Universidad de Guanajuato

División de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades

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Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés

A Case Study on Foreign Language Teachers' Beliefs about Classroom Management

in a Large Public University in Central Mexico.

TESIS

Qué Para Obtener el Grado de Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés

PRESENTA

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Resumen

Este proyecto de investigación estuvo encaminado a explorar las diferentes estrategias que maestros en el Departamento de Lenguas de la Universidad de Guanajuato (UG) creen o consideran ser las más efectivas para el manejo de su clase. El estudio se dirigió a explorar y escuchar la voz de cuatro maestros de varias lenguas extranjeras. De tal manera se pretende tener un acercamiento a las razones que existen detrás de las actividades que diseñan con el fin de mantener un entorno de aprendizaje adecuado. La investigación se enfocó en responder la siguiente pregunta: ¿Cuáles son las creencias de cuatro maestros de lengua extranjera acerca del manejo de clase en el Departamento de Lenguas de la Universidad de Guanajuato?

En este estudio de caso el enfoque central se dio sobre los participantes, cuatro maestros de diferentes lenguas extranjeras del Departamento de Lenguas de la UG y el centro de auto aprendizaje del idioma (CAADI). Se siguió una metodología cualitativa apoyada por la implementación de tres técnicas que sirvieron como herramientas para llevar a cabo este proyecto. Las técnicas que ayudaron a triangular la información para este caso de estudio fueron cuestionarios abiertos, observaciones de clase y entrevistas semiestructuradas. De esta forma, los maestros pudieron verbalizar sus creencias sobre el manejo de clase efectivo, de igual forma permitieron dar seguimiento a sus teorías pedagógicas a través del comportamiento observado dentro de sus clases y reflexionaron sobre la relación entre sus creencias y comportamientos dentro del salón.

Los resultados de esta investigación sugieren la poca importancia que se le ha dado al manejo efectivo de clase como una herramienta para transmitir los conocimientos de una forma más humana. También se concluye que a pesar de compartir las mismas condiciones laborales, las creencias o dogmas pedagógicos de estos docentes es variada debido a sus experiencias académicas y profesionales como docentes de una segunda lengua. El uso de técnicas educativas personalizadas, creadas o implementadas en base a lo que ellos creen que es mejor para sus alumnos puede llevarlos a romper con los patrones educativos enseñados en los programas de formación. La falta de experiencia en ciertas áreas del manejo de clase también los ha llevado a crear sus propias teorías sobre cómo lidiar y resolver problemas dentro del salón de clases.

Abstract

Among other cognitive processes, it seems that beliefs have a strong impact in teachers' decisions regarding classroom management strategies. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the beliefs of four foreign language teachers concerning classroom management. The importance of understanding teachers' beliefs and their influences in this particular area emerged from a personal interest in teacher training and teacher professional development programs in the Mexican context, where these cognitive constructs are barely taught or omitted. Frequently, it is possible to find teachers base their strategies or decisions on what they believe is better to do according to their own teaching experiences, needs, or/and contexts.

Having this in mind, context is an essential factor to consider for the application of teachers' beliefs. Therefore, this instrumental case study was carried out with a variety of teachers under the same working conditions at the University of Guanajuato (UG) and the self-learning language center (CAADI), in central Mexico. Four foreign language (French, German and English) teachers responded open questionnaires and participated in classroom observations and semi-structured interviews for the purpose of this qualitative study. The results obtained from this data are a tool to understand what the beliefs of four foreign language teachers with different backgrounds are. Despite the differences, these teachers share some ideas about what should be done and what they are actually doing in the management of their language classroom.

As part of the main results, these four teachers expressed their beliefs about the use of an official document for lesson planning. They also shared their beliefs about different strategies to build up a proper relationship with their students, including sense of humour, language switching, age and gender. According to these teachers, the use of grouping techniques was considered an effective strategy to create an adequate learning environment. Finally, they presented a different conceptualization of experience and its influence on classroom management.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my family, especially my parents Rosario Hernández and Genaro Garcia who taught me the value of education and the love for learning and teaching. I extend this dedication to Christopher for his unconditional love and support, thank you for always being there with me. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to myself for leaving my comfort zone in order to improve and looking forward to become an inspiration and support to other teachers.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1 Introduction

During the last few decades of educational research, the link between teachers' beliefs and their decision-making has been the center of much attention. However, not much work has been done between these mental constructions and one of the main concerns of language teaching which is classroom management. Throughout the first chapter of this thesis I present the personal interests that led me to explore this particular area of language education; a brief background of literature related to this study is also discussed. Finally, there is the purpose and potential contribution, as well as the gaps that were identified through this research.

1.1 Research Question

This research is an exploration of teachers' beliefs about classroom management. It is a case study in a large public university in central Mexico (Guanajuato). The question that guides this research project is:

What are the beliefs concerning classroom management of four foreign language teachers working at the Language Department of the University of Guanajuato?

1.2 My Motivation

To be motivated means to be moved to do something.

(Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 54)

Before I continue to present the basis of this research, it is necessary for me to express the reasons that moved me to explore this theme. Being an English teacher made me have a strong interest in certain issues related to the teaching practice. Two years ago, my last job was as a teacher assistant in a B.A. in English Language Teaching (ELT) located in the north of Mexico where I spent about three years mentoring and preparing pre-service teachers. To be more specific, my job was to give a class called "Teaching Practice". One of my functions was to observe pre-service language teachers during their first practices in real classrooms, and evaluate them during the semester with a portfolio and observation forms. These

observation forms were designed by the same B.A. teachers and it contained the main areas or competencies that teachers should take into consideration during the practice, otherwise their grades would decrease and they would fail the subject. After the first days of observation, I realized that my student-teachers were using some survival strategies when they were facing an unknown situation. Some of these situations included, for example, dealing with a visually impaired student, or using L1 in L2 (which was severely punished by the institution) to build up a relationship with their learners. Unfortunately, the observation form was not flexible enough to permit these types of situations. The evaluation criteria was closed and straight forward. It had a short open space for feedback comments although these comments were not part of their grade. The rubrics should be accomplished during the practices, just as they were stated in the observation form. If not, these pre-service teachers would fail in a teaching practice that could deserve some kind of recognition.

This experience was my main motivation for the topic that I present in this thesis. I wanted that novice teachers have a space in practice to experiment with their beliefs of what good teaching practice is. In some Mexican institutions there is still a need to open the door for teachers' beliefs or ideologies. At the same time, there is a need to look at those beliefs that have affected teachers' practice in a negative way and encourage them to open up on new ideas for the classroom. Beyond this research, I would like to support the new language teachers to exploit their creativity in the language classroom. In the following section I present an overview of the previous studies related to this research.

1.3 Background to the Study

The creation of a positive classroom climate enables the conditions to maintain an adequate or safe learning environment where students can develop their language skills comfortably (Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011; Fowler & Sarapl, 2010; Richards, 2015). Learning a language is a practice that takes place in small or large groups of people, in formal or informal-instruction. Notwithstanding, it is not only teachers' but also students' responsibility to provide the necessary tools and attitudes to achieve this comfortability. It has been discussed in different studies (for example, Castellanos Jaimes 2013; Pajares, 1992; Thomas, 2013) that there should be an emphasis on the examination of novice and experienced teachers' beliefs as a source of understanding the behaviors they adopt within

the language classroom. However, the analysis of these teachers' beliefs provides a wider view to the cognitive schemata that they have to come with once they face a new or unfamiliar situation during the classroom interaction.

1.4 Identification of the Gaps in Research

There is an increasing amount of research concerning the cognitive aspects behind classroom management. Nonetheless, limited research has been carried out within the Mexican context. Some examples of this research topic conducted in other Latin-American countries are Castellanos Jaimes (2013) who focused on the role of pre-service teachers' beliefs in a Colombian education program. Another research conducted in the Latin American context is Lopes and Santos (2013) who attempted to categorize teachers' beliefs and classroom goal settings although they were only concerned with the analysis of primary teachers' context. Finally, one last example of research in this specific context is the one presented by Ruiz Esparza and Castillo Zaragoza (2013) who offered a collection of cases regarding teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning in general. In this sense, I could find that there are some similar features shared among these studies. This thesis aims to explore a variety of language teacher in the same work context in Mexico.

Another gap is the defiant effort to compare teachers' beliefs with their behavior. Few studies have explored this issue, the strong assertion of cognitive influence on teachers' actions. Despite the limited information that supports the connection between beliefs and behaviors, it has been argued that beliefs are represented through attitude and specific acts of verbal and interactional evidence.

To summarize, this qualitative research attempts to bridge these gaps by working with four teachers with different backgrounds in the same context in a large public university of central Mexico. Furthermore, this thesis is an exploratory study that intends to discover what these teachers' beliefs concerning classroom management are. Hence, it triangulates beliefs, behaviors and teachers' reflection within a Mexican context.

1.5 Potential Contribution

Concerning the nature of research, there is always a potential contribution that might emerge from the unexpected or new findings of this study. This contribution is linked to the idea that cognitive and emotional processes might be revealed in teachers' classroom behavior. In addition, the extent to which teachers' beliefs influence their classroom management skills depends on several internal and external factors. Reflection on teachers' self-development is an influence in the improvement of their own practice. Finally, an expected outcome is raising awareness on the importance of teachers' beliefs. This should be understood not only by teacher training programs but also by teachers themselves. These are some of the aspects that are analyzed in-depth throughout this research project. In the next section I present the organization of this thesis.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

In Chapter 1, I briefly introduced my motivation, background of the study, the gaps and potential contribution of this thesis. Chapter 2 offers an analysis and discussion of the literature and previous studies related to beliefs and main areas of classroom management. It contains a discussion of teacher cognition, beliefs and an overview of beliefs and behavior in language education; then it continues emphasizing the importance of classroom management and its multiple areas. Chapter 3 presents the methodological processes that were followed in this research. It provides a detailed description of the paradigm, research method, and techniques' design and application as well as the context and participants where this study took place. Ethical concerns and illustration of the data analysis procedure are also included in this chapter. Moreover, a discussion and analysis of the results obtained in this research process regarding teachers' beliefs about classroom management is found in Chapter 4. Such results were divided in different themes presenting an analysis of the evidence that emerged from this qualitative study. Finally, in Chapter 5 I include a summary of the findings and a general conclusion where I attempt to describe the contribution of this research towards a research and practical future. This final chapter also introduces the research limitations that appear throughout the process and it indicates some suggestions for further research that could be carried out within the same area.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2 Introduction

Studies concerning beliefs in language education represent a growing field due to the connection they have with the decisions and behaviors that teachers implement inside and outside the classroom. This chapter examines the literature supporting the main concepts that correspond to teachers' beliefs and their influence on their classroom management actions.

2.1 Teacher Cognition: Defining Beliefs

Borg (2003) defines teacher cognition as "what teachers think, know, and believe and the relationships of these mental constructions to what teachers do in the language teaching classroom" (p. 81). This author suggests that all the unobservable dimensions in teaching are part of teachers' cognition. Indeed, in 2006, Borg included assumptions, perceptions, and attitudes as other cognitive processes that also reside within teachers' minds (part of teacher cognition), and that influence the decision-making processes as well. Barnard and Burns (2012) exemplify each cognitive process with the following explanation:

> Assumptions may be regarded as axioms which enable us to make pre-judgments about the world around us; for example, a teacher facing a new class of learners will assume that, in a number of respects, they will be similar to classes she or he has previously taught. After working for some time with these new learners, the teacher will perceive that there are similarities with, and differences between, this class and previous ones, and new, somewhat tentative attitudes will emerge. With further experience, these attitudes will tend to be refined, rejected or reformulated and then incorporated into a set of firmer and more stable beliefs. What distinguishes a belief about something from a knowledge of something is that respected members of one's community accept it as a fact. (p. 3)

In this quote it is possible to differentiate the association that exists between the elements of teacher cognition such as assumptions, perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs. Also, it mentions the opportunity that teachers have to reconstruct their beliefs after

application. However, there is still a particular similarity between these concepts that makes it difficult to provide a concrete definition of beliefs. Thus, this definition will be constructed throughout the following analysis. Main studies in teacher cognition underline that beliefs and knowledge are the central cognitive processes that influence teachers' decisions about the lesson (see Borg, 2003; Clark & Peterson, 1984; Fang 1996). Although Pajares (1992) claims that these two processes are hard to separate because of the numerous similarities in the way they are shaped, he also clarifies that it is possible to distinguish the differences between both of them: "[a] belief is based on evaluation and judgment; knowledge is based on objective fact" (p. 313). This is a controversial distinction that for decades appears to be acceptable despite the weaknesses that presents in the definition of beliefs and knowledge. This author also discusses that both aspects of teacher cognition (beliefs and knowledge) play an important role in the development of teachers' planning and class' performance. In addition, Pajares (1992) describes the differences between teachers' knowledge and beliefs in the following way:

> Knowledge systems are open to evaluation and critical examination; beliefs are not. […] belief systems are also unbounded in that their relevance to reality defies logic, whereas knowledge systems are better defined and receptive to reason. And yet, for all their idiosyncrasies, he concluded that beliefs are far more influential than knowledge in determining how individuals organize and define tasks and problems and are stronger. (p. 311)

Thus, knowledge is a process constructed upon facts whereas beliefs are mainly built upon possibilities of what could be right or wrong. From all the different cognitive processes, beliefs and knowledge represent a strongly attached mental construction that sustains our preconceived ideas of something. Whereas knowledge refers to facts and objectivity, beliefs have a heavier impact on the teachers' decision-making process.

Different from Clark and Peterson's (1984) statement about the static permanency and non-changeability of beliefs' structure, Borg (2003) claims that it is through knowledge and experiences that our beliefs can be constructed and reconstructed. Beliefs are considered to be a solid structure that can be moldable or reformulated although at a different pace depending on the individual and the circumstances. Beliefs in language teaching tend to be

resilient because of the way they were formed. Richards and Lockhart (1997) make clear that "[…] they are derived from a number of different sources such as: their own experience as language learners; experience of what works best; established practice; personality factors; educationally based or research-based principles; and principles derived from an approach or method" (p. 31). All of these factors become knowledge and they simultaneously formulate beliefs that are based on what did/not worked best in every past situation that is similar to the current one.

Ruiz Esparza and Castillo Zaragoza (2013) support Pajares (1992) by arguing that knowledge and beliefs are linked together and at the same time they are connected to emotions and identity. The emotional side influences our beliefs the moment we put them in practice and see the results. The effect that beliefs have on teachers' emotions will lead them to decide whether beliefs are replicable or not. Based on this, it is possible to predict that teachers' beliefs are laden with an emotional charge of the events that happened in past events and that could be repeated in their memory. In the same line, Fang (1996) discusses the analysis of teachers' theories as synonyms of beliefs. These theories are created from the need to solve emerging problems in the classroom.

The concept of schemata described by Pajares (1992) is complemented by Fang (1996) who states that "teachers' beliefs and theories represent the rich store of general knowledge of objects, people, events and their characteristic relationships that teachers have that affects their planning and their interactive thoughts and decision, as well as their classroom behavior" (p. 49). The particular schemata generated in each individual's mind seems difficult to approach in research due to the variety of experiences and beliefs that exist in every human. Nonetheless, there are certain patterns found teachers' beliefs that have permitted their analysis through representative behaviors. As a consequence, the following section shows a brief summary of how beliefs and behavior have been related in research.

2.2 Beliefs and Behavior

The study of human behavior has been approached through the analysis of factors that have changed throughout history. But now this study is better approached from a cognitivist view where it is considered the individual's sociocultural structures as well as mental

procedures. Regarding this, Borg (2003) points out that despite the invisibility of cognitive dimensions (assumptions, perceptions, beliefs, knowledge, etc.), they could be perceived through behavior and they also exist in every aspect of teachers' work. Having this in mind, it is fundamental to continue this discussion with the definition of behavior. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) define this term as the "observable acts that are studied in their own right" (p. 13). For the purpose of this research, I will only focus on teachers' acts on classroom management.

Generally speaking, the study of behavior has been of interest in different fields, such as medicine, cultural, educational, and so on. The development of these fields depend of human behavior for its development and improvement, and vice versa. Underwood (2002) presents a solid statement about how both social and cognitive elements impact directly on humans' behavior; he states that it is possible to confirm, "[…] culture and the psyche, it is now recognized, are mutually constitutive" (p. 1). To put it differently, teachers' beliefs and other cognitive processes are fully attached to the decisions they make in their classroom actions. Equally important is to mention that not all of the cognitive processes described in the previous section of teacher cognition (perceptions, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge) could be manifested in individuals' actions. Several studies (Ajzen, 1985; Morris, Marzano, Dandy & O'Brien, 2012; Underwood, 2002) have specified that the most perceptible processes involved are beliefs and attitudes.

In this section I discuss the main literature that focuses on understanding human behavior, specifically teachers' behavior and its relationship with beliefs. Some of these studies have given equal importance to the influence of both, external or social factors, and internal or individual aspects (i.e., cognitive processes) in the decisions that influence behavior. One of the most popular theories in this area is the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). TPB suggests that major responsibility is given to the attitudes and beliefs (terms that are used interchangeably) of the person that adopts any specific conduct. Following this theory, Morris et al. (2012) remark the importance of intention as an indicator of people's behavior, summarizing it as follows:

Intention is itself an outcome of the combination of attitudes towards a behavior. That is the positive or negative evaluation of the behavior and its expected outcomes, and

subjective norms, which are the social pressures exerted on an individual resulting from their perceptions of what others think they should do and their inclination to comply with these. (p. 5)

That is to say, the first trigger for an action to occur is having the intention to do it, or the desire to do something. But even when it plays an essential role in human conduct it does not seem to be enough for the action to occur. There are some other conditions that are needed for the intention to become an action. Decisions on behavior are taken by the individual regarding the belief on ease or difficulty perceived from the execution and effects of the action. For example, language teachers who might have an inclination for the use of games in the classroom sometimes hide their beliefs about the use of such pedagogic tools due to the lack of time and the priorities of the syllabus or the belief that games are not as important as completing the book activities. In that case, the teachers have the intention of using games but do not take action because of the external or internal limits that might exist.

Based on this discussion, it is possible to conclude that the combination of external factors, such as social norms, cultural patterns, codes of interaction, as well as, attitudes and beliefs, play an important role on this decision. Additionally, Brown (1968) suggests that attitudes are not as theoretically sustained as beliefs. It may be necessary to point out that attitudes could be a reflection of the beliefs held by people. Despite the limited research about the relationship between teachers' beliefs and behavior, there are some valuable studies that have attempted to approach this view. For instance, Harvey, Prather, White, and Hoffmeister (1968) managed to identify a continuum between abstract and concrete beliefs. This idea suggests that teachers' beliefs that fall into the concrete category are those that seem to base their teaching practice in the use of strategies that are more desirable for them. Opposite to this description, the abstract beliefs were those that presented more consistency with their own teaching practice. Furthermore, Brown's (1968) effort was to identify the influence of basic and educational beliefs on teachers' performance through the design of agreement-disagreement instruments including classroom observation.

In a more recent study on beliefs and behavior in teaching, Roffey (2006) highlights the valuable function of teachers' beliefs in the establishment of a positive relationship with their students. The following statement indicates that:

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The way we talk about children and their behavior determines how we think about it, which in turn suggests what we do about it, especially in the longer term. Such discourses can become powerful in a group and make it hard to challenge less helpful interpretations of behavior. (p. 16)

In this view, it is possible to say that perceptions are also attached to beliefs and attitudes as they occur before. Roffey (2006) further demonstrates that teachers perceive their students to have a direct impact on the way they position themselves towards the situation. Hence, teachers' behaviors are influenced by the beliefs they have upon their self-image related to the management of such situation. If teachers perceive a learner as a disruptive member, they might position themselves either in a stricter or softer image in order to deal with the learner. This decision depends on teachers' belief systems and their experiences in the situation. The significance of this study relies on the understanding of these cognitive and behavioral factors and how they join and lead teachers' actions inside the classroom. The reflection on teachers' practices might lead them to an improvement on their own performance and their learners' development. A change of belief could be a change of strategies, and if there are many struggles in the area of classroom management, teachers could redirect responsibility and recognize that this is shared not only between the learners but also with him/herself. Finally, Richards and Lockhart (1997) highlight the fact that beliefs change according to the conditions of teachers' teaching context. These authors claim that "teachers' belief systems are founded on the goals, values, and beliefs teachers hold in relation to the content and process of teaching, and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it" (p.30). According to this statement, the idea that teachers' beliefs and behaviors are reciprocally attached is conditioned for the environment, and policies where they are developed.

