The Way Student-Teachers Construct Their Identity at School

La construcción de la identidad del maestro practicante en la escuela

Diana Mayerly Díaz Benavides
dimayediaz17@hotmail.com
Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia

The incorporation of reflective practices in the arena of education has been discussed in different studies in order to understand the development of *practitioners* in a target setting. This article reports on a study aimed at describing the way ten foreign language student-teachers from a public university in Colombia construct their identity from their experiences at school. By analyzing student-teachers' reflections, diaries, and the participants' advisor observations during her visits to schools, the researcher found that once immersed at school, student-teachers evolve in interactions with the realities that the context offers, negotiate with it and then become independent decision makers.

Key words: Identity, reflection, student-teacher, teachers' identity

La incorporación de la reflexión en la práctica ha sido considerada en el campo de la educación como un medio para comprender el desenvolvimiento de los practicantes en un contexto determinado. En este artículo se reporta un estudio que tiene por objetivo describir la forma en que 10 maestros practicantes de un programa de lenguas extranjeras de una universidad pública de Colombia, manifiestan su identidad a partir de las experiencias que viven en la escuela. Reflexiones provenientes de los diarios de los maestros practicantes, reflexiones dialógicas y las observaciones del asesor durante las visitas a la escuela, demuestran que una vez los maestros practicantes se sumergen en el contexto escolar, se adhieren a su cultura e interactúan con ésta para tomar sus propias decisiones.

Palabras clave: identidad, identidad del maestro, maestro practicante, reflexión

Introduction

In my two years' experience as a foreign language advisor of the final practicum, I have focused my attention on the way student-teachers get involved at school and the positions they assume as new members of the school where they develop their practicum. This position

provided me with an illustration of school contexts and the universes they represent as *identity shapers.*

School members' relations, school policies, inclusion, bullying, violence, students' lives, conflicts, and drugs, among others issues, are situations that embody the heterogeneity of school contexts that student-teachers face in the beginning of their career. Thus, during the practicum, they are to respond to the diversity each school presents and to learn from it. Bengtsson (1995) asserts that within work contexts, reflection becomes an acknowledged way for student-teachers to learn about their practice and about themselves, which may be supported by advisors in their attempt to prepare prospective teachers to meet the demands of the school and the society (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2010).

Guided by the assumption that identity is a social phenomenon that evolves as a result of interaction with others (Wenger, 1998), a teacher's identity is shaped and reshaped by these interactions with others in various professional contexts (Olsen, 2008). From this standpoint, the classroom may represent the context where student-teachers' identity emerges since much of the teacher's classroom life involves decision making and acting in response to students' needs (Alsup, 2005). Thus student-teachers' actions and decisions made during the day to day exchanges at school portray who they are as teachers.

Bearing in mind the idea of identity as a dynamic process that requires an interpretation in relation to the other, one's identity is continually informed, formed and reformed through self-evaluation (Cooper & Olson, 1996). In this regard, to understand student-teachers' development at school, a reflective cycle served as a means to understand student-teachers' experiences at school and the identity they constructed through them. Systematic examination of their teaching helps student-teachers understand their shifting self-development (Freese, 2006; Korthagen, 2005).

Taking into consideration the close connection between reflection and identity development (Bartlett, 1990; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2010; Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Korthagen, 2005; Schön, 1982; Viáfara, 2005; Walkington, 2005; Wallace, 1991), in this report I will describe my understandings of the way ten student-teachers constructed their identity at school by means of DOES, a cycle of reflection named after the five letters of each phase: Describing target situations, Outline main aspects (actions, intentions, challenges), Evaluation of the situation (self-peer), and Searching possible alternatives for future challenges.

