theme is perceptions about the methods. Participants expressed their perceptions regarding the effectiveness, engagement and language skills development. The last theme is about the factors that influence the selections of teaching methods. Elements such as topic of the lesson, students, resources availability and teachers' confidence and knowledge were mentioned by pre-service teachers. Together, these themes provided the foundation for the findings and discussions in relation to the research questions set in the Introduction chapter.

The first section of the present chapter responds to research question 1: What do pre-service teachers know about the methods and approaches they use to teach English? The second section aims to answer research question 2: What perceptions do pre-service teachers have of these methods and approaches? Finally, the last section focuses on research question 3: What factors influence pre-service teachers' decisions of the methods and approaches they use to teach English?

4.2 Pre-service teachers' knowledge of the teaching methodology they use

In order to answer the first research question, the participants were asked about the characteristics of the methods that they used during their teaching practicum. Results revealed that they were knowledgeable of the main characteristics of the methods that they used. For instance, most of the participants exhibited understanding of the techniques of the methods, the roles of the teacher and the students as well as the role of the students' native language, and the correction

techniques that can be implemented. The next subsections show and discuss the detailed findings of the pre-service teachers' knowledge about the methods and approaches that they use.

4.2.1 Techniques

As mentioned above, I asked my participants about their knowledge of different methods and approaches. Most of the participants showed knowledge regarding the techniques of the methods that they use in their teaching practice. Their responses in the first interview were compared to relevant theory about methods and approaches to teach English (see Chapter II). By making this comparison, I was able to identify similarities and differences among them, thereby enriching the understanding of the findings.

TPR

Participants 1 and 2 mentioned the use of pictures, realia and body movements to demonstrate the meaning of vocabulary as the first step of TPR. They also agreed that the second step of the method consists of the teacher giving commands to the students. In addition, Participant 1 suggested that the commands can be given to one student first and then to all of the students. This finding was also supported during the observation since Participant 1 was aware that the students performed the commands alone. And in the last stage, when they were ready to speak, they gave commands to each other.

Although Participant 1 was observed following the steps and activities that she suggested, Participant 2 was not. Instead, most of Participant 2's lessons consisted of translating vocabulary from English to Spanish and vice versa. During the interview, she attributed this to the fact that her student was a blind child: "*They can't see so I can't use the modeling part in which you point out the picture*" (Participant 2, Interview 2). However, it becomes evident that this participant is

aware that teachers have to adapt the method or approach they use in their classes to meet their students' needs. This is because she mentioned that translating from English to Spanish was her attempt to adapt the stages of the TPR method to blind students. In addition, the results from the interviews reflect that pre-service teachers are familiar with TPR because as Larsen-Freeman (2000) claims, the first stage of a TPR lesson is modeling, where both the teacher and the students perform the commands that the teacher gives.

Grammar Translation

On the other hand, when Participant 2 was asked about the Grammar Translation method, she mentioned that grammar is taught inductively so the teacher can use colors to show grammatical structures. However, literature suggests that grammar is presented in a deductive way (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2014) according to the grammar translation method. Moreover, Participant 1 mentioned an activity that consists of translating texts into the students' mother tongue. This technique was observed in her lesson. Participant 2 added that it is useful to compare the meaning of the words in the target language and the students' native language. This statement may suggest that when using the method, the students translate from one language into another so that the learners memorize the equivalents of the words (Larsen-Freeman, 2000), or to facilitate students' understanding of some words as indicated by Participant 2.

PPP

Participant 2 also mentioned the use of realia to introduce vocabulary in the first stage of the PPP model, which is presentation. For practice, she described a controlled activity where the students categorize the vocabulary. Lastly, she included a game in the production stage. In the classroom observation, she did the three main activities that she mentioned in the interviews. In

the first activity, the students were able to get familiarized with the vocabulary thanks to realia provided by Participant 2.

The second activity offered an opportunity for students to practice the vocabulary previously presented to them. During this activity, the teacher maintained control over the exercise since there were clear correct and incorrect answers. In contrast, the final activity involved a game that allowed students to freely apply the vocabulary that they had learned. The explanation of the P-P-P model provided by Participant 2 and her performance in her class show that she knows what teachers are expected to do in each one of the stages.

On the other hand, Participant 1 mentioned that in the second stage, the teacher describes something while the students draw what they hear. Then, in the last stage the student can make a similar description. Although she did not comment about any activities for the first stage, in her lesson she gave her students a text and asked them to underline the words that she intended to teach them. Similar to what both participants did in their lessons, Richards and Rodgers (2014) suggest that a "text, audio, or visual is used by the teacher to present the grammar in a controlled situation" (p. 54).

Task-based approach

Participant 2 mentioned that she used the Task-Based approach in one of her classes. The activity that she suggested for the Task-Based approach consisted of asking students to listen to a song in order to identify vocabulary previously introduced. In the classroom observation, after Participant 2 introduced the vocabulary, she asked her student to listen to a song and identify the words previously reviewed. Nevertheless, although the use of songs as an authentic material meets the TBL characteristic of providing a natural context (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers,

2014), the stages of planning, analysis and practice were not observed during the participant's lesson nor were they mentioned during the interview.