2.3 Beliefs on Classroom Management

As previously discussed, beliefs can be implicitly perceived through teachers' behavior although there are some other concepts that might equally appear during observation. Castellanos Jaimes (2013) describes some other concepts involving cognitive elements: "teaching conceptions, teaching values, teaching styles, and teaching practices, teaching images or teaching approaches" (p. 196). All of these terms are interconnected by

teachers' cognitive, personal and experiential domains that were learned throughout their educational life even before they decided to get involved with this profession. They are also some of the main substantial principles that lead teachers' decisions and behaviors in the classroom. Therefore, researchers on beliefs must have a clear idea of the aspect they would like to perceive throughout the observation and try to liberate it (as much as possible) from the others. In other words, those who register data from observation should be aware of the amount of spontaneous data that emerges from the target scenarios so they can focus on the central issue of their research. Also, researchers can be aware of the different stages of teaching where these cognitive processes take place and decide on the one they prefer to study. For example, pioneer studies were specific on defining three stages of teaching where thinking takes place: "teacher planning, teachers' interactive thoughts and decisions and teachers' theories and beliefs" (Clark & Peterson, 1984, p. 10). This classification makes it easier to detect several types of beliefs through teachers' actions in three separate stages of the lesson.

Borg (2003) classifies teacher cognition in three themes concerning a narrower view of teaching: "(1) cognition and prior language learning experience, (2) cognition and teacher education, and (3) cognition and classroom practice" (p. 81). The purpose of these themes is to understand that, as mentioned before, cognition is present in all aspects of teaching. In the first theme it is claimed that teachers already possess some teaching knowledge before they even attend to the preparation courses. The second theme emphasizes the assumption that teachers use cognition while they are in preparation. And the third is a different dimension of the thinking process in which teachers reflect and experiment on new strategies that might be adapted to contextual or situational conditions. All three dimensions should be considered in the design of teacher training courses around the world.

Regarding the impact of teachers' beliefs on classroom management, Lopes and Santos (2013) underline the underestimated relationship that exists between teachers' beliefs and actions. Several experts (Caner & Tertemiz, 2015; Muijs & Reynold, 2011; Richards 2015; Scrivener, 2011) in the area of classroom management remark the importance of each key aspect that teachers should consider for the lesson. The variety of these areas implies an

equal number of decisions that teachers must make before, during and after their lessons. For instance, Scrivener (2011) points out that "classroom management involves both decisions and actions. The actions are what is done in the classroom… the decisions are about whether to do these actions, when to do them, how to do them and who will do them" (p. 55). It is necessary to remember that these decisions are influenced by several elements of teacher cognition (beliefs, knowledge, assumptions, etc.). Caner and Tertemiz (2015) state that "although teachers usually receive pre- and in-service training on this challenging task, studies show that their classroom management decisions and practices are significantly affected by their attitudes and beliefs concerning classroom management" (p. 155). Notwithstanding, many teacher training education programs have difficulties in including this aspect in their courses perhaps because teachers' beliefs are not a "prefabricated" item that can be taught like any other transmittable subject.

Another characteristic of teachers' beliefs that has captured the attention of educators and psychologists is that beliefs are reconstructed through the success or failure lived throughout different classroom experiences. The way beliefs are formed and presented in teachers' minds has been a matter of discussion in some studies. For instance, Pajares (1992) suggests the domain of teacher's schemata of solutions that are used under different circumstances that are similar to previously lived experiences. Even when teachers face problematic situations in the classroom, these schemata are not always present and beliefs are part of the decision-making process. Pajares (1992) expresses that:

> When a teacher encounters an entangled domain, cognitive and information-processing strategies do not work, appropriate schemata are disconnected and unavailable, and the teacher is uncertain of what information is needed or what behavior is appropriate. It is the episodic core of beliefs that makes their use so likely in just such a circumstance. (p. 311)

This excerpt describes the critical conditions that lead teachers to look at their beliefs on what is right or wrong during the practice. When knowledge is hard to retrieve or it does not exist in teachers' minds, beliefs play the main role in the decisions made. In addition, Fang (1996) provides two major reasons that link teachers' beliefs and behaviors within the teaching and learning context: " […] first, teachers are professionals who make reasonable

judgments and decisions within a complex and uncertain community, school and classroom environments; and second, teachers' thoughts, judgments and decisions guide their classroom behavior" (p. 49). It is not only inside the classroom where beliefs influence teachers' decisions but in all the multiple challenges involved with the profession.

Evrim, Gökce, and Enisa (2009) also affirm that "[…] teachers' personal belief system guides his/her choices of classroom management approaches" (p. 612). Thus, despite teachers' style in their classroom management, their decision may be based not only in the context where they are teaching but also on the beliefs of what is the best for their students. In addition, Caner and Tertemiz (2015) agree that "[…] teachers' classroom management approaches are, to a great extent, based on their understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and ways of controlling them" (p. 155). This statement exemplifies how teachers' beliefs are reflected in the decisions of what classroom behavior is considered or not as adequate.

The concept of beliefs has been defined as an information storage that can be retrieved to solve other problems in similar contexts (Fang, 1996; Pajares, 1992). Yet, a different view sustains that beliefs cannot be perceived as a set of pre-formulated schemas stored in our brains, but rather as a spontaneous result of critical events in the profession. Thomas (2013) states that "teachers do not use a template to solve problems at work; rather, they develop their own solutions based on their personal understanding of the circumstances" (p. 31). Attitudes, beliefs and educational philosophies are reconstructed in every lesson regarding the situational factors that teachers have to cope with. It is hard to find difficulties that repeat in different contexts. For example, a teacher can use different strategies for dealing with two noisy students from different classrooms because the experiences of interacting with these students have taught the teacher that successful solutions may work differently in separate situations.

Other studies (see Bielicki, 2014; Kang, 2013; Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013) have included a deeper review of both teachers' beliefs and classroom management skills within the teacher training and teacher development programs. One of the main reasons why beliefs are so difficult to include in teacher education courses is their variability that makes them hard to identify and evaluate. Several categorizations of beliefs have been elaborated

throughout research in regard to beliefs in classroom management. Richards and Lockhart (1997) propose a categorization for different types of teachers' beliefs that include: "beliefs about English; about learning; about teaching; about the program and the curriculum; about language teaching as a profession" (pp. 30-31). These different categories comprise all the activities that teachers normally do from their abilities to transmit the language until their self-perception as professionals.

Thomas (2013) clarifies that there are five types of beliefs that can be perceived and hence analyzed. These types include: "beliefs about learners and learning, beliefs about teaching, beliefs about the subject, beliefs about learning to teach and beliefs about self and the teaching role" (p. 32). As it can be observed, beliefs are involved in multidimensional areas of the teaching practice. Beliefs take part on the decisions that teachers make about the learning environment, their students' academic performance, the subject that they are teaching, the teaching method they use and what their role is inside the classroom. Such beliefs encompass the basic areas of a language classroom and they could affect their decisions in a negative or positive way. Furthermore, Thomas (2013) adds more categories such as: "(1) Teachers' beliefs about teachers' domain-specific knowledge; and (2) Teachers' beliefs about teachers' pedagogical skills" (p. 34). This research explores specifically on the beliefs about pedagogical skills and how teachers implement such skills in the language classroom.

Research frequently distinguishes teachers' beliefs specifically between novice and experienced teachers or pre-service and in-service teachers. There is greater attention paid to those teachers who have fewer years in teaching experience because of their so claimed "more recurrent" use of beliefs in teaching presented by their uncertainty in unknown situations. Ruiz Esparza and Castillo Zaragoza (2013) claim that "it is important to know and identify novice teachers' beliefs during the early stages of teaching in order to incorporate teaching strategies and techniques supported by research and effective practices" (p. 103). Although this thesis explores the belief systems of a variety of language teachers, this section is focused on novice teachers' beliefs because of the vast amount of research found in this regard. The analysis of novice teachers' beliefs is now discussed from the perspective of different authors.

Tartwijk, Brok, Veldman and Wubbles (2009) recognize classroom management as one of the major concerns among novice teachers. They concluded that "[…] creating a positive working atmosphere in the classroom is the first concern of most student and beginning teachers in secondary education" (p. 453). Similarly, Fowler and Sarapl (2010) agree that "classroom management is the greatest concern of most teachers, especially those who have not yet begun their careers in education" (p. 94). This position estimates that even teachers with a longer professional career also consider the strategies on classroom management, although beginner teachers add more importance to this specific area of teaching. Thus, for novice teachers there is a higher use of beliefs in the teaching practice which represents the need to succeed in management skills rather than subject knowledge. In 1992, Latz described the process that novice teachers followed in order to illustrate how they implement their beliefs on classroom management:

> Typically, the novice teachers looked for prescriptive, quick fix methods for dealing with individual problems. They essentially reacted to individual problems as they occurred. As the beginners gained experience, they came to understand the more global and dynamic nature of the classroom. As a result, their methods became more preventative. (p. 3)

According to this quote, it can be said that beliefs from novice teachers tend to work as a common reaction to the situational problems that appeared during their first teaching practices. Of course, the variety of solutions to a problem is constructed by every single teacher. Castellanos Jaimes (2013) suggests that it is the exposure to the new environment and situations which makes novice teachers to confirm their beliefs or theories upon what they think is correct and what is better to avoid. Later those beliefs are reconstructed with more experience and they develop to become knowledge that is adapted to their specific teaching context. Beliefs become knowledge through a large amount of experience repeating behaviors that once were uncertain but later become provable facts.

The development of beliefs about classroom management is also observed as a parallel process for teachers' development. As their experience grows, teachers develop a wider understanding of the problems and this makes them gain confidence on the decisions

they make. The development in teachers' profession implies also the development of beliefs and other cognitive processes. Coetzee, Niekerk and Wydeman (2008) state that either beginners or experienced teachers have the opportunity to improve their skills and talents as educators as they progress on the practice. Castellanos Jaimes (2013) and Thomas (2013) maintain that beliefs about classroom management might be different between novice and veteran teachers. Castellanos Jaimes (2013) describes the conditions of the first year of teaching experience to be critical for new teachers: "this period appears to constitute a single developmental stage during which novices acquire knowledge of pupils then use that knowledge to modify and reconstruct their beliefs about teaching" (p. 197). All the processes of negotiation and modifications made on teachers' beliefs and knowledge take form during this period; this is why it is a critical moment for them.

A different view stated by Lopes and Santos (2013) expose that it is important to know teachers' beliefs in order to understand their teacher-centered, student-centered or ambivalent/inconsistent approaches in their classroom management. In the same vein, Thomas (2013) proposes that it is during the first two years of teaching experience that the practitioners' concern with student-centered issues related to motivation and the classroom climate whilst teachers with further experience (five years) have a more teacher-centered view that is concerned with content and management techniques.

Additionally, Richards (1998) explains that "the belief system of novice teachers as they enter teaching often serve as a lens through which they view both the content of the teacher development program and their language teaching experiences" (p. 8). In other words, Richards sustains that due to the lack of teaching experience, the apprenticeship of observation theory (see Lortie, 1975) is the main reason to understand the sources of novice teachers' beliefs. In addition to this idea, Castellanos Jaimes (2013) advocates the following: "entering beliefs about teaching come from their own experiences as pupils, significant interpersonal relations with their professors, mentors and classmates, and their reflection upon critical incidents in their first encounters with teaching" (p. 196). This is a more descriptive explanation of how novice teachers form their beliefs regarding the interactions and involvements with other teachers throughout their academic lives.

To sum up, this section attempts to provide an overview of the main studies concerning beliefs in second language education. Conclusively, teachers' beliefs and other cognitive processes are linked to their personal and professional experiences. Indeed, teachers' classroom experiences are essential factors that help them construct and reconstruct their beliefs. The three main areas that influence teachers' beliefs are their own language learning experience, their academic preparation, and the classroom practice. Also, beliefs and actions are interconnected, especially in novice teachers who tend to be more exposed to unfamiliar/unknown classroom situations. Finally, I conclude this section stating that teachers' beliefs are flexible and changing as they demonstrate to be effective or not.

2.4 Effective Classroom Management

The issue of classroom management has received considerable attention in research although practitioners frequently tend to take it for granted in practice. Classroom management has been largely analyzed and redefined in different forms by numerous authors (Aliakbari & Bozorgmanesh, 2015; Coetzee, Niekerk, & Wydeman, 2008; Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011; Emmer & Hickman, 1991; Martin, Yin, & Mayall, 2006; McGarity & Butts, 1984; Muijs & Reynolds, 2011; Ryans, Kounin, Gump, & Ryan, 1961; Richards, 2015; Scrivener, 2011; Smyth, 2006). Despite the different definitions and perspectives given to this issue, these authors agree and still acknowledge the importance of a proper teaching and learning environment for effective language learning in both English as a foreign language and English as a second language contexts. Whereas classroom management is not limited to the English language but to teaching in general, the focus of this study is on foreign language classrooms. Throughout this section the concept of classroom management will be defined as the skills, strategies and actions that teachers implement in order to nurture students with a comfortable environment where learning can take place. Notwithstanding, little has been said about the key areas that shape this concept (more than just discipline).

Of particular concern is teachers' awareness about what the real meaning of classroom management is. The pioneering views of Ryans et al. (1961) and Emmer and Hickman (1991) suggest that discipline and classroom management were synonyms, and this ideology is still an influence for many language teachers today. Yet, the information provided in both complements each other. The former study focuses on the benefits of discipline since it

highlights how teachers can predict students' behavior by establishing a dynamic and interpersonal relationship with learners. As a result, Emmer and Hickman (1991) focus on strategies of self-efficacy in order to provide effective management and discipline strategies. Both of these insights started to change the traditionalist behaviors adopted by language teachers who understood discipline as entirely lesson control.

Moreover, McGarity and Butts (1984) relate classroom management to the multiple factors that are involved within students' engagement and academic achievement, clarifying that teachers' behavior is the main influence (but not the only one) within the learning process. In more recent studies, Smyth (2006) highlights the importance of effective time of engagement in the class as one of the most important results of classroom management. In this sense, he claims that "it consists of a series of loosely linked topics which have the common ultimate purpose of providing a set of structures and a total setting which enhances learning" (p. 127). In other words, classroom management involves all the activities carried out by the teacher; such activities aim to nurture learners' academic performance. Although, it would be wrong to assume that teachers are fully responsible for the engagement process. Teachers' behaviors and learners' attitudes are equally involved even when teachers act as the main responsible for the organization and implementation of the classroom management strategies.

With this in mind, Aliakbari and Bozorgmanesh (2015) refer to classroom management as a performance that "[…] embodies establishing rules to organize the class, to plan materials and activities, and to explain instructions and consequences of acting up" (p. 2). This could be the most common or popular definition for classroom management, although it may have a different view. For example, Muijs and Reynolds (2011) highlight that classroom management is fully linked to preparation due to all the functions that it includes. They point out that planning and organization represent the fundamental actions that lead to effective classroom management. In other words, in order to accomplish a more effective learning process, teachers should develop fervent skills for the before-class and during-class preparing themselves with procedures and rules to enhance control and avoid punishment.

On the other hand, Richards (2015) claims for a sensitive perspective of classroom management where he includes two dimensions: the physical and the affective. This view pretends to involve not only the systematical steps of planning that need to be followed but also the emotional consequences of interaction in formal education. Additionally, there are some other studies (Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011; Scrivener, 2011; Tartwijk, Brok, Veldman, & Wubbels, 2009) that comprise the main aspects of both of the previous definitions (Muijs & Reynolds, 2011; Richards, 2015). They define classroom management as an activity that requires teachers' attention not only on the organization and preparation of the lesson but also on the psychological, personal, and affective domains that take place naturally during this type of socialization. Djigic and Stojiljkovic (2011) affirm that:

> This term [classroom management] combines the teacher's personality, his/her abilities and professional conduct designed to bring all of his/her professional roles, as well as the processes that take place in a group of students and the results of these processes. (p. 820)

Djigic and Stojiljkovic (2011) are concerned with all the stimulating strategies that teachers can use to create a comfortable learning environment for both teachers and learners. These strategies regarding teachers' initiative to make personal and professional arrangements could benefit the learning processes. They also suggest that there are three different types of classroom management styles that teachers present based on their type of personality: non-interventionist, interventionist, and interactionist. The three styles are defined by the amount of interaction between teacher-students and they are formed based on teachers' beliefs and personalities. In the case of the non-interventionist, it refers to the minimal interaction and support towards learners' needs; the students are considered as independent beings who can solve their interests (discover further information, practicing outside the classroom, helping other students, etc.). Within the interventionist style, teachers have the complete control over the class as they are responsible of providing an effective classroom environment. Hence, the interactionist style stays in a middle point where the learner is seen as an individual who affects or has the power to manipulate the environment but also can be affected by it. Based on these concepts, Djigic and Stojiljkovic (2011) conclude that:

Having in mind characteristics of productive classroom climate and the ways to create it, it could be said that interactionist classroom management style is the best way to build up stimulating learning environment classroom climate that will produce the best students' achievement. (p. 828)

Indeed, the interactionist style seems to be an adequate approach since it distributes responsibilities among all the members of the classroom rather than only the teachers. For the profession of second language education, it is especially important to enhance a "productive classroom climate". When the class functions as teachers planned it, they are able to establish and achieve more goals that concentrate in content rather than environmental aspects. Consequently, before teachers begin in the profession, they start to idealize how easy or theory-based things could be during the practice. Richards (2015) describes the "metaphorical existence" of an "ideal classroom" as the utopic classroom atmosphere for teachers:

In an ideal classroom, students pay attention to what the teacher is trying to achieve; they behave with respect towards the teacher and other students in the class; they participate actively in activities the teacher has assigned; and the class functions as a cohesive group that collaborates to help make the lesson a positive learning experience. (p. 196)

This concept of the "ideal classroom" is a teaching dream, especially for pre-service teachers, although this could also happen to academically unprepared language teachers. It encompasses all the attributes that teachers expect to accomplish within their classrooms. The "ideal classroom" does not always successfully occur because of the unrealistic expectations of teachers towards their students' behaviors, schools' policies, classroom facilities, etc. Therefore, the existence of an ideal classroom can be perceived simply as a goal that teachers might reach at different levels depending on their own teaching circumstances. However, not all the strategies might fit in all the different teaching contexts or situations and is not only teachers' responsibility but it refers to double-side effort.

Another aim of classroom management is that teachers and learners identify their roles inside the classroom so they can be able to create and maintain the conditions for a

proper learning atmosphere that benefits students' academic outcomes. The learning environment is also referred to as classroom climate and it basically refers to the atmosphere in which learning takes place. When authors refer to classroom management, they introduce a cyclical connection between teachers' actions, students' behavior and academic performance. Fowler and Sarapl (2010) emphasize the importance of this cyclical relationship: "A well-maintained classroom helps teachers sustain good relationships with their students; additionally, organization and better instruction is also evident in this type of setting" (p. 94). The purpose of achieving this kind of climate is to create a safe environment where learners feel comfortable enough to share their own ideas, opinions, feelings and thoughts using the target language. At this point, it seems important to underline that since classroom management involves people management, relationship skills and behavior might be key opportunities to enhance students' engagement and motivation.

