Content Area Teachers' Knowledge Co-Construction About Bilingual Education: An Opportunity for Professional Development

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Abstract

This interpretative and descriptive study describes the insights of eight content area teachers about bilingual education while participating in a Teachers' Study Group designed as an informal space for teachers' professional development. The main objectives of this research were to uncover ways by which teachers constructed their understanding of bilingual education and to understand teachers´ reflections about their bilingual practices through pedagogical discussions. Audio recordings from the study group discussions held in nine pedagogical meetings with the teachers, were the main source of data collection. Findings suggest that spaces for teachers' knowledge co-construction and for reflection on pedagogical issues serve as a platform for professional growth. They are necessary within schools´ agendas and should be planned based on teaching and learning goals. Results indicate that collaborative work among teachers is fundamental to ensure the success of bilingual programs. The results also inform us that informal teachers' professional development programs can be spaces where teachers can learn about the bilingual underpinnings of a program, share pedagogical experiences and learn from colleagues to enrich their personal teaching repertoire.

Key words: Study groups, teachers' professional development, knowledge co-construction, reflection.

Table of Contents

Table of figures

Table of appendixes

Chapter 1

Statement of the Problem

This study was carried out at a private school, which was subsidized by a Family

Compensation Fund (FCF). This means that the school is in service to the community that is part

of the FCF and the students can enroll independently of their socio-economic status. In 2016,

there were 3.729 registered students from preschool to eleventh grade, 168 teachers and 30

administrative staff members. Since 2008, the school has implemented an institutional bilingual

education model that involves all the academic community.

According to the Secretary of Education of Bogota (SED, 2012) and the school's

Institutional Educational Project (Proyecto Educativo Institucional PEI) this is a National

Bilingual School, which means that 50 % of the curriculum is taught in English. Although,

English is used for teaching and learning in different areas through the Content Language

Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology, only about 20% of the curriculum is taught in the

foreign language. The model used by the school intends to provide students with tools not only

for academic life, but also to have better opportunities in a globalized world. Consequently,

students are expected to reach a B2 level of English proficiency according to the Common

European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL), which is the framework adopted by

the Ministry of Education in Colombia.

Having in mind the bilingual panorama of this school, there were many learning and

teaching issues that called my attention, such as students´ performance and social interactions in

this EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context. However, there was an interesting aspect that

I considered was worth examining in depth. It had to do with the struggle that non-bilingual teachers faced when they were required to teach a lesson in the foreign language. More specifically, in this bilingual program, school content area teachers (math, social studies, Spanish and science teachers) must include a session called "Say it in English" in their "*Guía de Aprendizaje*" (learning guide), that is the basic school material they use every class. Teachers must design a lesson in English that includes topics addressed in their discipline and it is implemented every four weeks. Additionally, class observation is an assessment criterion used by English coordinators to evaluate content area teachers´ work regarding lessons in the foreign language.

In order to detect the difficulties teachers were facing, I had informal conversations with them during our breaks by which I inquired after their concerns about the bilingual program. I noticed that the new teachers in middle school struggled with materials´ design and with the delivery of their classes in English mainly due to their level of English proficiency. This was also confirmed by one of the teachers of social studies, who stated that her low proficiency interfered with her teaching practices. Although she was taking English classes for general purposes at the language institution of the FCF, she informed me that she could design the session in English, but she was unable to carry a whole class in English. She gave the instructions in Spanish and the students worked easily. She felt overwhelmed because she taught in eighth grade and the students had a higher language communicative competence compared with hers. She stated:

> "Cuando tengo la sesión del "Say it in English" es un lio porque no soy muy hábil para el inglés. Yo le digo al monitor de inglés que lidere la clase. Yo los saludo en inglés y les doy las instrucciones como "open the notebook" y así. Si los estudiantes tienen preguntas, se las hacen al monitor. Yo solo verifico si tienen la actividad completa, que la mayoría de las veces es de completar y hacer oraciones, pero no les corrijo porque no se inglés."

"When I have the "Say it in English" session it is a problem for me because I am not very skillful in English. I tell the English subject monitor [a high achieving student in English] to lead the class. I greet them in English and I give simple instructions such as "open the notebook" and so. If the students have a question, they ask the subject monitor. I just check if they complete the activities, which most of the time are about filling the gaps and writing sentences, but I do not correct them because I do not know English."

A conversation with a Spanish teacher led me to detect that she shared a similar concern. She affirmed that material design in English was not difficult, but when she had to perform the "Say it in English" session, she assigned the class instruction to the students. They must read the instructions out loud, solve the exercises proposed and she limited her speech to a greeting and basic commands in the foreign language. If a student had a vocabulary question, she pointed at an English-Spanish dictionary on her desk and the student sought for the words. She could communicate using just few words in English and she assured that students had not realized that she did not speak English. She was afraid of making mistakes during her class.

In order to support my assumptions and learn about the non-bilingual teachers experiences in this bilingual teaching setting, I designed a questionnaire based on qualitative research studies about CLIL methodology and bilingual projects carried out in different schools in Colombia and Latin America (Korosidou & Griva 2016; de Lama 2015; McDougald, 2015; Mariño 2014). I applied the instrument to 87 teachers who were selected through volunteer sampling (Morrison, 2006, cited in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013) from math, social studies, science, Spanish and the humanities content areas and who were working from kindergarten to eleventh grade in the school.

This questionaire was divided in four different sets of questions which gave an account of different categories to problematize this language and teaching issue. The first set of questions aimed at gathering demografic information. Most of the teachers where female (n= 45). Out of the total group, 75% of the teachers taught in middle and high school. In addition, their distribution per discipline was Spanish 25.3%, science 24.1%, humanities 23%, math and social studies 20.7%. A high percentage of teachers had been working between 0 and 2 years (63.4%) in the school. This information shows that the majority of the teachers were novice in the school and this aspect might have interfered with their acquaintance with the bilingual model.

The second group of three questions drew on beliefs about bilingual education. The third set of questions helped me to identify what they believed were the advantages and disadvantages of implementing the CLIL metholodogy in their individual subjects. On one hand, teachers linked the advantages of CLIL methodology with the students performance and their academic success. On the other hand, teachers identified several disadvantages that were related to their professional performance because of their low English proficiency level. This consequently led also to lack of confidence during the "Say it in English" sessions. Some teachers pointed out that they had insufficient expertise on material design in the foreign language.

Finally, the last nine questions aimed at recognizing their personal concerns based on their in-class work within the bilingual model. They reasured that their low English proficiency was an obstacle to develop a class using the parameters established in the CLIL methodology. However, they noted that the material design became a personal challenge which allowed them to prove their capacity to understand a foreing language.

Additionally, the school bilingual project document states that teachers are responsible for the implementation of lessons (School Bilingual Project, 2016). Although, the teachers

collaboratively designed the schools' curriculum, they did not have the opportunity to discuss the pertinence of topics in the students' learning processes when implementing lessons in English. This led me to reflect upon the need to open up informal spaces where the teachers could have opportunities for pedagogical discussions about bilingual education, their role in the bilingual school project and their professional growth. These spaces can become a platform to confront their concerns, examine their linguistic limitations and help them to cope with the requirements of the school´s bilingual education program.

In order to stimulate teachers to discuss issues of their concern about bilingual education and their teaching practices, I proposed the creation of a "Study Group". This research alternative involves participants in reviewing professional literature or samples of student work (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003), which aims to create a democratic setting where the teachers decide what are of knowledge in their field, they want to access and how (Anderson & Saavedra, 1995). Consequently, the teachers would have the opportunity to gather and share their experiences, reflect upon their own methodologies and materials under my guidance. My pedagogical objectives were: (a) to foster awareness about bilingual education within the discussions in a teacher Study Group, (b) to promote critical reflections about teachers' bilingual pedagogical practices and (c) to boost collaborative work among teachers with the aim of improving practices for teaching contents of the disciplines in English.

Initially, the topics and methodology of the Study Group were presented to the participants. The plan was subject to change and was negotiated based on the teachers´ feedback and on their concerns, to create a democratic setting among participants. As my intention was to examine teachers' views and understandings about bilingual education and their practices, for this study I posed the following questions and objectives:

Research question:

How do non-bilingual content area teachers co-construct knowledge about bilingual education practices in a teacher Study Group?

Research objectives:

1. To uncover ways by which teachers construct their understandings of bilingual education.

2. To understand teachers´reflections about their bilingual practices through pedagogical discussions.

Rationale

The teachers who voluntarily participated in this initiative had an open space to co-construct knowledge upon language teaching and learning based on their reflections about their daily work, experiences, and knowledge. That space was not formally established by the institution and was a model to emulate in the school while empowering teachers to critically think about their professional growth.

The information about teachers using CLIL in Colombian bilingual education is scarce (Mariño, 2014) Therefore, this project wanted to contribute to examine more in-depth Colombian teachers' bilingual experiences while strengthening their opportunities for professional growth. Another pedagogical issue to target was the increasing need for professional development programs to understand the integration of language and content in EFL classrooms as suggested in a study by McDougald (2009). Such programs contribute to the achievement of the participants teaching goals, as well as the students' learning goals. Hence, this study

evidenced and explored bilingual teaching practices reflected on non-bilingual content area

teachers´ experiences in specific contexts, which nurture the professional development research

field. The knowledge obtained in this project also inteded to add to the existing body of

knowledge of the research line called "Processes of Teacher Education and Development" of the

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Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I describe the theory, concepts and the state of the art that served as the foundation for my project that had twofold purposes. One was to uncover ways by which teachers construct their understanding of bilingual education and the second, to understand teachers´ reflections about their bilingual practices through pedagogical discussions. My study adopted a socio constructivist perspective because I consider that teaching and learning processes are built among members of a social group who co-construct knowledge together based on their reflections and interactions.

My belief, which is rooted on Freire's perspective (1970), is that individuals are equipped with knowledge they have constructed through their personal, academic and professional experiences, and that such knowledge can be enriched and challenged through formal and informal professional development opportunities. Spaces for reflection and interaction enable teachers to co-construct knowledge. In this particular case, I viewed the immersion of content area teachers in a bilingual institutional model as an opportunity to voice their concerns regarding bilingualism and pedagogy and to nurture their practices based on their discussions. The "Study Group" I designed is understood as a zone for them to build their interpretations.

Social constructivism and pedagogy

The main premises behind constructivism and socio constructivism aim at providing explanations about individuals' psychological and cultural processes, about how individuals

construct knowledge and how they develop thinking in learning. The foregoing discussion includes a revision of the main tenets of the socio-constructivist paradigm as proposed by Piaget (1969) and Vygotsky (1986) respectively.

Learning is an active process in the constructivist theory. It is mediated by personal experiences, which determine how individuals represent the world using language (Christie, 2005 cited in Amineh & Asl, 2015; Piaget, 1969 cited in Vygotsky, 1986). Following Piaget's theory of development, learning is conceived as an introspective cognitive process that is determined by "ages and stages", which predict what individuals can or cannot understand at a certain age (Piaget, 1970 cited in Amineh & Asl, 2015; Vygotsky, 1986). Constructivism proposes that learning is a personal practice that implies individual discovery through inner development processes. There is a constant dialogue between individuals' prior knowledge and their new experiences, which leads to new knowledge construction. This internal process, in addition to the maturity of the individual, allows the learner to transcend to a social stage (Piaget, 1969 cited in Vygotsky, 1986).

From a constructivist perspective, learners are at the core of the learning process and independent work is central in such process. The role of teachers is threefold. It includes guiding students´ to become aware of their own knowledge, providing them with opportunities to test the adequacy of their current understandings and promoting learning environments that exploit inconsistencies between learners´ current understandings and the new experiences they encounter (Hoover, 1996). Therefore, from a constructivist perspective, learning and teaching are mediated by personal experience, learning is not passive, and individuals are not a *tabula rasa* (an empty container) in which new knowledge is etched (Hoover, 1996). In this sense, learning is always supported by previous learners' experiences that teachers should bring to forefront.

Although Vygotsky (1986) agreed with Piaget's (1969) premises about the active process of learning, his theory is developed from a social and interactionist perspective. Vygotsky addressed the issue of humankind from a cultural rather than a natural perspective. To understand how human thinking is developed, he argued for the need to transcend biological development. From his view, learning is socially constructed, and both history and culture influence the mental processes of an individual. Hyslop-Margison and Strobel (2007) stated that "constructivism strongly supports the idea, however, that individual representations of knowledge are somewhat idiosyncratic and socially mediated" (p.75).

Consequently, meaningful learning occurs when individuals are engaged in social activities such as interaction and collaboration (Amineh & Asl, 2015) either in school settings or in their everyday activities. Moreover, Vygotsky (1978) proposed that learners move from the introspective way of thinking which individual knowledge consciousness is or how an individual sees the world (state of the mind), to a retrospective development processes mediated by social interaction. In this respect, teachers facilitate and promote interaction among learners creating environments where there is knowledge construction and such actions position teaching as a social practice. However, it is important to consider radical constructivist tendencies that promote the idea that individuals construct their own knowledge by themselves and in some way "erase" the exterior (Gergen & Wortham, 2001), that does not guarantee knowledge construction. Some that oppose to that view are Hyslop-Margison and Strobel (2007) who pointed out that learners or for this study teachers, should be guided to elaborate their understandings based on grounded claims for which they must provide sufficient evidence or warrant so as to make facts distinguishable from values.

It is on substantiated interaction and discussion that peers construct their understandings and reconstruct knowledge. In constructivist environments the internalization of knowledge is fostered, and it goes through a transition from an 'emic' to an 'etic' perspective. The former refers to individuals' own construction or sense making of the world, whereas the latter refers to the influence of the social world, the "outsider" or social perspective (Vygotsky, 1978) From the "outsider" dimension, Vygotsky also believed that learning is scaffolded, and it is a continuous process that implies improvement that closely approximates to the learner's potential (1978). That continuous process takes place in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is "the distance between the actual developmental level, as determined by independent problem solving, and the level of potential development, as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.133). According to this principle, individuals' current understanding in the ZPD is nurtured by the social interaction with those individuals who have different "levels" of understanding and experience.

Dewey (1980c, as described by Garrison, 1995) recognizes the joined and collective efforts in the construction of knowledge, and how such construction opens spaces for the social transformation. Orland-Barak and Tillema (2007) agreed with Dewey's (1980c, as cited in Garrison, 1995) idea of thinking the ZPD as a community which serves as a platform for social interaction as an important factor in Teachers' Professional Development (TPD) processes. Such as processes are evident in the development of a "Study Group" in this research as an academic exercise to foster social and professional interaction among teachers. This last author (Dewey's, 1980c as cited in Garrison, 1995) considered that through a sense of belonging to a community, its members construct a democratic environment that frees intelligence to reconstruct the social order (Garrison, 1995).

These ideas strongly supported my proposal and influenced my views as I considered that

the "teachers' Study Group" was a space where teachers not only reflected upon their practices

and co-constructed knowledge in a collective and constructivist environment, but also felt part of

a community of intellectuals who could enrich their teaching practices. The work in this ZPD

draws on the professional growth and pedagogical engagement in bilingual education.

Co-construction of Knowledge

To understand the co-construction of knowledge in this constructivist setting, the theory of

Vygotsky (1978) introduced the distinction between lower and higher psychological functions.

The first ones refer to memory, attention and perception that are "natural" or "introspective"

ways of thinking development. These lower psychological functions, according to him,

transcended to higher psychological ones through social interaction (Wertsch, Ramírez Garrido,

Zanón, & Cortés, 1988). In collective interaction, mental processes such as abstraction,

generalization, comparison, reflection, representation, volition, or judgment are generally evident

(Kozulin, 1994; Vygotsky, 1978). It is in collaborative environments where knowledge

construction takes place and learning emerges. In this sense, co-construction of knowledge

demands higher psychological functions, which allow theorists to understand how individuals

build intellect in social practices based on their knowledge, experiences and interaction with

peers.

Knowledge is defined as the reflection of the world that is a dialectical and tentative

subject, which is constantly transcending and changing (Gergen & Wortham, 2001; Golombek,

1994). It is also a contextually-driven intrapersonal creation, something to work with, share and

build on rather than merely transmit (Ngcoza & Southwood, 2015; Adams, 2006) Furthermore,

Gergen and Wortham (2001) consider that knowledge is achieved when inner states of mind serve as a mirror of the existing states of the external world. Consequently, knowledge co-construction is the display of individual theories based on personal experience, which is mediated, reshaped and renewed through social interaction. In these processes, at the social level, the individuals create their own understanding by interacting with the group's shared construction (Gunawardena, Lowe, & Anderson, 1997).

The co-construction of knowledge for this study, is understood as the process of building knowledge through social interaction. Each member of the group brings to the discussion their personal knowledge that is grounded in professional and individual background. Having in mind this group of teachers as a community, members have the opportunity to mentor others on skills, share ideas and engage in meaningful conversations that lead to learning co-construction of knowledge happens (Erazo-Jiménez, 2009). This process also entails negotiation of meaning (Gergen & Wortham, 2001; Gunawardena, Lowe, & Anderson, 1997). Therefore, negotiation and mentoring in different areas of knowledge, give teachers the possibility to maintain a critical reflexive posture towards their work (Gergen & Wortham, 2001). In Wasser and Bressler's words (1996 as cited in Orland-Barak and Tillema, 2007), such spaces for reflection "offer academic communities to bring together their different kinds of knowledge, experience, and beliefs to forge new meanings through the process of joint inquiry within which they are engaged" (p. 362).

The reflective component in the co-construction of knowledge for this study is fostered in an informal way in teachers' professional development. Such a space was an opportunity to explore how content area teachers´ co-construct knowledge about bilingual education when they interacted, shared experiences and reflected upon their day-to-day teaching practices. A deeper

discussion of the importance of reflection in teachers´ professional development will be presented in the following section.

Teachers' professional development

To understand the concept of teachers´ professional development, first it is necessary to make a distinction between teachers´ training and teachers' development programs. Teachers training programs aim to provide educators with a set of practical activities as tools for achieving short term and immediate goals, as well as to understand basic concepts in their teaching practices (Richards & Farrell, 2005). It places a strong emphasis on teachers' language competence or teaching techniques, but it does not necessarily focus on teachers' growth (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). In fact, teachers training has been subjected to strong criticism. It has been considered an instrumental perspective of teaching in which educators are conceived as providers rather than facilitators of knowledge (Flores, 2001). Giroux (2002) adds that teachers should never be reduced to technicians, just as education should never be reduced to training.

Teachers' professional development (TPD) on the contrary, implies the achievement of long-term goals based on professional and personal growth. Teachers' education is a voluntary ongoing learning process and it has become a way to ensure that teachers succeed in matching learning and teaching goals that go beyond the instruction in formal institutions (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). Richard and Farrell (2005) affirmed that it often involves examining different dimensions of a teacher's practice as a basis for reflective review and can be viewed as a "bottom-up" practice.

Researchers propose bottom-up approaches for TPD which should bear in mind teachers´ needs (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017), and opportunities to contribute to their long-

term goals and that foster reflection to enact social change (Aguirre, 2018; Cárdenas, González

& Álvarez, 2010; González, 2007; Richard & Farrell, 2005). Teachers´ professional development

programs go against focusing only on methodology; they should concentrate on the construction

of teachers' knowledge that spurs professional growth (Cárdenas, González & Álvarez, 2010). It

is not just the development of workshops, but also opportunities for teachers to |work together,

examine practices and exchange ideas about teaching (Mundry & Loucks-Horsley, 1999). This

idea emphasizes the role of group and collaborative work and reflexivity. In addition,

development is seen as the path to find pedagogical alternatives to transform and construct

knowledge based on reflection on praxis (Aguirre, 2018). When teachers have the opportunity to

systematically reflect upon their theories and experiences in the classroom, they are equipped

with problem-solving skills, which make them experts in their contexts and position them as

high-quality professionals (Erazo-Jiménez, 2009). Teachers´ professional development implies

critical reflective practices that give teachers tools to gain deeper understanding of teaching

situations and classroom life. It empowers teachers to challenge the status quo and improve their

professional skills (Escobar, 2013; Flores, 2001).

It has been difficult to reach consensus on a definition of TPD since it varies from context

to context and teachers´ needs. According to Desimone (2009) TPD is understood as the

experiences that contribute to personal, social and emotional teachers´ growth. Also, TDP

agendas locate teachers at the core of the process for investigation, innovation and knowledge

construction (Jerez, 2008). Likewise, teachers' professional development programs that are

context specific, job embedded and content based are particularly important for addressing the

diverse needs of students and teachers in differing settings (Darling- Hammond, Hyler, &

Gardner, 2017). Farrell (2008) places reflective activities at the center of the TDP programs, so

that "teachers can engage at any stage of their careers to continue constructing their own

personal theories of teaching and improve their instructional practice" (p.4). Taking into

consideration all the definitions by different authors, I can conclude that TDP is an ongoing

personal and institutional intention to improve teachers´ craft, attending to educators needs and

concerns about learning and teaching processes grounded on context. TDP embraces

collaboration and encourages teachers to reflect upon their own practices in order to shape their

own theories, create and co-construct knowledge and be active agents in social change.

Types of teachers' professional development programs

TPD programs can be either formal or informal. Formal TPD opportunities are found in

seminars, master´s programs, and college courses, among others, which serve as a platform to

conceptualize teachers' profession (Little, 1993 as cited in Desimone, 2009). Informal TPD

include the reflection on everyday activities and informal discussions with peers about teaching

practices based on teachers' daily work (Desimone, 2009). Both practices enrich professional,

social and personal teachers´ experiences, which contribute to long-term goals.