Literature Review

The concept of identity serves as a pivot between the social and the individual and each can be taken in relation to the other (Wenger, 1998). To some extent, this view has been

considered by some authors such as Rogoff (as cited in Barton & Tusting, 2005), who asserts that one's identity is associated with one's participation in, and involvement with, a particular community rather than with the traditional fixed categories that consist of race, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity. Similarly, Mead (1934) draws on the notion that the *self* is a social emergent which has a development in the process of social experience and activity. As a consequence, our identity is strongly dependent on the type of environment one lives, the various meanings people can attach to themselves, or the meanings attributed by others (Beijaard, 1995). From a different perspective, Jenkins (1996) explains the existence of various versions of an identity which depends on the experiences one lives, which Dubar (as cited in Lopes & Tormenta, 2010) describes as "forms of identity" resulting from the interactions between the person and the institutional, social, and organizational structure. These identities are available by institutional contexts of schooling (Bullough, 2005).

One of the factors that contribute to the construction of teachers' self-image is linked to the interaction and collaboration with cooperating teachers and supervisors (Castellanos, 2004). In this sense, teachers' identity evolves through interaction with the realities of the school or place where the professional is located (Coldron & Smith as cited in Boreham & Gray, 2011). Therefore, this identity is generally recognized as multifaceted and constantly shifting because teachers are influenced by the contexts that surround them (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006).

In the same way, regarding teaching as a practice that involves the self, who at the same time can adopt different positions within the same place (Day & Kington as cited in Chong, Low, & Goh, 2011), demands that a teacher may not only understand how to act but also how to be as a teacher (Sachs, 2005). This serious thinking of the experiences teachers encounter during their practicum makes the process of teaching complicated and intense (Danielewicz, 2001). At this level, *reflective teaching* can be an opportunity to consider teaching thoughtfully, analytically, and objectively (Cruickshank & Applegate as cited in Bartlett, 1990), and stands as the appropriate environment to understand the course of the histories student-teachers knit around the classrooms and which gradually permeates the patterns of identity.

Reflective Teaching and Teachers' Identity

Teaching as pedagogy, becomes a quest, a research endeavor, which can be improved best through addressing both everyday experiences and the societal events that influence them (Bartlett, 1990).

Understanding teaching as a social practice signifies that teaching is an inherited social profession that is dependent upon formative interaction between teachers and students. Hence, this profession "is essentially an interactive process among a group of people learning in a social setting usually described as the 'classroom'" (Bartlett, 1990, p. 204). The interaction

resulting from this practice involves the connection between languages and identities that are correlated in a specific context. Beyond a linguistic system, language is part of the social practice in which experiences are organized and identities negotiated (Norton, 2008).

Based on that idea, we can say student-teachers portray their identity through the actions and decisions they make at school as a result of their day to day interactions with the context. The interpretation of patterns that emerge cannot be interpreted in an accelerated way, but in a self-conscious and sequenced manner; nevertheless, "students need to be invited to participate in [reflective] discussions about themes generated from their own realities" (Niño, 2007, p. 32).

Cycles of reflection to guide students' thinking skills. Research studies about professional development have focused their attention on models of reflection that relate to a student-teacher's mission and identity (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Schön, 1982; Wallace, 1991). From this perspective, development courses in teacher education have been focused on the creation of models of reflection such as the ALACT, named after the five letters (Action, Looking back on the action, Awareness of essential aspects, Creating alternative methods of action, and Trial) to promote reflective competence in professionals (Korthagen, 2005). In this sense, models of reflection structure student-teachers' thoughts about their experiences at school and transform their thoughts into serious reflections that lead to actions.

DOES: Towards the understanding of teachers' identity. The demand for the solution of a perplexity is the "steadying and guiding factor in the entire process of reflection" (Dewey, 1910, p. 11). Based on the previous assumption, authors such as Korthagen and Vasalos (2005), Schön (1982), and Wallace (1991) shared the idea of structuring thoughts in a sequence of phases that allow the person to describe, analyze, evaluate, and postulate alternatives of a target situation.