In addition, Djigic and Stojiljkovic (2011) highlight that "[…] it is very important to create an appropriate classroom climate. In order to fulfill this task, a teacher has to practice classroom management style based on constructive and productive relationship with pupils" (p. 821). Teachers' concerns of correct classroom management strategies and classroom climate benefit not only teachers' curricular goals but also students' learning processes. Regarding this, Kunter, Baumert, and Köller (2007) add that "effective classroom managers thus provide a smooth flow of classroom activities and ensure that their students are actively engaged in learning" (p. 494). Given that learners' engagement is another desired element in the learning process, perhaps the look for effective classroom management may give language teachers the idea that such interest could be enhanced by their own performance, strategies and preparation in classroom management.

Nonetheless, teachers should bear in mind that classroom management is a complement of teaching practice. There thus should be a balance between teachers' subject-knowledge and their abilities to transmit it as well as teachers' strategies to improve the environment where learning takes place. Kunter et al. (2007) report that "several studies support the notion that, rather than decreasing students' sense of autonomy, classroom management techniques may in fact have positive effects on students' motivation" (p. 494). It depends on teachers' creativity and ability to manage groups with different characteristics

(large, small, mix-level, etc.). It is more probable to catch students' interests by using the adequate strategies in the different areas of classroom management.

A wide variety of positions, approaches and definitions of classroom management have been examined. Researchers describe classroom management as an essential concern in language education. The multiple teaching contexts around the world have provided opportunities to focus on different views to classroom management, such as the individualist and collectivist side of education, the advantages of a dynamic relationship between teachers and students or the variability in teachers' personality and how this can be manipulated to benefit learning. For the following part, there is a discussion on what different authors consider the main areas of classroom management.

2.5 The Key Areas of Classroom Management

Classroom management covers many areas that teachers have to look for improvement. Kunter et al. (2007) establish that classroom management contemplates a structured set of strategies that aid language teachers to promote a respectful and comfortable area for teacher and learners' interaction. Many teachers understand the concept of classroom management as only discipline and control of their groups. Latz (1992) remarks that it is multidimensional in nature, and "management includes not only discipline, but also numerous other activities such as planning, monitoring, transitions, and the sequencing of classroom tasks, whereas discipline focuses on specific problems or events that occur during actual instruction" (p. 1). Therefore, classroom management is not an area that can be analyzed in a holistic way because there are numerous areas that compose it. Even when classroom management refers to all the skills, strategies and activities performed by teachers, some of these areas are considered priority for language teachers. There is not an established number of areas because research frames and describes those that have a stronger impact on learning. The following authors describe those areas that they understand as vital in the language classroom.

Coetzee et al. (2008) make reference to the following areas of knowledge where teachers must be prepared in: "subject knowledge, subject application, planning the curriculum, class management, pupil learning, teaching strategies and techniques, assessment and recording of pupil's progress, further professional development, relationships with

children, pastoral care, departmental management, leadership" (p. 8). The assumption is that teachers should be aware of general school conditions before they prepare the strategies for classroom management and this does not only refer to all the activities happening in the classroom but also outside of it. In Coetzee et al.'s (2008), areas that teachers should manage, they do not only include teacher–student interaction but management goes outside the classroom when it refers to departmental management. Teachers' organization reflects their abilities and disabilities in professional development. Furthermore, Djigic and Stojiljkovic (2011) agree that classroom management also involves the following areas:

> […] the management of space, time, activities, materials, labor, social relations, and behavior of students. Therefore, this concept is associated with a wide range of activities undertaken by the teacher in the classroom, such as arranging the physical space, defining and practicing classroom procedures, observation of students' behavior, dealing with undisciplined behavior, encouraging students' responsibility for learning, teaching lessons in such a way that encourages students' task orientation. (p. 821)

This description covers Coetzee et al.'s (2008) areas, but at the same time it suggests that teachers and learners share responsibility for the maintenance of a good classroom climate. Teachers need to encourage learners to keep learning, and be responsible of their own learning. In this case, learners are also responsible of their own participation and regulation in the classroom.

In a systematic view, Muijs and Reynolds (2011) offer the description of ten areas to classroom management as if teaching was some sort of recipe to give the class: "starting the lesson", "appropriate seating arrangements", "dealing with external disruptions", "establishing rules and procedures", "smooth transitions between lesson segments", "pupil talk", "giving homework assignments", "maintaining momentum during the lesson" and "downtime" (pp. 103–110). The segmentation of these areas gives the impression that every lesson has its own areas of classroom management. The description of the areas is detailed and considers not only insiders' (teacher-student) interaction but also possible disruptions from the school environment. One of the issues with these areas is that Muijs and Reynolds (2011) do not generalize on what teachers can do about external disruptions and lesson

downtime. Both of these aspects are difficult to manage, given the different time constraints that teachers must manage.

Scrivener's (2011) areas of classroom management description include: "activities, grouping and seating, authority, critical moment of the lesson, tools and techniques (language and other pedagogic material), working with people (motivation, feedback, eliciting, discipline, and other classroom interaction)" (pp. 54-55). These aspects are varied and they move from the global to the more classroom-specific context. Yet, these areas struggle to describe the affective side of teacher-students relationships which is part of the sociocultural nature in classroom interaction.

Wright (2005) has drawn on the three key aspects related to classroom management that must be solved in this classroom interaction; some issues are: "acceptable classroom behavior, effective grouping arrangement, and classroom management during the lesson" (p. 3). These key issues are fixed through the use of strategies that teachers develop within the different areas of classroom management. Richards (2015) highlights the following subareas of classroom management that comprise the most important traits in classroom interaction:

1. A personal relationship between the teacher and the students: enthusiasm for teaching, students collaborating to help achieve their shared goals, establishing an understanding of acceptable classroom behavior.

2. Using effective grouping arrangements: whole-class teaching, individual work, pair work, group work.

3. Classroom management during the lesson: giving instructions, the teacher's discourse, engaging with all the students in class, and managing time and pace. (pp. 196-215)

Each author in this section has presented several important areas that form classroom management according to their beliefs. Conversely, because of the exploratory view of this research, I decided to focus on Richards' (2015) areas. These areas embrace the most naturalistic and humanistic perspective in the language classroom. They are also easier to generalize in different teaching contexts and situations. This author takes into account

teachers' and students' needs for the improvement of learning environment as well as affective and pedagogical approaches.

The key areas of classroom management attempts to create and maintain the proper conditions to enhance learning. Strategies in this area are essential because it is through this that teachers and students start to build up a relationship that is the basis for a comfortable learning atmosphere. As it was previously said, the effective classroom management leads to a proper classroom climate. Richards (2015) states that:

> Climate refers to the atmosphere of the classroom, and results from the nature of the relationships between the students and the teacher, the kinds of communication that take place between them and the enthusiasm the teacher has for teaching and his or her skills in managing the students' learning. (p. 197)

One of the main issues with this particular area is the challenge to add the review of positive classroom atmosphere within the teacher education programs due to its context-dependency and variability. It is precisely this subjectivity in the teaching context, and teachers' ability to manage the classroom what leads to the construction of a better learning atmosphere. In order to make more sense of the results in this research, each one of these areas is further defined and discussed in the next section.

2.5.1 A Personal Relationship between the Teacher and the Students

The relationship between teacher and students becomes a prominent issue in regard to classroom management because it establishes a positive atmosphere in the classroom. There are many factors involved in the construction of a proper learning environment, and teachers manage several strategies of personality and identity in order to create and maintain a personal relationship with their students. First, Richards (2015) claims that teachers have to recognize and maintain their roles in the classroom, and take on different identities when they want to show empathy or create a distance with their students. Crosby (2000) points out the existence of six areas where teachers play a different role based on the situational needs: "1) the information provider, 2) the model, 3) the facilitator, 4) the assessor, 5) the planner, and 6) the resource material creator" (p. 334). The relationship between teacher and students is more than speaker and listeners. There is a collaborative participation between all the

members of a classroom. Crosby's (2000) areas demonstrate that teachers have to be competent at different moments of teaching as well as recognize the correspondent roles for each of these moments. In order to gain students' confidence and respect, teachers use different strategies to maintain students' attention and control. Some strategies include the sense of humor, remembering students' names, games or interaction activities, among others, and the choice of these strategies might depend also on the contextual factors of every class. Besides all of these strategies, there is evidence in research that indicates that the use of teachers' personalities is another strategy to promote a smoother learning atmosphere. Djigic and Stojiljkovic (2011) mention that "good teachers are also described as persons full of understanding for students' problems, willing to help them, allowing different activities in the classroom as well as maintaining order, having sense of humor and good knowledge of school subjects" (p. 820). Thus, teachers have to use several interaction skills in order to make learners feel comfortable or confident to express what they want without fear or anxiety.

Teachers' options are as vast as their creativity concerning classroom management. The correct use of these interpersonal skills might avoid discipline and order problems in the classroom. Another skill that aids in the development of a good relationship is the level of enthusiasm that teachers present towards their learners' work. Regarding this, Richards (2015) states that "if students sense that the teacher is positive and enthusiastic about the course book or materials that he or she is using, they are likely to share the teacher's enthusiasm" (p. 199). Through the use of the teachers' empathy they could make their students feel like people rather than just numbers. Teachers need to start building up a relationship with their students by using "simple routine acts such as showing empathy, using gestures, greeting, smiling, showing interest on students likes and dislikes, noticing interesting facts on their comments, recognizing each student's creativity, etc." (Richards, 2015, p. 200).

Furthermore, students are also an important part in the issues of classroom management. Indeed, teachers' skills in making a good relationship are directed to encourage learners to collaborate on their own learning environment. Students' attitudes to support each other is crucial during the learning process. Respect between teacher and students should be equally reflected among students themselves. The harmony in the classroom atmosphere is

not only the teachers' responsibility, but students share it as members of this community (Richards, 2015).

It is necessary to remark that management strategies utilized depend on the teaching and learning context. There are classes where there should be more emphasis on discipline/order than others, for example, those with larger groups of students or with younger learners. Even though discipline is not the only concern in classroom management, it is considered by teachers as central in teaching. Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) claim that "classroom management includes both, maintaining control over students through the use of discipline and promoting environments that foster academic learning and appropriate behavior" (p. 600). Beyond teachers' concern for achieving discipline and order in the classroom, there is a concern to develop techniques or strategies that could help them maintain control and engagement in their lessons.

About these, we can discuss either positive or negative strategies implemented to enhance discipline in the classroom. Chi-mei and Shui-fong (2003) describe how "some teachers tend to spell out positive consequences of desired behaviors and adopt reward-based strategies, whereas others tend to inform students of negative consequences of undesired behaviors and adopt punishment-based strategies" (pp. 114-115). Also, the decision to use any of these strategies generally depends on a teacher's beliefs about how he/she could lead the class more effectively.

Kunter et al. (2007) discuss that the use of negative strategies, for example, asking the noisy students to leave the classroom, or yelling at those students who cause trouble could cause a decrease in learners' sense of autonomy, responsibility and motivation. Furthermore, Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) add that "exclusionary disciplinary strategy include the immediate removal of the student from the classroom... this promotes more negative views of school climate for all students" (p. 600). This kind of strategies might cause struggles with schools' policies or with learners' parents, depending on learners' age or sensibility. It could be claimed that punishment is the most unrecognized method when compared to reinforcement. Hence, teachers' decisions might be influenced by these conditions and their own previous experiences.

Whereas the use of negative strategies implies a risk in the sense of becoming traumatic or even more problematic, positive strategies function as a tool to encourage students to participate in class and promote a more active atmosphere. Kunter et al. (2007) mention that "if teacher monitoring and guidance are experienced as controlling, negative effects might ensue. On the other hand, if students feel that teacher guidance provides them with informative feedback, it may positively affect their interest" (p. 497). Research has demonstrated that teachers do not necessarily need to choose between one type and the other. There are relatively better methods that teachers have implemented in their classrooms and that do not fall into one specific side (positive or negative) of the strategies' type. For instance, Muijs and Reynolds (2011) suggest "the use of rules as more formal, usually written, statements that specify what pupils are allowed to do or expected not to do" (p. 106). This description of rules seems to be designed in a teacher-centered form. Also, Richards (2015) suggests the use of rules for acceptable classroom behavior that can be arranged by the students and the teacher. In other words, teachers may allow students to give input on class rules. This strategy is more student-centered and allows teachers to consider the learners' voice and raise their awareness on what they can and cannot do in the classroom. Conclusively it is essential to emphasize that, different from the traditionalist ideologies, current research on classroom management promotes the integration and consideration of teachers and learners' voice for the decision-making processes inside the classroom.

As it was discussed throughout this section, there are several interpersonal skills and strategies that teachers might develop in order to create a positive relationship with their students. But the language classroom must allow the opportunity for all types of interactions where communication takes place with the minimum amount of disruptions. Next, there is the discussion of the subarea of classroom management, grouping arrangement.

2.5.2 Using Effective Grouping Arrangements

The appropriate use of space is undoubtedly one of the key factors that teachers handle in classroom management. Classroom space is usually filled up with different kinds of furniture and visuals that aid teachers and students during the learning process. Besides, the common classroom seating position is that where the teacher stands up in a spot where all students can make eye contact with him/her. This position may be settled based on the

needs of each class or lesson. Concerning this, Richards (2015) highlights that "effective grouping arrangements seek to maximize opportunities for interactions between the teacher and the class, as well as interactions among the students themselves" (p. 202). Grouping arrangements are planned to contribute in a particular activity or stage in a lesson whereas seating arrangement is the permanent position in which classroom furniture are accommodated. Scrivener (2011) adds that the variation in grouping arrangements is an effective way to provide different learning experiences to the students.

Moreover, Richards (2015) points out that the four main grouping arrangements: "whole-class teaching, individual work, pair work, and group work" (p. 203). There are advantages and disadvantages for each of these grouping arrangements. Whole-class teaching is the basic form of giving a class because it involves all the class members together in the same activity and it is the ideal form to start a lesson. It is also an aid in the issues of time management because of the simultaneous interaction that is controlled by the teacher. Besides the whole class arrangement, Scrivener (2011) also suggests the use of "mingle" which is described as "a whole class moving around and mixing together as individuals" (p. 58). This might be the ideal arrangement for those lessons with a more communicative approach.

On the other hand, there are other activities that can be better assimilated through individual work. When students work alone, they have the opportunity to take their time and practice by themselves whatever the teachers' objectives are. It is suggested "to consider how well students understand what is expected of them and whether the task provides adequate challenge, support and motivation to sustain their interest" (Richards, 2015, p. 204). Another grouping arrangement is pair work. It also gives learners the opportunity to practice and improve the language through communicative tasks. In pair work, there are occasions for interaction and participation for those learners who are more introverted and it saves time to move through more programmed activities. However, some of the disadvantages include the learners' unequal capability to solve the tasks and the negative responses that some students could have towards interacting with different people. Finally, one of the most useful group arrangements is group work, although there are some risks at implementing this type of configuration during the class. The increase of learners' self-esteem, talking-time, and

motivation through the use of group work. Notwithstanding, there are aspects that should be considered when planning this type of arrangement: "time, friendship, mixed language proficiency, monitoring, and control" (Richards, 2015, p. 207). During planning, all of these aspects should be foreseen by the teachers in order to avoid behavior, and order problems in the class.

No matter what the choice of grouping arrangement is, all the members must show respect and interest in the class. Instructions need to be clear, organization is fundamental, and time should be precise for each activity in order to permit the natural fluency of the class. Moreover, Scrivener (2011) highlights the importance of selecting any of these arrangements as long as they are adequate for the lesson organization. He observes the need to include activities that involve some kind of movement avoiding the over use of movement in a single lesson, but taking advantage of the space in the classroom. So far, some aspects of classroom management that involved interaction and participation between teacher and students have been discussed. The following subarea discusses more specifically about the different activities and strategies that teachers have to manage besides learners when performing a lesson.

2.5.3 Classroom Management during the Lesson

The components of classroom management take place in every lesson and during the multiple stages of every single lesson. In this section, I discuss the general aspects that teachers have to deal with such as time management, teachers' movements and discourse, among others. For example, this includes the clarity of instructions, the metalanguage skills, and the time administration among others.

One of the major skills that teachers should work with through their entire career is the delivery of instructions. Instructions should be given by using linguistic and paralinguistic features such as examples, synonyms, and demonstrations if needed. Teachers need to be careful about giving clear instructions in every task. Concerning this, Richards (2015) suggests that instructions should not be "too long, too short or too difficult to understand" (p. 210). The complexity of classroom instructions might also influence students' task performance.

Another important aspect is teachers' discourse. This can be modified or adjusted in order to have a more fluent process of communication. Teachers use different strategies to make these modifications in the target language. Some examples of these strategies include "repeating requests and instructions, speaking more slowly, using pauses, changes in pronunciation, changes in vocabulary, using easier grammar structures, avoiding colloquialisms and idioms, and making meanings more explicit" (Richards, 2015, p. 212). These types of modifications may lead learners to perform successful task achievements. Moreover, Scrivener (2011) mentions that students learn from everything they hear in the classroom, for instance, "the teachers' instructions, discussions, asides, jokes, the chit chat, the comments, etcetera" (p. 58). Therefore, there is an implication of preference for the use of the target language only. All the input received by the learners is an opportunity to acquire the language.

Nonetheless, recent studies have favored the use of the first language (L1) inside the L2 classroom, under certain conditions. For instance, despite the frequent debates regarding the use of L1 in L2 classrooms, Kang (2013) proposes the use of switching between the learners' first language and target language as another strategy to save class' time and enable learners' immediate comprehension. Nonetheless, the use of L1 in an L2 language classroom is also perceived as a challenging strategy because of the risks that teachers face when exposing learners to the over use of their native language. Even though Scrivener (2011) supports the idea of mixing both the first language and the target language for instructions, he also discusses that this is often problematic due to the linguistic interferences that over use might cause.

Another strategy suggested by Richards (2015) is the use of questions in teachers' discourse with different purposes (eliciting subject's information, maintain students' attention, summarize instructions, giving feedback, etc.). Consciously or unconsciously, there is plenty of information that students retain from teachers' discourse therefore, this is one aspect that language teachers should take into account.

The way teachers engage their students in the lesson reflects an interest on their learning processes. However, teachers are often unintentionally interacting with some

students more than others during the class. Scrivener (2011) stresses the difficulty to stay sitting down during a long period of time, and it is even worse when teachers keep talking during the whole class time. Richards (2015) includes the problems with the teachers' action zone, the zone where teachers look at more often and the spot where they stand up for longer periods of time during the lesson. This issue might affect learners' self-esteem, and teachers must be aware of these situations and avoid having this kind of behavior in the classroom.

Next, the management of lesson time is a strong concern within the teaching setting. Research on effective teaching has demonstrated that the time that learners spend on learning and working on academic tasks could be interpreted as advances in learning, considered an investment (Kunter et al., 2007). Time is, of course, one of the main elements that sustain lesson preparation. Richards (2015) points out that there are four categories of time:

> 1) Allocated (the allotted class time), 2) instructional (the actual teaching time out of the non-instructional activities such as taking attendance, returning homework, etc.), 3) engaged (the portion of time in which students are actively involved in learning activities), and 4) academic (the amount of time during which students are actively engaged and participating in an activity and learning successfully from it). (p. 214)

These four types of time must be considered by teachers when planning a lesson. The lack of organization and time distribution might produce serious problems, such as skipping important topics, reducing the quality in learning, for those teachers who are not able to distribute class time accurately.

In spite of this, time should be administered accurately by teachers in order to increase the improvement of the learning process. There are teachers whose class time seems to be reduced due to the lack of time management or a loss of control within the classroom. Aliakbari and Bozorgmanesh (2015) suggest that "[…] teachers need to be more careful about the strategies and techniques of managing their classes […] when teachers appropriately manage the environment, there is little chaos, disorder, and negative behavior in the class. Needless to say, in unorganized environments, effective teaching and learning processes would not happen" (p. 2). This is the reason why one of the most important roles of teachers is to be a good organizer, so this is equally invested in terms of time, content and

control. It is important to have control of the group in a healthy way, a way where they still can work and feel comfortable as a group.