Participant 3, who only used the Direct Method during her teaching practices, mentioned that when using this method, the teacher should provide many examples and opportunities for the students to practice the language such as taking part in a role-play where they imitate a real-life situation. She also mentioned that the focus of the method is on listening and speaking and that all the activities should be contextualized. These principles were observed during the participant's lesson which supports the claim mentioned above, which shows that this participant is knowledgeable about the purpose of using the Direct Method. This is because as Larsen-Freeman (2000) states, the main goal of this method is that learners communicate in the target language as if they were in real-life situations. Hence, the oral skill is emphasized.

These results show that most of the participants are familiarized with the techniques that they have to use according to the method or approach discussed in the interviews. For instance, participants 1 and 2 showed a strong understanding about the techniques of the methods that they implemented in their classes. However, Participant 2 showed limited knowledge about the Task-Based approach as she did not mention the techniques of said method during the interviews nor were represented in the observations.

4.2.2 Teacher and students' role

The three participants showed great knowledge about the teacher and students' role of the methods that they used in their classes. When participants 1 and 2 were asked about the roles of the teacher and the students according to TPR, they mentioned that firstly, it is teacher-centered because the teacher is the one who gives the commands. But later, the students take the leading

role as they give commands to each other and perform them. Participant 2 added that the teacher's role is to be a guide for the students.

It is important to highlight that although Participant 2 mentioned that there is a point where the students direct the class, she accepted that her entire lesson was teacher centered as it was observed in her lesson how the student only responded to her commands. Participant 2 explained that since her students were blind, she felt that it was challenging for them to give the commands so she omitted that stage of the method. However, Larsen-Freeman (2000) describes the role of the teacher in TPR as the director of the class. She points out that initially, the teacher is the one who directs all the students' behavior in class. Then, at some point, the roles are reversed and the students are the ones who direct the teacher and their classmates.

Regarding the Grammar-Translation method, Participant 1 mentioned that the teacher is the center of the class while Participant 2 commented that this method is both teacher and student-centered. She explained that in the beginning of the class, the students do not play an important role, it is later when they are given activities to be more active in their learning process. In contrast to what Participant 2 mentioned in the interview and based on the classroom observations, both participants were in control of their class when they used the Grammar-Translation method. Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (2014) argue that the teacher is the authority in the classroom and has total control of it. In addition, Larsen-Freeman (2000) explains that the students do what the teacher says and learn what the teacher knows.

Both participants agreed that a PPP lesson starts being teacher-centered as the students only listen to what the teacher says. Participant 2 added that in the second stage of the method, the teacher becomes a guide. And in the last stage, the teacher gives more freedom to the students so that they become practitioners. These roles were evident in the classroom observations. The

participant started being the center of the class but the students were the focus of the class by the end of the lesson.

These results suggest that they are well-informed about the PPP model because as Anderson (2017) claims, the teacher plays a different role in each stage. First, the teacher is an informant in the presentation stage. Then, he is a conductor in the practice stage. Finally, the teacher is a guide in the production stage. In addition, Richards and Rodgers (2014) state that the lesson starts teacher centered. Later, the teacher relaxes as the students are set in a controlled practice. In the last phase of the method, the students are encouraged to practice the language with more freedom.

According to Participant 2, the Task-Based approach focuses on the students because they are the ones who carry out the task while the teacher monitors their performance. During the classroom observation, she was observed monitoring her student's performance. Moreover, she occasionally interceded during the task to make sure that the student was doing it correctly as suggested by Richards and Rodgers (2014). They claim that students play the role of group participants and the teacher acts as a monitor during the learners' performance.

Participant 3 mentioned that the roles of the teacher in the Direct Method are to be a model and a guide for the students. Hence, the teacher has to provide examples, to use the language in the correct way and to correct students when needed. She also added that the students' main role is to be active participants in the lesson as they imitate the teacher model, participate in their learning and use their creativity to build their knowledge.

In the classroom observations, Participant 3 and her students were seen working together. She directed the activities and provided various opportunities for the students to analyze and use

the target language. She corrected the students' mistakes and provided feedback. These results support Larsen-Freeman´s (2000) claim that the teacher and the students work as partners in the teaching and learning process. This is because although the teacher still directs the activities in class, the students are not as passive as they are in the grammar-translation method.

4.2.3 Students' native language

The three participants also showed knowledge of the role of the students' mother tongue based on their responses in the interviews. For instance, Participants 1 and 2 agreed that the students' mother tongue plays an essential role in the Grammar-Translation method. According to Participant 1, this is because it helps the teacher to make students understand complex vocabulary.

During the classroom observations, Participant 1 made great use of the students' L1 by translating texts from English to Spanish. Moreover, Participant 2 suggested the use of L1 as a strategy to promote confidence among beginner students: "*You use the L1 to make them feel confident at the beginning and once you create that environment in the classroom, they start using the L2 more than the L1*" (Participant 2, Interview 1). During the classroom observations, most of the activities that Participant 2 implemented consisted of translating words from English to Spanish and vice versa. Moreover, all the instructions were given in Spanish. In the same way, Richards and Rodgers (2014) state that, "the student's native language is the medium of instruction. It is used to explain new items and to enable comparisons to be made between the foreign language and the students' native language" (p. 7). Moreover, Larsen-Freeman (2000) claimed that the class is taught mostly in the students' native language because the meaning of the target language is made clear by translation. Hence, the results indicate that the participants are familiar with the role of the students' native language in the Grammar-Translation method.