Wallace (1991) proposed a reflective cycle for teacher education with the purpose of helping professionals to transform negative situations into positives ones. Similarly, Schön (1982) coined the idea of structuring reflection within an *organizational system* consisting of two stages: in-action (while doing something) and on-action (after doing it). Conversely, Wallace's and Schön's cycles of reflection share their understanding of using such strategy as a way to acquire reflective skills and provoke changes. However, Wallace's cycle seeks to change problematic situations into positive ones while Schön's cycle explains that through reflection, practitioners make sense of their experiences and learn from them. The previous ideas about the use of reflection in professional development are described in Table 1.

For this particular study, I manifest my affinity with the idea of reflection stated by Dewey (1910) and Freire (1970) and the way it can be structured and guided as explained by Korthagen (2005) and Schön (1982). In this sense, DOES (Gibbs, 1988; Korthagen &

Vasalos, 2005; Schön, 1982; Wallace, 1991) served as a guide for student-teachers to describe a situation, analyze, evaluate and propose new alternatives for similar future challenges.

Table 1. Contrasting the Idea of Reflection in Reflective Cycles

| Author	Reflection
Dewey, 1910	Become aware of actions—start by preoccupations that are transformed into coherent experiences.
Schön 1982	Reflection in/on-action as a way of knowing.
Freire, 1970	Reflection as the critical consciousness to interrogate social structures and provoke changes (problem posing method).
Gibbs, 1988; Korthagen and Vasalos, 2005; Wallace, 1991	Reflection as a systematic strategy to make sense of previous experiences and find a solution.

At this point, my understanding of identity as a social process built through interaction with a community allowed me to use DOES as a means to interpret the development of student-teachers at school from their own experiences. Reflection needs to be part of the daily routine not only of pre-service teachers, but also of in-service teachers (Álvarez, 2005).

Pedagogical Intervention

The intervention of this research is an adaptation of the ALACT (see Figure 1). However, in this study DOES served as a means to initiate student-teachers' reflections guided by a question—posed by the advisor—based on observations during school visits or, in some cases, on preoccupations student-teachers encountered at school. Thus, one reflective session per week was held for thirteen weeks making a total of thirteen sessions. Each meeting lasted two hours. The settings were the university, the schools, or places near the university or the students' homes.

The following is an explanation of each phase:

First phase: Describing the situation. To initiate a dialogue through the cycle, the advisor formulated a question to encourage students to speak about previous visits to schools
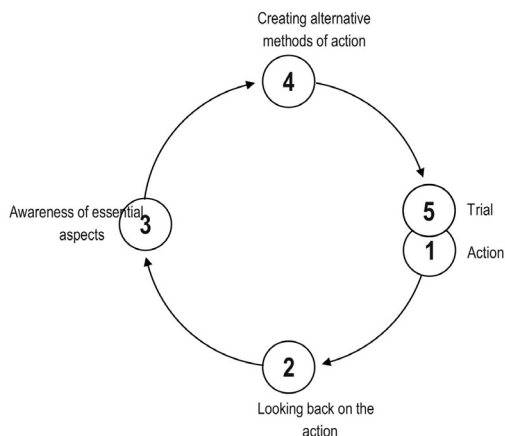
The ALACT Model of Reflection (Korthagen, 2005)

DOES (Díaz, 2012)
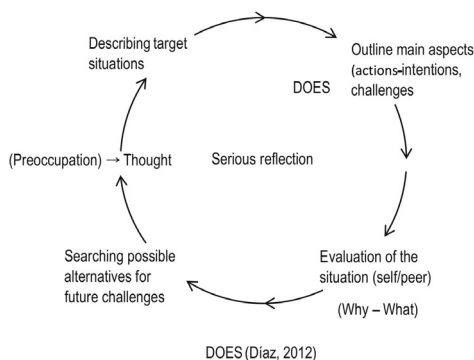
Figure 1. Adaptation of the ALACT Model of Reflection

or experiences they endured. These questions were general and simple such as: How was your week? / Why was that child not participating in your class? Based on Freire's (1970) problem-posing approach, Wallerstein (1983) states that teachers cannot just communicate information but "assume the role of asking questions of students and of expecting students to ask questions of us" (p. 191). In addition, the same author suggests that to develop thinking skills, we start by a simple descriptive level, asking students to describe people places or events.