This section attempts to suggest how classroom management offers a wide area of opportunities to develop strategies that enhance the teaching–learning process. Of course, the decisions taken by teachers in regards to the different areas of classroom management might be strongly influenced by different factors, such as the beliefs that they have developed throughout their teaching experiences. Latz (1992) mentions that "[…] teachers' perceived competency in dealing with management and discipline developed proportionally with experience. In addition, teachers with greater than three years of teaching experience are reluctant to admit that a personally perceived deficit exists even though management and discipline are stated as primary concerns" (p. 1). Many years of experience in teaching do not necessarily mean professional success. Nor the lack or lower experience signify the incapability to provide an effective learning environment. Furthermore, the achievement of teachers' goals is a cyclic process that encourages them to improve their teaching performance. Coetzee et al. (2008) manifest that:

> If [teachers] reach the goals that are important to [them], […] [they] increase [their] self-esteem and [their] happiness and start a positive cycle of higher self-esteem, more happiness, feeling good about [themselves], having more confidence in [their] ability to attain goals, etc. (p. 6)

Teachers and trainers ignore or give insufficient importance to the psychological benefits of achieving the goals and proposals within their language classroom. Coetzee et al. (2008) claim for the need to approach the teachers' self as an advantage and benefit to the improvement of the learners' development. When teachers have the ability to reflect on his/her own practice, the strategies they use and the beliefs that sustain them then he/she is open to reconstruct teaching strategies to improve. This research explores teachers' beliefs, where and how do they form and finally an analysis of their influence in classroom management.

2.6 Conclusion

From behaviorist to cognitive perspectives, the principles of education search to improve the learning process. In addition, the study of beliefs becomes stronger in this research area as researchers search for the connection that exists between these two dimensions of teaching. Furthermore, to carry out a study on beliefs and behavior requires a focus on one specific area of teaching practice because of the numerous behaviors adopted by teachers inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, this thesis centers its attention on the beliefs involved in classroom management decisions since this area is one of the main issues regarding education. Consequently, there have been many studies on the area of classroom management, and increasing research has been focused on beliefs and their impact on teachers' behavior. The understanding of teachers' beliefs and their link with the decisions and behaviors they have inside the classroom could enhance the opportunities to create a safer classroom climate. Having this in mind, the aim of this research is to use an instrumental case study triangulating an open questionnaire, classroom observations and interviews in order to explore on the beliefs and behaviors implemented by four foreign language teachers, specifically in the area of classroom management.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3 Introduction

Chapter 3 describes the methodology with which this research was carried out. This chapter presents the objective and research question, the definition of the qualitative research paradigm that led this process, the method and techniques utilized for the data collection (open-questionnaire, observation with ethnographic field notes, and semi-structured interview). Moreover, following the techniques, there will be a description of the context in which this research took place and the participants' profile is presented. I also include the data analysis' strategies, the ethical issues and how they were addressed along the process of application and the conclusion of this research methodology.

3.1 Research Paradigm: Qualitative Research

Regarding qualitative research, Holliday (2007) defines it as "a whole way of thinking about something" (p. 5). In other words, the qualitative paradigm is perceived as more than a research method. It should be seen as a unique style of doing research. Since dealing with beliefs is a challenging work that requires interpretation, I decided to carry out a qualitative research that allowed me to listen to the teachers' voice. The main characteristics of this study is that it belongs to the qualitative paradigm due to its interpretative view of the phenomena. This means that the researcher deals with the challenge of separating the self from the data in order to keep it as valid as possible. In addition, Holliday (2007) claims that "the qualitative paradigm believes that it is possible to find validity and reliability in people's reality and their social settings rather than statistics and numbers" (p. 5). Since the main purpose of my research is to explore teachers' beliefs and their teaching experiences, qualitative research is the most suitable paradigm.

This research project focuses on the beliefs that language teachers have regarding management strategies in the classroom. Marshall and Rossman (2011) explain that the qualitative research is interpretative, and it is also grounded in lived experiences of people that enable researchers to explore participants' opinions, beliefs and behaviors. They also describe five general features of qualitative research that should be considered when following this paradigm, such as: "qualitative research is enacted in naturalistic settings; it

concerns on humanity; it focuses on context; it is emergent and evolving; and is fundamentally interpretive" (p. 2). All of these aspects can lead researchers to construct new ideologies from the interpretation of human's behavior within their social settings.

In addition, Dörnyei (2007) agrees that the "qualitative paradigm has many characteristics, but one of the most important is its objective to describe social phenomena as it occurs naturally, without any attempts to manipulate the situation under study" (p. 38). Therefore, my decision to use the qualitative paradigm was led by the opportunity to explore what these four foreign language teachers' beliefs are and how they influence their classroom management strategies. It also attempted to carry out this research process without interfering with the participants' natural settings focusing on their behaviors and keeping a systematic reflection and interpretation on what emerged from my data analysis.

 Some experts in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Denscombe, 2010; Marshall & Rossman 2011) have pointed out that in order to carry out a qualitative study, it is not only necessary to follow the previously mentioned parameters of this paradigm, but also to follow a particular research method. For instance, Marshall and Rossman (2011) mention that it is possible to conduct qualitative research in different methods of inquiry, and each of these methods has a specific research purpose, although for the description of this research I focus only on the use of case study as my research method, specifically instrumental case. This is the method that I conducted my research on due to its suitable characteristics.

3.2 Method: Case Study

There are several methods that might be chosen by the researchers as a means to achieve their goals in qualitative studies. This research was supported by the use of a case study with an instrumental approach because of its multiple characteristics that allowed me to analyze separate cases related to the same topic. According to Yin (1994), "a case study is one of several ways of doing social science research" (p. 1). Researchers use case study because it contributes to obtaining a deeper examination of complex situations occurred in social events. Dörnyei (2007) refers to case study as "the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case… cases are primarily people, but researchers can also explore a program in depth, an institution, an organization, or a community" (p. 151). Another reason

to use case study is that it is not limited to approach individuals' characteristics, it also enables the proximity to their social context.

Furthermore, Creswell (2013) includes other areas of exploration for this method, such as small group contexts and decision-making processes. These characteristics are particularly relevant for the purpose of this case study because it aims at exploring the decisions the teachers make following their beliefs about classroom management. This case involves not only the understanding and analysis of a small group of teachers who work in the same context, but the unobservable beliefs that distinguish their management from the others.

Stake (1995) emphasizes that case studies seek to understand the uniqueness inside the common social arrangements, and that researchers must act with a sincere interest on what they are going to analyze. Researchers must pay especial attention to the unit that they are analyzing in case study since it is an approach to a unique context. Creswell (2013) points out that the objective of case studies is to present an in-depth understanding of the central issue, teachers' beliefs. I worked with a small group of teachers from the same school. This allowed me to focus more on the analysis of each participant as a particular case and then compare them with each other as an instrumental case study.

3.2.1 Generalization in Case Study

The term generalization in Payne and Williams' (2005) words is: "to generalize is to claim that what is the case in one place or time will be so elsewhere or in another time" (p. 296). Having a small group of participants might be considered a disadvantage in the use of case study. Dörnyei (2007) mentions that one of the tentative weaknesses of this method is its low credibility of generalizations, which refers to the application of one stance (or more) from the sampling to the rest of the population in the same context. This was carried out in the Language Department of UG and the CAADI. However, Denscombe (2010) suggests that researchers might decide the extent of generalization within their case studies by showing how this case compares with others in the same context. To achieve this, it is necessary to include sufficient detail about the context and methodological process of the case and how it compares with others. My strategy to enhance generalization is to use several techniques in order to explore teachers' beliefs in classroom management. Denscombe (2010) suggests that

another feature in case study is its focus on just one or two aspects of what is being investigated and that there should be an understanding of related cases so there can be a comparison to reduce generalization.

3.2.2 Instrumental Case Study

Concerning the definition of instrumental case study, Yin (1994) says that "defining the research question is probably the most important step to be taken in a research study" (p. 7). This is because the type of question defines the objective of the research. Regarding this, Yin (1994) mentions the following:

> For instance, in questions such as "how" or "why" the objective might be explanatory whereas in questions using "who" "what" "how many" "where", the objective is more descriptive and aims to dig into the main issue; the final objective in case studies is exploratory where the question to be solved is simply "what" and aims to discover something new in already visited areas. (p. 8)

Therefore, the nature of this research is exploratory and it was conducted through an instrumental case study. Several authors (Creswell, 2013; Dörnyei, 2007; Stake, 1995) make the distinction between two main types of case study: intrinsic and instrumental case studies. Based on the definitions of instrumental/intrinsic case study, my research falls under the first definition of instrumental case study. Stake (1995) defines instrumental case study as a method that it deals with a situation where researchers may gain insight and understanding by studying different similar cases. This means that instrumental case study enables an even deeper look on the research due to the comparison between more than one similar stances. Creswell (2013) claims that the intent of an instrumental case study is to understand a specific issue, problem or concern and a case or similar cases selected to better understand the problem. As stated before, the classroom management beliefs from each participant might vary; therefore, each individual was studied as a case and then be compared with each other in order to use an instrumental approach.

Moreover, Dörnyei (2007) states that an instrumental approach "provides insight into a wider issue while the actual case is of secondary interest" (p. 152). Based on this, I used

the instrumental case study in order to explore and describe what occurs in their behavior but focusing on their beliefs.

I decided to use an instrumental case study because I worked with a small group of foreign language teachers connected by the same working conditions. The primary issue in this research is the interrelation of beliefs that these teachers might share concerning classroom management. Nonetheless, there is a second issue that emerged as a result of the exploratory view. These are the beliefs that these four foreign language teachers might or might not share about numerous aspects of classroom management. The study of similar cases concerning the same issue, gave me the opportunity to compare similar stances and at the same time look for a higher extent of generalization in case study.

3.3 Techniques

The three techniques that I used to collect the data for my instrumental case study were: open questionnaires, ethnographic field notes in classroom observation and semi-structured interviews. The sequence of application for these techniques during the data collection followed the same pattern as the description below.

3.3.1 Questionnaires: Open-Questionnaires

Dörnyei (2007) defines questionnaires as "any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers" (p. 102). The type and objective of the questions vary depending on the expectations of the researcher. Denscombe (2010) distinguishes two types of questionnaires: closed and open. Closed questionnaires provide respondents with a set of different pre-established answers to select one or more from the options supplied. On the other hand, Denscombe (2010) suggests "open questionnaires are those that leave the respondent to decide the wording of the answer, the length of the answer and the kind of matters to be raised in the answer" (pp. 165-166). This type of questionnaire is used more in qualitative research and for the aim of this research I decided to use open questionnaires. The use of open questionnaires allowed my participants to give their own opinion about the topic and in a less controlled environment.

Dörnyei (2007) emphasizes the three main types of questions that can be used in questionnaires with different purposes but not necessarily should be separate. He points out that it is possible to use a mixed-item questionnaire in order to gather more information by using one tool. Factual questions are those that focus on certain facts or demographic characteristics in participants like age, gender, occupation, etc. Behavioral questions try to focus on actions, habits, personal history, habits, etc. Attitudinal questions explore people's thoughts, attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests and values. Some researchers can use mixed-item questionnaires and this means that they can combine any of the three types of questions in a single format. The type of questions designed for this research were mainly factual in order to illustrate participants' profiles, and attitudinal to find out what their beliefs and opinions about classroom management were.

In this instrumental case study there were two questionnaires, each one of them with a different design and purpose. The first was a seven-item open-questionnaire with behavioral questions concerning educational background, teaching experience, and class' general description (Appendix 1). The aim of this questionnaire was to compile the participants' profile. This questionnaire was responded by the participants immediately after they signed in the consent form. Each participant took an approximately ten minutes to respond.

The second questionnaire had a stronger impact on this research because its purpose was to gather teachers' beliefs. It was a mixed-item, open questionnaire with factual and attitudinal questions concerning age, gender, nationality, target language. The main use of this questionnaire was to gather teachers' beliefs in classroom management, their own definition, strategies and teacher's role (Appendix 2). I decided to use a questionnaire because I considered it a more comfortable way for teachers to take their time and think about the answers they had to provide. The way data is recorded in questionnaires is also faster and comfortable for the researcher during the data analysis and interpretation because visualizing the responses makes it easier to select chunks of meaning from it. Each attitudinal questionnaire was applied individually to the four participants at the beginning of the process. Some of them preferred to take their time and reply it via email; others preferred to respond it in person and they took only about 15 to 30 minutes.

3.3.2 Ethnographic Field Notes in Observation

Concerning the next technique, Maykut and Morehouse (1994) state that observation is one of the most chosen techniques in qualitative research because it allows for the possibility to analyze the natural settings without interfering with them. Observations were a helpful way for me to carry out this case study. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), observation is important because it takes place in the natural settings of concern and it allows "a firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest" (p. 117). Therefore, I decided to carry out eight classroom observations (two per participant) to compare the analysis of each participant in order to explore beyond what they wrote in the open questionnaires. Their aim was to identify the beliefs these teachers shared in the questionnaire to later compare them with their actual practices through observation.

In order to carry out the data collection during the observations, it was necessary to record all the events that occurred. When making the register of classroom events, observers take the risk of recording their own assumptions on what is happening. Wolfinger (2002) claims "researchers presumably identify certain phenomena as interesting and worthy of annotation. They must exercise discretion in deciding what should be documented in their field notes" (p. 87). The advantages of using field notes in research is complex since it allows for the exposure to spontaneous data that has to be selected carefully.

I decided to document the classroom observations by using ethnographic field notes as a way to enhance objectivity in observation. Edge and Mann (2013) state that "the point of ethnographic perspective in field notes is not to assume that we already understand what we see but to describe it as best as we can" (p. 64). The ethnographic perspective enables the researcher to make a more detailed description of the events in order to avoid discrimination of the familiar events occurring during observation. Furthermore, Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011) emphasize that the ethnographic approach in research is used as a means to study groups and people within their everyday lives. In other words, ethnographic field notes are considered a useful tool in research because they offer detailed information and avoid the register of researchers' pre-conceived ideas.

3.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

For the third technique, I chose semi-structured interviews. Interviews are widely used in qualitative research because it is a versatile technique that researchers can apply in a variety of applied linguistic contexts and for diverse purposes (Dörnyei, 2007). One of the strongest challenges in this research was to identify teachers' beliefs because they are inner aspects that required a subjective perception. Creswell (2014) states that interviews can be an aid for researchers who deal with challenges related to unexpected participant behaviors and ability to manipulate previous instruments in the research. This is the reason why I decided to apply interviews to my participants as a means to expand or clarify data gathered from the open questionnaires and the ethnographic field notes.

According to Wilson (2012), the three main types of interviews are structured, semi–structured and unstructured. I decided to design a semi-structured interview that enables the opportunity to keep participants concentrated on the topic to be discussed. Besides, semi-structured interviews are a middle point between open and closed questions. Researchers in semi-structured interviews act like a guide using prefabricated questions related to a specific topic. Nevertheless, the participant has the freedom to provide his/her own ideas (Wilson, 2012).

For the last part of this research, I applied a semi-structured interview (Appendix 4) given the teachers' schedule, the interviews were carried out at a later time after each observation. The purpose of this technique was to see if teachers' beliefs as stated in the questionnaires/interviews coincided with their behavior in the classroom. Each interview had four open questions based on specific issues related to beliefs about classroom management. These questions were: what is your concept of classroom management?; what are your strengths and weaknesses in classroom management?; was there something in your lesson that did not result as you expected?; and as a follow up question for this I asked, how would you avoid making the same mistake in future sessions?. These questions attempted to obtain more information about solutions for unexpected situations. The rest of the interview was personalized according to each participant's results obtained from the two previous techniques (open questionnaire and ethnographic field notes in observation). The purpose of this semi-structured interview is to explore in-depth in order to find the reasons behind what

they do and believe. Also, their responses were an opportunity to openly express how they feel about their own decisions in the classroom.

3.4 Context

The University of Guanajuato is located in the State of Guanajuato. The UG was founded in 1732. It has a population of nearly 34,000 native and foreign students. Today, the UG is located in 12 cities within the entity, through four campuses and one high school with ten high schools and a Language Department since 1976 (Universidad de Guanajuato, 2016). The four foreign language teachers in this instrumental case study currently work in the Language Department. This department has the following languages in Guanajuato: English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, and Japanese. There are also Saturday courses, TOEFL (Tests of English as a Foreign Language) and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) preparation courses, and finally, the CAADI area (UG, 2016).

The CAADI offers independent sessions for languages, such as English, French, German, Japanese, Italian, Greek, and Spanish among others. The diverse groups from the Language Department have access to CAADI where learners can create their own schedules and use all the material available. CAADI aids students from any area of the language department to recover their absences in class by working independently. The objective of this area is to promote skills of autonomous learning among the learners of a second language. Although this is a public institution, most of the students from the Language Department are young adults who belong to many of the BA programs in the UG (Ramirez Guadiana, personal communication, September, 22, 2016).

3.5 Participants

Participants are the central issue in this instrumental case study. Each one of them represents an individual case. Therefore, in order to explore this instrumental case study more deeply, I proceed with the description of my participants. The participants worked at different language levels and areas of the Language Department from the University of Guanajuato. The participants were four foreign language teachers of different languages, such as German, French and English. They also covered some hours attending to students from the CAADI program. The participants' ages were between the 21 and 58 years old. Two of the participants were female and two male. Two of my participants came from an English-

speaking country. Their educational background was varied, and two of them studied a BA in history. The other two were Mexican and had received a formal language teaching preparation from a BA in ELT.

I selected the participants based on three diverse characteristics: age, gender and work context. As mentioned by Dörnyei (2007), a case study has to enhance variability so it can promote the generalization of the case. Although these teachers share some work characteristics such as belonging to the same community of teachers (the UG language community), they also differed in aspects of gender, age, and target language. Finally, to summarize, despite the short number of participants, it is important to emphasize that the aim of this research is to explore their beliefs regarding classroom management..

In Table 1, I present a detailed description of the participants' profile. The participants decided to work anonymously so they were given a pseudonym.

Table 1. Participants' profile.

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Nationality	Teaching Experience	Language They Teach	Educational Background
Rebecca	58	Female	British	22 years	English–CAADI	BA in History ELT training course from UK
Mariana	21	Female	Mexican	6 months	German–CAADI	Studies in BA in ELT
David	26	Male	Mexican	1 year	French–CAADI	BA in History
Javier	28	Male	Mexican-American	2 years	English–CAADI	Studies in BA in ELT

Mariana was a 21-year-old teacher. She has taught German for seven months in the UG Language Department. During this research she was studying the fifth semester of the

BA in English language teaching. Her work schedule started from Monday to Thursday, one hour and 15 minutes each. David was a 26-year-old French teacher with one year of experience. He was Mexican and also finished his studies with a BA in history but he was hired by the UG Language Department and CAADI due to his proficiency in the use of target language (French). Javier was a 28-year-old English teacher with almost two years of experience. Although Javier was about to conclude his studies within the same BA as Mariana, he had previously studied computer engineering in the USA and cultural tourism in Guanajuato. He worked for the UG Language Department in the area of English and CAADI. He was teaching six classes a day, all of them with different proficiency levels. Finally, Rebecca was a 58-year-old English teacher with more than 22 years of experience. She studied a BA in History in London and she came from Britain to Mexico and lived in the city of Guanajuato, Gto. Rebecca was teaching English in the CAADI and the BA in ELT in the UG.

3.6 Data Analysis

For data coding and description, I also followed Creswell's (2013) and Denscombe's (2010) steps. The first step was organizing the data. In order to start with the data analysis, the first thing is to sort out the excerpts obtained from the four sources of data described above in my techniques (an open-questionnaire, ethnographic field notes, and semi-structured interview). The second was reading and taking notes. Then, I read again the information found in every technique to identify the evidence of what is being concerned with. I wrote some notes on what it was important. The third step was coding. Once that the evidence has been collected, it is time to extract using some of the Denscombe (2007) strategies to create different theme categories. For the data management and organization during the analysis, the participants' identity was protected through the use of pseudonyms. The first step was to write the evidence (chunks of data) provided by the participants in excel columns and separate the excerpts in different themes hoping that the issue of interest emerged. Table 2 illustrates the way in which evidence was first selected and then separated by themes and participants. Each chunk of data also received a number as it appeared in the raw data.