Participant 2 mentioned that the focus of the Task-Based approach is on the target language so the students' L1 is "*left behind*". Certainly, when she implemented task-based learning in her lesson, she focused on the English language. However, she did use a large amount of Spanish. For instance, the instructions were given in Spanish and the report of the task was discussed in Spanish. These findings support Willis (1996) claim that the instructions can be given in the students' native language, especially when the students are beginners, which was the case of Participant 2.

In the same manner, Participants 1 and 2 mentioned during the last interview that using the students' mother tongue was important during their P-P-P lessons because their students had a low level of English. Participant 2 also mentioned that although she tried to use the target language most of the time, she made use of the L1 to make sure that the students understand the instructions of the activities. During the classroom observations, she translated most of the instructions from English into Spanish. In like manner, the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEFR) (2001, as cited in Criado, 2013) states that the language of the classroom management and explanation is mostly the students' L1. However, the use of it is reduced as the class progresses.

Participant 3 claimed that the students' native language plays a significant role: "*They still speak in Spanish because sometimes they don't know how to say what they want to say in English. They also ask questions and say some words in Spanish*" (Participant 3, Interview 3). Nevertheless, she also mentioned that since the focus of the lesson is on the target language, students need to be encouraged to not use their mother tongue. For this reason, the teacher should also avoid using it. This behavior was observed in her lesson as she used English all the time even when her students expressed themselves in Spanish. These findings support Richards and Rodgers' (2014) claim that the medium of instruction in the classroom should be in the target language.

The only instance where a participant's statement did not align with the literature was when Participant 2 discussed the TPR method. While Participant 1 mentioned that the students' native language is not used in TPR, Participant 2 mentioned that students do use their mother tongue. In fact, she said that Spanish had a very important role in her class: "*in terms of percentage, I would say that 80% was Spanish*" (Participant 2, Interview 2). Certainly, during the classroom observations Participant 2 introduced the class in Spanish and continued using it until the end of the class to clarify the meaning of the words. These results do not support Larsen-Freeman´s (2000) claim that "TPR is usually introduced in the student's native language. After the introduction, rarely would the native language be used. Meaning is made clear through body movements" (p. 115). On the other hand, Participant 1 made minimum use of the students' native language as she used body movements to demonstrate the meaning of vocabulary as Larsen-Freeman (2000) suggests.

4.2.4 Correction techniques

The three participants mentioned to be unsure of the correction techniques of the methods that they use. However, all of them commented to have corrected the students' by using repetition. For instance, in her TPR lesson, Participant 1 mentioned that she corrected pronunciation mistakes at the moment by making her students repeat the vocabulary. In addition, Participant 2 said: "*If they mispronounce the word, you need to demonstrate again how is it [sic] pronounced and they need to repeat it*" (Participant 2, Interview 1). These two participants also agreed that the correction technique suggested in the Grammar-Translation method and the P-P-P model is repetition. Participant 2 and Participant 3 also mentioned that the technique is suitable for the Task-Based approach and the Direct Method. This correction technique was observed in all of the participants' lessons. They corrected pronunciation mistakes unobtrusively by modeling the proper

pronunciation of the vocabulary and making the students repeat it. These findings show an affinity with Larsen-Freeman's (2000) argument that in TPR, teachers should be tolerant with the mistakes that the students make and only correct major errors without being obtrusive.

Participant 3 pointed out that the corrections should be made without making the students feel bad for their errors. This way, they will not lose their confidence to speak in the target language. Moreover, when the students made a mistake, she corrected it at the moment. This behavior was observed during her lessons. These results support Richards and Rodgers's (2014) claim that teachers should never imitate the mistakes, they should correct the student. In addition, Larsen-Freeman (2000) states that it is important that the teacher encourages the students' self-correction by employing a variety of techniques. One alternative that she suggests and that is similar to what Participant 3 mentioned consists of repeating what the student said. Then, the teacher can either use a questioning voice as a sign that there was something wrong with the sentence or stop before the error so that the student knows that the following word was wrong.

As seen above, the first and second methods that came up during the interviews were the Total Physical Response (TPR) and Grammar Translation. Although Participant 1 and Participant 2 mentioned to have implemented this method, only Participant 1 used activities that correspond to TPR and Grammar Translation. Nevertheless, both participants showed great knowledge of these methods during the interviews. The PPP model was mentioned by participants 1 and 2 during the last interview. In the classroom observations the three stages were present in the participants' lessons. Moreover, they showed great knowledge of the model. A fourth method came up in the second interview when Participant 2 mentioned that she also included the Task-Based approach in her first lesson. However, some stages of the approach were missing in the classroom. Regardless of this, the information that she provided in the interview showed that she knows the method to

some extent. Lastly, the Direct Method was mentioned by Participant 3. During the interviews, she demonstrated great knowledge of the method and in her lessons, many principles of the method were observed.

4.3 Pre-service teachers' perceptions of the methods and approaches they use to teach English

This section aims to answer the second research question. Hence, the following subsections present the perceptions that the participants have about the methods and approaches that they implemented in their teaching practicum. The perceptions that they mentioned during the interviews include aspects of the effectiveness of the methods, how engaging they are to the students and their ability to develop the students' language skills.