One of the main objectives of TPD is to "[document] different kinds of teaching practices;

reflective analysis of teaching practices; examining beliefs, values, and principles; collaborating

with peers on classrooms projects and conversation with peers on core issues" (Richards &

Farrell 2005, p. 4), in order to create bottom-up frameworks to contribute to professional

development programs' agendas. Regarding this last element, Jerez (2008) argues that schools

and institutions have the responsibility to pursue the education and development of teachers in

the in-service phase by establishing development programs as part of their work. However, this

is not always the case and it may be explained by the fact that institutions do not have the

financial support they require or the organizational structure to ensure spaces for teachers to

refine their practices.

In support of Jerez' idea (2008), I proposed teachers in the school where I worked to

participate in a teachers´ Study Group as an informal TPD program, aimed at opening an

informal space where teachers could interact with colleagues from different areas, share personal

and professional experiences and co-construct knowledge about bilingual education. My

expectation was that in such as space, teachers could develop a more reflective stance toward

their teaching or students´ learning as Diaz-Maggioli proposed (2003). They also could expand

knowledge by listening to peers and discussing their perceptions about language, L2 learning and

teaching. Likewise, the Study Group I proposed aimed at creating a sense of belonging to a

community of teachers to support professional development and to have ongoing education

opportunities through dialogue and reflection (Aldana & Cárdenas, 2011). Moreover, this space

served as a platform to create a democratic setting where the teachers could choose an area of

knowledge they wanted to access, examine, discuss and establish the procedures to do so, which

creates a more autonomous process (Anderson & Saveedra, 1995).

This study intended to contribute to teachers' learning opportunities by focusing on

discussions, which raised self- awareness in terms of knowledge of oneself as a teacher,

principles, and values, strengths and weaknesses (Richards & Farrell, 2005) within bilingual

education contexts. As well, it was an opportunity for collective participation in which teachers

learn from peers' experiences (Desimone, 2009). This is a process that must be guided and

designed rather than be left at random (Jerez, 2008). Consequently, the proposed an agenda for

the Study Group which was revised and modified by the participants, following a bottom-up

framework which pursued TPD processes and teachers´ growth.

Bilingualism and teachers' professional development

The school where this study was carried out has promoted bilingual education as a backbone of its educational plan since 2007. The institution has attempted to provide Colombian citizens with the opportunity to have a bilingual education program at a lower cost. According to the government policies on bilingual education, this institution is considered a National Bilingual one, which means that students have 50% opportunities of contact with the foreign language in the curriculum (SED, 2002). Consequently, through the implementation of a bilingual model, the institution is giving the Colombian society "the opportunity to access to a socially-accepted form of bilingualism, leading to the possibility of employment in the global marketplace" (de Mejia, 2011, p.7).

Regarding the conceptualization of bilingualism, foreign and local authors consider this a rigorous task. It demands the study of aspects such as culture, economy, colonial and local practices, institutional conditions and power relations, just to mention a few, within bilingual education contexts (Baker, 2011; de Mejía 2011; Guerrero, 2010; Vargas, 2008; González, 2007; Cummins, 1980). All the efforts to implement bilingual programs in private and public schools in Colombia, seem to be unsuccessfully attached to real learning and teaching communities´ needs. The tendency of those programs is to follow some European and American frameworks, which are not suitable for the Colombian context, having in mind the geographical, economic and social conditions of this country (Aldana & Cárdenas, 2011; de Mejia, 2011; Guerrero, 2010; González, 2007).

One of the tendencies to define bilingualism is to typify it based on several aspects within L2 learning context. According to Guerrero (2010) this classification "do not constitute clear cut

dichotomies but rather a continuum in which all the taxonomies interplay in endless ways" (p.

166). In general, the classification according to the theory revised by Guerrero (2010) includes:

balanced or dominant bilinguals (depending on their proficiency in each language);

compound, coordinate, or subordinate (according to the organization of linguistic codes and

meaning in the brain); early, simultaneous, sequential, or late (age of acquisition); incipient,

receptive, or productive (functional ability); additive or subtractive (effect of L1 on learning of

and retention of L2); and elite/folk, circumstantial/elective (language status, circumstances

leading to bilingualism) (p. 166). Essentially, the school where I worked follows a balanced use

of two languages in school instruction (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 1980). It means that L1 and L2

proficiency is developed and privileged at a same level.

All in all, the concept of bilingualism for the institution is understood as the capacity of

students to communicate in a foreign language (English), having a B2 level of language

proficiency according to the CEFRL (School Bilingual Project, 2016). Such as capacity responds

to the dynamics of a globalized world where the students are involved. However, the notion of

English as a symbol of prestige is linked to economic success and the access to "better"

opportunities, go against the idea of language as a tool to organize experience and construct

realities (Bruner & López, 2004; Guerrero, 2010).

To "guarantee" students' proficiency in both languages, the school follows a preview,

review and post-review method (Lessow-Hurley, 2000 as cited in the School Bilingual Project,

2016). In the preview section, the students receive input from the content teacher of the areas

such as math, science, and social studies in L1/Spanish. Afterwards, the topics and concepts

learnt in L1 are reviewed and reinforced in L2 by the language teacher in the review stage.

Finally, the content teacher concludes the cognitive processes using L2 in the session "say it in

English" in the post-review. For this study, I focused my attention on the post-review stage of the model since it is the section where the content teachers are directly involved in bilingual education practices.

Regarding the content and language instruction, the institution adapted Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) which has been understood as a dual focused educational approach in which an additional language/L2 is used for learning and teaching of both content and language (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010). Additionally, CLIL aims at finding a common place where language and content come across in a more natural way (Marsh, 2006 cited in McDougald, 2015). Assuming CLIL as the integration of language and content within learning and teaching contexts, it can be argued that this institution "did not oversee workforce [teachers] sufficiently competent in all three necessary areas: target language ability, subject knowledge, and CLIL methodology" (Hillyard, 2011, p.1) among others.

Lo (2017) makes a distinction of content teachers or content specialists who teach in CLIL programs calling them "CLIL teachers", to distinguish their professional abilities within bilingual education. According to Bertaux et al. (2010) and Marsh et al. (2012), the development of CLIL teachers´ competences should be seeing as one of the alternatives for TPD programs or framework. Those competences are led by the notion of what the teachers need to know and how they make new knowledge comprehensible to students (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Hillyard, 2011 as cited in Lo, 2017). Such competences are mainly related to the understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of CLIL, intercultural learning, knowledge about language learning, content and language integration and lesson planning and pedagogy (Bertaux et al., 2010; Marsh et al., 2010)

Having in mind the development of CLIL teachers' competences , some foreign and local

researchers claim that TPD programs should be based on teachers´ values, epistemological

principles, education background, socio-cultural contexts, content expertise, among others, and

on teachers' professional growth resulting from reflection on praxis (Lo, 2017; McDougald,

2015; Gutierrez & Fernández, 2014; Escobar, 2013; Hillyard, 2011, Cárdenas, González &

Álvarez, 2010). Therefore, institutions should guarantee teachers' professional development

processes, particularly for content subject teachers who must face some responsibilities of

language teaching in CLIL (Lo, 2017). Therefore, policy requires from teachers within bilingual

environments to be reflective, active and committed to bilingual education models; however,

public and private institutions not always open spaces for knowledge construction, which may

pursue teaching and learning goals in a more effective way (Vargas, 2008).

Additionally, Desimone (2009) claims that effective professional development programs

"possess a robust content focus, features active learning, is collaborative and aligned with

relevant curricula and policies, and provides sufficient learning time for participants" (p. 4).

Besides, TPD programs must include language awareness related to pragmatics, lexicon, syntax,

and so on; since CLIL teachers are not only content but also language teachers (Lo, 2017).

Evidently, teachers´ professional development programs should emerge from the

institutional context needs. Following a bottom-up framework, those programs would fulfill

teachers´ and institution´s needs, followed by students learning. Thus, TDP context-driven

programs may support teachers' professional growth processes. It is argued that "external

approaches to instructional improvement are rarely "powerful enough, specific enough, or

sustained enough to alter the culture of the classroom and school" (Fullan, 2007 as cited in

Darling- Hammond, 2017, p.1). Furthermore, TPD agendas must reach a consensus among

policy, teaching and learning interests; because research has shown that this approach (CLIL) seems to be mostly student-centered and focuses less in teachers concerns (Gutierrez & Fernández, 2014)

As noted above, there is an urgent need for the creation of TPD programs that not only nurture CLIL teachers' competences in bilingual education but open the space for teachers to reflect about pedagogy and what it implies in their particular contexts. Those reflections must be based on their understanding of bilingual education and its methodology. TPD programs should offer opportunities to fulfill CLIL teachers´ needs and to enrich their professional growth (Vargas, 2008).

Collaboration and teachers' professional development

In order to understand how teachers construct knowledge collaboratively, I considered necessary to recall the essential principles of social constructivism. Social interaction is a key factor in the co-construction of knowledge. Ideally, new possibilities of world construction, development and social interchange are nurtured through social interaction (Gergen & Wortham, 2001). Vygotsky (1978) states that collaboration and peer interaction are central to the development of individuals' knowledge. His Zone of Proximal Development more explicitly stated that there is a space of social interaction among individuals who have different levels of understanding and experience and that those determine learning. This is applicable to teachers participating in TPD programs as well. This zone of professional development offers an opportunity for teachers to "stand back from the demands of the classroom and be open to available support from their peers or colleagues" (Ngcoza & Southwood, 2015, p.3). Teachers´ personal and professional reflections and discussions on praxis with peers, lead to opportunities

to construct knowledge and influence teaching practices, which consequently spur their growth and empowerment (Farrell, 2008)

I strongly agree with the idea of "team teaching" that supports bottom-up TPD programs framework, a value-based approach proposed by Richards which focuses on the view that teachers work best when they work in collaboration with a peer, and that interaction with a colleague in all phases of teaching is beneficial to both teachers and learners (Richards, 2002). Collaboration is seen as the set of actions a group of people take in order to work together to achieve a common goal. This allows participants to assume individual responsibilities and varied roles to contribute to their community (Carreño, 2014). For instance, I focused on the role of collaboration in the informal TPD group I designed. The participants had the opportunity to work with a collaborator who guided the inquiry process. The teacher-researcher motivated teachers and posed thought-provoking topics which drew on reflection and inquiry dynamics among the participants; since these two elements are essential in TPD programs and do not take place in isolation (Aguirre, 2018).

As an illustration, cross-curricular collaboration among language and content teachers is a promising trend to ensure the success of bilingual education programs. Informal TPD programs aim at effectiveness and at including opportunities for refining teaching strategies (Lo, 2017). In that sense, collaborative agendas in TPD can be fostered only if they are flexible; context embedded, and bear in mind teachers´ needs and community´s requirements (Aguirre, 2018). In general, TPD programs should foster the construction of professional knowledge and should be based on experiences shared with peers (Aguirre, 2018).

Collaborative environments in TPD, promote problem-solving capacities as a common goal in a group of individuals (Aguirre, 2018). Such processes must be closely related to TPD

agendas that respond teachers´ needs and their achievements in bilingual education contexts.

Such needs must not be understood as the lack of teaching abilities or bad performance (Aguirre,

2018). On the contrary, bilingual education TPD programs must aim at enriching and renewing

professional skills (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

State of the art

   The following section aims at providing a general scope of Teachers´ Professional

Development (TPD) and bilingual education based on local and foreign researchers. I classified

the topics in three different categories: TPD and reflection, TPD and collaboration and TPD and

bilingual education and CLIL methodology. The research I synthesize show the increasing need

to create TPD programs that are context-based and that respond to teachers and learners' needs.

Teachers professional development and reflection

  In the last decades, researchers have focused their research in TPD processes and have

defined reflection as an inherent element in teaching as a profession, which improves teachers´

practices (Erazo, 2009; Escobar, 2013; Jerez, 2008; Rico et al., 2012). The authors analyzed the

impact of reflection in TPD agendas and how such as process enacts and enriches teachers'

practices from different perspectives. Qualitative pieces of research from Latin American and

European scholars will be presented and their outcomes will be discussed.

  To begin with, Jerez (2008) aimed at understanding how teachers perceived the importance

of Reflective Teaching (RT) when they were enrolled in a TPD formal program at a public

university in Bogotá, Colombia. This case study reported the insights of two in-service teachers

about RT through questionnaires, participants´ journal entry, class observations and interviews.

The study was carried out for three months and her role as a researcher was that of a participant-observer. The author claimed that teachers´ reflections must be documented to understand teachers concerns and needs. Jerez (2008) defined (RT) as self-evaluation which transforms realities, hence, it enacts teaching agency and decision-making skills. She considered reflection as a process which needs to be guided and appealing to teachers. Ideally, the guidance needed in reflection processes should be fostered and guaranteed in TPD programs assisted by institutions. However, participants reported a lack of schools' support. Additionally, there was no time for reflection within schools' dynamics and there is no continuity of TPD programs. She also evidenced that there was certain resistance from teachers´ in the implementation of TPD programs due to the mismatch between teachers´ needs and learning contexts. On the other hand, Jerez understood TPD processes as the opportunity teachers have, to reframe their beliefs and problem- solving skills.

Erazo (2009), a scholar from Chile, led a research in which reflection was used as a strategy for teachers' development. Her study was carried out in 20 different schools. She aimed at identifying how reflection was evident during teachers' staff meetings and how this aspect influenced teachers´ professional dimensions. She used content analysis to understand teachers' conversations during their meetings. The results showed that reflection was presented in less than 50% of the meetings. The meetings tended to focus merely on information and administrative tasks, where teachers had few opportunities to reflect and made their voices heard. Erazo (2009) highlighted the importance of reflection as an opportunity for teachers to grow collectively as professionals. In her revision of literature, she realized that few studies reported reflection from an epistemological perspective within TPD processes. She considered that reflective practices enabled teachers to transform realities and also suggested that when teachers

participate in reflective processes, they are intellectually alert of new tendencies in education related to their contexts. She also agreed with the idea of Jerez (2008) about the carefully selection of thought-provoking topics and the guidance in reflective teaching sessions.

Escobar (2013) conducted an ethnographic study for one school year. This study steamed from a larger scale project, which aimed to validate a model of a pre-service content and CLIL teacher education program that was part of a Master´s degree for secondary teachers. This researcher studied the teaching experience of one female teacher who oversaw science lessons in English following the CLIL methodology in an unprivileged school in Barcelona, Spain, where Catalan/L1 and Spanish/L2 are co-official. The former teacher had the opportunity to revise the data gathered and could reflect upon her teaching practices during the study due to the time limitation for this endeavor. The participant of the study relied only on Catalan/L1 to teach complex content in the early stages of the study. She also identified changes in her own practices in academic reports after the implementation of the lessons because she introduced the use of English/L3 when teaching content. These changes not only obeyed to the choice to use L1 in the classroom but were result of lesson modification according to her students' cognitive needs and CLIL dynamics. Such as lesson adaptation was a process of individual development because of some reflection practices.

A group of scholars in Colombia conducted a local research that aimed to understand how reflection helped five language student teachers throughout their first teaching experience (Rico, et al., 2012). This case study was carried out during 16 weeks at a public university in Colombia. The main resources of data were observations, student teachers' journals, lesson plans and semi-structured interviews. The researchers acknowledged the importance of reflection in early stages of teaching practices to increase the possibilities of success in practicum

experiences. The data gathered was analyzed in the light of types and levels of reflection. On one hand, the scholars used Schön´s (1987 as cited in Rico et al., 2012) concepts of *reflection-in-action* that takes place while actions are happening, and *reflection-on-action* that occurs after actions finish. Researchers adopted Van Manen's classification of reflection into three levels (1977 as cited in Rico et al., 2012). The first level is technical which concerns the effectiveness of technical knowledge and skills in achieving a specific goal. The second one is practical which deals with the relationship between theory and practice when making practical choices in the classroom. The third and highest level is critical reflection which implies moral and ethical concern and it often integrates the previous two levels.

The results informed that any type of reflection at any level enriched student-teachers' practices. When teachers *reflect- in-action*, they have the possibility to surpass methodological flaws and make decisions on the spot. However, *reflection-on-action* allow teachers to think back on what they had done in their classes and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies, pace of lessons, content, and so on; thus, they can modify future actions that benefit learning and teaching processes. Also, it was evident that teachers' reflections transcended from practical to critical levels. Hence, researchers concluded that teachers' responsibilities go beyond L2 instruction, including aspects such as moral values and social dynamics within the classroom as aspects presented in reflective processes. The researchers proposed reflection as part of undergraduate programs during teachers' practicum so that teachers' practices can be enriched, and problem-solving skills can be fostered.

All the studies synthesized so far, demonstrate the importance of reflection in TPD. The researchers claimed for institutional support as the backbone for successful professional growth programs. One way to transform realities comes from the result of thought-provoking and guided

reflection in teaching processes. Such processes restructure teachers´ performance and foster

problem-solving skills. Moreover, reflection positions teachers as transformative agents who can

reshape their epistemological foundations and become critical when given opportunities to self-

evaluate their endeavors. To add to the discussions, the teaching issues presented in the last

studies can serve as a mirror to the situation presented in this research. The lack of spaces to

reflect in and on action is a tendency in this school, especially for teachers who are involved in

processes of bilingual education. This aspect restricts teachers to propose, to share new ideas and

to growth professionally. Teachers do not have the possibility to change current learning and

teaching realities. Hence, the goals proposed by the institution are not successfully achieved, as it

is analyzed in further chapters.

Teachers' professional development and collaboration

Local and foreign researchers about TPD suggested that teachers tend to work in isolation

because of lack of time, support and enough training within institutions dynamics (Aldana &

Cárdenas, 2011; Aguirre, 2018; Ngcoza, 2015). The scholars highlighted the importance of team

work and teachers' networks as an alternative for professional growth as presented in the

findings of the following pieces of research.

Aldana and Cárdenas (2011) reported on a qualitative research of five English teachers in a

public school in Bogotá, Colombia. This case study followed the Grounded Theory

methodology. The main sources of data were teachers' diaries, interviews, and questionnaires.

The participants joined voluntarily in a permanent teaching training program (PTTP) and met in

Study Groups. At the end of the program teachers worked in a professional network to continue

their professional development. The objective was to determine what favored the network work

and how this work influenced TPD (Aldana & Cárdenas, 2011). The scholars indicated that

PTTP serve as a platform for teachers to innovate, research and work collaboratively with

colleagues to meet common pedagogical goals. Such an opportunity was evidenced in the

participation of teachers in Study Groups. Aldana and Cárdenas (2011) considered that the

essence of Study Groups is active participation, bottom-up agendas, documented reflection

processes and knowledge construction. In that way teachers become leaders and change agents.

Findings suggested that networks that result from PTTP and Study Groups participation,

are beneficial for professional growth. Teachers have the opportunity to share teaching

experiences, expand their methodological repertoire, construct knowledge and keep in touch with

colleagues for further projects. Moreover, they create a sense of community that foster

trustworthiness and democratic settings. However, the continuity of networks relies only on

teachers' autonomy and motivation to participate, due to the lack of time and institutional

support. The informants also reported that contracts conditions and overload of administrative

work in schools made them hesitant to continue in professional networks.

Along similar lines, a qualitative case study conducted in South Africa, reported on the

collaborative professional development of science teachers in a transformative continuous

professional development (TCPD) network (Ngcoza, 2015). The researcher aimed to understand

teachers' perceptions when working within the South African post-apartheid education system

which did not allow teachers´ innovation and in which transitive approaches were perpetuated.

This study followed "socially critical-emancipatory principles in conjunction with a participatory

action research approach" (Ngcoza, 2015, p.1). The policy demanded teachers to transform their

pedagogical practices with insufficient professional development programs for this endeavor.

The author proposed a democratic and egalitarian way of working with the teachers. Six senior science teachers from four schools with 13 to 28 years teaching experience, were pioneers in a voluntary TCPD. Their interviews during and after the program reported interesting results. The data analyzed informed that TCPD participation allowed teachers to interact with colleagues, maximized science knowledge, shared experiences and expanded pedagogical knowledge. Teachers reported that they had received training on the new curriculum, but it did not promote reflection upon the new education system. The participants showed the benefit of co-construction of knowledge over its transmission. The author concluded that TCPD is an emancipatory practice which promotes collaborative work and teachers become agents of social change. TCPD agendas must be negotiated with teachers in order to guarantee their participation and commitment. Conclusions demonstrated that reflection practices in TPCD teachers "afforded an opportunity to stand back from the demands of the classroom and be open to available support from their peers or colleagues" (Ngcoza, 2015, p.3)

To expand the issue of TPD and collaboration, Aguirre (2018) conducted a qualitative descriptive and interpretive case study at a public school in Bogotá, Colombia. The participants were four unlicensed EFL teachers; it means they held different graduate degrees such as Spanish teaching, childhood education and psychology. Their English level ranged A2- B1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL). They were required to teach English in primary school to cope with the demand of English classes. The schools´ Institutional Education Project (IEP) profiled teachers as transformative agents who worked collaboratively to reach such as purpose. However, teachers did not have spaces for teamwork and pedagogical reflection. "This research demonstrates that when teachers are given the scenarios and tools to engage in collaboration, it is more plausible for them to encounter

legitimate motives to unwind, share experiences and knowledge with peers and, ultimately, take

action." (Aguirre, 2018, p. 75). Giving scenarios to work collaboratively and to reflect upon

praxis, bring reform to the system and schools dynamics. TPD served as platform to empower

teachers to propose curriculum changes grounded in learning contexts. Empowerment for

Aguirre (2018) meant making teachers own´s and others´ voices heard, something similar

proposed by Ngcoza (2015) and his emancipatory practices in TPD programs, where teachers

construct knowledge in a process of critical reflection (de Mejia, 2016). When the teachers'

voices are heard as a community, changes start taking place to respond to learning and teaching

needs and realities are transformed.