Table 2. Data selection sample.

Participant	Open Questionnaire	Ethnographic Fieldnotes	Semi-Structured Interview
Rebeca	Evidence 1	Evidence 2	Evidence 3
Mariana	Evidence 1	Evidence 2	Evidence 3
David	Evidence 1	Evidence 2	Evidence 3
Javier	Evidence 1	Evidence 2	Evidence 3

For the step of presentation and display I created a table (Table 3) presenting the relevant evidence from each technique and each participant. Each piece of evidence received a code to facilitate interpretation. The code given contained participants' pseudonym, techniques' initial letter, and number of evidence as it emerged. This way was easier to visualize and analyze the differences and similarities among each case. Creswell (2013) affirms that within case study it is not necessary to look at multiple instances so I only focused on the exploration of these teachers' beliefs through the analysis of teachers' discourse.

Table 3. Data coding sample.

Classroom Management	Teacher's Role	Rapport with the Students
Rebecca-EFN1	Rebecca-EFN1	Rebecca-EFN1
Mariana-EFN1	Mariana-EFN1	Mariana-EFN1
David-EFN1	David-EFN1	David-EFN1
Javier-EFN1	Javier-EFN1	Javier-EFN1
Rebecca-SSI1	Rebecca-SSI1	Rebecca-SSI1
Mariana-SSI1	Mariana-SSI	Mariana-SSI1
David-SSI1	David-SSI	David-SSI1
Javier-SSI1	Javier-SSI1	Javier-SSI1
Rebecca-OQ1	Rebecca-OQ1	Rebecca-OQ1
Mariana-OQ1	Mariana-OQ1	Mariana-OQ1
David-OQ1	David-OQ1	David-OQ1
Javier-OQ1	Javier-OQ1	Javier-OQ1

Finally, the fourth step was analysis, comparison, and interpretation. The chunks were extracted and organized in different categories after comparing the information provided by each participant. Although there were several themes emerging from each set of data technique, the interpretation of the data focused on the main issue in this study.

3.7 Ethics

Denscombe (2010) points out that "the public should be protected from researchers who might be tempted to use any means available to advance the state of knowledge on a given topic" (p. 329). In addition, he describes four ethics that must be considered during the research process: "1) Participants' interests should be protected; 2) The participation must be voluntary and based on informed consent; 3) Researchers must operate with scientific integrity; 4) Research should comply with the laws of the land" (p. 331). All of these points are to prevent the inappropriate management of information and guarantee the participants' rights to keep anonymity and free of acting, to express and being themselves during the research process. The identity of the participants in this case study was recognized with pseudonyms. In regards to the second principle, all participants received a consent form (Appendix 5) where they signed it voluntarily to participate on the process. Concerning the third principle, I also preserved the legal management of data and written work through the use of American Psychological Association (APA) citing and referencing style in this document. Finally, for the fourth principle, participants allowed me to enter into their classrooms before I actually did it.

Not being part of the environment that I was exploring gave me the "obligation" to accept certain unwritten conditions. Richards (2003) claims that there are certain issues that need to be addressed when observing, and these issues lead observers to a paradox which is: "if people know they are being observed, they will not act normally" (p. 108). Therefore, even though my techniques had a systematic application, participants were previously informed about the data collection process and then, they provided their permission. Working with people implies working in an ethical manner. As in other field involving people, researchers must anticipate ethical issues. Creswell (2014) claims that researchers need to protect participants to enhance trust and therefore a higher level of quality, integrity, and credibility of professionalism. The use of pseudonyms was an important part of the ethics in this research since they permitted to manipulate participants' information without revealing their real names. The anonymity gave participants more freedom to say what they think about teaching a foreign language.

3.8 Conclusion

Even though it is hard to measure teachers' beliefs, it is possible to interpret them through their behavior, attitudes, and narratives where they reflect their agency (Richards, 1998). Most of the times, teachers define classroom management as group control and discipline techniques even though classroom management refers to teachers' skills and activities used to provide the proper learning environment. Because this research deals with teachers' beliefs and behavior during classroom management, the use of the qualitative paradigm seemed to be more suitable due to its concern on interpretation of people's thoughts and actions within their social context. From all of the research methods in the qualitative paradigm, I decided to use an instrumental case because it helped me to analyze individual cases and compare them with each other case. In this study each participant represents a different case of the same stance: beliefs about classroom management. Case studies allow the researcher to use a variety of data collection strategies and the wider variety of strategies represents a deeper analysis for each case; therefore, I applied a behavioral open questionnaire (to build up participants' profile); a second open questionnaire with attitudinal approach (to explore their beliefs about classroom management); observation (to identify teachers' beliefs within their actual strategies in classroom management); and a semi-structured interview (to obtain a deeper view of participants' beliefs regarding classroom management). The application of different strategies was more rewarding for the data analysis since it was possible to obtain more information. Also, participants were able to reflect on their own actions and responses throughout the research.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Interpretation

4 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the analysis and interpretation of the data concerning the beliefs of four foreign language teachers who work in the same department. I also attempt to identify these teachers' beliefs concerning the key areas of classroom management and the extent to which such beliefs are reflected in their teaching practice. The analysis of the data is divided and organized in the following themes: 1) classroom management; 2) lesson planning; 3) grouping techniques; 4) language of instruction (the use of L1 in classroom management); 5) the role of the teacher and the students; 6) establishing rapport with the students; and, finally, 7) an unexpected theme of teaching experience and its relation to classroom management followed by the conclusion of this chapter.

4.1 Classroom Management

In order to start with this data analysis, it was important to understand what the concept of classroom management is for these four language teachers. It has been previously established by several authors that classroom management refers to all the activities designed and applied by teachers in order to enhance an effective learning environment (see, for example, Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011; Muijs & Reynolds, 2011; Scrivener, 2011; Richards, 2015). Language educators often move throughout a continuum of concerns that in many cases could lead them to give less importance to the learning environment. This chapter analyzes what activities, strategies and skills these teachers believe are more important for the classroom environment. To start with, I present Mariana's definition. She is a German teacher with eight months of teaching experience. Her definition of classroom management is:

> Everything that happens in the classroom is part of classroom management. It involves aspects, such as grouping techniques, material, instructions, the kind of activities used, timing, answering questions that students might have, etc. (Mariana-OQ1)

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Despite the fact that this teacher has the least amount of teaching experience, she seems to have a clear idea of classroom management and other related areas. In the previous excerpt, Mariana describes her understanding of classroom management by mentioning examples of what she believes it is involved in this area. Mariana briefly summarizes all the strategies that teachers use within the language classroom based on her past and present teaching experiences. Similarly, Javier refers to classroom management as a teacher-based function, and expresses the way he understands teachers' job concerning classroom management:

> I would say that classroom management is the way that teachers have a grip over their own teaching and the circumstances that surround it… It involves understanding the concepts of grouping, teacher talk time, planning, timing, adapting, and understanding the different context that are in play. (Javier-OQ1)

Javier complements Mariana's definition by emphasizing the importance of knowing different settings where management has to be adjusted if needed, considering the contextual factors of every class. The emphasis Javier gives with his words "adapting and understanding the different context that are in play" manifests his concern in applying different management strategies to different school contexts and making decisions on the most effective ones. In this case, Javier's definition could also be an example of Fang's (1996) discussion about how teachers' beliefs that are shared could represent what they know from their own work setting or from receiving the same training. This could be the reason why these two definitions (Mariana and Javier's) of classroom management are closely related. Mariana and Javier do not only work in the same place but they attended the same BA in TESOL. Their conceptualizations may be a reflection of the influence that their academic formation might have upon their knowledge and beliefs towards the practice.

On the other hand, Rebecca and David had studies in history before they decided to change their professional background to become language teachers. This might be a significant circumstance to understand their definitions of classroom management. David has taught French for two years, and for him classroom management is:

> …a goal, what must be done or what can be done in class, which can be utopic since there are many factors that can go wrong in the planning at any time. It is something

necessary, not only the idea to accomplish the program's requirements, or the lesson planning, actually it is not so simple to achieve the established goals at a 100%. (David-OQ1)

David understands that classroom management is something that takes place in every day classes, although it cannot be perfectly covered. His definition seems to be slightly skeptical as he mentions that classroom management "can be utopic". It sounds as if he did not believe that classroom management could be fully achievable and this is a logical stand. As it is possible to observe, there is a slight difference between teachers who have received some type of training and teachers who have learned how to teach through the practice. David's teaching experience has taught him the importance of considering all the challenges of a class that could interfere with this goal as he mentions "there are many factors that can go wrong in the planning at any time". Regarding this, Pajares (1992) remarks that teachers who face unknown or unfamiliar situations (mostly produced by the absence of teaching training in this case) tend to have a stronger connection with their beliefs. Under those circumstances, it is possible that these two language teachers (Rebecca and David), could have a stronger influence of their beliefs in their management skills. Nonetheless, timing also plays an important role on the way these teachers' beliefs have been shaped.

Along the same line, Rebecca, who studied history, has been teaching English in Mexico for about 22 years to the moment. Rebecca uses an anecdote to define the importance that the learning environment represents for her. She relates one of her first teaching experiences with this metaphor:

You are planting seeds that you weren't aware you were planting, like those kids that I taught in that high school. I see them around town now that they are adults. They are like ah! Your class was great! We really enjoyed your class! But at that time I was feeling like, you know, like beating my head against the wall but they obviously didn't, some things take time to process… (Rebecca-SSI15)

This metaphor of "planting seeds" is Rebecca's reflection of her first classroom management skills after many years of teaching. During her first teaching practices, she had some experiences in classroom management that made her believe that she was doing

something wrong. Rebecca explains how her students were happy with her teaching job even when she did not feel the same way. Now, she expresses how, after all the efforts and time invested, her ex-students come to thank her for the effort she made while teaching. Later, she found that the seeds had grown and she could perceive the results in her students' development and appreciation. Rebecca's belief of classroom management is more based on her experiences as a teacher and perhaps also as learners.

4.1.1 Lesson Preparation

I will now proceed to analyze these four teachers' beliefs about some of the key areas in classroom management described by Richards (2015), starting by lesson preparation. The process of planning classes is an essential element for management. Muijs and Reynolds (2011) claim lesson preparation as one of the major concerns that teachers commonly express. Lesson preparation or planning refers to time that teachers invest outside the classroom in order to organize the stages and procedures needed to carry out the class. It is the area where classroom management is shaped and created in teachers' minds before they even apply it to their classes. The concept of lesson preparation or planning encompasses a formal presentation and the development of the class. When these four teachers were asked for their beliefs about lesson planning, their first concern was related to the formal writing of a lesson plan that is a requirement for most of the public and private institutions. Some of these teachers' answers were:

> …I tried to do it [lesson planning] at the beginning. I had my lesson plan at the computer and I printed it and it didn't work. I didn't pay attention to it. I was like oh, I have to do this. I was ignoring many things so I thought no: why am I doing this if I am not using it? So, now I just write the most important information like, what they have to do, what pages, how much time would it take and the interaction, if it's in groups or pairs so that's all. (Mariana-SSI18)

In the case of Mariana, she explains how she used to write a formal lesson plan for her first teaching practices and later quit to this activity. But throughout her short experience as a teacher the reflection on this routine and its inefficiency led her to stop believing in the need of this written format. Mariana's experience on lesson preparation helped her to understand that written forms of a lesson planning should be short and concise, with no need

of major formalities. This situation is common in teaching, the multiple tasks that teachers need to perform make them look for practicality in many forms. The processes of reflection on different teaching circumstances might be a crucial aspect for teachers to decide on the perseverance or changes of their habits (see Castellanos Jaimes, 2013; Thomas, 2013). Regarding the same issue of writing a formal lesson plan, Rebecca expresses the following:

> …well, I wouldn't say it is a lesson plan but a list, yeah. And quite often I make the list a little bit longer than what I know is going to be possible, to kind of create the lesson for the next class… (Rebecca-SSI3)

Despite almost 21 years of difference in teaching experience, Mariana and Rebecca present similar beliefs about the use of an official or formal lesson plan. These two teachers express the reasons why they prefer not to write and use a formal lesson plan. Mariana, the novice teacher, believes that writing a formal lesson plan is something unnecessary given her previous experiences trying to use it. Rebecca, like the rest of the participants in this research, prefers not to write all the stages and elements that should be officially included in a lesson plan. Instead, they prefer to use a list that adapts better to their class needs. Instead, both teachers explain how they only use a short outline or a list with the most important aspects to consider within the lesson preparation. However, Rebecca sounds more precautious by stating how she sometimes adds extra activities to the list. Her experiences may have taught her that it is better to be prepared with more work. This also appears to be a common practice among language teachers, perhaps concerning time administration. In addition, the non-use of a formal lesson plan does not interfere with their classes because they have a good sense of time administration and class organization. As mentioned by Aliakbary and Boorgmanesh (2015), management should be concerned with having a proper environment, controlling chaos, avoiding all negative situations during the learning process, and leaving the importance of a formal document as a secondhand need. This view is closely tied to discipline concepts that can be avoid by having a proper class organization.

On the same line, Javier presents a negative opinion about writing an official lesson plan. He also reflects on the reasons why he prefers not to write a formal document nor to use a format in the classroom:

Never. I used it only for those make up, the substituting days, those three days I had to make a lesson plan, not because I wanted to, but because the teacher told me that she wanted to see my lesson plan before I actually implemented it… and I don't know where the hate comes from. I guess I'm a bit lazy but I just don't see it. If I already have it in my mind, I know the activities. I already printed out the activities. Why do I want to transfer it to paper? So, I think it is just bit more of a waste of time, the detailed lesson plans, if it's just like writing all: I'm going to teach the present continuous, my first activity is just this game. Ok, but if it is in the ones we have to do for the BA that we have to really explain the context and all the things I think is a waste of time. (Javier-SSI8)

For Javier, writing a formal lesson plan is not exactly a priority. It is a slight feeling of hate perhaps because of previous experiences or as part of their personality (as he describes himself as a lazy person). He does not only refer to his lack of comprehension towards having to write a detailed format, but he believes that this is time that he does not consider necessary to spend on. Even though Javier emphasizes the lack of necessity in using a detailed format, he also recognizes the purpose of using it in the past, where he refers only to substitution. As previously stated, teachers should effectively manage time administration for outside and inside their classrooms. Javier reveals that it is not necessary for him to write a lesson plan as long as he had prepared his class' activities and material. Concerning the importance of time organization, Richards (2015) mentions that it should be sufficient to include time for management, time for instruction, time for engagement, and time for learning.

Teachers have varied strategies to plan their classes, and exploring their beliefs might be the main sources for this process. Perhaps because of the theory they have learned or because of their previous experiences they have had, teachers' decisions about lesson planning could be mainly shaped based on their beliefs. These four teachers tend to structure their classes based on what they believe is more important to consider in each group and adapt it as they believe it is more practical. Teachers' management skills are as important as learners' work and engagement in the activities design and implementation. So, in order to have an effective design of the lesson, these teachers believe that it is important to consider

students' needs inside the classroom. In order to know their learners' preferences, they use different strategies. The following two excerpts express how listening to students' wants and needs is part of these teachers' lesson preparation:

I try to ask students what they want/need on a regular basis and adjust my planning to their responses and requests when possible. (Rebecca-OQ6)

Planning my classes (including timing) considering beforehand what my students might ask, trying to give clear instructions, grouping them differently, taking into account what they think and want. (Mariana-OQ3)

As it was established by Smyth (2006), students and teachers share a bit of responsibility in enhancing the effective classroom management. As it can be observed in the previous excerpts, Rebecca and Mariana state that knowing their students' wants and needs is essential in order to adjust their classroom management strategies. There is a wide variety of expectations when these four language teachers are in contact with their groups because each one of their students is different and has different needs. Therefore, these teachers affirm that it is necessary to consider students' profiles and preferences as much as possible for the preparation of their lessons. Yet, for teachers this might be a vital thinking since working with people requires not only organization skills but also empathy and effective management.

In the following data excerpt, Javier expresses his thoughts about how a bad class organization is perceived by students during the teaching practice:

When I do not plan a good enough class, I feel bad and I also see the students… I kind of foresee some issues that my activity would bring and I did not plan a solution for those, and I see it in real time and my students are like: "didn't you just say this or that?" There's some confusion and sometimes when you see confusion it is because maybe the teacher did not really plan out the class well. (Javier-SSI7)

Despite the nonuse of an official format, Javier states that the success of his classroom management depends on being prepared for the issues that emerge during the lesson. Javier, with two years of teaching experience, explains how he feels whenever he has not planned

the class properly. The confusion that disorganization is caused on his students makes Javier feel bad. Although Javier expressed dislike towards writing a formal lesson plan, he is aware of preparation and organization as a way to maintain the lesson under control. Concerning this, Richards (2015) highlighted that the time spent on lesson preparation is considered an investment that is reflected in the control of the classroom environment and lesson's fluency. In the previous excerpt Javier manifests his feelings of guilt when he has not foreseen the possible problems in the lesson. It is through the reaction of his students that Javier can realize that his improvisation causes confusion and misunderstandings in the classroom. This feeling of responsibility might be considered normal for young teachers who are reconstructing their beliefs through experience.

But different from Javier's feeling of full responsibility for an effective lesson preparation, other teachers understand that students' behaviors could also affect planning. For instance, David and Mariana believe that students' absences are another problem that affects the lesson:

> Let us say that I can make a perfect planning for me, but I've really noticed that sometimes students are not coming… or, there are several factors that I cannot control. They won't let me develop my class the way I want it to be developed. (David-SSI2)

> I think that's a problem [students' non-attendance] for me because sometimes I teach many things and they are not there, and the next day they come and they are completely in blank, so… what else? (Mariana-SSI3)

Even if these teachers have planned their classes, teachers are aware of the unforeseen circumstances that might interfere with their planning. David and Mariana believe that one of the most uncontrollable challenges for lesson preparation is timing which often overlaps with students' non-attendance. This is a situation that they cannot control and they find it difficult to solve. Likewise, Mariana identifies students' non-attendance as a problem, explaining how she uses each class time to teach different things and how this time is exclusive of every class. Despite there are new themes or reviews in the class, Mariana knows that non-attendance means losing the opportunity for students to learn at the same pace than the others as she is moving through her lessons along the week. On the other hand, David

blames non-attendance-students for not being able to teach the way he would like. Teacher freedom is not always possible for these kinds of situations due to a school's policies of time distribution.

Conversely, even when teachers had training on planning and time administration, there are certain situational and contextual factors that might cause a dilemma in the classroom. The organization and preparation of a lesson directly depends on the available class time. For example, Rebecca emphasizes that class time is important to her due to the conditions of her work. The program offers a class of one hour and 15 minutes / three days a week and an auto-learning day for students to work independently. Total of five hours per week. Therefore, losing a day of classes represents a large challenge for her:

> Maybe one of the main problems, I feel, is that I often feel rushed because the time is not what it is expected. In a way, I'm so grateful because the system here is so flexible that they allow me not to use the text book. We can cover things but we don't have to use the book or deal with it, but quiet often I feel like: "oh God, I don't have time. I need to repeat". So, maybe that is the repeated problem I feel, the time. (Rebecca-SSI22)

Rebecca recognizes the flexibility offered by the school's policy in regards to the use of the textbook, which is not seen as a strict requirement, but as a guideline for the course. However, she describes how time becomes a disadvantage throughout the semester. The frequent feeling of pressure from completing the course goals might reduce this teacher's quality in classroom management. This makes them focus more on the content of the class than the learning environment. In order to avoid this, teachers need to be aware of their weaknesses and work on them. Javier agrees on this and demonstrates the way he administers time in the classroom:

> I believe that if I focus on my timing skills then I could probably have more activities within the hour and fifteen minutes that we have. (Javier-OQ5)

Despite his two years of teaching practice, Javier is aware of time as one of his weaknesses in classroom management. This awareness makes him think of alternative

solutions for what he cannot change. All of these challenges become opportunities for Javier to improve his teaching.