4.3.1 Effectiveness

Data from the interviews suggest that the participants perceive the methods that they use as effective. For instance, two participants suggested that the methods that they used were effective because they helped to reach their goals in all of their lessons. Participant 3 mentioned that her goals, which were focused on speaking, were reached in the two lessons that she taught with the help of the Direct Method. According to her, the goals that she set for her lesson were successfully reached because her students were able to produce the language that she taught them. Similarly, a study carried out by Abata et al. (2021) determined that the Direct Method is effective when trying to enhance students' speaking skills. They concluded that "the implementation of this method contributed favorably for students to perform interactive communication and in the improvement of their speaking skills in lower students" (Abata et al., 2021, p. 151). Participant 3 pointed out that implementing the Direct Method with low-level students may not be as effective as implementing it with students with a higher level of English. According to her, this is because the

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method suggests that the students should always use the target language. However, she commented in the first interview:

> *if your students don't have enough language or enough vocabulary to speak, they are not going to speak. If you don't allow them to use their mother tongue, they won't speak at all. That would be a disadvantage because even if they have doubts or something, they are probably scared to speak or to try to speak in English* (Participant 3, Interview 1).

According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), one of the basic rules of the Direct Method is that no translation is allowed. However, Participant 3 shares that for her, using the students' L1 is also helpful. She mentioned that her A2 students used their mother tongue constantly during the lesson. According to her, this is because it was difficult for them to speak in English all the time since there are many words that they still do not know. However, she mentioned that whenever her students used their mother tongue, she encouraged them to use the target language instead.

On the other hand, Participant 2 mentioned that TPR was effective to reach her goals because she noticed that her student learned the vocabulary that she taught her. She considers that her student was able to learn the vocabulary because when implementing TPR, the students are involved in activities that are constantly making them practice the language. Similar findings were reported in research conducted by Sariyati (2013) where after conducting an experimental study in an elementary school, she concluded that "Total Physical Response method had high effect in improving vocabulary mastery of the students" (Sariyati, 2013, p. 61). Although Participant 1 mentioned that she was not able to reach her goal when implementing TPR, it is worth emphasizing that the only reason for not reaching her goal was because of lack of time. In the interview, she mentioned: "*I didn't finish all the lesson plan and the last activity was that they produce the language (…) so that's why*" (Participant 1, Interview 2). Despite this incident, she mentions that

she considers that the implementation of the method is overall good because the students were able to understand the language that she intended to teach.

Participant 1 and Participant 2 used the Grammar-Translation and the P-P-P model in their lessons. They mentioned that these methods were overall effective at reaching their goals, which were focused on teaching vocabulary. Similarly, a study conducted by Ramachandran and Rahim (2004) showed that "The Translation Method is an effective vocabulary learning strategy for ESL learners who are at the elementary stages of their proficiency in the English language" (p. 174). In addition, Nopiyadi et al. (2023) concluded that the use of the P-P-P model improves the mastery of the students' vocabulary in both oral and written form. In the case of Participant 1, her students were able to produce the vocabulary that they learned in a written form. On the other hand, the students of Participant 2 focused on producing the vocabulary orally.

Participant 2 also mentioned that she used the Task-Based method in one of her lessons and she was able to reach her goal that was focused on listening: "*I put them a little bit in contact with the language because the songs were with native speakers and he practiced the listening part of the same words he had pronounced*" (Participant 2, Interview 2). Similarly, a study made by Soto Aldas (2022) revealed that the use of the Task-Based method helps to develop listening skills. According to her results, "it was possible to improve and develop the listening skills of the students so that they can understand the audio in English" (Soto Aldas, 2022, p. 28).

4.3.2 Engagement

All of the participants mentioned that they perceive the methods that they used as engaging. This is because they observed positive reactions from their students in all of the classes that they taught. They attribute the students' behavior to the engaging activities that the methods suggest. For instance, Participant 1 and Participant 2 commented that the students seemed to have enjoyed

the class and to be engaged in the activities that are suggested in the TPR method. This is because this method suggests that students produce physical movements (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011), which adds a dynamic element to the class. This characteristic of being dynamic makes this method very appropriate for children such as the students that participants 1 and 2 taught.

According to Sariyati (2013), TPR is a very suitable method for elementary school children because the physical movements suggested by the method makes the class enjoyable for the students by making them feel motivated and interested in learning the language. This behavior was observed in the classroom when Participant 1 implemented the method. Her students looked happy and engaged when doing the activities. Especially when the whole group was participating in the dynamic of doing body movements. In addition, Participant 1 pointed out that these types of activities that involve body movements are very useful to show the meaning of the vocabulary without having to translate. This way, according to her, *"when you demonstrate the meaning, they don't memorize the meaning, they can relate the body movements with the meaning of the word"* (Participant 1, Interview 2).