Undoubtedly, TPD programs must include in their agendas collaboration and reflection as

key factors for professional and personal growth. However, the participants of these researchers

identified the institutional support as a limitation in their intentions to transform pedagogical

practices that benefit education dynamics. Bottom up, negotiated and shared agendas engaged

teachers in TPD participation and continuity. The studies pinpointed that the creation of

professional networks enabled teachers to transcend their local work and supported them in the

construction of knowledge with colleagues and peers. These studies demonstrate that TPD is a

vital space for teachers' empowerment and emancipatory practices.

Teachers' professional development, bilingual education and CLIL methodology

Research on bilingual education (BE) has demonstrated an increasing need to examine

teachers´ perceptions and concerns because teachers are a central "element" in BE programs

(Papaja, 2013). Various researchers share similar concerns regarding the reduced

epistemological foundations and unclear methodologies in the implementation of bilingual

education, which consequently limit teachers´ practices (de Mejia, 2016; McDougald, 2015;

Moate, 2011). Moreover, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is commonly

adopted in bilingual education programs. However, findings in local and foreign research

demonstrated that educators struggle with language and content instruction because of

insufficient or null training. Additionally, most of the existent pieces of research tend to focus on

students' success or difficulties whereas there is scarcity on research in teachers concerns.

(Papaja, 2013; Moate, 2011)

To begin with, local research on teachers´ development and bilingualism in public schools

in Colombia, suggested that bilingual education in Colombia is still unclear. Teachers do not

receive enough and accurate training for their bilingual teaching practices, and they tend to work

in isolation (de Mejia, 2016; McDougald, 2015). Bilingual education programs in Colombia have

been imposed and teachers do not have knowledge about their underpinnings before the

implementation of bilingual programs takes place. Moreover, European mainstream material has

been adopted by bilingual schools and the lack of local authenticity influences teachers and

learners' engagement (McDougald, 2015). As a result, institutions and stakeholders have trained

teachers in BE having unsuccessful results because those programs tend to focus on technical

expertise in international examinations rather than local learning needs and teachers´ needs (de

Mejia, 2016).

McDougald (2015) conducted a qualitative research based on survey-based methodology.

One hundred forty in-service teachers teaching different content area subjects in English at

primary, high school and higher education in Colombia were polled. The main purpose of this

study was to gather teachers' insights about CLIL methodology. The researcher referred to CLIL

as a methodology in which English is the medium for the teaching of non-language subjects.

Findings showed that teachers are still not aware of the CLIL approach even when they are already teaching content in English. Too often, institutions decide to implement BE programs, but do not oversee effective teachers' training in the underpinnings of the new methodologies. Participants also manifested the need for content and language teachers to work collaboratively making CLIL a reality in their contexts. However, institution boundaries and lack of time made teachers intentions difficult to reach.

De Mejia et al. (2012 as cited in de Mejia, 2016) reported the findings of a cross case study on eight bilingual primary schools and the participants were teachers and administrative staff. The collected data such as interviews, class observations and document analysis aimed to identify the tensions of teaching language and content knowledge. Participants did not know how to integrate language and content and they struggled to balance their roles in the classroom. The authors proposed some strategies for successful BE programs implementation. For instance, carrying out cross-curricular projects that foster collaboratively work and reduce teachers' tendency to work in isolation. Besides, to design local and authentic material appealing to learners and teachers' contexts to foster meaningful learning. In addition, to invite teachers to seek BE training programs offered by external institutions. However, financial support is necessary from institutions to guarantee teachers´ participation in formal BE training programs, otherwise, teachers would feel reluctant to pay on their own to pursue institutional goals.

Foreign researchers who study teachers' professional development programs do not focus only on linguistic issues but also in a bundle of factors which interfere in teaching practices (Oattes, et al., 2018; Lo, 2017; Gutierrez & Fernández, 2014). For example, an ethnographic study conducted in the USA evidenced the uncertainty in CLIL teachers´ roles within TPD. The study attempted to understand TPD as a strategy for enriching bilingual teacher professional

roles (Varghese, 2004). The participants were a group of novice teachers, one of their instructors and his assistant, and the creator of the professional development institute where this study was carried out. Most of the teachers felt the need for bilingual specific professional development where they could know the theory and methodology of BE in their contexts. They claimed for programs which showed clear methodology paths that could guide them along the implementation of BE programs. Ideally, the role of teachers in BE is as an active agent who can make choices in their contexts rather than reproducer of top down policies. Findings suggested teachers sense of empowerment and leadership within TPD practices. Consequently, TPD formal programs are seen as a platform of evolution and orientations of bilingual education.

Along similar lines, a research in Poland was related to the role of teachers in CLIL practices (Papaja, 2013). The empirical study was based on observations and interviews. Data collection took place during teachers´ participation in a TPD program during a school year. The participants were thirty-one EFL, geography, biology, mathematics, physics and history teachers in a secondary school. The researcher profiled teachers based on the bundle of knowledge needed for their performance. Among them, there were language/communication, theory, methodology, learning environment, materials development and assessment. The findings suggested that teacher must have such knowledge to lead successful learning processes. In addition, the role of L2 proficiency is a key element in teachers´ preparation and adaptation to content. Most of the content teachers' proficiency level in English ranged between B1-B2 and C1 level for EFL teachers according to CEFRL. The institutions guaranteed teachers´ proficiency level by providing language training in L2 in external institutions. The dual-focus methodology (CLIL) requires the instruction of L2 and content at the same level. Hence, teachers should be aware of language use and how to teach it. Their main concern deals with the insufficient

training of this matter and the struggle with explicit language teaching. This study highlighted the creation of professional networks to share experiences and know about colleagues work in different contexts.

In the support of the existent relationship between TPD and bilingual education, Moate (2011) aimed to understand in a qualitative study, the impact of foreign language mediated teaching in six Finnish teachers' professional integrity and to explore the challenges teachers faced in the implementation of CLIL methodology. Moate (2011) defined professional integrity as teachers´ agency or teachers' personal practices. The transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed using realist method to understand the reality of the participants (Braun and Clarke 2006, as cited in Moate, 2011).

The researcher tried to explore the significant influence in teachers´ agency when methodological uncertainty appears, and teaching becomes more demanding. In this study "teachers felt they had no time left to improve their language, but context demands effective handling of subject matter" (Moate, 2011, p. 341). There was a clear mismatch between what the institution required from teachers and what the schools offered to educators to achieve institutional goals. Additionally, teachers saw the CLIL methodology as an advantage for students, but a demanding and difficult task in their teaching practices. The findings also reported the perpetuation of isolated practices, non-authentic materials use and the lack of collaborative work which plays and important role to BE success. This study shares similarities with some of the ones carried out in Colombia that also show that the implementation of bilingual education programs requires extensive training, collective work and support from the administration (de Mejía, 2016; McDougald, 2015; Aldana & Cardenas, 2011)

A case study conducted in Madrid, Spain by Gutiérrez and Fernández (2014) aimed "to reflect on CLIL teachers training in relation to the teachers´ work n the bilingual project launched in the Autonomous Community of Madrid since its implementation in September 2004" (p. 52). The participants of the study were seventeen primary teachers in the Madrid bilingual program who provided valid responses by means of an online questionnaire. They belonged to twelve different state owned and state- finance schools. To be part of bilingual schools, teachers had been qualified to teach content in English via "linguistic certification" and courses in the British Council provided by the Ministry of Education. The panorama of the bilingual program after ten years of implementation had changed but there was a need to work harder in order to have a successful project. The researcher also identified the tendency of the program to focus only on the learners' outcomes rather than the teachers' proposals and professional progress. Findings suggested that L2 learning was necessary in TPD agendas, but teachers emphasized on content, methodology, materials design, literacy processes and teaching science in English as key points for further TPD programs. The participants proposed to create materials collaboratively; work on resource banks to reduce content class preparation and the creation of online networks to share experiences with colleagues. The author concluded that teachers should be included in TPD programs making-decisions to guarantee contextualized agendas, because "proper preparation of the teachers is the foundation and the key to success" (Gutierrez & Fernández, 2014, p. 64).

Lo (2017) explored CLIL practices and TPD in a multi-case study in Hong Kong. Three female teachers who taught different content subjects, served as informants in a cross-case comparison data analysis. They participated in a 6-month TPD program that consisted of two 3-hour training workshops and on-site support/ feedback to teachers. The data analyzed were

interviews, lesson observations and discussions. The study aimed to understand the impact of a

TPD program participation in teachers' beliefs about BE. It seemed that after their participation

in a TPD program, teachers recognized their roles in language teaching and became more aware

of the relationship between content and language. They saw their own potential to enrich CLIL

practices and considered TPD programs as a promising trend for cross-curricular collaboration.

Garrity, Aquino-Sterling, Van Liew, and Day (2016) proposed an exploratory study which

sought for ninety-one multiracial preservice Early Care and Education (ECE) teachers'

understandings of bilingual education. The researchers wanted to support a bilingual program in

the city and considered vital the undergraduate students´ perceptions during their practicum

experience, and because they would face multilingual students after becoming certified teachers.

The authors made a strong criticism of the policy called "Prop 227" implemented since 1998 in

California, USA. The policy banned bilingual education under the premise that students must

receive English instruction at early ages and dual-focused formal learning delay such process.

This policy denies the existence of diverse languages as students' mother tongues and considers

English as the "only" language accepted to be a citizen of the USA. However, teacher-students

saw bilingual education practices beneficial for teaching and learning, and training teachers as

necessary for BE to be a reality. As a conclusion, the scholars proposed to view language

learning as a right and resource rather than a problem as the policy considered it.

In Netherlands Oattes, Oostdam, de Graaff and Wilschut (2017) did a study with fifteen

bilingual history teachers who were interviewed and answered an online questionnaire. The

voluntary decision of teachers to become bilinguals was supported by institutions that offered

English/L2 training until teachers reach a C1 or C2 level according to the CEFRL, then can focus

on content instruction in English. Even though, teachers mastered the L2 they did not know how to teach language along content as the CLIL methodology proposes.

Findings showed that the assumption of L2 only instruction was implemented to guarantee rich L2 input and output. However, in early stages teachers used Dutch/L1"illegally", going against the English-only policy. They considered it was a good tool to clarify new concepts in L2 and at the same time it enlarged L1 skills. The scholar also concluded that "using the CLIL methodology in bilingual education is perceived to enlarge teachers' pedagogical practice and competence, as it increases their awareness of the general impact of language on history teaching." (Oattes, et al., 2017, p. 173)

The aforementioned worldwide studies informed us about the work of scholars who problematized teachers' professional development and bilingual education from different perspectives. After revising their work, I can conclude that research on this matter must be more visible for teachers, administrators and policy makers, specifically in local contexts. Bilingual education has been established worldwide but stakeholders, institutions, policy makers and teachers do not have a clear panorama about its underpinnings, methodology and application in diverse contexts. It is necessary to understand what bilingual education implies and encompasses; also, to know BE programs and methodologies´ epistemological foundations that favor teachers´ endeavor. Moreover, it is evident that collaborative and reflective agendas must be included in institutions, as well as TPD programs dynamics to avoid isolation.

It has been naive from educational systems around the world to think about teachers as passive agents who limit their work to transmit knowledge (Ngcoza & Southwood, 2015; Adams, 2006). Teaching is a social construction and it needs transformative agents with critical skills to change realities based on learning settings and needs. It is interesting how the oppressive

discourse and practices has been perpetuated over the years and teachers´ voices have not been

heard in different parts of the world (Aguirre, 2018; Erazo, 2009). Bilingual education conditions

for educators remain the same, despite of scholars' intentions to exalt teachers´ innovative and

purposeful skills. Nonetheless, teachers need institution and policy support, time and

opportunities to reflect upon their practices in order to change realities that evolve from

professional growth.

Chapter 3

Research Design

This chapter aims at describing the research design used in the light of the main research question which was how do non-bilingual content area teachers co-construct knowledge about bilingual education practices in a teacher Study Group? From the main research question, I posed two objectives. The first aimed to uncover ways by which teachers construct their understanding of bilingual education, the second intended to understand teachers´ reflections about their bilingual practices through pedagogical discussions. This section defines the type of study, the instruments to collect data, the profile of the participants, and the context where the study was carried out.

Type of Study

This study was framed in a qualitative perspective. Qualitative research concerns the study of the meanings subjects bring to a given situation considering that they are historically and socially situated. Scholars defined this type of study as a rigorous endeavour of rich descriptions of human systems that include behaviour patterns and complex cultural structures (Savenye & Robinson, 1996). Merriam (2002) stated that qualitative research is the study of individuals´ understanding of the world. Hence, the world´s meaning is socially constructed, and it recognizes multiple interpretations of reality. Likewise, Savenye and Robinson (1996) highlighted the importance of studying why people believe what they do, based on the multiple meanings of shared natural settings. Qualitative studies estimate the discovery of new ideas and

insights of how participants experience and interact with a phenomenon within a natural setting,

as well as the generation of new theory (Heigham & Croker, 2009). One hallmark of qualitative

research is its inductive methodology. It means that researchers gather data to build up concepts,

hypothesis or theories rather than test pre-existing theories and hypothesis (Merriam, 2002).

Qualitative researchers are interested in reporting participants daily life issues and how they

portrait their realities, by interacting closely with the subjects of study. This paradigm fits in my

study because I wanted to capture the essence of content teachers' reflections about bilingual

education, within a Study Group as an informal teachers' development setting.

This study was framed under an interpretative and descriptive perspective theorized by

Merriam (2002). She emphasized the inductive process and the descriptive outcome of

qualitative studies. This type of study aims at understanding how participants make meaning of a

situation. The data analysis is done inductively to identify recurring patterns or common themes.

Subsequently, a rich description of the findings is presented and discussed in the light of

literature that frames the study. Moreover, Merriam (2002) defined the role of the researcher as a

human instrument for data collection and analysis. This human source has biases that might

influence the study data interpretation. For that reason, it is important to identify and monitor

them to become aware of their influence in the study and avoid ambiguity of data interpretation.

Having in mind this description of qualitative research, in the following section I will describe

the context of the study.

Context of the study

This research was carried out at a private school in the North-west of Bogotá, which was

subsidized by a Family Compensation Fund (FCF). This means that a percentage of students'

tuition was subsidized by a non-profit company, that aims to improve Colombian citizens´ life

status regarding education, health and recreation. In 2017, there were 3,729 students enrolled

from preschool to high school. There were 168 teachers and 30 administrative staff members.

According to the Institutional Educational Project (Proyecto Educativo Institucional PEI), the

school offers a high-quality education service to Colombian citizens based on values and

autonomy. The school´s methodology follows the basis of task-based learning and its principal

resource is a collection of "learning guides". This paper-based material is designed and adapted

by teachers from all subjects in every grade. Pupils use this material during their classes and it

contains activities and information about the topics studied during each term.

Since 2008, the school has implemented its own Bilingual Education Program (BEP) that

intends to provide students with tools not only for academic life but also to have better

opportunities in a globalized world. Consequently, this institution is considered a National

Bilingual School, where 50 % of the curriculum is taught in a foreign language, which is

English. To get the bilingual high school diploma, students were expected to reach the level of

B2 English proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for

Languages (CEFRL), which is the framework adopted by the Ministry of Education in

Colombia.

Students take English classes as foreign language five times a week in primary school (6

hours), four in middle school (7 hours) and three in high school (4 hours). For these classes an

English textbook, an online workbook and learning guides were used as tools to develop the

syllabus.

The bilingual model at this institution was supervised and monitored by a coordinator who

oversaw the approval of material and class observation processes of both; language and content

teachers from preschool to high school. The schools BEP was framed under the Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) underpinnings and methodology. It consisted of three different stages. The first one was called "Preview" here students received instruction of a specific topic per term led by their content teachers (Spanish, maths, social studies, arts, technology and science) in L1/Spanish. The second stage was "Review" where English teachers displayed content knowledge in L2 based on the topics reviewed in the first stage. Finally, in the "Post-review" stage, content teachers delivered a class in English called "Say it in English", as the conclusion of the topic studied in the previous two stages.

On one hand, language English teachers had to deliver classes and design material using L2 based on content. On the other hand, content teachers had to do the same process in English, most of them having an English level of A1 and A2 according to the CEFRL. For the purpose of this study, I focused on teachers' experiences who were in charge of the "post-review" stage of the model. Their profile and selection criteria will be discussed in the next section.

Participants

There were eight participants in this research study, they were selected by using the purposeful and convenience sampling techniques. According to Patton (1990) purposeful sampling is the selection of *information-rich-cases*, informants who could have a bundle of ideas about the topic of study. When selecting participants through this technique, the researcher should interview the potential participants of the study to know their different ideas to avoid bias (Yin, 2011). According to Yin (2011) convenience sampling deals with the selection of informants who are available and qualified to participate in a study.

Following the guidelines for convenient sampling, I had informal conversations with middle and high school teachers involved in the "post-review" stage of the model and I identified different concerns about this topic. Afterwards, I designed a questionnaire addressed to content middle and high school teachers to collect information at the initial stage of this research. After reviewing their responses, I had the support of the institution to invite teachers to participate in the project in a general staff meeting where I presented my research proposal. However, none of the teachers seemed interested or aware of the goals of the study. Therefore, I personally invited teachers to participate in the study. I presented the purpose of the study and evoked its benefit for their current teaching practices within bilingual education. After that process, eight teachers participated voluntarily in the nine sessions of the Study Group.

Profile of the participants

Seven women and one man who held different degrees were the informants of this research. Their ages ranged between 27 to 45 years old. The male teacher held a Business Management degree and one female teacher was a Chemical Engineer. They taught technology and chemistry respectively in high school. Five teachers held a degree in Pedagogy. Two were social studies teachers, two Spanish teachers and one was a math teacher. They did not hold a postgraduate degree, but one of them was enrolled in an online master's program. Seven of the teachers had worked in the institution for less than a year and the chemistry teacher had worked in the school for eleven years. They had between one and fifteen years of teaching experience in different institutions. These characteristics made the group heterogeneous regarding their teaching background and points of view concerning bilingual education.

Ethical component

Following the guidelines that intent to protect the participants' social status and well-being in human science research, I used consent forms with the administrative department of the school and with the participants (Annex 1 and 2). Those documents included the objective of the study, the researcher´s responsibilities and the description of the Study Group dynamics. I guaranteed the confidentiality and the privacy of the data gathered. Likewise, I clarified that the teachers´ voluntary participation in the study would not influence negatively their performance in the institution and it did not imply extra work. On the contrary, I emphasised the benefits of having such as space to discuss and build pedagogical knowledge. Names were changed to protect teachers' identities.

My role as a participant-researcher was to guide the teachers' discussions and to pose though-provoking topics about bilingual education and their teaching practices at the institution. Each of the participants promoted respectful debates and there was a trustful atmosphere in each session. The agenda of the nine sessions was shared with the teachers to foster a democratic setting.

Instrument

For data analysis I used the audio recordings of our Study Group that consisted of nine meetings. The recorded conversations were considered spoken data, whose main purpose is to capture details of a session that cannot be easily perceived during the lesson or meeting (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Spoken data for research purposes serves as evidence or relevant information that offers richer verbatim language and contextual details of the conversation,

which report participants´ insights of the topic of the study and which are difficult to capture in other different kinds of data, for example written data (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004)

Procedures

Lankshear and Knobel (2004) defined data as pieces of information that are the base to make interpretations in order to enrich knowledge and understanding concerning of a problem. In their theory they identified three characteristics of data collection. First, data is *constructed* during the research process; it implies systematic data collection during participants' interaction. For the purpose of this study, each weekly meeting was carefully planned, and tape recorded to obtain the participants´ perceptions about their bilingual practices. Guiding questions and topics were stated before each meeting to stimulate pedagogical discussions. Second, the scholars characterized data collection as a *selective* process because all data gathered is not always necessary. It entails the exhaustive selection of pieces of data which serves as evidence for the topic of study. For instance, I collected data by audio recording nine sessions of sixty minutes each, where the participants interacted and reflected about different topics. After each meeting, I transcribed and sorted out from the transcriptions only those pieces that related to the participants´ interventions in which they discussed bilingual education, teaching experiences, reflection, among others. Third, data is *neutral,* this means that data is read through the theory that framed a study and it is shaped and constructed based on it.

Validation of instruments

The core of my data were the discussions held by the participating teachers. Therefore, it was necessary to examine the quality of the contents proposed for each of the sessions. I

examined the lessons I proposed with my professors and peers at the M.A in Applied Linguistics

to TEFL at the university. I obtained feedback that helped me to improve the quality of materials

and to give robustness to the discussions. Additionally, I piloted one of the lessons called

"Language and Communication – Movie BLACK" (Annex 3). It was important to analyse the

effectiveness of the activities to guarantee the data expected for this study in the same line as

their pedagogical needs. Three English teachers, who worked in the school were invited to

participate in the piloting session for one hour and a half after the school shift. Following the

Study Group´s agenda, the teachers were requested to watch the movie "Black" before the

session. While watching the film, the participants needed to focus their attention on the role of

language and communication in the story. This activity aimed at giving the participants the basis

for the discussion having in mind the richness of the movie in terms of symbolic language.

Nevertheless, not all of the participants watched the movie. This aspect influenced negatively the

discussion; the teachers who had watched the film were actively participating excluding the

participant who did not. However, I played four movie excerpts which showed the key aspects of

the story and all the participants were engaged in the debate.

The session was audio-taped and carried out in Spanish. They discussed the role of

language and communication based on the movie and in their daily practices. Due to the number

of participants (three teachers), there was an ask-answer interaction between the teachers and the

researcher, similar to an interview. The data gathered showed individual construction of

knowledge and little interaction among them. The learning goals proposed for the session were

accomplished and they showed their opinion about the construction of language and the role of

communication in their classes. However, time was not enough to get a consensus and report it

in one of the instruments proposed (the minute).