To sum up, teachers' beliefs take place during lesson preparation or planning. Some of the main concerns mentioned in this section revealed teachers' beliefs about what it is and it is not important for lesson preparation. For instance, writing a formal lesson plan for every class seems not to be necessary for these teachers. Instead, these teachers have adapted some practical strategies, such as making a list of activities and materials per class. Nonetheless, they believe that being prepared with materials and foreseeing problems are essential to avoid learners' confusion and misunderstandings. Also, whereas some of these teachers believe that class organization is their own responsibility, others acknowledge students' non-attendance as a negative aspect that affects their lessons even though it is out of their control. Furthermore, Mariana, Rebecca, and David claim that students should express what they want or need in order to personalize the lesson. The reduced amount of classes that these teachers have has been a challenge that forced them to deal with class time organization.

4.1.2 Grouping

During classroom practice, the teachers recognize the facilities that they have access to, and search for different ways to take advantage of the space and equipment. Grouping strategies are part of the teachers' organizational skills and lesson planning. The beliefs and personality of teachers might be crucial on the decisions they make in grouping arrangements. At the same time these arrangements are learners' opportunity to have different learning experiences. Mariana, Rebecca, David and Javier share their beliefs and experiences about the use of grouping strategies in the language classroom. Mariana describes her beliefs about the use of different group arrangements:

> I think that there should be like a variety. It's not always that they work alone or in groups but in each class there should be like a variety of activities in group management. Sometimes they can work in pairs, in groups or alone depending on the activity or the type of activity. If I want students to think by themselves, then it is an activity that they have to do alone. And if I want them to interact, talk and to use the language they had learned so in groups or in pairs. (Mariana-SSI11)

Mariana starts by exemplifying her beliefs about using different grouping strategies for different purposes. These beliefs are that there should be different arrangements during one lesson depending on the purpose of the activities she designed. She is careful to state that she decides whether her students should work individually or in groups. This preference is based on the level of autonomy or social interaction that learners should develop throughout the activities. To put it differently, grouping arrangement varies depending not only on teachers' beliefs but also on the objectives of the activities. Mariana's excerpt coincides with Scrivener's (2011) claim, in that grouping arrangement is the learner's opportunity to improve on his/her interactional and individual skills.

Even though Mariana expresses her preference for using different group arrangements, opposite to this, her classroom observations reflect a limited use of group work techniques. In this regard, Richards and Lockhart (1997) claim that beliefs might change through experiences or because of situational and contextual factors. The following excerpt is a brief example of the ethnographic field notes taken during Mariana's lesson. Observe how she decides to implement this activity as a whole class.

> The reading activity continues as a whole group activity. Everybody is quiet paying attention to the reading and the teacher's explanation of the vocabulary. During all of the activity, the teacher doesn't move from the same spot (next to her desk). The teacher reads the second activity and again selects a word to ask students for its meaning. This time she only translates it when they don't know. Students start asking in the L1 too. (Mariana-EFN2)

As it is possible to observe, Mariana demonstrates a slight discrepancy between her beliefs and her actions regarding group arrangements since she seems to be aware of their importance but hardly includes them within her classes. Although reading activities are generally attached to individual arrangements, Mariana decided to carry it out as a whole-group reading activity. During Mariana's class, there was limited group work throughout the lesson. Notwithstanding it is necessary to admit that this is an exploratory research focused on the beliefs that these teachers have. It is important to mention that a larger amount of observations could have enriched this thesis in registering teachers' attitudes or behaviors

during the classroom. Furthermore, Rebecca also exposes her reasons for using group arrangements:

> I use a lot of small group work… I find that this gives enough opportunity to discuss/compare/contrast work results for individuals. (Rebecca-OQ5)

It has been already established that there are multiple advantages for using grouping in the language classroom. Rebecca considers group work as a strategy for students to complete a task. Rebecca gives priority to the achievement of a task through the interaction of her students. The use of group work in classes can have not only communicative goals but also pedagogical advantages as it was coherently perceived within Rebecca's classes. In the following piece of data, it is possible to perceive how useful it is for Rebeca's learners and herself to work collectively:

> The teacher starts reading the instructions of book's activity. Then one of the students reads the first question and all the group responds aloud. They confirm the correct answer and explain why. Then the teacher asks students to continue responding the other questions in pairs. While the students respond, the teacher goes to her desk and keeps organizing her material. The teacher approaches the students. They are sitting in the back of the classroom. The teacher stands in the middle of the classroom to be closer. (Rebecca-EFN3)

As it is possible to observe, Rebecca and her learners both took advantage of group working time. Whereas learners worked on their activities, Rebecca had time to prepare the material for the next activity. Based on this type of conduct in the classroom, it is possible to posit Rebecca into the interactionist style in classroom management (Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011). She teaches her students how to find the answers and gives them enough space to find them on their own. Besides, Rebecca takes advantage of her position inside of the classroom. The fact that her students decided to sit at the back does not mean that she is going to stay at the front. She looks for an action zone that is visible for all of her students.

Javier claims that group work is a way to manage students' over talking when it becomes a discipline problem. Regarding this, he states:

I tend to have some students talking a lot in class… but I started to use grouping techniques which helped out. Each year has been different for me regarding how I teach even after having to teach the same levels. (Javier-OQ6)

Interestingly, the participants in this research presented different perspectives in regards to the benefits/uses of grouping techniques. For Javier grouping techniques have become helpful with discipline. Javier used to believe that group work was not necessary. In this excerpt, it is possible to notice how he suggests that he learns new teaching strategies every year when he claims "each year has been different for me regarding how I teach". Javier also seems to have the desire to learn and change for self-improvement as he has expressed in his response stating the differences in each year.

These teachers appear to have a preference for the use of group arrangement in the classroom, although their reasons are different. For example, for Rebecca and Mariana this arrangement is a way to save class time, to develop communicative skills, and to have more control of learners' discipline during the tasks. Regarding Richards' (2015) words, another strategy that teachers can use for effective classroom management is their speech, the tone, the clarity, and the verbal behavior is a significant tool in the classroom. Thus, the following section presents these teachers' beliefs about the way instructions should be given.

4.1.3 Instructions: "The Use of L1 in Classroom Management"

Richards (2015) states that teachers' discourse is an implicit strategy that collaborates in the creation of a safe classroom environment. One of the most important elements in classroom management is giving instructions, and teacher metalanguage in the classroom. It is important to mention that for the context of this research, learners mostly shared Spanish as a first language whereas the target languages were English, French, and German. Kang (2013) supports the use of L1 in the L2 classroom as another teaching and management strategy. Although there are certain unwritten norms that must be considered, such as the amount, the purpose and the appropriacy. During the classroom observation, the use of the first language is present as a strategy that all nonnative participants use repeatedly. The reasons and situations in which they use it is diverse. In the next selected ethnographic field note Mariana manifests the use of L1 as a way to start the class and approaching her students.

Mariana stands up in front of the students and asks about the exam in L1: "¿Como estuvo el examen?" (Mariana-EFN2)

Mariana, a German teacher, briefly uses Spanish (L1) with different purposes during the class, but in this example she uses it to create rapport, or to establish a more solid relationship with her students. This type of habits might reinforce the relationship between teachers and students because they become the basis to construct a positive learning environment where learners are motivated and comfortable to acquire the language. For learners this strategy could mean more than the use of the non-target language in groups. Additionally, Mariana justified her use of Spanish based on what she believed:

Sometimes I have to use Spanish because it is a very useful tool but it is not like every single thing in Spanish, so I try in German as I can, as much as I can, but when I see their faces like: I don't understand, I switch to Spanish and I think that it helps but you have to be careful so that they don't get used to only hearing Spanish but the language they are learning. (Mariana-SSI14)

Marianna believes that reading her students' expressions has helped her realize when it is necessary to use the L1 in the classroom. She uses L1 as a strategy to reduce learners' anxiety based on what she perceives from her students' expressions. She is also aware that the excessive exposure of students to the L1 could be a problem perhaps affecting their linguistic competence. Nevertheless, for classroom management, this is perhaps a strategy to save time, resolve doubts, and encourage students to focus on content. Although there are certain constraints that should be considered when using the L1, some of them are the overuse and the context in which it is used (for example EFL or ESL). The use of the students' first language in classroom management can be useful but it should not be excessive. Otherwise, students could interpret this overuse as a permission for them to do the same or cause them an over rely on teacher's use of the L1. Then the class' objectives might be lost and the learning process will be affected. In the next ethnographic field notes from Javier's class, it is possible to distinguish an excessive use of the L1 with his learners of intermediate level.

Students take out a copy that the Javier gave them last class. Javier starts reading the paper out loud and translates every sentence from English (L2) to Spanish (L1). Students follow the reading in silence. (Javier-EFN10)

Javier knows that the use of Spanish is one of his biggest weaknesses in his teaching practice. He uses Spanish in repeated times during the class observation. He expresses his beliefs about the use of Spanish in his language classroom:

Yeah, even though I was born in the US, I feel more comfortable in Spanish. I feel that in Spanish you can communicate passion. You can communicate so much more than English. I think English is sometimes cold or just to a point and in Spanish you can communicate so many things and so many aspects. (Javier-SSI11)

Javier believes that the use of Spanish is a way to "communicate passion". Perhaps this means that it is easier for him to motivate students through the use of their native language. Although he was born in the US, he considers Spanish to be more comfortable to use in the English classroom. Nonetheless, in his use of the L1, as observed in the former excerpt, he has a tendency to translate the class. This behavior might represent an overuse of the students' native language which is a risky action that might create interference between the first and the target language.

In the following analysis, it is possible to observe the instructional strategies of the other two teachers (David and Rebecca). In this ethnographic field note David demonstrates the use of L1 as a faster way to solve all students' doubts.

During students' presentations, David listens to some of the students speaking in their L1. He asks all of the students to please use the target language (French). One of the students raises his hand. The teacher approaches him. At the same time, another student asks for the meaning of a word. The teacher responds in L1 and keeps paying attention to the first student. (David-EFN4)

David keeps control of his learners' target language use. He tries to be a role model for them by using French, the target language, as much as possible. Similar to what Marianna does in her classes, the use of L1 to explain difficult or new vocabulary enables David to

move faster throughout the class. This way David was more efficient to resolve two different students' doubts at the same time and continue with the next activities.

In the next field note I illustrate how Rebecca, the most experienced teacher, does not implement the use of learners' first language at any time inside the classroom. She prefers to use different strategies to present new vocabulary or solve students' doubts.

> For every answer, Rebecca selects specific vocabulary and asks students for the meaning of it. When they do not know, she gives examples using the word in different sentences. Everything is in the target language. (Rebecca-EFN10)

Finally, Rebecca prefers to avoid the use of students' L1 and implements different strategies to make students understand new vocabulary, strategies such as: giving examples, contextualizing, using mimic, etc.

There are multiple strategies that teachers can use to avoid the use of L1, however, their decisions rely on what they believe is more suitable to their lessons. As it has been previously stated by Kang (2013), the use of L1 in the L2 classroom is not a negative strategy as long as it is used properly during the lessons. The diversity of these teachers methods regarding the use of learners' first language might also be a reflection of their own learning process.

4.2 The Role of the Teachers and Students

In this section I present the teachers' beliefs of teachers and students' role. Once that they have understood their responsibilities and collaborations in the class there is a contribution from both sides that improves the quality of the learning environment. In this section I present the teachers' beliefs what their roles as language teachers as well as the students are. Teaching is a multidimensional profession that involves the competence and administration of numerous elements (Coetzee et al., 2008). It is assumed that for each management of these elements teachers have to adopt a different role in their classrooms (*ibid*). Some of the roles mentioned by Crosby (2000) in the literature include the information provider, the model, the facilitator, the assessor, the planner, and the resource material creator. The four participants in this thesis have discussed their beliefs about the role(s) that they and their students should have within the classroom, including the responsibilities that both share

within the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, establishing a good relationship is another role for teachers, in order to "humanize" their classes. David considers that this "humanization" is another important role for teachers to let the students know how much they care about them. David believes that another responsibility that teachers have is to go beyond language teaching. This is possibly based on his own experience as a learner. Teachers need to make their students feel appreciated. In this regard, David defines what he believes is his role as a teacher:

> That my students feel comfortable is very important for me because without them there would be no job, and I really feel that the social work of the teacher is not only to teach the course because it often seems that we are just forming robots but giving them the knowledge to implement it… to be functional in society. (David-SSI6)

Considering that he has studied history rather than teaching, he made an important observation. David talks from the perspective of a student more than a teacher. He believes that being a teacher should be more than transmitting knowledge. David believes that teachers should make students feel that they care about them, their learning, and their human sides and not just their knowledge of the subject matter. Still he is precise in indicating his interest to maintain students' comfortable within the classroom. This view is equivalent to the affective domain addressed by Richards (2015) and the claim for students' incorporation within society.

Rebecca exemplifies the role of the teacher as a "problem solver" by using a situation that she commonly finds within her classroom. Rebecca describes a recent situation happening in the classroom where one of her students was very quiet and therefore, it was hard for her to check this student's progress in language learning.

> Encouraging, the quiet student has to speak or the dominant has to listen to the others so that's important...So I guess I just try to provide the opportunities for her and encourage her, and not intimidate her, pushing her but not intimidating her and the rest has to come from her, you know, you only do what you can do. (Rebecca-SSI5)

Another specific role that this teacher describes is the problem solver. Rebecca deals with other problems, such as the lack or excess of participation from some students. In situations like this, the teacher has to anticipate possible problems in the lesson planning and go one step further to find possible solutions. Rebecca tries to encourage her quiet students and at the same time to keep an equilibrium with those students who are more participative. This attitude is a clear projection of an experienced teacher.

Javier has a more explicit concept of what the teacher's role is. He expresses what he believes he should be able to do in the classroom and also what he should avoid.

> …so I believe that a teacher has to be…prepared, has to have years of theory and all of that…I've seen it throughout my life, bad teachers are usually teachers that are so used to the…routine, they just go to class. They ask the students do this, do that, and do a presentation and let's go, and I feel that is just being lazy and I just don't want to be one of those lazy teachers that are used to the routine and they like to teach the students: oh you have to be good, and, you have to be excellent when you become a teacher, and then we see a whole different aspect when we are being taught so they're saying a lot of things but they don't do a lot. (Javier-SSI6)

Javier's words seem to reflect his ideas towards teaching which may come from his experiences as a student. He sustains the idea that teachers' preparation needs to include "years of theory", and full knowledge on the subject matter even when he has not concluded his studies yet. Javier exemplifies his own perspective as a student, comparing "bad" teacher actions and expressions concerning the classroom. Javier refers to the teachers' image, and the importance of what they say and do within the class. In this excerpt, Javier infers that falling into a routine is an obstacle for teachers' self-improvement. He identifies a teacher as "lazy" when he/she acts like "the boss" who only gives orders in the classroom. Finally, Javier rejects the idea of becoming the kind of teacher that he describes as a "bad teacher". He emphasizes that he has to be prepared in order to avoid the kinds of situations where teaching is a routine and learning is a secondary issue.

In order to conclude with this section, Mariana gives a specific role of the teacher in the following excerpt:

It involves many aspects, but in a few words the role of the teacher is facilitating the students' learning. (Mariana-OQ4)

Mariana says that being the teacher means to facilitate learning, not giving all the answers nor solving students' problems. Teachers are responsible for providing the conditions for a proper learning environment.

There are also roles of responsibility that belong only to students, especially in the context where these four foreign language teachers work. Rebecca describes her teaching philosophy which is to promote the conditions for autonomous learning and her view of this method, as follows.

I think it would be essentially my philosophy for what I do in the CAADI that I want individuals to develop whatever is that they need and to make them, or maybe help them to become aware of what they need and to help them a little bit down the road. (Rebecca-SSI18)

Rebecca explains how her role as a guide works by promoting learner autonomy in and outside the classroom. Her priority as a teacher is to encourage her students to develop self-awareness of what they need in terms of learning and then encourage them to look for it. Some teachers want to help their students to find out knowledge on their own and preserve their essence as individuals. These teachers might feel completely responsible for students' learning especially for beginners like Mariana who has taught for eight months and assumes some responsibility for students' knowledge:

I think that I feel responsible for the learners to learn well what they have to learn. Sometimes I feel that if I don't teach them well what they have to learn it is my responsibility, but sometimes it is their responsibility to study at home and to learn more. But I think that is my biggest concern because it's a responsibility that I have as a teacher and yeah, that's like my major concern. (Mariana-SSI1)

Opposite to Rebecca's thoughts, Mariana takes all the responsibility for students' learning although she is aware that they also need to take on their responsibility. Mariana's biggest concern is her responsibility to "make" students learn. However, teachers must be aware of the limited responsibility they have for students' failure or success in general.

These four teachers do not share the same beliefs about their role in the classroom. These teachers believe that their role in the classroom is to be responsible for everything that happens in the classroom and everything that students are supposed to learn, especially beginner teachers like Mariana. In the same line, Javier believes that teachers should know all about the subject they are teaching, and provide all the materials and information to their students, otherwise they may be considered "lazy". On the other hand, Rebecca underlines her preference for learners' autonomy and understands her role as a facilitator or guide that leads students to find their own answers. Finally, David has a more sensitive view of teachers' role claiming that one of his main functions is to provide a comfortable environment where learners can develop socio-functional skills through the target language.

4.3 Establishing Rapport with the Students: "Friends with the Enemy"

The importance of teacher-student and student-student relationships is one of the main factors that promote a positive learning environment. There are many strategies that teachers can use in order to gain learners confidence and thus reduce problems, such as language anxiety and other negative aspects (Crosby, 2000). The teachers in this research establish a professional yet personal relationship with the students in order to gain students' confidence. They believe that the image that teachers project with students as an authority, as a friend or as a guide who leads students to behave in certain ways. But the main objective of classroom management is to promote a positive learning environment. Thus, at times when discipline fails, teachers need to find new strategies to reintegrate students. They describe some aspects, such as age and gender like elements that influence classroom management. The metaphor of "friend with the enemy" emerged from the first chunk of data in this section and it is illustrated below.

Javier suggests the necessity to find a balance between being an authority and a friend. For Javier, gender is an important attribute in classroom management. In this excerpt Javier manifests his beliefs about what he means by being "friends with the enemy":

I actually thought, well, they would still disrespect me but maybe since I'm a male figure they might respect me if I kind of joke around with them about soccer or something with the guys because usually guys are the ones who don't respect, but I was hearing girls saying so many words that I didn't even know… and I was thinking well, I guess I would have to, at first try to make friends with them, friends with the enemy and kind of go about teaching English after that. (Javier-SSI13)

Therefore, there should be a balance between teacher flexibility and demands. This way the figure of authority and respect continue without becoming a symbol of fear in the classroom. Javier believes that the position he takes might be an advantage in order to gain students' confidence and respect:

It is difficult because you don't want to be too strict but you don't want to be too easy and we just have to find the middle ground but is difficult… (Javier-SSI14)

In the first excerpt, Javier describes two different strategies he would use in case he had to work with teenagers. According to Javier's beliefs, his first strategy is taking advantage of his gender to gain boys confidence. Javier actually assumes that the male students are the most undisciplined in the classroom and that his figure as a teacher would be helpful for him. In other words, he assumes that to be a man is to have a stronger figure of authority for the learners. The second strategy is humor, which seems to be a common variant of Javier's teaching. Finally, the objective would be to become "friends with the enemy", to gain students' confidence, and have them on their side in order to control the classroom without forcing them to participate.

Mariana explains how her beliefs about the importance of having a proper learning environment.