Nevertheless, Participant 1 considers that although the activities suggested by TPR are engaging, the body movements could also be a disadvantage since there are students who may not like them: *"when you ask them to do the same gestures or body movements, maybe they don't like these type of activities because they feel embarrassed"* (Participant 1, Interview 2). During her lesson, her students did not seem shy or unhappy with the movements suggested by the teacher. However, as Participant 1 mentioned, research conducted by Xie (2021) showed that when using TPR some students might not react so enthusiastically towards the physical movements due to shyness. In addition, Participant 2 commented that with TPR the students got very distracted at some point of the lesson. Similarly, Participant 1 shared that at the beginning of her first class

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everyone enjoyed the activities but as the class went by, the student started to feel bored. She attributed these negative reactions to the method as she suggested that it is very repetitive: *"you teach them the vocabulary by doing the gestures, and then they have to do the same during all the class"* (Participant 1, Interview 2).

4.3.3 Language skills development

Two participants mentioned that they like the methods that they use in their teaching practice because when they implement those methods their students practice and develop their language skills. For instance, Participant 2 mentioned that the Grammar-Translation method promotes the four basic language skills: listening, writing, speaking and reading. Nevertheless, existing literature suggests that the grammar-translation pays little attention to speaking and listening skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

In the same manner, Participant 1 mentioned having negative perceptions towards the Grammar-Translation and the P-P-P model. According to her, the students put into practice the target language only at the end of the lessons. She might feel this way because it is at the last stage of the Presentation-Practice-Production model where the students are given more opportunities to freely use the language (Anderson, 2017). Similarly, as mentioned before, the Grammar-Translation method focuses on reading and writing (Richards & Rodgers, 2014) and her students produced their writings at the end of the class. Nevertheless, Participant 1 made a criticism of these two methods: *"I think that they have to produce the language during all the class, not at the end of the class"* (Participant 1, Interview 3). However, the methods that she chose are mostly teacher-centered so there is little chance for the students to produce such language during the whole class as she suggested.

Participant 2 also commented that she likes the Total Physical Response method because it fosters the students' oral production of the target language: "*you are able to use different activities and they are asked to repeat and practice the words or language throughout the class*" (Participant 2, Interview 1). As a consequence of this constant practice and repetition of the vocabulary, she shared that her student was able to get the correct pronunciation. Similarly, a study conducted by Abata et al. (2021) revealed that the implementation of TPR improves the students' speaking skill in vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency.

In addition, Participant 3 mentioned that the reason why she likes the Direct Method is because it enhances the students' speaking and listening skills: "*they are able to practice a lot their spoken language (...) it could help learners to use the language in real life situations and use the language for communication purposes*" (Participant 3, Interview 3). Similar findings were reported by Abata et al. (2021) as they stated that "applying the direct method in classes contributes to the improvement of the main components of speaking: vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency" (p. 149).

As seen above, all of the participants mentioned that they perceive the methods that they used as effective because their students were able to learn and use the language that they taught. Likewise, they consider the methods as engaging because of the positive reactions that they got from their students during the lessons. Lastly, they highlighted that they like the methods that they used because they are very helpful to develop their students' language skills.

4.4 Factors that influence the selection of teaching methods

The last research question of this study aims at identifying the factors that influence pre-service teachers' methodological decisions. The analysis of the interviews revealed four different factors that influence the pre-service teachers' choice of a method. These factors include the topic

of the lesson, the students, the resources that teachers find available and the teachers themselves. The following subsections refer to each one of them in detail.

4.4.1 Topic of the lesson

The first factor that came up during the interviews was regarding the topic of the lesson. All of the participants mentioned that they select a method according to the lesson that they are going to teach. For instance, when Participant 1 was asked in the first interview about the factors that influence her decision to choose a method, she answered that she chooses a method based on the topic that she has to teach.

Likewise, when Participant 1 was asked in the second interview about the reason behind her decision to use the TPR method for her first lesson, she explained: "*I thought the topic of the method fit well with the TPR because it was only vocabulary and expressions like 'I like' and 'I dislike' so I thought it could be easier to implement that method*" (Participant 1, Interview 2).

Then, in the third interview she gave the same argument. She shared that she was asked to cover a specific topic of a book so she "*made decisions based on the book*". For this reason, she mentioned that she based the methodological decisions of her second lesson mainly on this factor. Similarly, Participant 3 commented that she selected the Direct Method for her second lesson specially because it was "*aligned*" with the topic that she wanted to teach:

> "*since it is a grammar topic, sometimes it is hard to be interested in that and students often get frustrated when it is a grammar topic so I wanted it to be interesting and I felt like it was the best way to teach it*" (Participant 3, Interview 3).

Similar to what the participants mentioned, Olayinka (2019) argues that teachers' decisions on what method to use can depend on the lesson or topic of the class. Olayinka (2019) also states

that "One of the aspects that explain choices of teaching methods is teacher's tendency towards engaging students in real life connection" (p. 324). This statement is similar to what Participant 2 mentioned in the first interview, when she said that she takes into consideration a method that promotes her students to learn about real-life situations that they can encounter daily.

4.4.2 Students

The second factor that emerged from the interviews was about students. For instance, all of the participants mentioned that the proficiency level of their students has a great impact on their methodological decisions. For instance, Participant 3 commented in the three interviews that she always takes into consideration the students' level of English to choose a method. According to her, the students' level of English is the main factor that makes her select a method because she has to adapt the language that she is going to use according to it. In the interviews she even mentioned that for her, it is very important to take into consideration the level of the students so that they do not feel uncomfortable with the method. She mentions that this is because low-level students tend to use their mother tongue because of their lack of English vocabulary and if the method does not allow the use of the students' native language, they may feel upset.