The participants gave me feedback regarding the development of the session. They considered the topics were interesting and the activities were designed to foster interaction among participants. Nevertheless, they suggested the revision of some questions due to their ambiguity, such as: What is language? They considered it was not a topic to discuss in one session and it needed a context to answer it. In addition, they expressed their concern about the schedule proposed after the school shift for one hour and a half. For them, this element would interfere in the group participation.

Having in mind my perceptions and the piloting feedback session, I made some decisions to improve the lessons within the Study Group. First, the time of the lessons was reduced to 60 minutes and the activities were modified to be more specific about the topic to discuss. Secondly, three different excerpts from the movie were carefully selected as a backup plan, to foster discussion which would activate previous knowledge and give enough input to the teachers who would not watch the film before the session. In addition, three questions were suggested to answer while watching the movie before the session which aimed to focus the participants' attention on the main aspects of the movie. Finally, I adopted a participant-observer role as researcher because it was difficult to be just a listener and not give my point of view.

Chapter 4

Instructional Design

In this section, I present the pedagogical intervention plan I designed and carried out in

order to promote reflection among teachers in a private institution who were experiencing

processes of bilingual education. A total of eight sessions were planned and an extra one was

suggested by the participants. All activities were included in the format of a Study Group, whose

principles will be explained later in the document. The topics and methodology were revised and

negotiated with teachers based on their needs.

In order to foster reflections and discussions upon issues of concern for teachers, and for

me as a researcher to understand and interpret teachers' perceptions about bilingual education at

this institution, I posed three instructional objectives:

1. To foster awareness about bilingual education within the discussions in a teacher Study
   Group.
2. To promote critical reflections about teachers' bilingual pedagogical practices.
3. To boost collaborative work among teachers with the aim of improving practices for
   teaching contents of the disciplines in English.

Considering that my intention as a researcher was to promote pedagogical discussions

regarding bilingual education, I framed my study within a socio-constructivist perspective that

defines learning and teaching as a social construction within collaborative settings (Vygotsky,

1978). Hence, learning takes place collaborating with peers under the guidance of an educator, who facilitates and fosters interaction.

I also built on the idea that language is not only a simply means of communication, but it also connects to socialization into the local and wider society. It is also a powerful symbol of heritage and identity (Baker, 2011). Bruner and López (2004) define it as a tool to organize experience and to create realities. Language is a situated social practice of organizing experiences which draws on power relationships, identity discourses which are socially constructed based on reality and at the same time, it has implications in the local and the global dynamics. It would be naive to think language learning and teaching as a static and isolated process. Thus, education is a collaborative work among students, teachers and an ideal learning environment which is critically discussed to transform realities. For that reason, the language and pedagogy discussion were always open in every phase of this project to highlight teachers' critical perspective upon their realities.

Language as Self-Reflection

Tudor (2001) added to the discussion, the importance of understanding language as a self-expression of individuals. The scholar distinguished language not only as a means of social action, but also as means of personal and affective expression. This implies a different perspective in reaching language teaching and learning goals. Tudor (2001) identified that a view of language as a self-expression determines learning goals based on what the learners wish to express, this means that each learner has his or her own learning agenda. However, having individual learning goals in large classes is not an easy task neither for teacher nor for an

education system. It implies the accommodation of policies and practices to learners' personal interests.

As consequence, Tudor´s theory (2001) positions teachers in a humanistic perspective which allows learners "to be themselves" in a warm and supportive environment. In such space, teachers encourage individuals to express freely their deeper feelings without fear of judgement or rejection at the same time they learn the language (linguistic system). Language as a mirror of self-expression makes students feel involved in their language learning process. They might feel that learning a language is part of themselves, instead of something useless for their contexts. To illustrate a humanistic and self- expression approach, participants in this study had the opportunity to express themselves regarding different pedagogical issues based on their experiences in a trustful environment where they could construct knowledge and be heard.

Pedagogical Intervention

Following with the description of the intervention´s procedures, I conducted a needs analysis through a questionnaire which was responded by 87 volunteer teachers from different content areas, the details of this instrument were explained in chapter one. The results of this instrument principally evidenced teachers' concern about bilingual education based on their experiences. Such preoccupations had to do with teachers´ English language proficiency level, materials design, policy guidelines, content and language teaching, among others. These results were considered to plan the pedagogical activities which were also modified as participants provided feedback about them.

Study Groups

I strongly agree with the idea of "team teaching", a value-based approach proposed by Richards (2002) which focuses on the view that teachers work best when they work in collaboration with a peer, and that interaction with a colleague in all phases of teaching is beneficial to both teachers and learners. Moreover, teachers can develop a more reflective stance toward their teaching or students´ learning (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). They also can expand knowledge by listening to peers and discussing their perceptions about language, L2 learning and teaching.

In order to promote a pedagogical discussion among the participants, I used a professional development strategy, or an informal professional development strategy called "Study Groups", which involves participants in reviewing professional literature or samples of student work (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). It also aims at creating democratic settings where the teachers decide what knowledge about their practice they want to access and how (Anderson & Saveedra, 1995). Consequently, the teachers had the opportunity to gather and share their experiences, reflect upon their own methodologies and materials used in class by discussing the main concepts of teaching and learning based on their beliefs and experiences.

According to Gersten et al. (2010) Study Groups are forms of professional development centered on three pillars. One is the integration of teachers' conceptual understanding into their classroom pedagogy. The second one is the promotion of active learning and the third one refers to, nurturing collegial support while responding to school realities. In my particular case, I used the pragmatic knowledge of teachers to guide them in the understanding of central concepts in bilingual education and to help them identify gaps and concerns in their teaching practices. Active learning was promoted by fostering active participation in the discussions about the topic.

Collegial support was promoted as teachers has a venue where they could freely discuss their concerns and could find support to face the challenges that they felt the bilingual program imposed.

Moreover, local researchers define Study Groups as the opportunity for professionals to become leaders and agents of change by systematizing reflections and construct knowledge in bottom up agendas (Aldana & Cardenas, 2011). This idea of recording teachers' reflections goes along the idea of thinking over teachers´ experiences as teachers and learners that allows educators to review critically their roles, challenges and responsibilities (Gonzales, 2007). Thus, teachers make part of a community of professionals who shared similar concerns in a democratic setting where they are active agents.

Intervention Activities and Chronogram.

To create an adequate environment of discussion, I designed activities for nine sessions of 60 minutes twice a month in the school after teachers´ work shift. Its methodology, chronogram, objectives and topics are illustrated in Table 2. This Study Group was an informal space for teacher professional development, where the teachers had pedagogical discussions regarding the institutional bilingual program; at the same time, they co-constructed knowledge upon bilingual education; this space which was not formally established by the school.

The activities were discussed and negotiated with participants based on their needs at the beginning of the intervention. Each activity was designed based on their feedback and the topics that emerged from the needs analysis questionnaire. Therefore, the topics were open to modification according to the Study Group dynamics.

The topics of the intervention followed the revision of those core concepts as seen in three

phases: The first phase was called "Sensitization: Working together", in which the teachers

discussed about the role of language, communication and L2 learning and teaching within their

classroom environment. In the second phase "Closing EFL Knowledge Gaps" the debate was

about bilingualism, CLIL methodology, and the school bilingualism project. Finally, the third

session named "Becoming Strategic" the participants had the opportunity to share their

experiences and identified useful strategies for the development of their lessons. Also, teachers

evaluated the process as a whole, in relation with their learning and experiences during the

pedagogical intervention.

Venue

Teachers met every two weeks on Wednesdays. We created a WhatsApp group where we

could communicate and arrange our weekly meeting. This strategy helped us be informed of any

change in the meetings´ schedule and they confirmed their attendance. The sessions were held in

a regular classroom at the high school branch in the institution. We were allowed to use the

space from 3:30 pm to 4:30pm. This situation made teachers comfortable because they did not to

go to a different place to participate in the Study Group.

Materials

I designed and adapted all materials that were used in the Study Group. I intended to have

material which offered the participants the opportunity to share their insights and perceptions

about a topic. For instance, I used comics in some sessions as a warming up activity. The

illustrations showed ironically issues related to language use and communication. They were the

starting point of reflection. Additionally, I carefully posed thought provoking questions that

promoted meaningful discussions among participants.

The following table summarizes the objectives I proposed for each of the sessions along

with the methodology, procedure and topics discussed. A sample of one session can be found in

Annex 3.

TABLE 1 STUDY GROUP' WORK PLAN

Phase	Session	Teaching objectives	Learning Objectives		Topic	Methodology / Procedure
SENSITIZATION: WORKING TOGETHER Get started: Introduction to the Study Group (Session #1)	**Get started: Introduction to the study group** *In this session the teachers will be informed about the procedure and the purpose of the study group.* ***Instruments:*** *Tape recording and the study group´s program* ***Time:*** *60 minutes* ***Type of data:*** *Opinions and suggestions.*	To identify teachers ´concerns about teaching English and teachers´ development processes.	Teacher will identify areas of concern regarding EFL and content-based practices.		Introduction and general agreements. - Agreements to work together. - Suggestions and improvements to the programs according to the teachers' ´needs.	**Participation: Group discussion.** 1. What are your main concerns about teaching your subject in a foreign language? 2. Teachers will receive the study group program where the activities and procedure are explained lesson by lesson and they will discuss: 3. What would you like to include in the program? 4. What would you like to learn in this study group? 5. Make any adjustments and suggestions based on your expectations.
SENSITIZATION: WORKING TOGETHER Language and communication (Session #2)	**Movie BLACK** *This is a movie about a girl who was born deaf and blind. She could not communicate until her parents found a teacher who could help her to communicate with others.* ***Time:*** *60 minutes* ***Type of data:*** *Opinions, perceptions, understandings and beliefs.* ***Instruments:*** *-Meetings typescripts. -Movies´ key excerpts.* ***NOTE:*** *Having in mind the short time during the sessions, the teachers will watch the movie at their houses.*	1. To identify teachers´ beliefs about language. 2. To increase teachers' awareness about the processes of learning a language.	1. Teachers will become aware of their own beliefs about language and communication. 2. To reflect upon their beliefs about language learning and communication and how they influence their teaching practices.		-Language and communication. -The role of communication in learning.	**Participation: Group discussion.** **A. Connecting ideas** 1. What difficulties did the kid overcome through her development process? 2. What is the vision of language and communication of her parents? 3. What sort of difficulties did the kid face when learning how to communicate with others? 4. What sort of strategies did the kid use to overcome those difficulties? 5. What is the teacher vision of language and communication? 6. What is the role of family in the child´s development process? **B.** BECOMING AWARE OF LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION. **GENERAL QUESTIONS:** 1. What is language? 2. What is communication? 3. What is the role of language in human development? 4. Is language constructed or taught? 5. What sort of difficulties do you face when learning a language? **INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS: 6**. What is the role of communication in your teaching environment? 7. What is the role of language in your teaching environment?
SENSITIZATION: WORKING TOGETHER Language learning (Session #3)	**Why do we talk?** *The teachers´ reflection upon their learning processes and what L2 learning means.* ***Time:*** *60 minutes* ***Resources:*** *Why do we talk? video* ***Type of data:*** *Understandings and beliefs.* ***Instruments:*** *Meetings typescripts* ***Artifacts:*** *A poster about learning*	1. To understand the teachers´ positions about L2 learning. 2. To raise awareness about language learning and acquisition processes and how it takes place.	1. To reflect upon L1 and L2 learning processes. 2. To co-construct knowledge about L2 learning. 3. To identify their own L2 learning process as key aspect in their teaching practices.		-Second language learning. - Second language acquisition.	**Participation: Group discussion about a video.** **A. Before** watching the teachers will discuss: 1. How do you learn? 2. Which processes are involved in learning? 3. How do you think your students learn? 4. How did you acquire your mother tongue? 4. How did you/do people learn a second language? **B. While** watching the video *why do we talk?* The teachers will focus their attention on the L1 and L2 learning and acquisition. **C. After** watching the video the teachers will compare their previous definitions with the video´s information. **Participation:** Construction of a poster where they will show their L2 and L1 learning understandings.

CLOSING EFL KNOWLEDGE GAPS School bilingualism policy (Session #4, #5 and #6)	***School Bilingualism project*** *Review the school bilingualism project document (SBP).* ***Time:*** *Thee sessions: 180 minutes.* ***Type of data:*** *Reflections and understandings* ***Instruments:*** *- Meeting typescripts* *-SBP document.*	1. To promote pedagogical discussion about the SBP	1. To understand the main constructs and principles of the SBP. 2. To critically discuss the bilingual police and its implications to their teaching practices.		-Teacher´s role defined in the SBP document. -Bilingualism project´s principles - Bilingualism and the bilingual person.	-Using the information in the SBP document and your own perceptions, answer the following questions: -What does it mean being bilingual for the school? -What is the teacher's role in the bilingual model? - Which are the principles from the SBP document you could identify in your teaching practices? - How similar or different is the definition of bilingualism and bilingual person from your own perspective?
CLOSING EFL KNOWLEDGE GAPS CLIL methodology in our context (Session #7 and #8)	***CLIL Methodology*** *Teachers will bring one of their designed guide´s session in English and discuss key aspects about its creation process.* ***Time:*** *Two sessions: 120 minutes.* ***Type of data:*** *Teaching practices and understandings* ***Instruments:*** *- Meeting typescripts* *-Learning guides (math, social studies, science and technology). "Say it in English" session.*	1. To identify personal designing processes when teachers create material integrating content and language. 2. To identify teaching practices used in class when teacher implement material in English.	1. To share meaningful teaching experiences within the bilingual model of the school.		- Teaching practices. - Articulation between language and content. -Individual strategies at designing and implementing material in English.	Discuss the following questions based on your experience when you designed and implemented the material: - What tools or resources did you used to design the guide's session? - Did you receive support from a language teacher colleague? - How did you use the language to develop the content in this material? -What difficulties did you find in this process? _____ -What difficulties did you find in the implementation of the material with the students? - How effective was this material for the content development with the students? - What teaching strategies did you use during that class? - How did you use the foreign language to develop the content during this class? - Does the material design and implementation encourage you to improve to teaching practices? How?
BECOMING STRATEGIC Study group conclusions. (session #9)	***Teaching strategies*** *Teachers will summarize and conclude the study group by identifying the strategies, concepts and understandings they developed about their teaching practices under the umbrella of the school bilingualism project.* ***Time:*** *60 minutes.* ***Type of data:*** *Teaching strategies, conclusions and understandings* ***Instruments:*** *- Meeting typescripts*	1. To understand the study group's contribution to the teachers practices in the implementation of the bilingualism project at this school. 2. To understand the study group's contribution to each teacher's professional life.	1. To identify aspects reviewed in the study group which are meaningful for their teaching practices.		-Teaching strategies. -General conclusions. -Concepts developed during the study group.	The teachers will discuss about the constructs and concepts about bilingualism, as well as the teaching strategies identified and discussed during the study groups. **Group assignment:** What can you conclude from the pedagogical discussions during the study group about: Language and communication, learning and teaching a language, Bilingualism, Teachers´ role in the bilingualism model and Learners in the bilingualism model? Personal journal assignment: -How did the topics reviewed and discussed with your colleagues during the study group contribute to your teaching practices in the implementation of the school bilingualism project? -How did the topics reviewed and discussed with your colleagues contribute to your professional life during this study group?

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

58

Chapter 5

Data Analysis

This analysis presents and discusses two categories and three subcategories which emerged from the data collection and the subsequent analysis of nine sessions of the teachers' Study Group, where eight high school content area teachers participated. The data analysis was carried out in the light of the research question: how do content area teachers co-construct knowledge about bilingual education in a teacher´s Study Group? This study had a twofold purpose, the first was to uncover ways by which teachers constructed their understanding of bilingual education, and the second was to understand teachers ´reflections about their bilingual practices through pedagogical discussions.

Framework of Analysis

For the purpose of this research, I analyzed the data based on Grounded Theory principles proposed by Charmaz (2006). This inductive framework implies a rigorous and continuous detailed analysis of the data themselves to understand a phenomenon so as to describe it, to gain knowledge of its properties and to keep on enriching our understanding of it. Charmaz (2006) proposes that such as analysis implies the recognition of local worlds and multiple realities.

A constructivist approach prioritizes data and analysis as a construction of shared experiences and relationships among participants. It aims to show the particularities and complexities of settings, as well as to study "how and why participants construct meanings and actions in specific situations" (Charmaz, 2006, p.130). Such is the case of the present study in which the intention was to uncover the constructions participant made of the content of various

sessions focused on bilingual principles and to understand different variables which might

influence their bilingual teaching practices in this context.

The main and only data collection instrument was the audio recordings from nine different

sessions of a teachers´ Study Group that lasted one hour each. Eight content area teachers

(Spanish, social studies, technology, science and mathematics) participated voluntarily in the

group where different thought-provoking topics were discussed. I gathered rich information

concerning teachers' meaningful learning and teaching experiences, beliefs and perceptions

within bilingual education.

Once I transcribed each audio recording, I started to code data, specifically "line-by-line"

coding process which brought me to a deeper level of understanding of the participants´ voices

(Charmaz, 2006). This first approach to the data is called "initial coding or open coding". Such a

coding process consists on breaking data into discrete parts and attaching labels to them that

illustrate what each segment is about. To have a closer look at the data, I coded each section

using color coding to organize each piece of data (Annex 4. Color coding sample). Additionally, I

added memos as preliminary analytic ideas about what the participants meant in each

intervention; thus, I could relate my thoughts based on the emergent topics for further

interpretation. Researchers use 'memoing' as an informal alternative to discover their ideas about

what they have experienced during data gathering (Charmaz, 2006).

After open coding, I identified common themes from each session and I grouped them and

assigned a name closely related to each of the objectives of the study. This procedure is called

"axial coding" that allows the researcher to show the links among groups of data, based on the

experience with the representation of participants´ voices (Charmaz, 2006). The creation of

categories and subcategories is also grounded in the saturation of data, when the data does not

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

60

show new and fresh patterns within the conceptualization of a category (Charmaz, 2006; Glasser & Strauss, 1967). For that reason, it was important to re-read codes and refine them to reflect upon participants´ words and how during interaction sessions with peers, they could co-construct knowledge and show understanding about bilingual education.

The third stage in the process is Selective Coding whose aim is to reduce and cluster categories in a higher understanding level (Charmaz, 2006). At this stage, researchers focus their attention on explaining the core concept of a category in a robust and exhaustive analysis. I related groups created in the previous step to provide possible explanations of data using visual displays (See Annex 5). These visual displays attempted to give a detailed account of teachers practices and their bilingual education understandings in this context. Finally, I proceeded to write the explanations for the categories, or set of groupings I had identified and the connections between those categories.

Credibility of the Analysis

One of the main aspects that qualitative researchers need to take into consideration is how to give credibility, transparency and robustness to their data. One of the procedures to give credibility to my data was by resorting to explanations from the theory and from the state of the art about this topic. I could constantly compare and contrast my possible explanations with the theory, in the light of light of the research question and objectives. This procedure in the literature is called "theoretical triangulation" (Heigham & Croker, 2009).

Additionally, Charmaz (2006) pointed out that some problems may arise while interpreting data because there is a tendency to impose a preexisting frame on each category based on the researcher´s experience. I constantly compared my initial interpretations of data with my

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

61

colleagues and professors during the master´s program sessions; as well as in the individual sessions with my tutor to avoid biases. They provided feedback on that process and led me observe my data from a different perspective.

Bearing in mind the coding process and memoing, I consolidated two categories and subcategories which caught the essence of the participants' perceptions. The following visual display attempts to demonstrate how categories intertwined in the light of the research objectives of this study.

Figure 1

Categories and subcategories

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

62
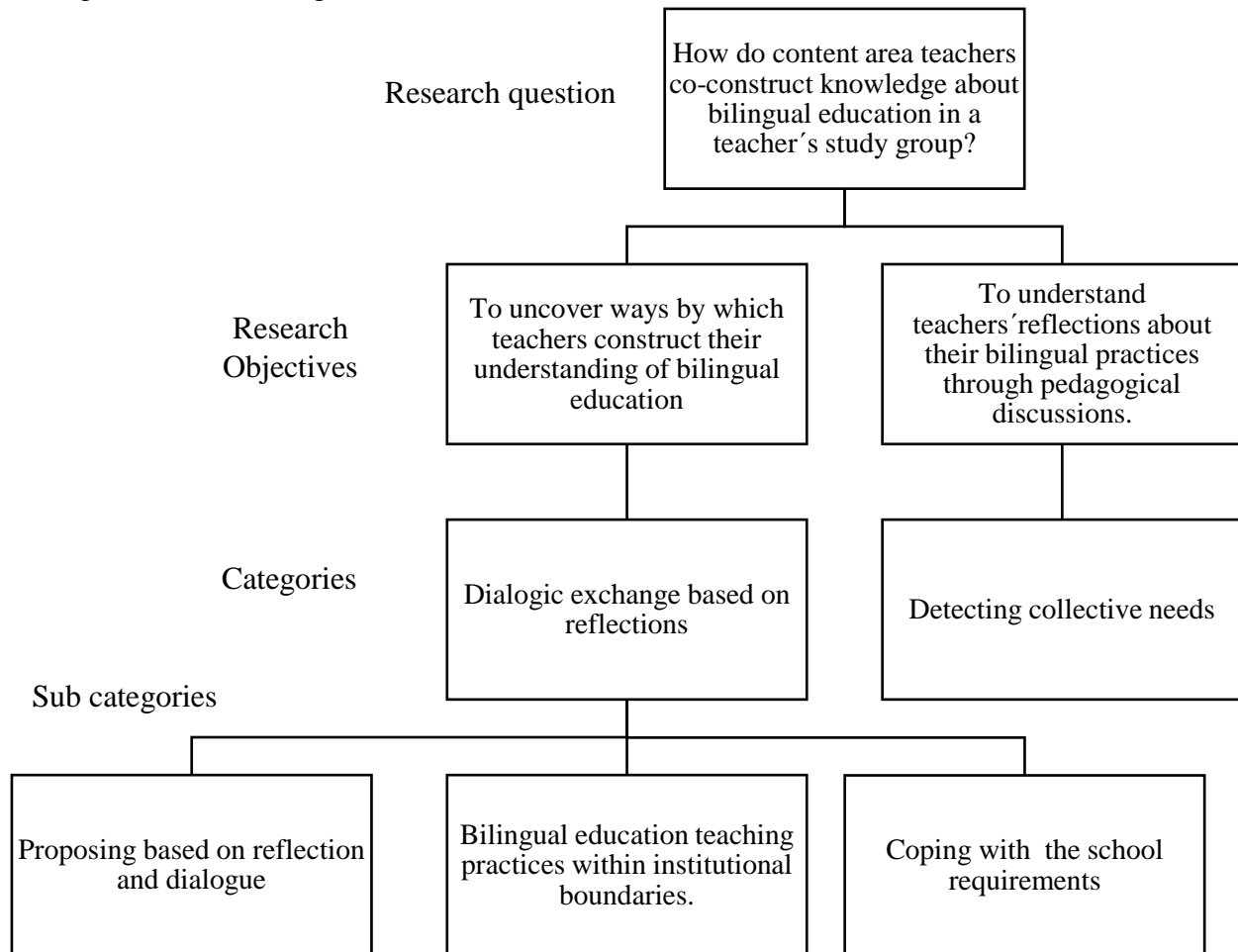
Categories and subcategories

Dialogic Exchange Based on Reflections

The previous chart only states the names that I have assigned to the categories after following the process established by Charmaz (2006). Next, I will to explain each category in the light of the objectives that I proposed for this study.