I think I have a very good relationship with them and this kind of relationship helps not only me but also the students to have a better learning environment that makes it easier for them to learn, now I believe it. (Mariana-SSI7)

Mariana clarifies that she did not use to believe what the BA in ELT teachers told her about the advantages of having a good relationship with her students. After her first semester

of teaching she now believes that having a good relationship with her students promotes a positive learning environment and this makes it easier for them to learn. Mariana needed to live this situation so she could believe it, although she still needs to take into account that there are many differences from class to class.

On the other hand, Rebecca has more experience dealing with situations of this kind. She is aware that the interaction with her students is an important tool to manage the class and use different strategies to get to know them.

> I try to identify the students' motivation for taking the class and any preferences or dislikes that they may have. I use a "getting to know you" sheet and add notes to it when any relevant incident occurs. (Rebecca-OQ3)

The strategy that Rebecca uses to approach her students is that before she starts every new course she tries to identify not only students' needs but also their preferences in regards to learning. Keeping a record of what these considerations are and updating it when needed is useful for her to rapport with her students.

Beyond this strategy, there are some other factors that facilitate teacher-student interaction. For instance, in the next piece of ethnographic field notes Javier uses laughter as a way to reduce stress within the learning environment

> The teacher walks around while they are working. Teacher goes to a team and jokes. They laugh. Teacher walks towards different teams and asks them if they have any doubt. Each team has a different doubt. He responds and continues walking. (Javier-EFN11)

During this classroom observation, I found that Javier constantly monitors his students' work. He moves around his students while they answer the target activity and uses jokes as an ice breaker to make them feel his support and gain rapport. Humor in the classroom is a double-edged sword because it may cause non-comfortability or disrespect from one or more students. For Javier, it is a way to establish a good relationship and help students gain confidence in the classroom.

A proper interaction between teacher and students, in most cases, functions as an aid for them to have the control over the class. Nonetheless, many aspects should be considered in order to be establish rapport with students. Aspects such as the teachers' age, gender, or students' background emerged in this matter. In regards to this, I started to distinguish these teachers' beliefs about advantages and disadvantages of age and interaction. For these four teachers who are 20, 26, 28 and 58 years old, they express their concerns about age matters in classroom management.

Mariana is a 21 year-old language teacher and she expresses the problems she has to deal with because of her young age:

> Well, sometimes it is a little bit difficult for me to control them, to manage the classroom, but I think that is also kind of easier because we are like the same age. (Mariana-SSI8)

Mariana is the youngest teacher in the German area. Her age seems to be more of an advantage than a problem in terms of discipline and control. She recognizes the rare problems with discipline that she has to face for being the same age or younger than her students. The model of authority could be affected by teachers' age and the options they have is to ignore students when they are misbehaving. Even though this strategy appears to be effective for Mariana, literature suggests some other strategies to maintain a proper behavior among students. Such strategies could be positive, such as giving rewards, or negative like giving conditions or adding extra homework. Moreover, it is suggested to involve learners in the creation of class' rules and criteria. All these strategies could be used by novice teacher since they seem to be more concerned about discipline.

Mariana states that whenever her students do not listen to her directions, she does not insist and prefers to move on. Even though Mariana has exposed her beliefs about the negative aspects of age, she also finds the positive influence that this has on establishing rapport with students.

> They are not allowed to use cellphone but they do. And I tell them that they cannot use it but they keep doing. It is like, I won't tell them anymore… (Mariana-SSI20)

I think like we get along well, because of the age, because I see that, for example, my colleagues, they are older than me… and the relationship they have is like teacher and students. That's maybe because of the age, but I feel that it is different in my case. I feel I don't know if it's true but I believe it sometimes…it is like as if I were another student sometimes. I'm the teacher but that is not like: I'm the teacher and you do what I say. (Mariana-SSI9)

Starting her second semester of teaching, Marianna has realized the importance of having good interaction with her students. Although Marianna compares her own behavior with students' behavior, she says that she prefers to be seen as a friend rather than the authoritative figure who gives orders and waits for students to obey.

In teacher-student interaction, respect must be prevalent. Otherwise, there is a point in which the authoritative role might disappear and then the teacher needs to use different strategies to interact with students and gain their confidence with respect. In a similar stance, David shares his experience from a different view.

In my case, for example, I am 26 years old and my students are aged between the 16 and 30 years old and sometimes it is very difficult because you have students of your age who want to be your friends, who want to see you as an equal in the classroom and you are not. You are the teacher, and this affects a lot because it also means that you have to manage more effective forms to deal with them. (David-SSI7)

For David, there are other disadvantages in age rather than the lack of authority. There are experiences where the teacher-student interaction is so strong due to the age compatibility that students trespass the borders of friendship and start to treat the teacher as an "equal" figure. David suggests that with these acts respect to teachers disappears and then it gets hard to distinguish between the teacher and the others.

Nevertheless, David also shares his beliefs concerning the privileges of his age in managing the classroom environment. He identifies not only the negative aspects of sharing with his students but also the advantages of his age in the classroom. In the following extract, he talks about his beliefs in regards to this.

I've noticed that there are older teachers to whom, perhaps because of the age, students have a little bit more respect or even fear… however, I feel that when you are of an age closer to the students, like five or ten years older, you can ask certain things you would not do with another teacher, maybe to charge your cell phone or things that seem very basic but I also feel that sometimes that helps you form a bond of trust with them. (David-SSI8)

With this idea, David believes that it is essential to place himself in the students' position. He reflects on the idea of considering students' needs, by giving them the confidence to approach him. David attributes this student's confidence to his class' age range, and emphasizes the difference between his own and other teachers' situations where it is hard to distinguish between students' respect and fear from students towards the teacher.

In regards to age, Rebecca believes it is related to student motivation. In the case of Rebecca, who is a 58-year-old English teacher, she manifests a different concern about having a good relationship with students.

Perhaps I am not dynamic or young enough in my outlook to motivate large groups or younger students. (Rebecca-OQ7)

Rebecca believes that motivation and dynamism are a successful key in classroom management. She has built a mental connection between her own age and students' motivation, thinking that her age might not be adequate to work with younger age students (she teaches adults and young adults). Dynamic classes and motivation of teacher and students seems to be interconnected according to Rebecca. She associates her age with, perhaps, a more serious way of teaching that perhaps, younger students will not find academically attractive.

Based on their experiences, these teachers agree that the relationship with the students is essential; it enables them to have a more interactive environment. There are certain aspects that they believe are an advantage for creating this bond. For instance, some of the aspects that influence the interaction with their students are teachers' age, gender, and interest towards students' issues.

4.4 Teachers' Concept of Experience

  This research approaches two main areas: classroom management and teachers' beliefs. Although beliefs are closely attached to professional and personal experiences, they were not expected to be linked to classroom management. Notwithstanding, these participants provided their own concept of experience and related it to the teaching practice, more specifically, to classroom management. Javier, who has been teaching English for two years, considers himself a rather new teacher. Even when he compares his first teaching practices with the current ones, he explained the emotions he had during his first teaching experiences and remarked the difference between then and now:

    I don't know exactly what I did those days. It was like more of adrenaline. It was kind of testing the waters and I actually felt great after those three classes because at that time I felt like I was not ready but the students made me feel like I was like a good teacher and it was like a different. I was a different teacher. (Javier-SSI2)

  Naturally, Javier did not feel prepared to teach during his first teaching practices. He believed he needed to receive more preparation before he started teaching. This idea could be related to his belief that the teachers' role is to know everything about the subject and the fact that he has not concluded his studies yet. These first days of teaching for Javier were the opening to his career and even though he was not sure of what he was doing, students encouraged him to continue. Nowadays he feels and looks more comfortable on his teaching techniques.

  Beginning experiences in teaching are different. Some teachers might have struggled a lot during their first teaching practices. Even though Rebecca has gained more experience throughout these 22 years of teaching, she recognizes the challenges she faced when she started:

    I didn't think I was a natural teacher at all. I was kind of shy as a child and grown up. I didn't have any social goals really. When I first started teaching, it was really hard for me, so yeah, I have to develop more skills on how to do it. (Rebecca-SSI21)

  Rebecca offers a clear example of a negative experience in "testing the waters". She had to deal not only with students but also with her own personality. Rebecca uses the concept

of not being a "natural teacher", which is the way she felt perhaps for receiving preparation on history rather than language teaching. The only option Rebecca had in that moment was to develop skills to fix the problems which is part of experience in classroom management.

The next excerpt from Mariana seems to be concrete concerning her beliefs about the role of experience. There is not a script that says the exact amount of years that teachers have to have in the profession in order to succeed. Notwithstanding, Mariana beliefs that experience is essential for her professional development:

> Experience plays a big role, since it is through experience that we improve in anything we do. (Mariana-OQ2)

Despite being the youngest teacher, and having only eight months working as a German teacher, Mariana takes experience seriously regarding classroom management. The difference of beliefs between these four teachers arise from the different experiences they have lived from the beginning of their careers. Experience does not necessarily have to do with years of teaching, or age but more with the good and bad things that happen to us throughout our careers and how we solve them.

Teachers gain experience from the first day of classes and the beginnings of each teaching experience are different. Castellanos Jaimes (2013) refers to this development as a process of negotiation where teachers' beliefs are applied in complex circumstances and they are reconstructed or constructed based on the results. Rebecca, the most experienced teacher in this case study, shared the way her teaching experience was developed during her first teaching practices:

> Well, I think that when I started teaching it was useful for me to teach all those earlier levels. I taught for years and years. It was useful; it gives you confidence. It is like textbooks, you always find people who feel comfortable using a textbook for a year or two and then they feel restricted by it, and I think it is a natural process in the formation of teachers. (Rebecca-SSI24)

Rebecca provides an example of how she believes that teachers learn through the years of experience until they no longer want to continue with the routine. Rebecca agrees

with the effective development she had to pass through her first years of teaching. However, the nature of this process will lead teachers to a feeling of nonconformity with what they are doing or what they have to do, and later on to look for a change. Rebecca emphasizes that beginner teachers look for something to base their work on, for instance, a textbook.

Although beginner teachers are able to develop certain capabilities through the moments lived in the classroom, the feeling of "testing the waters" is more like a rough immersion into the profession. Mariana considers her short experience to be a weakness for her:

> Weaknesses I have a lot. Because I am studying, so I feel like I don't have enough experience, so it is very difficult when I don't have a background and sometimes I don't know how to manage certain situations or yeah… I think that's like a very big weakness, my experience. (Mariana-SSI10)

Mariana perhaps believes that her lack of experience is a weakness for her. Mariana also refers to her background as something she really needs in order to manage certain situations. In this concern, it would be interesting to know what teachers understand by "experience". She claims that everything she needs to know is in the BA classes that she has not received yet, and that she needs to conclude her studies in order to have more experience. When talking about the amount of experience she considers "enough" this is what she responded:

> How much experience, I don't know, it depends on everybody, but I just have like one semester, with this, two semesters that I'm teaching and I feel that I have learned a lot since the last semester. I think that I have improved in many techniques or my way of teaching but I still feel that I need more, I need more experience to be like a better teacher... I think the experience also depends, not only on time but what kind of context you have been teaching, because we all work in different contexts and I think it varies according to the background or the context. (Mariana-SSI6)

Finally, Mariana manifested her idea of "experience" as moments lived in teaching different students and contexts. Nevertheless, she still points at her low preparation as an

aspect related to classroom management. Each teacher has their own role model and this is built up based on what they see and belief about the teaching-learning process.

David believes that experience refers to the past actions he has lived as a student and now as a teacher. He makes it clear that if he can understand his students, classroom management becomes easier in certain forms:

> Often, as a teacher you forget details that you also dealt with. I put myself in their [the students'] place, obviously I also realize when they lie, or you realize that kind of things that you also lived, also you told the same lies… so I think of those points, and I really take them into account, much of my experience as a student, and starting from there I take a lot of ideas for my classroom. (David-SSI9)

The use of their own experiences as a student is a strategy for younger teachers. David believes that this strategy tends to be forgotten by teachers. Perhaps this could work better for beginners in the profession or when you are playing both roles in the same period of time (teacher and student). This reflections is evidence of Lortie's (1975) apprenticeship of observation theory. This theory refers to the duplication of previous teaching strategies that novice teachers perceived during their learning processes and they implement to their own lessons as teachers. To understand students' behavior makes classroom management easier and helps teachers to identify their weaknesses and strengths in order to start with improvements from that point.

The multiple notions that teachers have about the concept of experience is a relevant aspect for classroom management. These teachers exposed their own beliefs of what experience means to them. Moreover, this chapter reveals how their variety of beliefs concerning the same topic has been influenced by Borg's (2003) sources of cognition: prior language learning experiences, teacher education, and classroom practice. From the first class until their current stage, teachers have grown different skills and beliefs concerning the problems and solutions they have found along the road.

4.5 Conclusion

The beliefs shared from these four foreign language teachers who work in the same context appear to be built upon their experiences and knowledge about teaching. Some of

these teachers' beliefs regarding classroom management include: the uselessness of writing a formal lesson plan, their role as facilitators and guides, the use of L1 as a language of instruction, the preference for grouping work, and the experience that is required to provide a positive learning environment They discussed different aspects that they believe have an influence on their decisions for classroom management. Once these teachers identify their roles it is easier to construct an idea of what type of strategies they manage in their own language classrooms. They also assumed responsibility and at the same time recognized the importance of students' self-direction in learning. Mariana, Rebecca, David, and Javier work under the same conditions although their different backgrounds reflect some differences on classroom management.

Another significant strategy for teachers to improve the learning environment is having a good relationship with the learners. Getting to know more about their students, caring about their learning process, using the sense of humor, or putting themselves in their shoes are some of the strategies used by these teachers. In regards to discipline, the teachers' age is considered an important factor. Younger teachers need to find an in-between behavior and adult teachers need to update their sources in order to succeed on rapport.

Finally, the unexpected outcome points to the beliefs that teachers have about experience and how differently they define this concept. Experience as physical age, as past events, or as academic preparation is emphasized as a fundamental factor that influences their beliefs and hence their decisions in the classroom.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5 Introduction

The last chapter of this thesis provides the conclusions of the research and to present the findings of this research. In this chapter, I add a summary of the main findings and contributions that this project might offer for future researchers within the field. In addition, I include a discussion of the importance that this research might have and its implications for practical application.

5.1 Research Objectives

The objective of this thesis was to explore on the beliefs of four foreign language teachers working at the same language department of a public university in central Mexico. This qualitative research was carried out through an instrumental case study in order to analyze participants' beliefs as individual cases of a particular theme. The research question that was aimed to respond is:

What are the beliefs concerning classroom management of four foreign language teachers working at the Language Department of the University of Guanajuato (UG)?

This research aimed to explore the beliefs that motivate the decisions made by language teachers concerning their classroom management strategies. Another objective was to highlight the importance of teachers' decision-making within educational research in order understand the internal and external reasons behind their actions. In addition, it is necessary to underline the teachers' search for the conditions to create a positive learning environment.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

Classroom management refers to the multiple activities used by a language teacher to create a comfortable learning environment (Kunter et al., 2007). Most of the activities and decisions in the classroom made by these four teachers were built upon their beliefs and experiences. As claimed by Pajares (1992) and Borg (2006), teachers' beliefs are considered a strong influence for dealing with new or unknown situations. This section offers a brief summary of the findings that emerged from the data analysis and interpretation.

Beliefs concerning classroom management: the main variable for this area were teachers' educational background. Those teachers who did not receive an official teaching preparation (Rebecca and David) were more sensitive at describing what classroom management means. David refer to his students as the essence of his classroom management strategies whereas Rebecca defined classroom management as a process with long-term results. On the other hand, Javier and Mariana, who received the same teaching preparation had a practical view of the elements that compose this concept.

Beliefs concerning lesson preparation: the four participants disagreed with the need for writing an official lesson plan, although they believe that organization is vital for an effective teaching. At the same time, Rebecca and Mariana believe that considering learners' wants and needs is important for lesson preparation. They also perceived learners' non-attendance as an obstacle to carry out their activities properly. Timing skills are challenging for these four teachers, since they have to follow the program based on school's policies.

Beliefs concerning group arrangement: the teachers expressed their preferred grouping techniques within the classroom. However, in the cases of Mariana and Javier, not many of these strategies were perceived during their classroom observations. Rebecca and David claimed and demonstrated the benefits of using different interaction patterns during the lesson. The four participants concluded that using several grouping techniques is more practical and a strategy to save time in more complex activities.

Beliefs concerning the role of the teacher and the students: despite the theoretical controversy on this issue, these teachers expressed the reasons why they believe that learners' native language is necessary in the L2 classroom. Mariana uses the L1 as a means to save time on grammar explanations and also to create a natural connection with her students. Similar to this thought, Javier believes that using Spanish is helpful to communicate passion, although his major challenge is to avoid the over use of L1 in the L2 classroom. David and Rebecca presented a limited use of the L1 and decided not to express much of their beliefs about this topic.

Beliefs concerning the roles in the classroom: David believes that teachers' work should not only be to teach a subject but to make learners feel functional for society. He feels empathy for his students as he places himself on their position in order to understand their needs. Rebecca believes that her role is to facilitate learning although learners with different characteristics should find their role in the classroom by themselves. In a different view, Mariana considers herself as a major responsible for students' failure or success. She claims herself as responsible for providing her students with all the tools required for their effective learning. In the same line, Javier labels teachers as prepared to those who know everything about their subject, and lazy to those who let all the work to their students. For Javier, good teachers are those who demonstrate their knowledge in front of the group.

Beliefs concerning rapport with the students: this area contained more data since participants were more explicit on their strategies to create rapport with their students. To start with, Javier believes that his gender is an influence to gain students' confidence and respect. He states that it is difficult to control the group without being strict, then teachers need to find a middle point. Mariana realizes that it is necessary to have a good relationship with her students. Nonetheless, she describes some disadvantages of being a young teacher as she sometimes feel disrespected by her students and has difficulties with discipline. Yet, David says that her short age is a privilege because learners may feel more comfortable expressing their concerns to him. Finally, Rebecca believes that knowing her students' interests could be another way to motivate them and have a connection with them. She does not consider herself a dynamic teacher, thus she believes she could never work with younger students than what she works with.

Beliefs concerning teachers' concept of experience: evidently experience is a crucial element for professional growth. Nonetheless, these teachers present various notions of what experience is based on their beliefs. Javier and Rebecca refer to experience as the transformation he has lived throughout the years of teaching practice. Mariana reflects on her short experience and perceives it as a weakness as she sometimes needs more knowledge to solve classroom problems. Her concept of experience is synonym of subject-knowledge, yet she has not a clear idea of how much experience is needed to become a good teacher. Finally,

David describes experience from students' perspectives and uses her memories as a learner to decide on his management techniques.

In general, the main differences found in participants' beliefs seem to be between novice and more experienced teachers. Whereas less experienced teachers wish to be more prepared in aspects of discipline, the affective domain appears to be predominant for those teachers with more experience. On the other hand, professionally qualified teachers seem to be more comfortable in regards to their classroom management skills than unqualified language teachers.

The four teachers presented a balance between teacher and student-centered beliefs although their behaviors did not match in regards to this. That is to say that despite they mostly believed in learners' involvement within the class decisions, they seemed to give learners restricted voice to what should be done within the classroom. Nonetheless, learners did not show resistance to this situation, they quietly expected to receive all the answers form their teachers. Teachers' beliefs varied according to experience and professional education. Also, it was possible to observe that novice teachers appear to have an interventionist style of classroom management whereas experienced seem to be more interactionist based on the approaches discussed by Djigic and Stojiljkovic (2011).

In a cognitive perspective, teachers tend to be unaware of the beliefs' change and reconstruction that practice and experience give them in classroom management. Most of the times they seem to believe in something, but their behavior demonstrated something different that was confirmed through the reflection of their practices. Teachers may shape their teaching style and the decisions they make inside the classroom based on their beliefs. If a teacher is friendly, or distant, if a teacher prefers technology or traditional games, if a teacher speaks the entire class time or prefers to promote the interaction with and between the students. Those are decisions that might depend not only on the knowledge or the experience but on the beliefs and personality of the teacher.