Participant 2 entirely agreed with this reasoning in all of the interviews as well as Participant 1 in the third interview. They mentioned that since their students had a low level of English, they chose a method that would make them feel comfortable with their basic knowledge of the target language or by using their native language. This can be related to research carried out by Hasdianti (2019) which indicated that students are one of the factors that influence pre-service teachers to select a teaching method.

In the last interview, Participant 2 added that she also considers the students' interests to make them feel engaged with the lesson. Similarly, Participant 1 mentioned in the second interview

that she chose the TPR method mainly because her students were very energetic so she needed to implement a dynamic method:

> *I noticed that most of the students are very imperative. So for example, they don't like to write. For example, the teacher says "you have to do this" and they do the activity and they get bored. So that's why I chose the TPR. Because I think it is how they can be motivated.* (Participant 2, Interview 3)

Similar to this result, Olayinka (2019) states that one of the most influential factors for teachers to choose a method is "the level of student engagement perceived to be achieved through" (p. 325) it. In this case, Participant 1 and Participant 2 thought that TPR was the best method to keep the students engaged in their lesson based on the students' interests.

In addition, since Participant 2 did her teaching practicum in a school for blind children, she shared that her students' condition also affected her decisions of not only selecting but also adapting the methods. Similarly, Olayinka (2019) argues that "One factor related to students that influence choices of teaching methods is the unique class composition of the students" (p. 325) including any physical or psychological challenges. In addition, 69.8% of the teachers who participated in a study conducted by Khalil and Semono-Eke (2020) stated that they choose a method that suits the students' needs. However, Participant 2 later in the interview pointed out that although this factor influenced her decisions, it was actually the least significant one. This was because she was more focused on a method that suited the level of her students rather than their blind condition.

4.4.3 Resources availability

The third factor mentioned by the participants was about the resources that the teachers have available for their lesson. Two out of three participants mentioned that the resources that are available in the classroom influence their decision to select a method. For instance, Participant 2 shared that for her second lesson, she wanted to take advantage of the objects that were available in the classroom. Moreover, since her students were blind children, the surrounding objects worked as realia to teach vocabulary in her lesson.

Similarly, Participant 3 mentioned that for her second lesson she wanted to make use of the materials that she had in the classroom such as a smartboard and some mats. This way, her students can feel more engaged in the lesson. This finding is aligned with a study carried out by Cheruiyot (2019) which found that the most significant factor that influences teachers on the choice of a teaching method is the availability of resources. In addition, research conducted by Adhikari (2017) shows that the availability of resources is one of the major factors that influence the selection of a method.

However, Participant 3 also mentioned in the three interviews that this factor is the last one that she considered when choosing a method. One of the reasons for it is that there are many resources in the classroom that she can take advantage of. For instance, she used the smartboard available in the classroom in her first lesson. However, she mentioned that if the smartboard was not there, she would have found alternatives to show pictures to the students. Lastly, in the third interview it was definitely the least important factor for her as she mentioned: "*I didn't think about what I had available for me to use and I would have taken advantage of the resources that I had but I didn't think much about it*" (Participant 3, Interview 3). Hence, even if the participants do take into consideration the resources that are available in the classroom, there are more important

factors that influence the teachers' decisions about choosing a teaching method. This is because as Participant 3 mentions, the materials available in the classroom can be replaced with other types of materials.

4.4.4 Teachers' confidence/knowledge

The last factor that was mentioned by the participants involves the pre-service teachers themselves. The three participants mentioned that their knowledge about the methods influence their decisions of method selection. Participant 3 shared in the last interview that she decided to use the Direct Method twice because she considered that she had a good knowledge of it. In addition, she mentioned that she felt comfortable using the method because she used it in the first lesson and it worked.

Similarly, Participant 1 mentioned in the first interview that the most important element for her to choose a method is that she feels confident about the implementation of it. According to her, "*if you know that method maybe you can have a success [sic] class*".

On the other hand, Participant 2 shared in the first interview that her knowledge about the methods is the last thing that she takes into consideration when choosing a method. She said that the reason behind it is because she takes into consideration other factors when choosing a method. However, she also mentioned that she did want to make use of the knowledge that she acquired in her university about the different teaching methods: "*In school, they teach us strategies or methods, we need to put them into practice because, why did I learn them if I'm not going to use them*" (Participant 1, Interview 1).

In her lessons, she tried to implement different methods for each one of them. Probably, as she mentioned, because she wanted to put into practice what she learned during the BA. Similarly,

Olayinka (2019) argues that the teachers' perceptions of their knowledge about the implementation of particular teaching methods affect their selections. For this reason, "some teachers show preferences towards those teaching methods that they feel more competent in handling" (Olayinka, 2019, p. 326).

This section discussed the four main factors that pre-service teachers take into consideration when choosing a teaching method. These factors include the topic of the lesson, the characteristics of the students, the resources that are available in the classroom, the teachers' knowledge about the methods and their confidence when using those methods.

Chapter V Conclusions

The aim of this research was to explore pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methods and approaches they use to teach English and the factors that impact their choices. This study was guided by three questions:

1. What do pre-service teachers know about the methods and approaches they use to teach English?

2. What perceptions do pre-service teachers have of these methods and approaches?

3. What factors influence pre-service teachers' decisions of the methods and approaches they use to teach English?

This conclusion chapter includes the summary of the major findings of the research. Then, it reflects on contributions and implications for pre-service teachers. After that, it identifies the study limitations and provides suggestions for future research.