In connection to the first objective of this study that aimed at uncovering ways by which teachers construct their understanding of bilingual education, I found that it was not only important to consider "how" teachers reconstructed their understandings, but also, it was relevant to analyze "what" knowledge teachers were recalling and reshaping along the sessions. I gave priority to teachers´ voices who had no formal spaces to share their concerns and ideas about the bilingual program in the institution. The participation in a teachers´ Study Group in this study, was understood as a social constructivist environment that opened an informal space to co-construct knowledge by means of dialogic exchanges. When teachers had the opportunity to display their knowledge, they started to build up connections among prior and new knowledge based on their shared experiences with peers about bilingual education practices. These exchanges led to *reflection on action* about teaching practices after lessons had been carried out which accounted for professional growth (Schön, 1987 cited in Rico, et al., 2012). Although, reflection should be inherent in pedagogy and should inform us about how teachers evaluate their own practices, this component seems to be the least studied in professional development (De Mejia, 2016; McDougald, 2015; Erazo, 2009). The following subcategory portrays the particularities of teachers' interventions related to their experiences, based on the institution's requirements regarding the bilingual program.

Bilingual education teaching practices within institutional boundaries.

In the teachers´ discussions about teaching and learning practices, all the participants

agreed that education must be context-based. It means that the school community should be

aware of how their conditions, limits, challenges, difficulties, teachers´ roles and so on, determine

teaching and learning practices (Erazo, 2009). Remedi (1989, as cited in Erazo, 2009) referred to

how institutions define their own views of education and support their teaching and learning

processes through the implementation of policies and methodologies. Hence, the school

community should follow institutional philosophies which aim to achieve common goals. For

instance, the participants of this study identified bilingualism offered by the institution as

beneficial for students in their academic future:

> *R: ¿Cuáles son las ventajas de una educación bilingüe?*
> *T1: Poder acceder a diferentes fuentes de conocimiento, digamos libros, hay muchos textos en la universidad cuando ellos salen que son textos en inglés, libros en inglés y si ya tienen...*
> *T2: Ámbito ganado ...*
> *T1: Ya se les facilita mucho conseguir esa información que muchas veces uno no tiene por no conocer el idioma, no puede acceder a ese material. (Sesión 1)*
>
> *R: Which are the advantages of bilingual education?*
> *T1: People can access to different knowledge´s resources like books, there is a lot of texts in the university when they [students]finish high school, so they have ...*
> *T2: That advantage ...*
> *T1: Yes, so it is easier to get information that one does not have because does not know the language, cannot access to that knowledge. (Session 1)*

The teacher understood bilingual education as the use of L2 for only academic purposes

and as a tool to approach to new knowledge. The participant considered L2 level proficiency

advantageous for students´ future academic lives and placed her lack of language knowledge as a

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

64

disadvantage for her. Also, another teacher added some of her insights about L2 as a resource for

"better" opportunities in students´ future:

> **T3:** *Es la explicación más lógica para los niños que estudian inglés, porque les va a abrir muchas puertas en el trabajo y probablemente sea una mejor herramienta en la universidad a la que vayan a entrar.*" *(Sesión 1)*

> **T3:** *It is the most logical explanation for children who study English, because it will offer more opportunities as professionals and it is probably a better tool the university they are going to study. (Session 1)*

This teacher explained how students who study English were able to access to "better" job

opportunities. Moreover, for this teacher L2 was an instrument for academic purposes in higher

education. Teachers believed that L2 learning was a process which was advantageous for

students´ academic and professional future lives after finishing high school. It can be said that

teachers considered bilingual practices beneficial for their students at different levels of

education.

Concerning materials design, in one of the sessions we revised the learning guides given by

the school. Regarding the bilingual program, content area teachers must design a section in their

learning guides that contained a CLIL section called "Say it in English". This section had a

special structure and it was approved by the bilingual coordinator in the institution. They

identified materials design as a key aspect for their professional performance and an aspect that

strongly influenced their practices. The participants manifested that the design of materials was a

limitation for displaying their knowledge:

> **T4:** *Yo digo que la estructura del "Say it in English" está muy atada a que tiene que ser así*
> **T3:** *Aja*
> **T5:** *Ósea muy cuadriculada*
> **T4:** *A mí me han devuelto mucho las guías de inglés y mucho es muchísimo por eso …entonces que primero debe ser el vocabulario, pero si yo quiero manejar el vocabulario de una manera diferente y tiene que ser la rayita y que ellos completen las palabras. Si yo*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

65

pongo una actividad diferente que sea de vocabulario, no sé qué haga una cartelera del vocabulario, que haga un dibujo que represente esa palabra, a mí no me le aceptan porque me dicen que eso no es así. (*Sesión 2*)

T4: *The structure of the "Say it in English" must be like that*
T3: *Yeah*
T5: *Like too limited*
T4: *My guides have not been approved many times … so, the first thing in the section must be vocabulary, but if I want to teach that vocabulary in a different way, it has to be filling the gaps, but if I assign put a different activity of vocabulary like the creation of a poster about the vocabulary, a drawing that represent the Word, it is not accepted because it is not the way.* (*Session 2*)

The teachers considered that the design of this section limited their autonomy in their classes. They did not like the way the section was designed and when they proposed something different, the coordinator required modification. Data showed that the structure of the main material was a limitation which did not allow teachers to propose alternatives to display new knowledge. Another teacher shared the same ideas about materials:

T4: *…eso el key vocabulary, por eso, para mi puntualmente en sociales siempre [la coordinadora]me pide es esto el key vocabulary y ¿cuál debe ser la estructura? tiene que ser unas palabras y tiene que ser una oración y que ellos pongan una palabrita, y yo lo he tratado y yo lo he hecho pero esta guía principalmente me la devolvieron como diez veces porque yo intente hacer un catalejo con los niños, y yo quería que ellos aprendieran las palabras de cómo hacer las instrucciones y entonces yo dije; vamos hacer un programa de televisión de cómo hacer un catalejo entonces yo les voy dando las instrucciones en inglés y entre todos vamos haciendo el catalejo y entonces eso no sirve porque ahí no va la palabrita y no, entonces eso para mí eso no es significativo. (Sesión 4)*

T4: *… that, the key vocabulary, for that reason, for me specifically in social studies [the coordinator] always asks me the key vocabulary and what should be the structure? It has to be few words and it has to be a sentence and they put a word, and I have tried it and I have done it but this guide was mainly given back to me ten times because I tried to make a telescope with the children, and I wanted them to learn the words about how to do the instructions and then I said; "We are going to make a television program about how to make a telescope so I am giving them the instructions in English and together we are doing*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity
of Teachers Professional Development

66

*the telescope" and then that does not work because the word does not go there and then,
that is not meaningful to me. (Session 4)*

    The teacher felt that the teaching practices proposed in the bilingual program were
centered on repetition and translation and were not contextualized. She considered that
meaningful learning was not taking place when students centered their attention on the filling in
the gaps exercises. To this respect, De Mejia´s (2016) states that authentic and local material
must be grounded on teachers´ contexts and must be appealing to learners' if schools want to
foster meaningful learning. The participant related meaningful learning to practical exercises and
collaborative practices where students could apply new knowledge in interactive settings. This
argument goes along the concept of experiential learning of Dewey (2004), that recognizes the
connection between the cognitive and practical dimensions of knowledge. Thus, the teacher
considered that there was a strong connection between theory and practice when students learn,
and it should be the basis for meaningful learning. This raises questions regarding the extent to
which the institution was aware of teachers' professional background, their knowledge and
experience to combine them with EFL language learning.

    Teachers considered that learning both the content of their disciplines and the English
language required activities different from filling the gaps. However, the guides provided by the
school required this type of exercise, which limits meaningful learning and the use of practical
knowledge. It also restricts teachers' abilities to design their own material. Also, it could be
evident that they cared about their students´ learning processes and wanted to approach new
knowledge through innovative exercises. It was evident that teachers' pedagogical practices were
restricted by institutional procedures as they had to follow a "structure" and a "pattern" to present
new knowledge to students. Teachers felt that few opportunities for interaction and meaningful

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

67

experiences were considered in the bilingual class. As an illustration, another teacher expressed her discomfort about this topic:

> **T3:** *Y a mi realmente, la palabra correcta es me castra la guía a mí la guía me castra*
> **T5:** *Te corta las alas*
> **T3:** *Es con lo único que no he podido acoplarme a este colegio. (Sesión 2)*

> **T3:** *This really, the word is castrate, the guide castrates me*
> **T5:** *It clips your wings*
> **T3:** *Yeah, it is the only factor I cannot adapt to, in this school. (Session 2)*

The teacher referred to a negative feeling about the guide. The word "castrate" was a strong statement about the meaning of the policy for teachers. It implies restriction and lack of freedom. This idea was reinforced by T5 who affirmed that the guide limited T3´s freedom to choose the best way to design the session "Say it in English" to display new knowledge. This negative feeling was evident in T3´s freedom to adapt and design material for her classes. She could not adapt herself professionally regarding this aspect in the school.

It seemed teachers´ agency was limited by the school´s lesson requirements. Literature defines teachers´ agency as the professional integrity of teachers that implies the personal and professional definitions of effective teaching (Moate, 2011). This means that teachers have the decision-making capacity to determine what it is more effective in their classrooms concerning learning and teaching processes. Limiting and restricting agency, educators became professionally vulnerable (Kelchtermans, 1996). In this context, negative feelings regarding the policy, discomfort and limitations to design materials and teachers´ difficulty to self-adapt to institutions´ dynamics, are clear examples of teachers´ vulnerability. However, there was a teacher who had a different opinion about the guide design:

> **T6:** *A mí me encanta hacer las guías, yo disfruto haciendo guías*

T3: Pero el mismo diseño de la guía es estresante, que le faltó esto, o lo otro.
T6: Es que cuando yo diseño las guías puedo ver los temas en forma lineal y sé qué es lo que voy a ver y cómo. En mi departamento no molestan tanto.
R: Estamos en un mundo diferente T6. (Sesión 4)

T6: I love to design the guides, I enjoy making them.
T3: But the designing is stressful. There is always something missing
T6: well, when I design the guides I can see the sequence of the topics as a horizontal process, of how and what I am going to do, in my area are not that picky.
R: We are in a different world T6. (Session 4)

T3 planned how and what knowledge was displayed when designing her material in a lineal way, which meant the content was easier and clearer for her and for her students in her science classes. Additionally, she did not receive negative feedback about such as process. On the contrary, her colleague expressed her discomfort about designing material arguing that "there is always something missing" in the materials´ evaluation for Spanish teachers. This situation could be interpreted as the different guidelines the school had to evaluate material regarding the subject (science or Spanish). I hypothesized that this issue took place because of the lack of communication between the bilingual coordinator and the teachers who designed material. This situation was also an example of teachers' vulnerability, since they lacked clear orientations to work, understanding of the reasons and norms concerning teaching practices (Kelchtermans, 1996).

For Núñez and Téllez (2009) material design is a central aspect in teachers' professional development, because it is a reflective endeavor which takes into consideration teachers´ expertise and learners' needs. They also state that "designing materials is not a race, but rather a peaceful journey to be savored each point along the path, each step of the route to be travelled" (Nuñez & Tellez, 2009, p. 184). Quite the opposite happened in the school where this project was

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

69

carried out. Stressful and demanding processes were taking place at this institution regarding

material design for bilingual practices, as reported by the participants.

This stressful feeling could be related to the lack of time teachers had to design material

and to the lack of proper training to develop accurate activities to approach the new academic

topics. To this respect, Erazo (2009) pointed out that teachers must concentrate on different tasks

assigned by the institution and such extra workload leads to difficulties in attaining some

professional requirements. The teachers also concluded that time was an important factor to

guarantee accurate design of materials, but also inquired about the autonomy they had to choose

their own materials:

> **T6:** *Pero yo creo que todas las cosas son actitud. A mí se me hace que el programa no está mal, que el diseño no está mal, que el principio esté mal. Sino que a veces nosotros o no tenemos el tiempo, no le ponemos muchas ganas y no debería ser como en todas siempre, pues la repetición… sino que escogiera uno, que tuviera…todo lo impuesto o lo que toca es lo que harto, cuando a uno le dan la libertad para hacer las cosas, las cosas funcionan mejor. (Sesión 5)*

> **T6:** *I think, it is a matter of attitude. For me, the program is not wrong, the design is not wrong, the principles are not wrong, but we sometimes do not have time, or we are not into it, and not always it should be like that, like repetition. Instead, one could choose, we had… the imposition, what is obligatory is annoying, when we have the freedom to do things, things work out better. (Session 5)*

The teacher not only acknowledged that teachers did not have time to create materials in a

more effective way but also highlighted the lack of interest of some colleagues to find strategies

for materials design. She also supported the idea of not having freedom to adapt and innovate in

materials, which as stated previously, is perceived as a "castrating" practice which was not

working. This aspect connects to what Moate (2011) suggested regarding agency. The author

pinpointed that when teachers' agency (professional practice) is limited, teachers are

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

70

demotivated, and their job satisfaction is low. If teachers were free to choose, select and adapt

materials based on their students' needs and teachers´ experience, their attitude towards this

practice would be more enthusiastic; hence, teaching and learning practices would be more

effective.

Additionally, teachers not only reported a lack of time to prepare their material, but also

manifested a lack of training as the following sample suggests:

> **T5:** *Bueno el año pasado recibimos una capacitación a los nuevos y después hace poquito con los de Cambridge que fueron unas actividades chéveres…*
> **T3:** *Pero a mí no me parece que eso sea una capacitación, es una sesión de información, cómo tenemos que hacer la guía y ya*
> **T5:** *O los cursos que ofrecen, pero lo cierran y ya, y pues ahora ofrecen el curso en Cambridge y yo lo tengo que pagar, pero es muy extenso.*
> **T3:** *Pero capacitarnos sería en realidad brindarnos, que nosotros no tengamos que pagar, sino que se ha ofrecido por el colegio*
> **T5:** *Pero ahí va la autonomía, digamos en las sesiones de los jueves de 1:30 a 3 ustedes de inglés nos pueden ayudar. (Sesión 7)*

> **T5:** *well, last year we had a training session, the new teachers and not long ago with Cambridge and there were nice activities*
> **T3:** *But I don't think that was real training, it was an informative session, like how we should make the guide, that´s all.*
> **T5:** *Or the English courses they offered, but they finished them. Now they offer a course with Cambridge and I have to pay for it, but it is too long.*
> **T3:** *But a real training would be the one we do not have to pay for, offered by the school*
> **T5:** *Autonomy is key, for example in the sessions on Thursdays from 1:30 to 3:00, you the English teachers could help us. (session 7)*

It is necessary to recall the definition of training sessions for this study, which are programs

that aim to provide educators with practical knowledge to achieve short term goals (Richards &

Farrell, 2005). The "training" sessions were not meaningful for the teachers and the meetings

were merely informative. They understood language training or English courses as "real

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

71

training". The teachers placed L2 learning as a priority in their professional performance due to the need to improve their L2 language skills to guarantee effectiveness when delivering classes. Moreover, teachers felt reluctant to pay for English courses. Teachers considered that if they are working in a bilingual school, the institution must assure their language proficiency in order to pursue institutional goals. Finally, T5 proposed the creation of training sessions for content teachers led by English teachers in a specific schedule during the working hours. This time was usually used for staff meetings and institutional informative sessions. The fact that teachers themselves are pointing out the need to have more autonomy in their plans for the professionaml development and the idea of working together with the teachers of English, pinpoints the centrality of collective work and building school capacity. This last aspect will be discussed in the following chapter.

As an example, there was also overwhelming evidence for the notion that L2 teachers´ proficiency was a key factor in their CLIL classes as it could be summarized in the following excerpt when we revised the evaluation criteria of CLIL´s class observations:

> *R: Entonces ese es el quality input que nosotros tenemos. Entonces, clear and suitable language according to the age and the English level of the students. "Suitable" es acorde con... a la edad y con el nivel de los estudiantes*
> *T6: Por ejemplo, en el caso hablando de grado 11 ellos tienen un nivel más que uno, en el caso mío ¿no? entonces ahí queda como grave ¿cierto?*
> *[…]*
> *R: Si es algo que sea acorde con el nivel de inglés y con la edad de los chicos.*
> *T4: Yo creo que ahí hay una contradicción con todo lo que vimos en inglés y todas las actividades que planearon los de educación física y cosas así, que decían la idea es que haya un acercamiento al inglés más no una total inmersión porque nosotros no somos profesores de inglés. Entonces, yo entiendo lo que dice T6 porque yo con séptimo … pues obviamente las instrucciones de pronto las iniciales y eso que le toca uno planear la clase con una semana antes porque si me toca, a mi si me toca hacer mi trabajo cómodo para que no se me enrede, y no hacer el oso allá porque los niños saben mucho más y yo tengo niños de séptimo que en inglés son supremamente buenos, como el saludo, que abran la guía, cómo resolver la duda, las primeras instrucciones.*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

72

T5: Pero no todo, todo es en inglés

T4: O algo así, pero si dice que el vocabulario como acorde al nivel, es mucho más complejo. (Sesión 4)

R: So that is the quality input that we have. Then clear and suitable language according to the age and the English level of the students. Suitable is in accordance to ... the age and with the level of the students

T6: for example, in the case of 11th graders, they have a higher level than me, in my case, right? then it is too difficult, right?

[...]

R: Right, it is something that is according to the level of English and to the age of the children.

T4: I think there is a contradiction there. With everything we saw in English and all the activities that were planned the Physical education teachers and so, they said the idea is that it is an approximation to English but not a total immersion because we are not English teachers. Then I understand what T6 says because with seventh grade ... obviously the initial instructions and I have to plan the class a week before because I have to, I have to do my work comfortably to not get confused, And do not get embarrassed because the children know much more and I have children in seventh grade who are supremely good in English. How do I say hello? Take out the guide, how to answer questions in the first instructions.

T5: But not everything, everything is in English.

T4: Or something like that, but if it is said that the vocabulary is according to the level, It's much more complex. (Session 4)

The difference in the level of proficiency in English among students and teachers in different grades seemed to be a key element when teachers delivered a class. It is evident that teachers found it complex to use L2 because they felt students had a higher language proficiency, Although, they managed to introduce the topic and give simple commands, and that they were willing to study the material beforehand, there was still tension when teachers faced students in the classroom. They were afraid to fail; they did not want to be embarrassed in front of the students. Situations such as these generate fear of losing face and affect their image as teachers negatively. Despite having expertise in their disciplines, they felt that such knowledge would be undermined by their lack of proficiency in the English language; as consequence, they started

doubting about their own professional qualities, an aspect that had been previously highlighted in the literature about teachers' professionalism (Kelchtermans, 1996).

It is important to mention that teachers became familiar with the bilingual policy of the school during the study group. The policy was unknown for them and were not aware of its particularities. The discussions gave them the opportunity to identify a mismatch between one of the evaluation criteria and the classroom´s reality; that required by teachers to provide students with a "quality input according to students' level of English." T4 realized that the policy required from her to handle "good quality input" according to the students´ English level proficiency. She manifested that in a training session carried out by physical education teachers, they were informed that working in CLIL classrooms with the content area teachers implied just an "approximation" to the basic level of language such as commands, simple instructions and vocabulary. Instead, the evaluation of the class required from them to fully use L2.

When teachers feel they lack language proficiency, they feel uncomfortable and insecure. This factor may influence in their job satisfaction (Oattes et al., 2017) Moreover, these aspects could be related to the school boundaries that limited teachers regarding materials design, class dynamics and the expected outcomes within the bilingual school program. Thus, teachers felt overwhelmed by the use of L2 in their classes. Additionally, they believed that traditional practices were imposed and determined their pedagogical decisions that went against the experiential learning.