Second phase: Outlining specific aspects, intentions, decisions. In the second phase of DOES, the use of questions such as: Why did you call the principal, instead of trying to control the situation? / What do you think about that decision? These questions encouraged students to be conscious of their previous actions, evaluate them and move on to the next phase. The process of interpretation of the social structures in which a teacher develops his/her practicum and becomes aware of the realities he/she faces at school is denominated *critical thinking* (Freire, 1970).

Third phase: Evaluation. In this phase and after describing the target situations, the advisor, by asking the members of the group questions such as: What do you think about that? / What is your opinion about that decision? encouraged students to assess the attitudes that framed the situations and re-evaluate their previous actions based on their understanding of their responsibilities.

At this point, they realized that being a teacher is an art; that gifted teachers exist, but that accepting and acknowledging their failures to propose changes is a matter for true professionals. Therefore, when students became aware of their conscious or subconscious actions, they accepted the responsibility of the consequences and learned from them. By evaluating their actions, students moved forward to the next phase.

Fourth phase: Searching possible alternatives for future changes. After describing the situation and evaluating the actions that surrounded it, students were encouraged to propose alternatives to the situations they or their peers experienced. We as teachers have to initiate *practitioners* in a reflective experience in which they become increasingly aware of their realities at school and become independent searchers of alternatives (Díaz, 2012). Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) state that core *reflections* do not entail delving into a person's private life, but rather support student-teachers' reflection on practical situations they are confronted with.

Given the methodological nature of reflection, DOES guided this study by showing students transformations through each phase. In this respect, the cycle established the connection between the contexts where student-teachers developed their practicum and their understanding of it, which gave me a better picture of the realities student-teachers had to face.

Figure 2 shows the way student-teachers moved through each phase of DOES and gained a better understanding of their realities at school.

Research Design

The research accounts for a descriptive case study looking to understand the identity formation of a particular group of student-teachers through a cyclical model of reflection denominated DOES.
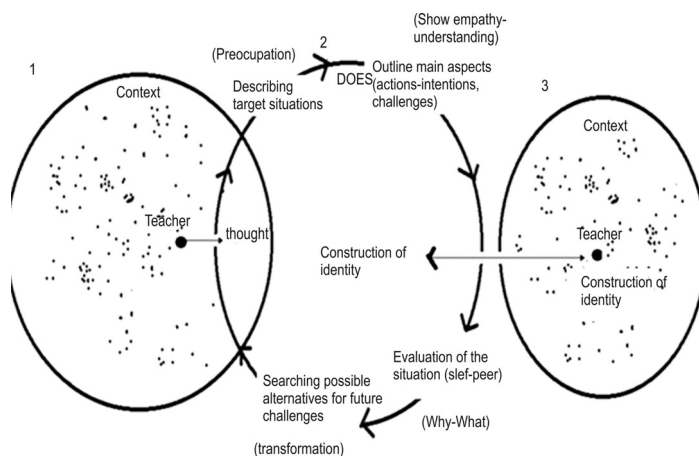
Figure 2. Student-Teachers' Identity Construction: Thought-Reflection-Transformation

Research Questions

1. How do student-teachers portray their identity through a DOES cycle of reflection?

2. What is the role of the school in student-teachers' identity construction?

Setting and Participants

The population selected for this study was composed of ten student-teachers who belong to the foreign languages program of a public university in Colombia. The group was comprised nine females and one male with ages ranging from 21 to 25 years old. The criteria for selection were the students' willingness to attend and participate in each session of reflection.

Instruments

Group dialogues. The discussions that were generated by students teachers and the advisor through the cycle of reflection took the shape of the dialogues generated by their narratives about their school experiences. Freeman (1998) asserts that discussions are opportunities to engage in and exchange ideas. However, a dialogue implies more that the exchange of ideas; it also implies the *liberation* of thoughts and understandings that are significant for the people who share similar experiences. Dialogue imposes itself as the way with which they achieve significance as human beings (Freire, 1970).