5.1 Research findings

The data showed three major findings that correspond to the three questions set for this research. The first major finding of this research was that most pre-service teachers are knowledgeable about the methods that they use to teach English. This is because based on the data obtained from the interviews and the observations, the participants showed knowledge of the main characteristics of the method. These characteristics include the activities that can be implemented when using the methods, the correction techniques as well as the roles of the teacher, the students, and the students' native language. However, there was a misalignment at times regarding what the participants mentioned in the interviews and what they did in their practices. For instance, although Participant 2 showed to be knowledgeable about the techniques of TPR, the observations showed that she did not include any of the techniques corresponding to the method during her class.

The second major finding was about the perceptions that pre-service teachers have towards the methods that they use to teach English. These perceptions can be categorized into positive and negative. Positive perceptions highlight that the methods are alleged as effective and enjoyable for students because they promote language skills and suggest engaging activities as well as authentic tasks. On the other hand, negative perceptions include concerns that students may react negatively towards the methods, that they promote little production of the target language and that they may not be suitable for beginners.

The last major finding was about four factors that influence pre-service teachers' decisions to choose a method. The first and one of the most significant factors that were mentioned by the participants was the topic of the lesson because they choose the method based on that. The second major factor involved the characteristics of the learners, including the students' level of English, their engagement and specific needs. The third factor that was identified was about the resources that were available in the classroom. However, it was claimed to be the least significant one because the resources could be easily replaced for other ones. Lastly, the fourth factor was teachers' confidence when using methods and approaches in their classrooms. The participants emphasized that knowing the methods gives them confidence to implement them.

5.2 Contributions and Implications

This research explores pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methods and approaches they use to teach English and the factors that impact their choices to further the understanding of how teachers perceive certain teaching methods, their knowledge about them and the factors behind their decisions to choose a method.

The findings of this thesis offer significant implications for pre-service teachers as a discrepancy was found between the knowledge that some participants have of the methods and

their actual classroom practices. Although the participants showed good knowledge of the methods, the classroom observations revealed that the techniques they discussed in interviews were not implemented during the lessons. For instance, Participant 2 mentioned to have implemented the Grammar Translation and the TPR method in her lesson; however, none of the techniques of the methods were observed in her class. Instead, her entire class consisted of translating from English to Spanish and vice versa. She expressed that it happened because it was challenging for her to implement the TPR techniques with her blind students. As a consequence, the only activity that she used consisted in asking her student to translate vocabulary repeatedly.

This information can help professors of pre-service teachers who might incorporate self-reflection activities as part of their courses of different teaching methods. By doing so, professors can guide students to identify any discrepancies between their knowledge about the methods and their teaching practices. This self-reflection can enhance their effectiveness as teachers and promote their continuous improvement (Ahmad, 2024).

Moreover, some activities that can be implemented by pre-service teachers who struggle to put into practice their theoretical knowledge are the ones that involve getting feedback from their peers (Johnson, 2022). For instance, pre-service teachers can observe a lesson and hold discussions about it to identify the methods that they noticed and support their interpretations with theoretical evidence. Another recommendation for pre-service teachers is to observe and talk to experienced teachers (Jin et al., 2019), to ask them about the goals for their lessons, the theories that they used and their reasons behind it.

These recommendations can help pre-service teachers to apply their knowledge of teaching methods in the classroom to minimize mismatches between theory and practice. On the contrary, if this incorrect application of teaching methods continues, implications such as failure to achieve

lessons goals (Dittrich & Eloff, 2022), students' disengagement (Tang & Hu, 2022) and impediment of developing teachers' competencies may arise. This is because teachers' knowledge about methods and the correct application of them are crucial to teachers' growth (Bell, 2007).

In addition, this study reveals that pre-service teachers still use traditional methods such as the Grammar-Translation method probably because they still feel the need to be the center of the class. And they use their mother tongue to deliver their lessons especially because, as they mentioned in the interviews, they perceived that their students felt more comfortable using their native language as they had a low level of English. This suggests a need to reconsider the use of modern methods and approaches such as CLT rather than traditional ones. This is because the Grammar-Translation method fails to apply the target language in real-life situations making it difficult for students to take part in a conversation (Al-Maamari et al., 2021). In addition, since this method involves a passive role from students, the lack of interaction decreases students' motivation and engagement during the lesson (Naghiyeva, 2025). In contrast, modern approaches like CLT foster student autonomy by promoting active participation from students. Moreover, this approach improves students' ability to communicate effectively by facilitating the use of the target language in authentic contexts (Qasserras, 2023).

5.3 Limitations of the study

The present research addressed some of the limitations of previous studies in the field such as including classroom observations to ensure the truthfulness of the data obtained from the interviews. However, it must be acknowledged that there are also some limitations in this research. For instance, although having a small sample allowed the study to obtain extensive information, the lack of a larger sample prevented the research from generalizing the results. In addition, the BA in which the participants were enrolled does not specialize in basic education or blind children.