At this point of the analysis, I affirm that the bilingual policy implemented at the school framed teachers´ practices and affected their decision-making process to design appropriate materials. As a result, teachers felt stressed and as expressed by them "castrated" due to the lack of time and training in L2 instruction. Additionally, their agency was limited by the dynamics of

the CLIL sessions and the structure of the main paper-based material (learning guides). Teachers

could not innovate, propose and implement new teaching strategies based on context regarding

bilingual education practices.

Participants informed how they struggled methodologically with class delivery, material

design and their language proficiency. The following section reports how teachers used teaching

strategies to cope with the bilingual program requirements and to do what they considered useful

and meaningful for them and their learners.

Coping with the school requirements

"Bilingual teachers and their development must be understood as agents who make choices

and have differentiated understandings of their profession, rather than as individuals who

replicate the content and way they have been trained" (Varghese, 2004, p. 222). Based on this

statement, which positions teachers as active agents, it is important to highlight that participants

used different strategies to accommodate their work to the circumstances they were facing and to

respond to the policies proposed by the institution:

> *T6: Pero hay compañeros que manejan CLIL, yo no manejo CLIL … pero cuando me tocó
> a mi hacer lo de décimo Diego me acompañó tremendamente, yo tenía una lectura inicial y
> él me dijo, ¿será que yo puedo cambiar esta parte por algo diferente? y yo haga lo que
> quiera y Diego me acompañó muy bien. (Sesión 4)*

> *T6: But there are some partners who know CLIL, I do not …but when I had to do it for 10th
> grade Diego greatly supported me, I had an initial reading and he asked me: Can I change
> it for something else? and I said yes, Diego supported me. (Session 4)*

Statements such as the one above revealed the importance of collaborative practices for the

adaptation of material in teachers' classes. The teacher in the sample acknowledged her

difficulties using CLIL methodology and she asked for support from an English teacher. These

teachers, as others in the study, emphasized the importance of creating a collaborative

environment that promoted problem-solving capacities, an idea supported by Aguirre (2018). The

common goal for these teachers was to produce suitable materials for learners´ needs. When we

concluded the session regarding materials design, another teacher agreed with T6:

> **T5:** *También coincidimos en que nos apoyamos en nuestros compañeros de inglés que siempre están con buena disposición para colaborarnos de verdad que sí, todos de verdad que le brindan a un apoyo incondicional. (Sesión 4)*

> **T5:** *We also agree that we rely on our English teachers; colleagues who are always in a good mood to collaborate, they really are, everybody truly give us unconditional support. (Session 4)*

Collaboration was evident in the process of materials design and class delivery. Content

area teachers had the "unconditional" support of language teachers and this made participants

more confident about the material they were going use in their classes. The value of working

together created a sense of "team teaching", which is an approach focused on the idea that

teachers work best collaboratively to achieve a common goal (Richards, 20002). In sum,

collaboration among content area and language teachers is a promising trend that aims to assure

bilingualism programs success and they can refine their teaching strategies (Lo, 2017). Despite

teachers' difficulties with their proficiency, it was evident that there was commitment to do the

best they could to deliver their classes in English. Once again, fear appears as a factor that moves

them to prepare their classes:

> **T4:** *Para mi es difícil primero hablarles en inglés, bueno y ellos ya se adaptan y bueno uno planea su clase en inglés.*
> **T3:** *Exacto y uno estudia la guía y bueno*
> **T5:** *Uno estudia*
> **T3:** *Si claro, para que no le vean a uno el quiebre*
> **T4:** *Bueno y yo estudio las expresiones generales y de que se va hacer en inglés y bueno que hagan un texto, entonces no, a mí me cuesta hacer un párrafo, ponme tu R a hacer un*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

76

párrafo, aunque sea lo del día, yo no sé y va a tenar mil correcciones, yo no tengo la capacidad de revisarles lo que hacen. (Sesión 5)

T4: *For me it is difficult to talk to the students in English, well they get used to it and I plan my English class.*
T3: *Exactly and I study the guide*
T5: *I study*
T3: *Of course, so students don't see our weaknesses*
T4: *Then I study the general expressions and what we are going to do in the class, so they create a paragraph, then no, for me it is difficult to create a text, R assign me the creation of a paragraph even it is about my day, I don't know how, and there will have hundreds of corrections. I am not able to evaluate what they do. (Session 5)*

The sample above shows that teachers agreed that planning was an effective strategy to guarantee their success in their classes. Their commitment to the program was evident in the time they devoted to time preparing their classes and studying vocabulary and topics in a foreign language. However, the limitations of such preparation are evidenced in T4´s attempt to have students write paragraphs. She acknowledged that she did not possess the linguistic tools to ensure that students' production in the language was appropriate. It was difficult for her to revise the task in terms of grammar, vocabulary and so on. Consequently, she was unable to provide her students with feedback about their assessment.

As part of teachers' commitment to put into practice the bilingual policies and make learning significant to students, they devoted time to designing appropriate materials, even if that implied deviating from what the formal guides requested.

R: *Se supone que nosotros debemos dar el contexto cuando aplicamos las guías ¿son esos contextos significativos cuando ustedes aplican ese tipo de guías?*
T3: *Claro, por ejemplo, a mí me funciona mucho saber de memes y youtubers, porque ellos lo asocian mucho, entonces aprendes más rápido. Pero si yo boto la carreta como lo haríamos nosotros acá bien académicos, no entiende nada. Que por ejemplo yo aprendía mucho así con el método de Diana Uribe, qué a mí me lo cuenten todo en forma de chisme.*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

77

A mí también me funcionan los mapas conceptuales y hacer muchos dibujitos. Porque a veces la clase magistral se tornaba muy pesada. Yo me distraigo muy fácilmente por eso entiendo perfectamente a los niños. (Sesión 6)

R: We are supposed to give context when we use the guides. Are those contexts meaningful when you use that type of guides?
T3: Of course, for example, it works a lot for me to know about memes and youtubers, because they associate it, so they learn faster. But if I give a long speech, like we would do here, too academic, they would not understand anything. For example, I learned a lot with the method of Diana Uribe, to tell me everything as if it were a rumor. I also work with conceptual maps and do many drawings. Because sometimes long speeches in class became very tiring. I easily get distracted, so I perfectly understand children. (Session 6)

The participant was concerned about meaningful learning and how she could include activities in her classes that fostered it. What was interesting from samples such as this one, was that teachers looked for different strategies to try to connect to students and make the topics interesting and meaningful. This teacher, for example, mentioned using social media to gather their attention and using other strategies that were more appealing considering the age of the learners. There was also empathy with students and reflection on how to adapt to different learning styles.

A very interesting aspect that emerged from the data was the awareness that teachers had about collaboration among students. The capitalized on this knowledge by adapting their materials and activities to classroom dynamics that favored collaboration among students:

T3: Pero hay cosas que se pueden cambiar como por ejemplo el individual learning. Yo sigo insistiendo que en una clase que no es inglés funciona mucho mejor el trabajo de grupo, sobre todo para los niños que no saben.
T5: Hay unos niños que saben mucho y hay otros que no saben nada
T3: Y aparte de eso son distraídos y eso claro. La actividad se les hace una pesadilla hacerlo solos y yo lo intenté una vez obligarlos a hacerlo y hay unos que se quedan mirando al techo. Entonces no, háganse de a parejas.
R: Mejor trabajamos en grupo
T3: You need work both (risas). (Sesión 5)

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

78

T3: But, there are things that can be changed, such as individual learning. I insist that in a class that is not English, group work works much better, especially for children who do not know
T5: There are some children who know a lot and there are others who do not know anything
T3: Additionally, they are distracted and that is clear. The activity for them is such as a nightmare to do it alone and I tried once to force them to do it and there were some who stay looking at the ceiling. Then, make couples
R: We better work by groups
T3: You need work both (laughs). (Session 5)

This collaborative strategy is interpreted from the principles of socio constructivism referring to learnings as a construction in interactive contexts (Vygotsky, 1986). It was evident that teachers preferred students working collaboratively to foster the potential of low achievers with the assistance of higher achievers. For instance, T3 believed that language was learnt and improved through interaction. Such as belief made her adapt her classroom´s dynamics placing collaborative work as the core of students learning process.

In conclusion, the knowledge teachers co-constructed in their reflections mirrored their main concerns related to their teaching practices within the bilingual program. Their perceptions referred to the limitations they faced when designing CLIL material and the lack of language training that influenced their effectiveness in their classes. However, teachers' discussions also allowed them to observe their commitment to their practice as they used different strategies to cope with the schools´ requirements and most importantly to foster students' learning. They identified collaborative work as useful for their practices and students' success, as well as planning and material adaptation to foster meaningful learning.

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity
of Teachers Professional Development

79

Proposing based on reflection and dialogue.

This category refers to the role dialogic exchanges played in the co-construction of knowledge

and the key role of reflection in such construction. Dialogue was central in my proposal. Socrates

defines it as a process that takes place under certain conditions and have special goals. The

conditions concerning a topic of interest and the process involves a sense of collectiveness that in

turn, requires the guidance of a facilitator to lead and enrich the dialogic exchange among

participants. The goals of dialogic exchanges have to do with reaching the ability to answer

rhetorical questions aimed at finding the truth and strengthening participants' opinions (Van

Rossem, 2006). In this interaction, it is not necessary to get a consensus but to listen to each other

and to approximate to the truth.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned facts, the discussions about pedagogical

issues in my project were the possibility to exchange knowledge dialogically through listening to

peers and valuing opinions. Listening and dialoguing were the pillar of teachers' interventions.

When listening to peers they complemented ideas by giving their opinion, agreeing and

disagreeing and arguing their points of view as can be observed in the following intervention:

> **T7:** *O sea que ¿primero fue la comunicación y luego el lenguaje?*
> **T5***: El lenguaje*
> **T3***: El lenguaje es la capacidad de comunicarnos indiferente de cómo nos comunicamos*
> **T1***: ¿Y la comunicación?...*
> **T3***: Es el acto*
> **T1***: Es el acto de hacerme entender*
> **T7***: El enviar algo y que tú lo entiendas*
> **T1***: Es hacer entender el mensaje que estoy enviando*
> **T3***: Exacto. Yo convengo con lo que dicen los profes. Yo creo que correspondiendo a la*
> *pregunta de que, si se construye o se enseña lenguaje, yo creo que se construye. (Sesión 6)*
>
> **T7***: So, was communication first and then language?*
> **T5***: The language*
> **T3***: Language is the ability to communicate indifferently, how we communicate*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

80

T1: *And communication? ...*
T3: *It is the act*
T1: *It is the act of make myself clear*
T7: *Sending something, and you understand it*
T1: *It is to understand the message that I am sending*
T3: *Right. I agree with what the teachers say. I believe that according to the question that if language is constructed or taught, I believe that it is built. (Session 6)*

This excerpt illustrated how from a specific topic, teachers not only complemented ideas but also agreed on them, clarified their stances and gave their opinion. Although, they did not get a consensus, they tried to reach a "correct" answer in that context. Also, it referred to a belief about the collective construction of language which allows the understanding of messages.

R: Además yo diría que en las humanidades hay espacio para las subjetividades. Entonces cualquier cosa que nosotros digamos es válida, pero tiene toda una construcción de lo que yo traje, lo que tú decías en el lenguaje como proceso, pero ¿por qué lo dice Javier? porque Javier viene de una formación que le hace pensar en procesos, en ciclos...
T1: ... y las humanidades siempre tiene una contraparte respecto a... Como es están subjetivo, también yo puedo dar mi contraparte a lo que tú estás diciendo. Es que matemáticamente dos más dos es cuatro y lo digo porque yo lo aprendí así, no, en las humanidades es diferente, desde la subjetividad de las humanidades. Yo también te puedo responder, interpretar, yo no creo que lo que tú estás diciendo es así. (Sesión 2)

R: I would also say that in the humanities there is room for subjectivities. So, anything we say is valid, but it has a whole construction of what I brought, what you said about language as a process, but why does Javier say it? Because Javier comes from a training that makes him think about processes, cycles ...
T1: ... and the humanities always have an opposition to ... As they are subjective, I can also express my opposition to what you are saying. It is mathematically two plus two is four and I say it because I learned it that way, no, in the humanities, it is different, from the subjectivity of the humanities. I can also answer, interpret, I do not think what you are saying is like that. (Session 2)

Disagreeing with peer´s ideas is an opportunity to challenge knowledge and beliefs. When these two participants gave their opinion about humanities, they opened a space to understand

this concept from two different perspectives. The one which accepted it and the second one

which questioned it and asked for validation. They considered that as teachers, we had the

possibility to validate knowledge through experience and collective acceptance of rejection. In

addition, they kept an attitude to listen to colleagues´ and remained open to different points of

view about the same pedagogical concern. Besides listening to others, teachers constructed their

own understandings about new knowledge. As an illustration, a teacher reconstructed her

understandings about the role of the teachers within the bilingualism program in the following

excerpt:

> *R: Entonces ¿cuál es el rol del profesor en proyecto bilingüe?*
> *T3: Todo eso que acabamos de hablar, crear estrategias, facilitar el aprendizaje del niño teniendo en cuenta su contexto, Es decir, el aprendizaje significativo, la multiculturalidad. Todo está enfocado hacia el niño, buscar qué es la segunda lengua. No es una traba sino una extensión, y que aparte de eso se incluyen todas las clases transversalmente sin que eso signifique ponerle atención a hablar más inglés, ok, ya tengo que dejar la temática, sino que se complemente. (Sesión 7)*

> *R: So, what is the role of the teacher in the bilingual project?*
> *T3: All that we have just spoken, to create strategies, to facilitate the child's learning taking into account his/her context, I mean, meaningful learning, multiculturalism, everything is focused on the child, to find out what the second language is. It is not a limit but an extension and besides that, it is transversally included in all classes. That does not mean paying attention to speaking more English, Okay I have to leave the topic aside but complement it. (Session 7)*

The participant showed her understanding of the teachers´ role based on the previous

discussion with her peers and the revision of the official document of the bilingual program. She

concluded that it was important to assimilate factors such as students' context, meaningful

learning, multiculturalism and the use of language in the classroom. She understood that the L2 is

an extension of content, and not two different subjects in the same classroom.

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

82

As stated before, reflection was a central factor in this project. It is understood as a self-evaluation, which transforms realities and enacts teaching agency and decision-making skills (Jerez, 2008). As Erazo (2009) pointed out it would be naive to think about a teacher as a professional lacking a reflective mind. Educators do not limit their work to replicate mainstream methodologies, instead, they think of innovative and accurate ideas to respond learners needs, based on theoretical foundations or collective and personal teaching experiences. Participants in my project showed a deep level of reflection. They identified, for example, a mismatch between the official bilingual policy used in the school and teachers and learners´ realities. Teachers in two of the sessions reflected upon the goals of the bilingual program, which defined the institution as national bilingual school. One of the teachers concluded:

> **R:** *entonces podríamos decir que en el colegio que estamos es bilingüe nacional con base a lo que leímos en la sesión anterior y lo que plantea la Ley Nacional de Educación.*
> **T7***: viéndolo desde un punto de vista normativo, o sea sobre los documentos en lo mucho o poco conocimiento que tengo acerca del colegio me atrevería a asegurar que no es un colegio nacional bilingüe, porque si estamos hablando del 50% en asignaturas, -y para no ir tan lejos y tomando nos a nosotros de muestra, creo que aquí la única que hace la clase 100% en inglés eres tú R. Y eres uno de seis, entonces serías el 15%. No completamos la meta del 50%. Bueno, y cada uno de nosotros tiene su especialidad, su área, pero el inglés que nosotros manejamos, o por lo menos en mi caso sería un inglés más conversacional Y uno que otro concepto propio de mi asignatura., Decir que voy a dictar mi clase Gestión Empresarial totalmente en inglés sería una utopía en este momento.*
> **R***: Entonces cómo le podríamos definir si se dice que es bilingüe*
> **T4***: sería una aproximación. (Sesión 8)*
>
> **R:** *Then we could say that this school is bilingual national based on what we read in the previous session and what the National Education Law says.*
> **T7***: Looking at it from a normative point of view, I mean, about the documents, despite how much I know about the school, I would assure that it is not a bilingual national school. Because if we are talking about 50% of the subjects, to mention and having us as an example, I think that here the only one who does the class 100% in English is you R. And you are one of six, then you would be 15%. We do not complete the goal of 50%. Well, each one of us has its expertise in its area, but the English that we manage, or at least in my case, it would be conversational English, and some concepts of my own subject. Let´s say*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

83

that I will totally delivery my Business Management class in English; it would be a utopia at this time.
R: Then, how could we define it if it is supposed to be bilingual?
T4: It would be an approximation. (Session 8)

The teachers understood the content of the official documents about bilingual in Colombia. Their awareness of the percentages of classes was evident as was the fact that the school could not be framed as bilingual because few classes were taught in the L2. The participants were also aware of their role in labelling the school as bilingual. T7 expressed that his L2 was neither enough nor adequate to respond to the policy´s goal. Moreover, they redefined the way the school was proceeding in terms of English instruction as an "approximation" to the target language and bilingual education dynamics.

Samples such as the one presented above revealed teachers' concerns about the disconnection between policy and reality. One of the teachers, for instance reflected upon her own practices in the CLIL sessions. After listening to T7, she discussed the factors that affected the success of the program according to her experience.

> *T1: me atrevería a decir que el proyecto bilingüe no funciona es porque uno no está haciendo la sección del Say It in English. Yo te juro que nunca la he trabajado como lo debería hacerlo en ningún curso y eso lo digo acá porque esto no es institucional*
> *T6: y yo creo que sí lo hiciéramos bien no estaríamos tan lentejos en el inglés*
> *T1: Y los niños se esforzarían, y harían más y trabajarían más en clase, y estarían escuchando otras voces, otros tonos otras pronunciaciones. (Sesión 8)*

> *T1: I would say that the bilingual project does not work because I do not do the "Say it in English". I swear I have never worked with it as I should, in any class, and I say it here because this is not institutional.*
> *T6: and I think that if we did it, we would not be so bad at English*
> *T1: And the children would try harder, would do more and would work more in class, and they would listen to other voices, would be listening other tones, other pronunciations. (Session 8)*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

84

Aldana and Cárdenas (2011) proposed that the participation of teachers in professional development programs fosters trustworthiness among its members. This is evident in the previous samples that showed that T1 dared to speak out about her real practices in her classes because she felt confident to do so and because the meeting was not formal or led by any administrative staff member. Hence, she admitted that she did not follow the guidelines in her CLIL classes. This might be explained by her lack of L2 instruction, L2 teaching skills and the differences with students´ L2 proficiency. Therefore, she assumed part of the responsibility for the failure of the program by saying that if she did things accordingly to the policy, the bilingual program would be successful. T6 added a key aspect that enriched T1´s intervention by suggesting that their L2 proficiency would improve if they used English in their classes, and T1 concluded that students would be benefited as well to have different class' dynamics in the target language held by different teachers.

These reflective processes showed teachers' concerns about the policy´s goals and their responsibility to contribute positively to the bilingual program success. This resulted in a purposeful attitude to change practices based on what they considered not successful in the bilingual development of the school. For instance, they insisted in the need to work on material adaptation as a backbone for meaningful learning:

> **T6**: *yo quería explicar cosas de química en inglés, pero a través de un laboratorio químico de la práctica, y eso les gusta más porque ya están cansados de la misma lectura*
> **T4**: *Entonces ahí se llega a replantear la misma estructura de siempre, las palabras de la sopa de letras, se podría hacer algo diferente. (Sesión 5)*
>
> **T6**: *I wanted to explain chemistry in English through a chemical practice lab. They like that more because they are already tired of the same reading.*
> **T4**: *Then you think about remodeling the traditional structure, the words in the word puzzle, you could do something different. (Session 5)*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

85

Based on their experiences with material design, teachers considered that it was necessary to change the structure of the paper-based material. Teachers acknowledged that students enjoyed different activities rather than a word puzzle. They believed that one way to change current CLIL practices began with the adaptation of the learning guides to make them more appealing to students learning preferences. Regarding policy´s goals and current practices, teachers identified different factors that they did not take into consideration before being part of this informal TPD program. One of the participant stated:

> *T7: Creo que debería haber más coherencia desde lo que se plantea en el documento, pues de la formalidad con lo que se ejecuta. En su momento cuando se planeó fue estructurado con toda la buena intención, pero con todas las causas que se puede numerar, obviamente hay diferentes aspectos a mejorar, para cambiar y mirar por qué se dieron. Hablando de la capacitación que se dio en el coliseo yo asumía que lo de bilingüismo era para los de inglés, como que el programa bilingüe en inglés. Pues no me toca a mí, pero ya viéndolo acá desde el formalismo, me di cuenta de que también hago parte de ese cuento, y también que la invitación de cada uno, pues ya está inmerso en el proyecto ¿qué va a hacer al respecto? Eso sería mi interpretación. (Session 9)*

> *T7: I think there should be more coherence from what is stated in the document, because of the formality that it is executed. At the time when it was planned it was structured based on good intentions, but with all the causes that can be numbered, obviously, there are different aspects to improve, to change and to evaluate and why they took place. About training that took place in the coliseum, I assumed that bilingualism was only for English teachers, as the bilingual program is in English. It is not my business, but checking it here from the formalism, I realized that I am involved in it too. Also, the invitation for anyone who is already immersed in the project, what are you going to do about it? That would be my interpretation. (Session 9)*

T7 concluded that there were positive foundations for the bilingual program and despite its flaws and strengths; there was a heavy workload to be done to improve such as process. A very important aspect to highlight from T7's reflection is that he saw himself as external to the bilingual program. English, in his own view was "somebody else's business". However, he asked

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

86

himself about how he was going to contribute to the development of the program and invited his partners to be part of such as process.

