



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA
FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN Y CIENCIAS HUMANAS
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS



A PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

LUISA FERNANDA CASTELLANOS RODRIGUEZ

STEVEN DAVID PALACIOS RAMOS



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

DIPLOMA COURSE

Lifelong Professional Development: Empowering Foreign Language Teachers

MONTERÍA - CÓRDOBA

2020





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Statement submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of English

Teaching Program

MENTOR

PEDRO AGUAS CASTILLO, PhD

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Our Leadership Profile

As professional teacher leaders we are empowered souls that every day seek to promote cooperative work through the implementation of the art of motivating a group. As leaders, we have the challenge to put into practice the abilities that we have acquire during the development of our career and at the same time continuing empowering and improving our methodology and pedagogy to meet students' needs, wants and lacks. We are teacher leaders willing to develop an active role with autonomy, responsibility, respect and authority. Leaders who believe in the diversity and free expression of each one of our followers and also we are able to enhance and improve the learning and teaching processes of our team.

—Luisa Castellanos & Steven Palacios, Personal Leadership Statement





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1. Introduction

Leadership is the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal. Experts as Leithwood et al. (2006) and Harris (2012) say that leadership is the effectiveness and improvement of schools, forms a key component considered as the second most important school ingredient. An effective leadership is based upon ideas (either original or borrowed) but won't happen unless those ideas can be communicated to other in a way that engages them enough to act as a leader wants them to act (Samur, 2019). Consequently, leadership requires more than control or authority, it's comprised of responsibilities, respect, motivation and attitude.

Cooperative work is one of the key aspects of the teacher and students leadership. The objective of this ability is to achieve common goals through the development of teamwork. This speaks of how important and fundamental leadership is in any field or discipline. Therefore it is rooted in these processes leaving different definitions by those who have the ability to work with and in this field. In this way, leadership is an indispensable academic process that requires people to follow a role model guide with the objective to attain shared goals through a cooperative work.

According to Pont, Nusche, & Moorman (2008), leadership functions can contribute in making provision of guidance of the main characteristics, tasks and responsibilities of proficient leaders in a specific field, so the individuals are able to adequately guide, direct and control the operations and situations with the impact of effective leadership skills.





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2. Our Assumptions

Regarding our role as teachers we have to incorporate and promote programs and processes that improve the quality and level of education of students, through the implementation of tools such as authority and autonomy with the purpose of strengthening and increasing students' cognitive skills. Taking into account the assumptions and experiences of other teachers we can say that they are necessary for the development of L2 students, so they assume different challenges or responsibilities when developing communicative and cognitive competencies. In this way, the teacher uses his/her knowledge to promote cooperative work, commitment, motivation and interest among the students. Through the teacher perceptions students will be always the focus of the academic processes because teachers seek to adapt the educational processes to the needs, wants and lacks that student will face when learning. Consequently, we as teachers play an important role in the development of these processes because our assumptions give us the opportunity to know the advantages and disadvantages that students will have with the second language acquisition. This allows us to develop appropriate and elaborate programs for students to contribute to the cognitive and personal improvement of them.

Teacher leadership requires some specific attitudes to be developed effectively. We as teachers have to implement leadership strategies as good interactive tools which can help us with implementation and creation of projects or activities that encourage participation, self-directed learning and teacher empowerment. It also allow us to enhance students in the





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development of abilities that they will need to develop themselves as social beings who are exposed to a continuous process of knowledge acquisition.

Collaborative work has influenced our leadership learning because through this we can exchange ideas, clarify doubts and provide information to those who need, thus we are immersed in a group learning which benefits all participants of this process. Also this collaborative learning process helps us to put in practice, to strengthen our skills as teacher leaders, and in the same way allows us to expand our knowledge and acquire the empathy and experience necessary to enhance our desire to do things the in the right way. Following this desire many questions arise on our way in the search for this professional and effective leadership, such as: do we have the basic skills to be considered leaders?, do we want to be professional leaders?, is really fundamental the leadership for educational processes?. This last question has been answered over the years and even more when our research proposal in the subject of seminar was focused on educational leadership, which has enriched our knowledge of this fundamental life skill.

3. Leadership Empowerment and Implications for the Future

Our journey on the constant search for academic professionalism has been influenced by various perceptions and experiences that contribute to our development. In this way the collaborative work has become a fundamental piece in this process. The possibility of working with colleagues allows us to have a broader perspective of the information, knowledge already acquired and new knowledge, and therefore allows us to strengthen our weaknesses because we can take into account the shortcomings and advantages of our peers





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when making decisions and in this way build an excellent rapport in a group way. A clear example of this may be when there is a group assignment and the members of each group exchange ideas, opinions and suggestions in order to achieve the objective of such activity. Through this type of projects individual weaknesses are reinforced and strengths are also acquired due to the exchange of knowledge and attitudes. This is something that each of us who are in this process of professional training has experienced many times. Consequently, all this exchange of weaknesses and strengths has positively affected our teaching process which provides us with leadership skills and collaborative abilities such as autonomy and commitment. These skills are necessary to expand our knowledge, which is fundamental in the nature of teaching. In this way, charismatic leadership is based on the admiration and respect shown to a leader by subordinate coworkers, and is grounded in trust, honesty, and credibility (Friedman, 2004)

According to our role during the course, we can institute that this process has allowed us to strengthen and develop many personal and academic aspects, such as our autonomy and commitment as future leader teachers, which have helped us to improve our responsibility and confidence. Throughout the development of the degree we have learned to be leaders, to help and motivate others, as well as to enhance teamwork. This aspects has been fundamental in our role as students to respect and listen the ideas of our co-workers. We have learned to face challenges, take risks, and take into account different opinions and at the same time to be teaching guides.





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Apart from this, there have been also obstacles that have caused difficulties in the process, such as the use of virtual or technological resources, we consider that this has been the most relevant inconvenience that has arisen in the course. In some cases, the educational resources or tools that are necessary for the learning process to be effective are not enough, as well as distance can be a great disadvantage which can affect communication and understanding, when expressing ideas and opinions with our co-workers, on the other hand this situation allows us to be able to value and commit to our learning process.

4. Conclusion

Finally, at the end of our professional career our weaknesses and strengths will be put into practice when it comes to functioning as professional leaders and in this way both points will vary due to the experience that we are going to acquire. That is to say, with the experience come new challenges, new strengths and also new weaknesses will come afloat, but the great point in favor that we have as leaders, is the large number of tools, skills and knowledge that we acquired in the course of our career to adapt our methodology and pedagogy to the academic needs of the educational processes. In the same way with the culmination of this course does not end our process of professional and linguistic development because in our training is present the constant acquisition of learning and therefore knowledge. In the same way the empowerment of the qualities related to leadership which goes hand in hand with our professionalism for the future. Therefore we consider that the degree has provided us with the necessary bases to face any academic process satisfactorily because through this we have grown individually and professionally as





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beings in charge of transmitting knowledge and skills necessary for the development as social and human beings.





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