In consequence, the pre-service teachers do not have the necessary preparation to teach those types of students. The reason why participants chose those teaching contexts is based on their availability in the university catalogue; however, there is an identified need to develop courses in the BA program to prepare students to teach English in basic (elementary) levels.

5.4 Suggestions for future research

A recommendation to widen the research about pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of the methods to teach English and the factors that influence their decisions is to include a larger sample to be able to increase the generalizability of findings.

Another suggestion is to include pre-service teachers who teach in different contexts. The participants of this study carried out their practicum in elementary schools. Future research can include perceptions from pre-service teachers who teach in higher education levels. This suggestion can add depth and richness to the findings.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Observation form

Observer's name:	
Observation Date:	Observation Start Time:
Length of the Observation (Minutes):	Observation End Time:
Teacher's name:	
Topic:	Number of Students:
Class Observation	
Observational notes	Reflective notes
Beginning	
Middle	
End	

Appendix B. Interview 1

Thank you very much for your participation in this interview. I am a student from the B.A. in English Language Teaching at ICSHu. The aim of this interview is to explore your knowledge and perceptions of the methodology you use to teach English as well as the factors that impact your teaching methods choices. The results of this interview will be used only for research purposes, so please feel free to answer sincerely. Before we start, I would like to ask you to give me your consent to record this interview. This interview will be anonymous and will last approximately 30 minutes.

1. To start with, please briefly tell me why you decided to become an English teacher.
2. Can you tell me how you feel now that you are about to finish your studies?
3. Where did you decide to do your teaching practicum? Why?
4. What levels are you teaching?
   Knowledge about methods/approaches
5. Could you explain what you understand by method?
6. Could you explain what you understand by approach?
7. With what L2 teaching methods and approaches are you most familiar with?
8. What teaching methods/approaches are you implementing in your classes?
9. What do you know about the methods/approaches you use?
10. Could you describe a typical class outline?
11. What are the teachers' roles in the method/approach you use?
12. What are the students' roles in the method/approach you use?
13. What is the role of L1 in the method/approach you use?
14. What are the activities that can be used in the method/approach you implement?
15. What are the correction techniques of the method/approach you use?
    Perceptions of methods/approaches
16. Is it important to follow a specific method/approach when you teach? Why?
17. What are your reasons for choosing that method/approach?
18. Does it work to reach your goals?
19. How do students react to that specific method/approach?
20. Why do you prefer to use this method/approach to teach?
21. What are the advantages of using this teaching method/approach
22. What are the disadvantages of using this teaching method/approach?
23. What constraints have you encountered in using this method/approach?
24. In general, what is your perception regarding this method/approach?
    Factors that influence the choice of methods/approaches
25. How do you plan your lessons?
26. In your opinion, what are the external factors that make you choose a teaching method/approach?
27. In your opinion, what are the internal factors that make you choose a teaching method/approach?
28. What are your reasons for considering these aspects?
29. Which of these factors do you think has the biggest influence on your decisions to use a teaching method/approach? Explain your answer.

30. Which of these factors has the least significant influence on your decisions to use a teaching method/approach? Explain your answer.

Thank you for your help, before we finish the interview, is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix C. Interview 2

Thank you very much for your participation in this interview. The aim of this interview is to explore your knowledge and perceptions of the methodology you use to teach English as well as the factors that impact your teaching methods choices. The results of this interview will be used only for research purposes, so please feel free to answer sincerely. Before we start, I would like to ask you if you give me your consent to record this interview. This interview will be anonymous and will last approximately 25 minutes.

1. To start with, can you tell me a bit about how your practicum is going?
   2. Can you tell me how you feel now that you have more opportunities to teach?
   3. Can you describe how you felt before you taught the class that you recorded for the first/second observation?
   4. Can you describe how you felt while you taught the class that you recorded for the first/second observation?
   5. Can you describe how you felt after you taught the class that you recorded for the first/second observation?
   Knowledge about methods/approaches
   6. What teaching methods/approaches did you implement in that class?
   7. Why did you choose that particular method/approach?
   8. What are the main characteristics of the method/approach that you used?
   9. What were your roles in the method/approach that you used?
   10. What were the students' roles in the method/approach that you used?
   11. What was the role of L1 in the method/approach that you used?
   12. What correction techniques of that method/approach did you use?
   13. Can you describe the activities that you implemented in your class?
   14. Why did you choose the activities that you used during the class?
   15. Can you describe how those activities are linked to the approach that you used?
   Perceptions of methods/approaches
   16. Did the method/approach work to reach your goals?
   17. How did students react to the method/approach you used?
   18. What were the advantages of the teaching method/approach you used?
   19. What were the disadvantages of the teaching method/approach used?
   20. What constraints did you encounter in using this method/approach for that class?
   21. In general, what is your perception regarding the implementation of that method/approach for that specific class?
   Factors that influence the choice of methods/approaches
   22. What were the external factors that made you choose that method/approach for that specific class?
   23. What were the internal factors that made you choose that method/approach for that specific class?
   24. What were your reasons for considering these aspects?
   25. Which of these factors do you think had the biggest influence on your decisions to use that teaching method/approach? Explain your answer.

26. Which of these factors had the least significant influence on your decisions to use that teaching method/approach? Explain your answer.

Thank you for your help, before we finish the interview, is there anything else you would like to add?