As a conclusion of this first category emerged from data that aimed to uncover ways by which teachers constructed their understanding of bilingual education, I affirm that teachers were willing to participate actively in each session by listening carefully to their peers and learning from them. They identified different aspects regarding the bilingual education policy such as material design, class dynamics and goals, which made part of traditional education practices, that restricted their autonomy, conditioned their pedagogical decisions and made the learning process not meaningful for the learners. They considered the bilingual project was in discordance with the school community´s needs and context which required different dynamics grounded in meaningful experiential learning. Finally, they proposed different alternatives to approach to effective teaching practices as working collaboratively with colleagues adapt material and commit to the bilingual program as professionals.

Detecting collective needs.

This second category intended to understand teachers´ reflections about their bilingual practices through pedagogical discussions. It was difficult to evidence changes in teachers' practices in such a short time and to give continuity to the project. Despite this limitation, this category reports on the ways teachers felt that the participation in the Study Group contributed to their teaching practices. It is important to reinforce that those reports are based on their own voices rather than on by observations by the researcher. By identifying collective needs, teachers started to show their sense of belonging to a community and this serves as a platform to transform realities (Dewey 1980c, as cited by Garrison, 1995). Consequently, it demonstrated

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

87

that teachers learnt from others´ experiences and shared the same concerns and grew

professionally (Desimone, 2009). The teachers identified needs that they had as a community and

that related to three key aspects: methodology, training and collaborative work.

Regarding to methodology, teachers claimed for innovative practices that were more

appealing to students´ preferences. In one of the sessions they explained how they proposed

different activities, but the coordinator limited their ideas:

> *T3: De hecho, yo había puesto inglés participativo y no se pudo, porque era de quien lee, quien participa, quien sabe del tema y explique, exposiciones y no.*
> *T4: Pero no porque no hace parte de la guía*
> *T3: y a mí me choca mucho, y es por eso, pero la guía es solo una guía, no puedes apegarte a la guía, pero, bueno voy a hacer tal cosa, pero lo siento no estaba en la guía. (Sesión 5)*
>
> *T3: In fact, I had proposed "participative English" and I could not, because it was about the one who reads, who participates, who knows the subject and explains, presentations but not.*
> *T4: No, because it is not part of the guide*
> *T3: and it annoys me and that's why, but the guide is only a guide, you cannot stick to the guide, well, I'm going to do something different, but "I'm sorry it was not in the guide. (Session 5)*

That excerpt portrayed teachers' discontent when the structure of the material did not allow

them to propose different activities that might foster interaction among students in CLIL classes.

Teachers felt constraint and limited (as stated previously). Additionally, she considered that the

guide was a tool that helped her to distinguish a path to work on new topics, instead of

determining the methodology she had use in each class. In the following intervention, a teacher

reported the same concern as T3:

> *T3: Esta guía la hizo Jessica y me parece que quedó chévere. Porque además el tema es chévere y no es tan ladrillado como los otros.*
> *T5: ¿cuál tema?*
> *T3: Dramática*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

88

T5: Súper

T3: Pues tiene lo fundamental, el vocabulario que ya lo había hecho, y como algún lenguaje que se necesitan, las onomatopeyas y acá los explica más para niños. Pero tiene una obra de teatro en inglés que me parece genial, y ya ponerlos en inglés es bien y creo que yo voy a hacer el narrador y ya que ellos interpreten. Igual nosotros tenemos un proyecto, bajo cuerda, con la profesora Catherine, que es montar proyectos audio visuales en inglés y sería excelente para que ellos suelten la lengua. Incluso nosotros, que ellos hagan guiones en inglés y que ellos lo apliquen. (Sesión 6)

T3: For example, this guide was created by Jessica and I think it was cool because the topic is cool, it is not so boring as others.
T5: which one?
T3: Dramatic arts
T5: Nice
T3: It contains the basic vocabulary that I had already taught, like some language that is needed, the onomatopoeia and here there is an explanation for the children. But it contains the creation of a play in English that I think is great., I think I'm going to be the narrator and they'll play it. So, we have project under the table with the teacher Catherine, which is to create audio visual projects in English and it would be excellent for them to practice the language, including us, they do scripts in English and they interpret them. (Session 6)

The participants shared one of the guides they had designed or used. The purpose of that activity was to revise the teachers´ experiences working with that material. The teachers recognized good practices done by other teachers like the inclusion of a different and meaningful activity for the students and the teachers. T3 considered that such activity might foster the development learners' language skills. She felt engaged with the activity and she thought it would be useful to improve her language skills as well. Moreover, she stated that she was leading a "clandestine" project with an English teacher colleague. This implied that teachers were reacting to the school´s imposition by creating something new for their students even if it was not part of the curriculum. This practice is considered as "emancipatory" because it goes against a policy and it follows collaborative work principles among professionals who became agents of

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

89

social change (Ngcoza, 2015). Along similar lines, T6 reflected on various aspects regarding the

participation in the study group:

> **T6:** *Pues a mí me deja tres cosas. Me deja tranquilidad admiración y compromiso. Tranquilidad porque cuando tú planteas el grupo yo pensaba como intentémoslo otra vez a ver si aprendemos más inglés, y luego los vi a todos acá tan jóvenes y pensé que todos teníamos el mismo nivel o las mismas dudas y eso me tranquilizó. Admiración porque de ustedes aprendí cosas increíbles. A mí me parecían los días muy agradables en los días que pude estar, aprendí mucho al conocer el pensamiento de ustedes, eso hace que los admire y que pueda contar con muchas personas en el mismo colegio. Y compromiso por qué yo no puedo pensar que estoy en una institución y no ser parte de las cosas que la institución quiere. Este colegio ha sido un referente de cosas nuevas, ya he visto profesores que han intentado hacer cosas innovadoras. Tal vez el llamado es a meternos a cosas innovadoras creo que debemos comprometernos en eso. (Sesión 9)*

> **T6:** *Well, it [the participation in the study group] leaves me three things. It makes me feel calm, feel, admiration and commitment. Tranquility because when you proposed the creation of the group, I thought "let´s tried again to see if we learn English", and then I saw everyone so young and I thought we all had the same level or the same doubts and that reassured me. Admiration because I learned amazing things from you, I found the days very pleasant when I could come, I learned a lot by knowing your thoughts, that makes me admire you and that I can count on many people in the same school. And commitment because I cannot think myself in an institution and not being part of the things that the institution requires. This school has been a benchmark for new things, I have seen teachers who have tried to do innovative things. Maybe the invitation is to get into innovative things, I think we should commit ourselves to that. (Session 9)*

The teacher expressed how she felt during the Study Group and what she learnt from it.

First, she recalled her expectations before her participation. She thought that the sessions were

English classes that might help her to improve her language skills. She changed her mind when

she saw other colleagues involved and understood that everyone, including her, were sharing the

same concerns and doubts about different topics. She manifested how much she learnt from her

peers through discussion and interaction that made her respect them as professionals.

Additionally, she reconstructed the image she had of her colleagues by recognizing them as the

new generation of critical professionals who could innovate and create new alternatives for

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

90

education. Therefore, she positioned herself as an active agent within the school´s dynamics by saying she was part of the institutional intentions. She realized that her role in the school was the starting point to change her professional contexts and invited her peers to make part of the transformation in terms of innovation. T6 position herself and her colleagues as "transformative intellectuals" who could change realities based on what their theoretical foundations, personal and professional experiences (Giroux, 2002).

Another methodological concern reported by the participants related to the scarce interdisciplinary work that took place in the school. Interdisciplinary work refers to the analysis, synthesis and harmony among disciplines into a coherent whole (Choi & Pak, 2006). This means that different disciplines work collaboratively to achieve a common goal. The teachers discussed about this issue when we were talking about collaborative work among teachers:

> *T7: Pero ¿qué es más productivo?,¿qué los niños sepan álgebra al derecho y al revés o que hagan una escultura?*
> *T2: Pero tú puedes hacer arte desde la matemática, desde la música, en sociales, el problema es que también la dirección de la educación dice que matemáticas hace esto, inglés hace esto, sociales hace esto*
> *R: Nada transversal*
> *T7: No hay integración*
> *T2: Si yo hubiera sabido que Marcela en sociales había hecho la actividad del hombre, yo hubiera podido decirle a Marcela que hiciéramos un proyecto transversal en el que ella y yo ganáramos y los chicos estuvieran conectados con dos materias a un mismo trabajo, pero como no tenemos la discusión acá en básica secundaria. No hay trabajo en equipos, como lo hacen en primaria*
> *T1: Pero inglés y lo intenta*
> *R: claro, pero si yo no tuviera que ser la guía como me la piden, yo no sabría qué están haciendo en otras materias, por ejemplo.*
> *T1: pero bueno eso es un intento que hace el colegio para buscar la transversalidad*
> *T2: pero si lo pueden hacer desde el inglés, ¿por qué no lo puedo integrar todo? (Sesión 8)*

> *T7: but what is more productive, kids knowing perfectly algebra or kids making sculptures*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

91

T2: But you can do art through mathematics or music through history. The point is that education says that mathematics does this, English does this, Social does this
R: Nothing is interdisciplinary
T7: There is no integration
T2: If I had known that T5 in Social Studies had done an activity based on the topic of "man", I could have told T5 to do a transversal project in which the kids were connected with two subjects doing the same job. But as we do not have the discussion here at secondary school, there is not team work, as they do in primary.
T1: But [the teachers of] English subject try.
R: Of course, but if I did not have to design the guide as they ask me, I would not know what they are doing in other subjects.
T1: well, that is an attempt that the school makes to look for the interdisciplinary
T2: But if you can do it in English why can't I integrate everything? (Session 8)

The dialogue of the teachers evidenced that interdisciplinary work was a collective need and that such teamwork was necessary to develop different projects and to develop the knowledge from different disciplinary perspectives. The teachers acknowledged that the educational policy fragmented knowledge and made the teachers work in isolation. They considered that interdisciplinary work was an advantage for their endeavor and made them save time in terms of planning and materials design. In addition, teachers considered that such as effective practice took place among primary teachers as a contradiction in high school dynamics. This might be explained by the lack of time they had for working together due to the bundle of tasks they had in the school.

Regarding collective needs linked to training, the data revealed that the main issue was related to L2 instruction in class and the development of teachers´ English language skills. Teachers pinpointed that training sessions were necessary but acknowledged that the incorporation of different perspectives when teaching a subject was indispensable. They also considered imperative to include the guidance of experts of each discipline who could provide tools and strategies to address effectively new knowledge using L2:

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

92

T2: Yo Considero que sí deberíamos tener una capacitación, pero muy particular, por ejemplo, va haber una capacitación para los profesores de ciencias, pero ¿ciencias vistas desde qué punto?, física química o biología. Esta semana les corresponde a los profesores de química y sucesivamente. Además, el grupo cuenta porque hacer una clase para 2 o 4 se aprende muchísimo, y tal vez perder el miedo a hablar, porque yo siento que ese es el mayor de los miedos ante el idioma, no porque no sepa la estructura, es tener ese miedo de cómo expresarme desde mi asignatura porque no lo sé. Pero no tengo una persona que me diga que estoy haciendo las cosas mal para apoyarme. Esa es la capacitación que realmente necesitamos como docentes. Privilegiada por áreas. Entonces pueden decir "cursos de inglés para todos" vamos a aprender a conversar entre nosotros y me puedo comunicar con ustedes los profes de inglés y con los chicos, pero ¿desde mi asignatura cómo me enriquezco yo? Eso es lo primero que deberíamos proyectar, manejar mi asignatura con conceptos propios y alguien que me esté dando apoyo. (Sesión 7)

T2: I think that we should have training, but very particular. For example, "there will be a training for science teachers", but what are the sciences seen from? chemistry and physics or biology, this week corresponds to chemistry teachers, and so on. In addition, the group matters because when we have a class for 2 or 4 people; we learn a lot. And perhaps to lose the fear of speaking, because I feel that this is the greatest fear to face a new language, not because I do not know the structure: It is to have that fear of how to express myself, from my subject because I do not know. But, I do not have a person who tells me what I'm doing wrong to support me. That is the training we really need as teachers. Privileged by areas. Then they can say "English courses for all" we will learn to talk among ourselves and I can communicate with you, English teachers, and with the children, but from my subject how can I enrich my practice? That's the first thing we should think of, how to handle my subject with my own concepts and someone who is giving me support. (Session 7)

This excerpt illustrates the need to focus on specific training to deliver content from the different disciplines in English. T2 in this case pointed out that it was necessary to focus on the specific teachers´ needs having in mind which content areas they are responsible for. More than developing language competence to speak in everyday situations, the teachers would like to have opportunities to properly include the content of their disciplines and teach them using the L2. Interestingly, she mentioned her willingness to have a person pointing out her mistakes; what she is doing "wrong". This is a demonstration of her openness to criticism and her willingness to

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

93

learn and improve. As Gutiérrez and Fernández (2014) state professional teachers´ training is a key foundation for success of any program and as this project shows, it requires teachers' awareness of their needs as well as an open-minded attitude towards change.

Teachers also understood their participation in the Study Group as an opportunity to learn the underpinnings of bilingualism and to reflect upon their daily work

> *R: ¿ustedes han recibido algún tipo de capacitación sobre el proyecto bilingüe?*
> *T5: el año pasado hubo la oportunidad en una jornada pedagógica que hubo en el auditorio donde también había profesores de inglés, los nuevos. Nos entregaron unas hojitas y nos preguntaron que era el "Say it in English", eso fue el año pasado. Y este año en el coliseo donde el profesor Hugo si nos explicó cómo era el modelo de bilingüismo y nos dio muchos aportes, y fue muy significativo porque había cosas que uno desconocía y nos dio la información de cómo había nacido, porqué había nacido y demás el proyecto bilingüe, y fue chévere. Pero después de eso ya no nos han vuelto a dar nada. Creo que aquí tengo los apuntes de las 3 horas que duró hablando. Pero fue bastante fructífero si uno desconocía todo eso. Después de eso no nos han dado nada, y pues después se presentó la oportunidad con usted y chévere porque uno desconoce todo eso. (Sesión 6)*

> *R: Have you received any type of training on the bilingual project?*
> *T5: Last year there was the opportunity in a pedagogical workshop that took place in the auditorium. There were also English teachers, the new ones. They gave us some sheets of paper and they informed us about what the "Say it in English" was. And this year in the coliseum the teacher Hugo explained to us what the model of bilingualism was, he gave us a lot of information, and it was very significant because there were things that you did not know. He gave us the information about how the program was born, why it was born and so on. It was cool, but after that, they did not give us anything again. I think I have the notes of the 3 hours that he talked. But, it was quite productive if somebody did not know all of that. After that, they did not give us anything and the opportunity came up with you and it has been cool because I do not know all of that. (Session 6)*

In the last excerpt, T5 recognized the importance of time and spaces to learn about bilingualism. She highlighted the intentions of the school to train teachers on the foundations of the program, but it seemed it had not been enough. She also pointed out that her participation in the Study Group for this study was an opportunity to expand her knowledge about her daily work

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

94

with the students in her CLIL classes. However, it is important to point out that the sessions

where purely informative and apparently did not include discussions from teachers. It was a top

down process that did not have follow up sessions. The participant highlighted the value of the

Study Group sessions. Along similar lines, the following excerpt evoked the importance to learn

about the basis of the program and to have opportunities to reflect upon their endeavor.

> *R: ¿qué le dejó estás nueve sesiones para usted como profesional y como persona?*
> *T1: Yo creo que la discusión y el debate siempre va a ser un parte fundamental en la formación docente, pero se pierde, se pierde en la cotidianidad, en el aula. Sí tal vez uno tuviera estos espacios desde diferentes ámbitos, donde uno también tiene una discusión, porque uno siempre lo tiene tomándose un tinto tomándose un algo uno si hace discusiones pedagógicas, pero cuando es una discusión un poco más orientada, cuando es más organizada y tú traes unas preguntas a discutir, entonces empieza a tener un camino, un eje de esa discusión y creo que si lo hace pensar a uno, a re evaluar cómo está haciendo las cosas en el proyecto que tiene el colegio, y creo que también si uno trabaja en un lado es porque también uno quiere apoyar, y quiere apuntarle a ese proyecto que el colegio tiene crezca, y no sólo como trabajo de paso, sino quiero realmente aportar al colegio. Como decía a T4 en el momento en que yo conozco ese documento y quiero entender más que es lo que el colegio quiere, entonces pienso a plantearme yo como persona y como docentes, ¿cómo yo puedo apoyar al colegio y cómo para ayudarle a cumplir este reto del bilingüismo?, que es a lo que apunta. (Sesión 9)*

> *R: what did you take for yourself as a professional and as a person after these nine sessions?*
> *T1: I believe that discussion and debate will always be a fundamental part of teacher training, but it is lost, lost in everyday life, in the classroom. Maybe if we had these spaces from different areas, where we also have a discussion. Because we always have pedagogical discussions over a coffee or drinking anything, but when it is a focused discussion, when it is more organized, and you bring some questions to discuss, then, you start to have a path, a basis of that discussion. And I think that if you think about it, to re-evaluate how you are doing things in the project, and I think also that if we work in a school, it is because you also want to support it. And you want to achieve that project´s goals, you want the school to grow, and not only as a temporary job, but I really want to contribute to the school. As I said to T4 at the time I knew the document and I wanted to understand more about what the school wanted. Then I think to consider myself as a person and as teacher, how I can support the school and meet the challenge of bilingualism, what is it aiming at? (Session 9)*

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

95

This last excerpt clearly illustrated the increasing need to systematize pedagogical reflection. T1 defined her endeavor as a reflective practice, which faded in teachers' daily work. Although teachers always are talking to colleagues about their daily experiences in informal spaces that enrich their practice when those conversations are focused and have clear objectives, they serve as platform for social transformation (Jerez, 2008). This aspect was evident in the voices of the participants in this research. The reflections of the participants also showed that they were self-evaluating their involvement, participating and thinking about their responsibility to make the bilingual plan successful. Consequently, detecting needs refer to both external needs (training, collective work) but internal ones as well. Those needs were related to L2 skills and transformation in terms of involvement. Teachers positioned themselves as social and active agents who had the possibility to change realities based on their knowledge, their contexts and their experiences.

As a conclusion, it is vital to consider teachers as transformative intellectuals, active agents, committed to institutional goals and students' learning processes, reflective individuals and highly qualified professionals for their practice. Teachers constructed knowledge by learning from others, sharing their experiences, having in mind their students' contexts and interests to adapt their practices to succeed in the bilingual program. The next session discusses the main conclusions from this project along with its implications.

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

96

Chapter 6

Conclusions and Discussion

In this section I present the conclusions that emerged from the data analysis carried out to answer the question: How do content area teachers co-construct knowledge about bilingual education in a teacher's study group? The discussion is divided in two parts based on the two objectives that guided the research.

The first research objective proposed in this project was to uncover ways by which teachers constructed their understanding of bilingual education. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the participants of this study shared their teaching and learning experiences about bilingualism and reshaped their beliefs about this topic to construct new understandings about it. Reflection was at the core of this process. The discussions brought teachers' constant self-evaluation of their performance in their classes and tended to focus on what they believed methodologically effective in their classrooms. The discussion of teachers´ concerns has been studied by local researchers who affirm that professionals can improve their practices and transform their realities based on their reflections (Escobar, 2013; Rico et al., 2012; Erazo, 2009; Jerez, 2008).

A key aspect in teachers' discussions was their willingness to listen to their colleagues. It can be stated that teachers had few or null opportunities to listen to colleagues from different areas to share teaching experiences and to build school capacity. The teachers were missing the opportunity to change practices to enrich their own professional repertoire, to find the coherence among policy and local needs, and to change school practices and policies for the benefit of the school community. Participation in this project provided teachers with opportunities to change

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

97

this situation. When teachers listened carefully to their peers, they could empathize with them because they had similar concerns not only about their L2 proficiency level, but also about teaching content in the second language. They also had an opportunity to share their own individual practices as a means to enrich their teaching repertoire. Sharing these experiences and similar concerns fostered a desire to keep on inquiring about their day-to-day work. It also fostered an attitude of openness to learn from others in an atmosphere of trust and belonging. This finding has important implications. First, it shows the importance of creating academic spaces for teachers to interact and construct new understandings together. This goes along the precepts of social constructivism that promotes the idea that through social interaction individuals can learn and re-construct knowledge together (Ngcoza &Southwood, 2015; Adams, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978). Second, this finding also strengthens the idea that professional communities of teachers are alternatives for professional development. To this respect, Aldana and Cárdenas (2011) highlighted that belonging to a professional community is a key element to foster reflection and dialogue among peers to allow constant professional growth. If schools in Colombia aim at implementing EFL and CLIL methodologies, they need to provide the spaces for teachers to share and listen to colleagues and to find solutions together for their concerns. This also implies that schools' administration must open possibilities for teachers to hold pedagogical discussions where they feel comfortable to express their ideas. This would require an open dialogue between administration and staff to work on what teachers need and to plan in schedules.

It is important to highlight that this study adopted an "informal" teacher professional development program in the form of a Study Group that offered participants a basis for inquiring and reflecting into their own practices. "Informal" programs for professional development are

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

98

discussions and reflections of day-to-day work where teachers can enrich their pedagogical repertoire based on their experiences; different from "formal" teachers´ professional development programs that aim at conceptualizing teachers' profession through formal courses at colleges (Desimone, 2009) or other formal settings. Informal programs also allow teachers to take risks, solve problems, and attend to dilemmas in their practice as suggested by Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner (2017). From a pedagogical point of view, the implementation of an informal professional development program requires that all activities are carefully crafted to attend teachers´ needs (Jerez, 2008). As a participant observer in this process, I led the discussions so that teachers could build knowledge about bilingual education collaboratively. To do so, it was necessary to allow participants to discuss what they struggled with in terms of the bilingual practices, and then promote activities that encouraged them to work together on their own suggestions and ideas. This is relevant for two reasons. First, it helps teachers confront their own fears about teaching in a foreign language, and second, it stimulates team work in areas such as class preparation and material design. Teachers in this project recognized this practice as a key factor for their endeavor because having their peers' help was easier than working alone. However, this institution does not include in its agenda the creation of either informal or formal programs to acknowledge teachers´ work and efforts to develop this bilingual program. External companies as publishing houses had delivered few CLIL training sessions for content and English teachers, but they were unsuccessful because such spaces do not bear in mind teachers´ needs and insights about bilingual education and the school´s context.

