A PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

ANYE LUZ RAMOS PUCHE

UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

DIPLOMA COURSE

Lifelong Professional Development: Empowering Foreign Language Teachers

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

Teaching Program

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MY LEADERSHIP PROFILE

As a teacher leader, I feel greatly encouraged and I feel willing to face the challenge I encounter in a diverse classroom. It allows me to go beyond my students needs and take into account their skills to bridge their educational performance with learning objectives through innovative and creative practices. This experience empowers me to become the teacher leader I want to be: A Passionate collaborator, diversity supporter, and compassionate facilitator. These are the strengths that allow me to address not only my own objectives, but the ones that   school community and administrative staff pursue. Helping others through their learning process has inspired me to be more responsible and a risk taker in my own professional development and work on educational and transformational solutions for the community.

—Anye Ramos, Personal Leadership Statement

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1. Introduction

Leadership is involved in all aspects of our life. It attracts universal attention; for centuries many historians, philosophers, business experts and different experts from different areas have attempted to understand and to explain leadership (Hackman & Johnson, 2013) Some authors described leadership as an influence on the agenda of a group (Stogdill,1950) others attributed leadership to an interpersonal process as a result of a directed communication leading toward a goal (Tannenbaum, Wechsler and Masaryk (1961) some others tried to define traits or exhibits as the main features of "leadership" (Boyett, 2002, as cited in Low, 2010) However, one central idea can be assured from all the previous defining-experiences of leadership. Leadership is a process and not specific characteristics or personal qualities. It refers to the process of interactive influence that occurs when, in a given context, some people accept someone as their leader to achieve common goals (Silva, 2016). The aforementioned implies that leadership is a dynamic product of leader-members' genuine interactions and it depends on assuming a major role in the specific group to pursue changes and restructure processes successfully. Therefore, the process of leadership builds upon the purpose of the leader. Iqbal (2012) affirms that a great leader is capable of making greater humans by empowering and growing them with high commitment and passion.

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It suggests the significant appreciation and encouragement a leader should demonstrate toward their followers and communicate through personal actions. (Fry, 2003) All this theory on leadership highlights how important the interaction among a leader, followers and context is conceived. These considerations can be experienced in a context and out of its limits for the transformational power of leadership. This transformation can be in terms of motivation, structure and perceptions while the context experiences changes. Leadership refers to the process of transformation in many aspects of a community which are reflected in the achievement of specific goals through collaboration, resilience, effort and determination of all the members including the leader as the main influence.

2. My assumptions

The role of leadership has impacted on some many other areas different to business and Personal Development. It has extended to education arising the awareness on how leadership creates new opportunities to bridge difficulties and innovation as well as the change in current cultural and educational paradigms. For this reason, educators, entire school staff, and different organizations are providing scenarios for teachers to develop leadership skill in natural ways and become leaders in their communities. Although becoming a leader implies empowering, transformation and goal achieving, it goes beyond staged-processes and positive results.

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Educational leaders need to be interested on improvement to bring changes for the benefit of their students, the whole community and not only as a personal gratification. It means that leaders on this field need to empower themselves on their own skills, recognizing how they could lead to changes on different areas of the teaching and learning aspects, analyzing the improvement it could bring in terms of learning outcomes, methodologies, assessment, interactions, motivation and so forth. Furthermore, among these necessities, there is also the opportunity of studying their own students' objectives, insecurities, desires and be supporters and searchers of a potential plan to help those difficulties to be overcome. On the other hand, a leader is always concerned on how through education and competent students can stablish networks and organize work that impacts on their communities and maximizes students´ potentials as well. Through all the initiatives educational leaders can influence and lead transformation, difficulties and challenges may emerge and become an obstacle for progression; however, their powerful ideas and decisions are the basis for defeating any situation encountered. It is well known how the labor of a leader is difficult, but as leadership also means collaboration, a leader always finds the way to organize a plan co-working with people involved as students, coworkers and directives. Experience on teamwork is always inspirational and decisive for collaboration. Collaborative experience with my partners has inspired me to be less competitive and more open to others contributions in order to build solid knowledge and quality product.

Working with others allow us to be responsible for our own actions and arises the awareness on how our role in a group may affect work dynamics, improve and shape organization. Group work also provides a significant opportunity to strengthen trust and reliability among members and support our own leadership skills. It means we are encouraging each other in a subtle way to stand for ourselves and take a chance toward our own development. As awareness, strengths and skills are enhanced and we become more committed to becoming leaders, new ideas evolve in our way of thinking and curiosity leads me to ask myself questions such as: How can I involve myself in additional leadership practice out of educational context? Do I need more extrinsic motivation or different leaders 'perspectives in order to trigger your inner leader? What kind of people would I work with if a become a full time and dedicated leader in education? What kind of leadership labor would I dedicate to? Would I inspire others through your contributions as a leader?   These questions are the just an expression of a bigger plan. The overview of an ongoing process. In other words, there are several aspects to reflect on and analyze when it comes to organizing my own leadership agenda for the future.

3. Leadership empowerment and implications for the future

Empowerment comes through the creation of a collaborative community through the development of different cultural practices in the context. Assuming my own leadership role allows me to reflect on my own process and prepare the path for my prospective plan. First, I need to consider as a basis of my own agenda the significance of the school culture and values that contribute to the creation of a collaborative culture. Analyzing values, behaviors inherit to my coworkers and students will be supportive to lead actions for improvement. Before making any decision and moving to the change, I will give greater opportunities for my team so that they also lead and participate in management under the right advice and training. For this reason, the creation of leadership programs that encourage school staff and influence on their own teaching outcomes is necessary. Leadership support will allow the school stuff to see their competences and attitudes in a different way. They will be more aware about the meaning and impact of their job and become more involved in their own practice and school management. This empowerment is determining for aligning school goals and professional growth for the team. However; in this path of development I might encounter unexpected problems, frustrations and confusion. To ensure communication effectiveness, a positive atmosphere and encouragement for my community, Reflection will be suggested to negotiate.

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Especially for making important decisions, working on projects or embrace uncertainty in difficult moments. First, as a leader, I have to embrace my weaknesses so that my team can feel more open to express their thoughts and I can listen to their ideas. This guarantees engagement, learning and confidence in the dynamics of the team. As a result, I will construct progress and promote values with my team.

4. Conclusion

Leadership is not about having all the solutions and avoiding difficulties, it is about facing the challenges and building collaboration through innovation and learning opportunities. This insight under an educational perspective needs to be aligned with school goals, culture context and teachers' motivation on improving their instruction. Based on the above, leadership success relies on the alignment of different instructional, behavioral, curricular and cultural aspects. This alignment ensures interaction of educational aspects in general and human talent to lead diverse actions towards transformation. Therefore, schools need to evaluate the role administrators, teacher staff and school culture play in the whole picture of foreign language education and how they promote development and changes in their context.

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