5.3 Unexpected Findings and Contribution

Experience appeared in the data as a special theme that illustrated different beliefs regarding a single concept. The definitions for experience were related to subject-knowledge,

situations lived inside the classroom, skills development, and prior language learning experiences. The majority of the participants in this case study expressed their concern with "experience" interpreted as age and image towards their students. For instance, younger teachers claimed that their age could be an advantage when they wanted to have a good relationship with their students. Nonetheless, young teachers might also feel insecure about the area of discipline and group control. On the other hand, more experienced teachers expressed being comfortable in the areas of discipline although they expressed low self-confidence regarding their age and the impact that their image might have for the learning environment with younger learners.

One of the contributions to the field could be that not only the cognitive processes influence teachers' decision but also other aspects, such as self-confidence and self-esteem, could be linked to our behavior in the classroom. At the same time, emotions and beliefs play an important role in the activities that teachers perform because they both take part in the decision-making process and the solution of problems. A different contribution could be that beliefs are demonstrated unconsciously through our behaviors, although some beliefs do not coincide with actual behaviors in the classroom. This is likely due to the dynamic and ever-changing factors within the classroom. In the next section I discuss the impact of my conclusions and a description of the implications that represent a bridge between the theory and the practice based on my research findings.

5.4 Importance of the Study

Despite the fact that research has shown evidence of beliefs influencing teachers' decision-making processes, there are few related studies within the Mexican context. Mexican educational programs have limited or none consideration of teachers' beliefs as an influence for management strategies. Beliefs are mental constructs that are shaped through experiences which occur in multiple teaching contexts. Therefore, it is proposed that training and development programs should strongly consider the characteristics of their specific context (public, private, educational level, native, non-native teachers, etc.) before they contemplate beliefs in the curricula.

Also, this research points out the situation of those language teachers who entered the field without receiving previous preparation in this area. Those who became teachers throughout the practice. This thesis also contributes with more information about those who decided to change their professions (e.g., a biologist, or an accountant becoming a language teacher) or did not have any formal training on language education. This is also a frequent situation in the Mexican context where it is common to find uncertified language teachers who are hired just by speaking a foreign language proficiently. This case study aimed to explore what the beliefs of four teachers with "different" profiles might share within the same context. Finally, I would like to highlight that it is necessary to include teachers' voices and ideas within the educational programs of the Mexican context in order to improve the quality of teaching.

5.5 Practical Implications: From Theory to Practice

Whereas teachers' beliefs influence their behaviors, such behaviors simultaneously produce a cyclical effect on learners' performance that again may affect teachers' beliefs. These are behaviors involved in a learning environment. In regards to the practical implications of this research, I suggest three forms of application for this research. My proposal is to focus on the importance of teachers' beliefs about the positive and negative classroom management strategies. First, I suggest the inclusion of reflective practices within the academic programs so teachers can have introspective analysis about their own classroom performance. The second suggestion includes a peer reflection of the practice, where teachers from the same context can share their beliefs about what they are doing in their classroom and how helpful have these actions been for them. Finally, my third suggestion is that within the teacher preparation programs there should be a sharing community where teachers with different backgrounds come and talk about their teaching experiences and beliefs with novice teachers. The aim of this third proposal is that not only novice teachers but also teachers with different backgrounds can create awareness of their own teaching beliefs and practices. Based on this awareness, it might be possible to change some held beliefs that have had a negative influence on their teaching styles and consequently they may improve the learning environment.

5.6 Research Limitations

Since qualitative research involves the examination of subjective areas in people's interactions there were several limitations that emerged during the research process and that must be considered for future researchers. Time administration is important for this type of data collection process. The amount of observations could be considered a weakness in this research since there was a lack of time to continue. Another important limitation was the number of the participants because other teachers were reluctant to be observed in class. Finally, working with beliefs is challenging since they are interpreted from human behavior which varies according to numerous reasons such as mood, and health, to mention some.

5.7 Recommendations for Further Research

This research is directed to those teachers who are concerned with the management and engagement of their lessons. This exploratory research could also be carried out through an action research method. Likewise, ethnographic studies could shed light on other practical results in educational research and, of course, they could also include the participation of all the members that encompass the learning environment (teachers and students). Furthermore, the cognitive and practical dimensions of this research make it an ideal theme to be explored in different teaching contexts. I encourage future researchers to explore teachers' beliefs about classroom management should be analyzed within the different educational levels (elementary, middle school, high school, and etcetera) where a foreign language is learned. Also, the profile of different teachers' backgrounds might be an influence on the beliefs that they sustain. Therefore, another recommendation is to use case studies focusing on a homogeneous profile in their participants. To conclude with this section, my last recommendation would be to do explore on the beliefs that have a negative impact on teachers' decisions. Also, it would be important to analyze students' beliefs about classroom management to have a different perspective of this issue.

To conclude this thesis, teacher preparation programs and teacher professional development courses should consider a major emphasis on teachers' beliefs due to their impact in the practice. The beliefs shared by these four foreign language teachers seem to be diverse despite the fact that they share the same work context. Hopefully this research might have some contributions for researchers who are interested on any of the two dimensions that

I looked at (the elements that encompass classroom management and teachers' beliefs in the decision-making process). The target goal in this research is to understand the wide variability of teaching beliefs and behaviors in order to raise awareness on the practitioners' performance and how it influences the learning environment. Including reflection into our teaching practice should be done frequently as an interest to improve on everything we do, avoiding reflection might be a signal of arrogance and disinterest for our job. Teachers should always keep their eyes and mind open to receive the constant feedback from their colleagues, administrative systems, but especially from their own students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Profiling Questionnaire.

The following questions are part of the MA's research project *"A case study on foreign language teachers' beliefs about classroom management in a large public university of Guanajuato, Mexico"*. Information given will be gathered anonymously. Feel free to be explicit on your answers.

What is your educational background?

How long have you been a foreign language teacher?

Where do you work currently?

Is your school's system private or public?

What level of language are you teaching?

What are your students' ages? (average)

How many hours a day do you teach?

Appendix 2. Open Questionnaire: Beliefs About Classroom Management.

Fill in the gaps with your personal information.   Then, answer the following questions in the sheets of paper provided by the applicator.

Age_____ Gender_____ Nationality____ Target language _____

1 How would you define classroom management?

2 What are your beliefs as a teacher concerning classroom management?

3 What strategies do you use for classroom management?

4 What are the teachers' roles concerning classroom management?

Mariana-SSI10

I -Ok, that's nice. Well, the second question is. What are your weaknesses and strengths as a teacher?

> P -W*eaknesses I have a lot, because I am studying so I feel like I don't have enough experience so it is like very difficult when I don't have like a background and sometimes I don't know how to manage certain situations or yeah like, I think that's like a very big weakness, my experience.* And strengths, maybe the fact that I'm studying in this B.A. is like I have a little bit of theory and I can support or get some support from that and maybe the age, yes because as I have told you before, they feel comfortable with me because they are… yeah because of the age.

Javier-SSI18

I - Ok, good, now, you said that you never prepare a lesson plan because you don't like it.
> P -I hate them

I - Ok, was there a time where you actually used it?
> *P - Never. I used it only for those make up, the substituting days, those three days I had to make a lesson plan, not because I wanted to, but because the teacher told me to that she wanted to see my lesson plan before I actually implemented it… and I don't know where the hate comes from, I guess I'm a bit lazy but I just don't see it, if I already have it in my mind, I know the activities, I already printed out the activities, why do I want to kind of transfer it into paper? So, I think is just bit more of a waste of time, the detailed lesson plans, if it's just like writing all: "I'm going to teach the present continuous, first activity is just this game.." it's ok, but if it is a long the ones we have to do for the B.A. that we have to really explain the context and all the things I think is a waste of time.*

Rebecca-SSI15

I - What was the experience? Or how much experience did you have at that time?

P - Ehm… well, it's kind of interesting because one of the things that I am aware of is that some of the things you do that might seem difficult at that time, *you are planting seeds that you weren't aware you were planting, like those kids that I taught in that prepa, I see them around the town now that they are adults, they are like AH YOUR CLASS WAS GREAT, WE REALLY ENJOYED YOUR CLASS but at the time I was feeling like you know like beating my head against the wall but they obviously, some things take time to process…* I feel that as language teacher we have the opportunity to be in contact with all kinds of discussions and bring all kinds of different knowledge into the classroom and is a matter of balancing and not aliening it them by bringing things like you know I'm a historian for example, I love history but I'm perfectly away I don't go like HEY and then start talking about history so I try to sneak things in in a way that is fun and it might have some kind of logic or effect is not necessarily related to language, I think, I see the whole cultural thing connected to language, I don't separate it in my mind.

David-SSI18

I - Ok, bueno, cuál crees tú que es la influencia de la edad de un maestro para el manejo de una clase?

P - Tiene mucho que ver porque *en mi caso por ejemplo tengo 26 años y mis alumnos oscilan entre los 16 y los 30 y de repente es muy difícil porque te encuentras alumnos de tu edad que quieren ser tus amigos, que quieren verte como un igual que dentro del salón de clase no lo eres porque a fin de cuentas eres el profesor pero eso afecta mucho porque también implica que tienes que manejar de una manera más eficaz el trato con ellos. Me he dado cuenta que hay profesores mayores a los cuales tal vez por la edad les tengan un poquito más de respeto o hasta miedo y prefieren hacer cierto tipo de cosas, en cambio yo creo que sienten que cuando eres de una edad cercana, tal vez 5 o 10 años, te pueden preguntar ciertas cosas que no harían con otro profesor. Tal vez poner a cargar su celular o cosas que parecen muy básicas pero también yo siento que a veces eso te ayuda a formar un lazo de confianza con ellos.*

Appendix 4. Selected Excerpts from Ethnographic Field Notes.

Excerpt 1 (20 mins / 1.15hr)

DATE: 10/03/16	GERMAN CLASS	MARIANNA AND AID TEACHER	14 STUDENTS: 7 FEMALE AND 7 MALE	TV, PROJECTOR, WHITE BOARD, POSTERS WITH TARGET LANGUAGE, THREE LINES OF TABLES, APPROXIMATELY 25 CHAIRS

TIME	ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDNOTES	REFLECTION
3:17	The head teacher (Marianna) arrives to the classroom. And makes a joke about the noise they are doing. Students laugh. Everything In the target language.	Establishing rapport w/ sts
3:18	Marianna greets as she thanks the aid teacher and puts her material on the desk. Marianna continues with the rest of the class, aid teacher sits down.	
3:18	Marianna stands up in front of the students and asks about the exam in L1 "¿Como estuvo el examen?	Using L1 to elicit information not relevant in the class
3:19	Students respond all at the same time. Marianna only listen and repeats what some of them said, switches to the target language and starts with the class.	
3:19	Marianna starts by asking students a specific question regarding the last topic they checked in class. By calling their names (she knows all of her students' names), she asks to each one of her	Establishing rapport (knowing their names)
3:19	students the same question in the target language (German)	
3:20	Marianna is preparing her book. Students open their book without receiving the instruction.	Discipline and order
3:21	Some of the students are still very noisy, speaking and telling jokes in the L1. Teacher ignores them until they start to work.	
3:21	Mariana asks one of her students to read the instructions of an activity in the book. When the other students listened to their classmate's name, they pay attention and try to find out what she is reading from the book.	

Excerpt 2 (20 mins / 1.15 hr)

10/04/2016	ENGLISH CLASS	JAVIER	12 Students: 8 female, 4 male.	TV, PROJECTOR, WHITEBOARD, BLACK BOARD, POSTERS WITH THE TARGET LANGUAGE ON THE WALL.
TIME	**ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDNOTES**			**REFLECTION**
5:50	The teacher arrives to the classroom, puts his material on the desk and separates the worksheets in order of sequence. Students start arriving to the classroom.			
5:51	Teacher greets all the students and starts by establishing the objective of the class (first conditional review).			RAPPORT AND OBJECTIVES
5:51	Teacher starts to write some examples on the board. Students are copying the examples in their notebooks.			
5:52	The teacher is reading the examples at loud as he writes them on the board.			USES OF L1
5:52	He starts explaining each example with circumlocution.			
5:53	When students do not seem to understand, he uses Spanish (L1) and switches back to English.			
5:55	Students are quiet paying attention to what the teacher is explaining, they are also taking notes.			
6:00	Teacher jokes occasionally during his explanation. He uses funny examples or real life examples and catches students' attention.			RAPPORT
6:03	One of the students arrives late to the class and sneaks in quietly. Teacher ignores him and continues with the class.			
6:03				
6:05	There is a small pause, teacher walks to his desk to pick up some flashcards. He shows the flash cards to his students and gives instructions for a domino game.			GROUPING
6:05	Teacher then gives students a number, they have to join the classmates with the same number and make teams.			
6:06	Students stand up and start looking for their matches. They sit together with their teammates.			
6:06	During this process students start making noise, play and joke in Spanish. Teacher is on his desk, he doesn't pay attention until they are in teams. Then he gives them the material to play domino.			DISCIPLINE AND ORDER
6:07				
6:07	Teacher walks around the teams to monitor. Students are working and speaking Spanish.			
6:07	The teacher goes to the front of the class and asks for their attention to clarify instructions. Each step is explained first in English and then in Spanish.			USES OF L1
6:08	Teacher approaches each team. Some students have doubts and he answers in Spanish, then continues with a different team.			RAPPORT
6:08	Teacher stays with one team repeating instructions. He uses Spanish for some parts of the instructions then switches to English again.			
6:09	Teacher keeps walking around the teams. Teacher approaches a particular team and tells a joke, students laugh and he keeps walking around.			
6:09				
6:09				

6:10	One of the teams is distracted, teacher approaches and asks what they are doing. They continue working. Teacher walks around the other teams.	
6:10	Another team rises hand and the teacher goes to them. They ask for vocabulary, the teacher uses mimics to explain the word, students laugh. Teacher asks all students if they almost finish. Nobody answers. Teams start getting loud and teacher starts giving instructions for the next activity without referring to the domino game. Students take out a copy that the teacher gave them last class. Teacher starts reading the paper at loud. Students follow the reading in silence. After each sentence the teacher reads, he translates it into Spanish. Students are just listening.	USES OF L1

Excerpt 3 (20mins / 1.15 hr)

10/03/2016	French Class	David	8 students: 5 female and 3 male.	TV, PROJECTOR, WHITE BOARD, POSTERS WITH TARGET LANGUAGE, THREE LINES OF TABLES, APPROXIMATELY 25 CHAIRS
TIME	ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDNOTES			REFLECTION
6:59	Teacher is early in the classroom. He goes out to receive his students. He welcomes his students and goes outside			RAPPORT
7:00	the classroom again to see if he finds more. There are 8 students in the classroom when he decides to start. He sits on his desk and calls one of the students to come to his desk. The student goes with his notebook.			
7:03	Teacher is checking and correcting student's notes. Teacher speaks at lout. The rest of the students are			
7:04	waiting for the class to start. They have their notebooks and books ready.			
7:06	Some students take their cel phones out and start playing while the teacher is talking with this particular student			
7:06	on his desk.			Uses of L1
	The student sits down and then a different student asks a question to the teacher in L1 (Spanish) "¿Como se dice Buenos dias en frances?. Teacher answers sitting behind			
7:08	his desk using L1 too.			
	Teacher calls attendance.			RAPPORT
	Teacher asks students to start with their presentations.			
7:10	Students prepare their material for the presentation. Teacher points at one of the students and calls her name "Alejandra". She passes to the front with a plan of a house drawn in a cupboard. This student asks help from			
7:12	one of her classmates to hold the cupboard while she gives the presentation.			
	The student starts the presentation, she looks really nervous. Teacher corrects every mistake at the moment.			
7:14	Student starts to hesitate and speaks less and less. Teacher is speaking louder and louder to her. During the presentation the teacher also asks questions. Everything is in the target language.			GROUPING
7:16	Student doesn't want to speak anymore. Teacher asks her to sit down. Teacher instructs the group to make			
7:17	pairs or trios and give their presentations in private. Everybody starts to work.			MONITORING
7:17	The teacher starts walking around the pairs/ trios to monitor their work. Students take turns to present their cupboards.			
	During their presentations, the teacher listens to some of the students speaking in their L1. He asks all of the students to please use the target language (French).			
	One of the students rises his hand. The teacher approaches him. At the same time, other student asks for			
7:18	the meaning of a word, teacher responds in L1 and keeps paying attention to the first student.			USES OF L1

7:19 7:20	Teacher keeps walking around. One of the students asks another question. Teacher decides to call everybody's attention to respond this question for all, he uses the board. Then students continue working. Students are helping each other to solve their doubts using L1 when they see that the teacher is busy with another team. Students are still giving their private presentations in pairs/trios. Teacher asks if they have finished. Nobody responds. Teacher stands up in front of the class and starts talking about some vocabulary related to the class topic (parts of the house). Teacher explains vocabulary in Spanish (translation).	AUTONOMY

Excerpt 4 (20 mins / 1.15 hr)

10/ 03/ 16	ENGLISH CLASS	REBECCA	6 STUDENTS: ALL FEMALE	TV, PROJECTOR, WHITE BOARD, POSTERS WITH TARGET LANGUAGE, INDIVIDUAL CHAIRS WITH TABLE, APPROXIMATELY 25 CHAIRS
TIME	ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD NOTES			REFLECTION
5:45	Students are in the classroom waiting for the teacher.			
6:00	Rebecca arrived to the classroom running and greeting students as she walked towards her desk.			
6:01	She put her bag on the desk as she apologized for being late. Students were quiet.			TEACHER'S POSITION
6:01	Teacher stands up in front of the class and asks about their weekend before she starts with the class.			RAPPORT
6:02				
6:02	Some students respond softly. One of the students starts talking about her weekend and the experience within the Cervantino's opening.			
6:02				
6:03	Teacher asks follow up questions and then looks at the other students. The rest of the class was paying attention to their conversation.			
6:03				
6:04	The teacher shares her weekend experience and everybody pays attention quietly.			
6:06	The teacher then walks towards her desk again and organizes her material.			
6:06	She states the objective of the class explaining that it is a review from last week's class.			
6:07	Students take their books out and open it in the page that the teacher indicates. As they open their books, the teacher is still making jokes about the Cervantino and her busy life. After that, teacher gives suggestions to tell jokes in English.			GROUP WORK
6:07				
6:08	Students are quiet paying attention to everything she says.			GROUPING
6:08	Teacher starts reading the instructions of book's activity.			
6:08	Then one of the students reads the first question and all of the group responds at loud.			
6:09	They confirm the correct answer and explain why.			TEACHER'S POSITION
6:09	Then the teacher asks students to continue responding the other questions in pairs.			
6:09	While the students respond, the teacher goes to her desk and keeps organizing her material.			
6:09	Teacher approaches students. They are sitting in the back of the classroom, teacher stands in the middle of the classroom to be closer.			
6:10	Students are still answering. One of them asks for the meaning of "robber", teacher answers in the target language (English) "somebody who robs". Student continues working with her partner.			
6:10				
6:10	Everybody is quiet, the teacher starts reading the questions too.			GROUPING

6:12 6:15	Teacher receives a phone call, she runs to pick up her phone outside the classroom. Students keep working without problem. Teacher comes back and apologizes again. Students start discussing and comparing answers in English before they have finished. Teacher goes back to the desk. Teacher interrupts students by asking them if they are done. Nobody responds, they are still working. Teacher approaches students (monitoring their work). Students keep working.	

Appendix 5. Consent Form.

DATE: _____

I, _____, give my permission to LEDLI. Ma. Del Rosario García Hernández to use information that will be gathered from the interview and questionnaire for research use in her MA's studies at the University of Guanajuato (UG). I have also been notified that this information will be used purely for research and is confidential. This research is concerned with *"**A case study on foreign language teachers' beliefs about classroom management in a large public university of Guanajuato, Mexico"**.* If I preferred to remain anonymous, I will check the below statement for this. If this is the case, I give my consent.

Signature:

I would like to remain anonymous: YES   NO