Through the discussions during this study, teachers identified collaboration and cross-curricular work as beneficial for them and for the school community. They discovered their own potential to enrich the bilingual program regardless of the content they taught, their expertise in

bilingual education and their L2 proficiency level. Practices such as the one proposed in this

study could help reduce teachers´ tendency to work in isolation.

It is also important to mention that teachers in this study claimed that they did not receive

enough professional development support from the institution to understand the underpinnings of

bilingual education and to implement it in the school. Apparently, training in bilingual education

was not in the institution's agenda and probably the school administration was not aware of

teachers' needs to implement it successfully. This resulted in teachers´ endeavors being

ambiguous and difficult to carry on. This finding is like what de Mejía (2016) and McDougald

(2015) pointed out in their studies, which was that the lack of proper training in Colombian

schools leading to misunderstandings about bilingual education and to mistakes in its

implementation. This consequently, results in poor achievements in EFL competence. This study

supports the notion presented in other studies regarding the need for schools to implement

professional development programs aimed at understanding the tenets of bilingual education and

at fostering collective work that support curriculum changes in the transition to become a

bilingual school (de Mejía, 2016; McDougald, 2015; Aldana& Cardenas, 2011).

This study also highlights that such "informal" professional development opportunities

should be "local" rather than being offered by external agencies. This study demonstrated that

from teachers' perspectives, they were willing to propose different alternatives to strengthen the

bilingual program proposed by the institution. For instance, teachers from different content areas

could lead training sessions where teachers were able to share their experiences, create cross-

curricular projects or participate actively to foster meaningful learning. This, from teachers'

views, might be more fruitful than bringing to the school external agents who train teachers in

mainstream tendencies. Local or particular needs could be targeted if the institution knows the

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity
of Teachers Professional Development

100

potential of its own staff members. Everybody has the potential to use their expertise to

contribute to make bilingual programs successful, and this consequently improves school's

capacity.

Creating and implementing a teachers' study group, such as the one proposed in this

research, addressed the lack of coherence between education policies, local needs and learning

and teaching opportunities that has been detected in Colombian bilingual programs (Aldana &

Cárdenas, 2011; Guerrero, 2010; González & Fernández, 2007; De Mejia, 2001). The results

show that a community of professionals, who share and build knowledge together, builds school

capacity because teaching and learning goals can be met when knowledge, skills and dispositions

are valued. An informal professional development opportunity like the one I proposed allows

teachers to share goals for students learning, to recognize collective responsibility to achieve

goals, to inquiry about daily life challenges and the possibility to influence the institutional

activities and policies (Newmann, King & Youngs, 2000). That is to say, that working

collaboratively and having spaces to reflect upon day-to-day dilemmas, could stimulate

professional growth.

Regarding the second research objective that aimed at understanding teachers´ reflections

about their bilingual practices through pedagogical discussions, the study revealed that teachers

began to gain agency. It is important to highlight that the teaching practices in the bilingual

program were bounded by the institutional policy and requirements of the bilingual program

coordination. As mentioned before, teachers had few opportunities to propose innovative and

meaningful activities that could be appealing for their students. This is relevant in this study

because it shows that teachers' agency was limited as it was difficult for them to deliver classes

in English according to what they believed was more effective. Teachers felt that their decision-

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

101

making capacity was limited, and it led to what is known in the literature as teachers´

vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 1996). This refers to limited feedback about material design or

teaching activities that trigger lack of autonomy and that generates ambiguities regarding paths to

reach educational objectives. In addition, if there is ambiguity regarding institutional goals,

teachers start doubting their own professional qualities (Kelchtermans, 1996). Such professional

instability was evident in this study. Teachers did not feel competent enough to perform a good

role in their bilingual classes. This finding is relevant as it shows that if schools aim at

transforming their curricular and pedagogical practices, they should make sure that teachers

participate in the changes proposed and provide opportunities to develop the necessary

competences to carry out the planned changes. When decisions are vertical, teachers find they are

vulnerable and lack the tools to cope with the necessary changes to succeed.

Hence, teachers' voices should be heard as their opinions and proposals are valuable for the

academic success and effectiveness of a program. Unfortunately, that has not been the case as

Aguirre (2018) stated. In general, policy makers and administrative staff have not provided

opportunities for change that respond to learning and teaching needs in local institutions, where

teachers assume an active role. This study showed that such a change is possible. In the Study

Group I designed and implemented, participants found an opportunity to listen to others and to be

heard, which is a form of empowerment (Aguirre, 2018). Teachers' empowerment is derived

from processes that intend to challenge the status quo, that aim at refining teachers' professional

skills, and that result from knowledge construction in critical reflection (De Mejia, 2016;

Escobar, 2013; Flores, 2001). In this study, teachers mentioned that this empowerment was

manifested in their resistance to limit their practices to the institution boundaries. As they began

to understand the principles of bilingual education, to share teaching experiences, and to identify

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

102

solutions to the problems they encountered, they mentioned that they began to implement pedagogical alternatives to meet students' needs that were different from the institutional practices.

This project also shows that, from teachers' perspectives, their practices are constrained due to their limitations in language proficiency. Teachers struggled with how to provide linguistic instruction because they lacked the necessary input to do so. This generated fears and increased their vulnerability. Besides affecting the emotional and professional dimensions, this situation raises questions about teaching effectiveness in both language and content. For schools to have strong bilingual programs it is therefore necessary to guarantee that teachers have the communicative skills in EFL to carry them out. Rather than imposing the use of a language to teach content, both teachers and school administrators should work together to consolidate a plan for teachers' professional development in that regards. In other words, there should be changes for teachers to improve their language proficiency level so that feel confident to teach the content of their subjects since L2 proficiency is part of teachers' preparation and adaptation to content (Papaja, 2013).

To sum up, this research showed that the implementation of bilingual programs requires well-prepared teachers who can actively participate in their design and that informal learning opportunities should be part of bilingual school agendas. Opening the spaces for teachers to work together to understand the tenets of bilingual education, share concerns and work together in the solution of pedagogical problems are key factors for teachers to overcome their vulnerability and to build school capacity. These, in addition to guaranteeing the improvement in teachers' proficiency levels in L2, are conditions sine qua non for bilingual programs to succeed.

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

103

Chapter 7

Limitations and Further Research

I encountered different limitations during the development of this study related to lack of time and school´s support to carry out the project. At early stages of the research, it was difficult to find the participants due to the lack of time teachers had, their amount of work and the scarcity of opportunities to meet with the entire body of teachers, including primary, middle and high school teachers to invite them to participate in the study group. As I had anticipated the difficulty to contact a vast number of teachers to be part of this program, I talked to my closest colleagues to join the study group. This strategy was positive, and I could work with a small number of teachers who were willing to participate and give continuity to my project.

The principal and the middle school academic coordinator supported my initiative to carry out a research study in the institution and they pointed out the importance of doing research as teachers. However, I did not have authorization nor the space to develop the activities as I had proposed during working hours, due to the institutional chronogram and the activities the educators had to attend throughout the year. Consequently, I had to carry out the Study Group after working hours. This factor influenced negatively the participants´ attendance, because they used their personal free time to attend to each session of the study group.

Considering that one of my goals as a researcher was to understand the influence of the pedagogical discussions about bilingual education in teachers´ practices, I did not have the possibility to observe their classes in English. We shared meaningful strategies to do both; deliver classes in L2 and design materials that were fruitful for the participants. However, we could not observe these new practices in their classrooms, this could be developed as a second

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

104

phase in a further study. This exercise would be significant for teachers as co- evaluation of their work and for the enrichment of their professional skills.

I consider that teachers´ pedagogical discussions about teaching issues should be part of instructional agendas. Teachers´ experiences and their reflections should be systematized to improve learning dynamics, and to establish strategies to match institutional goals in collaborative settings. In order to achieve this, more research studies based on teachers' professional development should be visible in local literature. Hence, I posed the following research questions for researchers who would be interested in the local needs of this institution:

Questions for further research:

1. What do class observations inform us about bilingual practices and their connection to informal professional development programs?

2. What is the impact of the continuity of informal teachers' professional development programs in teachers' bilingual practices?

3. What is the role of CLIL teachers in the development of bilingual education curriculum within institutional policies?

4. How do non- bilingual content teachers and EFL teachers co-construct knowledge about CLIL practices in collaborative settings?

5. How does interdisciplinary collaborative work unveil non- bilingual teachers´ professional growth within bilingual education agendas?

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

105

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106

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107

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108

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109

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110

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113

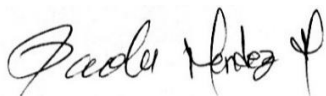Annex 1. Consent form for participants

Bogotá, Agosto 3 de 2017

Docente
Colegio X
Apreciado Colega.

Quiero hacerle la invitación a participar en el grupo de estudio extracurricular que obedece a la implementación de mi proyecto de grado de la Maestría Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés, de la Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas que lleva como título: "Maestros de contenido en la co-construcción de conocimiento sobre educación bilingüe: Una oportunidad para desarrollo profesional docente". Este grupo de estudio tiene como fin promover discusiones pedagógicas basadas en la educación bilingüe y sus prácticas de enseñanza en la misma. Al mismo tiempo, contribuye con su desarrollo profesional como maestro. Usted tendrá la posibilidad de contribuir con la dinámica del grupo y los temas tratados en él serán elegidos según sus necesidades pedagógicas como maestro.

Los datos recolectados y posteriormente analizados con fines académicos serán presentados a ustedes y a la institución. La participación de este estudio no tendrá ninguna influencia en su quehacer pedagógico, en términos laborales y su participación es totalmente voluntaria. Esta investigación es de carácter confidencial y su identidad y la de la institución NO serán divulgadas en ninguna etapa del estudio.

Agradezco su atención y respuesta a esta solicitud. Si precisan mayor información o tienen alguna inquietud sobre los fundamentos del proyecto, no duden en escribir al correo mendezf.p18@gmail.com. Sus apreciaciones y contribuciones son válidas en el proceso de esta investigación.

Cordialmente,

Paola Andrea Mendez Florez

Licenciada en Educación Básica con Énfasis en Inglés
Estudiante de la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés
Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity
of Teachers Professional Development

114

Annex 2. Consent form for the school´s principal

Bogotá, mayo 3 de 2017

Señor(es)
Consejo Académico
Colegio X
Ciudad

Apreciados señores.

Por medio de la presente quiero pedir a ustedes su consentimiento para desarrollar la fase de la implementación de mi proyecto individual de grado de la Maestría Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés, de la Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas que lleva como título: "Maestros de contenido en la co-construcción de conocimiento sobre educación bilingüe: Una oportunidad para desarrollo profesional docente". Con lo cual es preciso que un grupo de maestros del colegio, participe voluntariamente en un "Grupo de Estudio" extracurricular que lideraré personalmente, el cual promueve discusiones pedagógicas basadas en la educación bilingüe y sus prácticas de enseñanza en la misma.

Los datos recolectados y posteriormente analizados con fines académicos serán presentados a la institución y a los participantes quienes no tendrán ningún daño moral, ético o político durante el desarrollo del este estudio. La investigación es de carácter confidencial. La identidad de la institución y la de los participantes NO serán divulgadas en ninguna etapa del estudio.

Agradezco su atención y respuesta a esta solicitud. Si precisan mayor información o tienen alguna inquietud sobre los fundamentos del proyecto, no duden en escribir al correo mendezf.p18@gmail.com. Sus apreciaciones y contribuciones son válidas en el proceso de esta investigación.

Cordialmente,

_____

Paola Andrea Mendez Florez
Licenciada en Educación Básica con Énfasis en Inglés
Estudiante de la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés
Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas

SENSITIZATION: WORKING TOGETHER - Language and communication (Session #2) Movie BLACK			
Teaching objectives	**Learning Objectives**	**Topic**	**Phase #1 SENSITIZATION: WORKING TOGETHER**
1. To identify teachers´ beliefs about language and communication. **2.** To increase teachers' awareness about language learning processes.	**1.** Teachers will become aware of their own beliefs about language and communication. **2.** To reflect upon their beliefs about language learning and communication and how that influences their teaching practices.	**1.** Language and communication. **2.** The role of communication in language learning.	**1.2** Language and communication (2nd session) 🖉 Teachers´ study group (mini group discussions depending on the number of participants) 🖉 60 minutes session.
			Type of data: *Opinions, perceptions, understandings and beliefs.* ***Instruments:*** *meeting´s typescripts, Movies´ key excerpts.*

	BLACK (2005 film) *This is a movie about a girl who was born deaf and blind. She could not communicate until her parents found a teacher who could help her to communicate with others.* *Teachers will watch the movie during their free time and will discuss the movie´s plot in the study group´s session.*

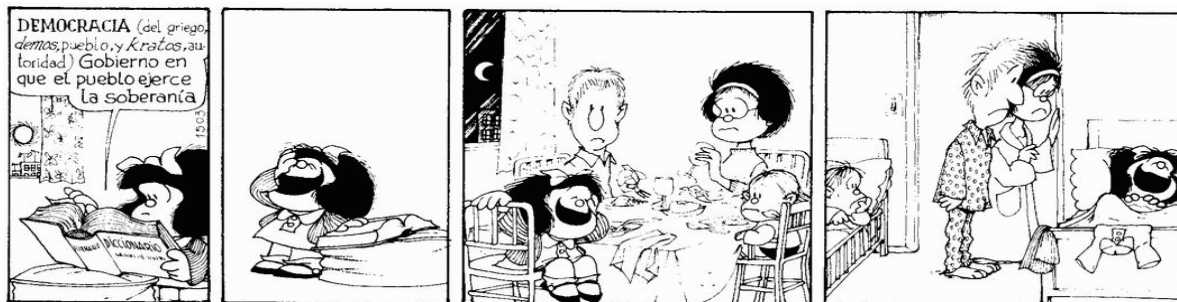|	**1.INDUCTION:**	**2. INDIVIDUAL WORK.**	**3. WORKING TOGETHER:**	**4. SYNTHESIS**
PROCEDURE	**1.1 Warming up:** Analyze the **comic (Annex 1**). What can you infer from it? Share your ideas with your partners. **1.2 Connecting ideas:** ABOUT THE MOVIE… Think about the movie. Answer and discuss the questions stated in **Annex 2**. **1.3 Session goals:** **1.** Teachers will become aware of their own beliefs about language and communication.	BECOMING AWARE OF LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION. Answer the questions in **Annex 3** based on your prior knowledge and experience as a language learner and as a teacher.	CO-CONSTRUCTING KNOWLEDGE. Discuss the previews questions with your partners.	**As a group reach a consensus about** (1) Language, (2) Communication (3) The role of communication and language in language teaching and learning.

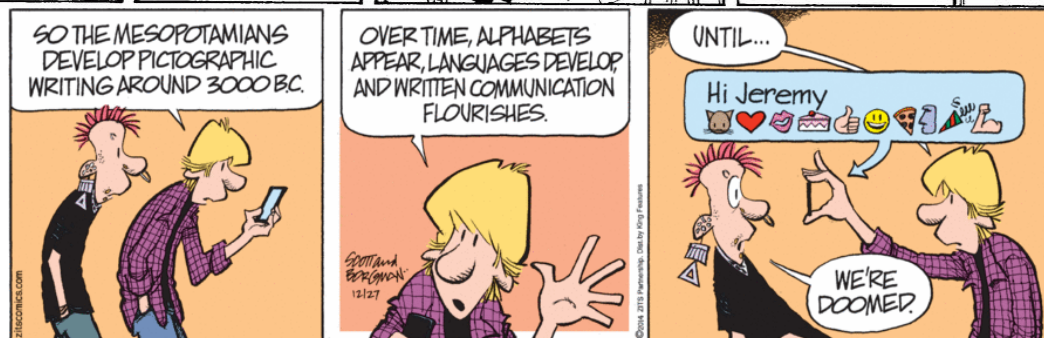|	**2.** To reflect upon their beliefs about language learning and communication and how that influences their teaching practices.			

Annex 3. Sample lesson plan -session 2

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

117

Annex 3

(Session 2) WARMING UP

Option 1

Option 2

ANNEX 1 (session2). Connecting ideas	**ANNEX 2 (session 2). INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP WORK GENERAL QUESTIONS:**
1. What difficulties did the kid overcome through her development process? 2. What is the vision of language and communication of her parents? 3. What sort of difficulties did the kid face when learning how to communicate with others? 4. What sort of strategies did the kid use to overcome those difficulties? 5. What is the teacher vision of language and communication? 6. What is the role of family in the child´s development process?	1. What is language? 2. What is communication? 3. What is the role of language in human development? 4. Is language constructed or taught? 5. What sort of difficulties do you face when learning a language? **INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS:** 6. What is the role of communication in your teaching environment? 7. What is the role of language in your teaching environment?

Content Area Teachers' knowledge Co-Construction upon Bilingual Education: An opportunity of Teachers Professional Development

118

Annex 4. Color coding – Data analysis sample

Sesión número 4 working Together agosto 30, 2017 tiempo 1:06 minutos
Objective: 1. To understand the main constructs and principles of the school bilingual program.

T6: mmmm Pero es. Por ejemplo en se caso hablando de grado 11 ellos tienen un nivel más que uno, en el caso mío ¿no? entonces ahí queda como grave ¿cierto?

T5: (Risas) profesora por eso apúntale al bilingüismo

R: apúntale al bilingüismo Si es algo que sea acorde con el nivel de inglés y con la edad de los chicos

T4: Yo creo que ahí hay una contradicción Con todo lo que vimos en inglés y todas las actividades que planearon Los de educación física y cosas así que Qué decían la idea es que haya un acercamiento al inglés más no una total inmersión porque nosotros no somos profesores de inglés Entonces Yo entiendo lo que dice Mónica porque yo con séptimo … pues obviamente las instrucciones de pronto las Iniciales y eso que le toca uno planear la clase con Una semana antes porque si me toca, a mi si me toca hacer mi trabajo cómodo para que no se me enrede Y no hacer el oso allá porque los niños saben mucho más y yo tengo niños de séptimo que en inglés son supremamente buenos Cómo como digo venga saludo que abran la guía Cómo resolver la duda las primeras instrucciones

T5: pero no todo, todo es en inglés

T4: o algo así pero si dice que el vocabulario como acorde al nivel Es mucho más complejo

T6: Pero el say it in English si Rocío, la unidad sí.

T5: ¿La unidad toda, toda en inglés?

T6: por ejemplo nosotros que nos tocó hacer en décimo y en once una guía completa solo en inglés entonces yo escogía una, entonces yo escogí para décimo una de investigación y el profe de ese entonces de once escogió una de laboratorio este año dejamos la misma y todo el laboratorio era en inglés, entonces uno todo debía hablarlo en inglés y lo que tú dices uno no (refiriéndose a Marcela)

T4: y uno hay conceptos que uno no maneja

T6: y lo que tú dices ahí hay una contradicción lo que tú dices está bien, se supone que vamos a dar unos comandos, pero en ese orden de ideas no nos lo están pidiendo así

R: Y la evaluación está diciendo otra cosa

T4: exacto porque ahí dice que maneje un lenguaje acorde a las de mi edad y no manejo y yo soy consiente Mónica porque la evaluación lo dice. … yo si trato cuando hago mi sesión de ingles, yo si trato de venga, y lo hago en inglés y les hago cualquier cosa primero en inglés, que se levanten como para que ellos se sientan que está ahí inmersos y hago la aclaración de que como ustedes me ayudan ¿sí? Y tengo los monitores bueno van hacer la sesión en inglés, tu léete bien esto y tú me ayudas porque ya uno identifica cuales son los más pilos en ingles

T5: yo tengo una que en B2 en un octavo

T4: si yo el año pasado tenía una niña que había vivido en estados unidos y hablaba supremamente bien el inglés, y ella me decía no profe hagamos una cosa ven yo lo hago y te ayudo hacer la sesión en inglés, yo hablo y yo te ayudo y ven cuadramos, y entonces es un trabajo más del estudiante. Por ejemplo, yo en ese curso la niña me hacia la clase en inglés y esa era la nota de la niña y hacia la sesión en inglés, pero yo no me siento en la capacidad de hacer toda la clase en ingles así acorde a la edad de los niños así sean de séptimo no me siento acorde

T3: es difícil si

paola mendez
Placing the students in a higher level of knowledge. Comparing hers with the students

paola mendez
Mismatch between school policy and real teaching practices

paola mendez
Lack of language teaching skills

paola mendez 11 minutes ago
Planning as a teaching strategy
Reply   Resolve

paola mendez
Placing the students in a higher level of knowledge. Comparing hers with the students

paola mendez
Placing the students in a higher level of knowledge. Comparing hers with the students

paola mendez
Restoring to profesional knowledge to adapt material

paola mendez
Lack of L2 proficiency

paola mendez
Mismatch between school policy and real teaching practices

paola mendez
Lack of language teaching skills

paola mendez
Placing the students in a higher level of knowledge. Comparing hers with the students

paola mendez
Bilingual teaching strategies

paola mendez
Lack of language teaching skills

Annex 5. Visual display – Building categories