Student-teachers' diaries. As a requirement of the practicum, student-teachers must complete a diary in which they record weekly their thoughts, understandings, interpretations or descriptions of the day to day situations that they experience during the practice. At the beginning, the habit of writing about their experiences at school did not represent a valuable tool in the student-teachers' professional life; however, throughout the implementation of the cycle of reflection, students started to verbalize their practices in their diaries.

Participant observation. The observations were based on actions and decisions made by student-teachers in the classroom. These observations were transcribed in brief notes that described my perception as the advisor of each situation. This technique was based on Richards' (2011) procedures to collect data depending on the focus observation.

Data Gathering and Analysis

The extracts that are going to be analyzed in this section are the results of student-teachers' reflections throughout the cycle, student-teachers' diaries, and the advisor's observations. The following are the codes used to identify the source from which the information was taken: S=Session, P=Paragraph, Di=Diary. Next, the different categories into which the analysis was divided are explained in detail.

Adhesion to the reality. The feeling of dependency manifested by the student-teachers throughout the cycle of reflection is a feeling that Freire (1970) denominates as "adhesion to the reality," which means that when a person is in contact with a community, s/he starts to follow what others do and adopt dependent positions in school context immersion.

This state of perplexity corresponds to the initial stage of the way student-teachers portrayed their identity in the interaction with the new context:

> When I arrived to the classroom, the teacher wasn't there, she was with other students, I thought it was going to be easier to handle ten students but I was wrong, they didn't want to pay attention to the class, they were screaming and running everywhere, it was very frustrating for me because I didn't know what to do, so I decided to go and call the principal. (S1, P1, Sandy)[1]

Once immersed at school, student-teachers showed insecurity and made the decision of adhering to others to survive:

> I don't want to start the class without the teacher, I want her to stay with me more time in class. (S1, P4, Diana)

Blase (1988, p. 127) explains the "phenomenology of political vulnerability" as experienced by teachers. He observed that as this experienced vulnerability grew, teachers

---

[1] Participants' names have been changed to protect their identities.

developed several protective coping strategies that resulted in conservative micro-political actions aimed at preserving the status quo. In other words, student-teachers easily adopted strategies used by their mentors to cope with the challenges they faced.

> At school, teachers follow a routine for the class, if I do something different it does not work. (Di, P12, Angy)

> Teachers use a tambouring and sing songs in order to control discipline, and it works. (S2, P3, Merriam)[2]

At first sight, the previous experiences described by students through the cycle allowed me to think that they were not ready to assume their role as teachers. Conversely, those and other strategies observed during my visits such as yelling, asking the mentor teacher for help to manage a class, give a negative mark to misbehaving students or singing songs to control discipline were used by student-teachers to handle particular situations and showed patterns of their identity at school. However, in this initial stage, the one pole, which represents the position of the student-teachers confronting the school culture, "aspires not to liberation, but to identification with its opposite pole" [the structure] (Freire, 1970, p. 4). As a result, student-teachers felt in tune with the dynamics of the reality and followed them.

> I like the teacher's methodology. She is strict and talks aloud, but she does not address to students in a bad way so they behave and are disciplined. (S2, P4, Merriam)

> I don't know how to make my students behave in a good way (as teachers at the school do).[3] (S8, P3, Katy)

Freire's (1970) perspective of the *oppressor* is the person who imposes her/his ideas over the others. For this study, school teachers are not acting as oppressors but as generators of alternatives to activate student-teachers' role in education.

Throughout the process of reflection, I noticed how student-teachers, after negotiating and understanding school members' views, started to propose their own choices and took risks which then framed their identity as foreign language teachers.

> Well, advices sometimes work, but it didn't happen always, I even didn't try to yell because I don't like, and I preferred to use other kind of activities, like to sing a song. (Di, P8, Susan)

> Teacher Claudia is a very good person; she says that we as teachers have to be friends of the parents. That way, we can have a good communication with them and help children with their learning process. (Di, P1, Sandy)

---

[2]   These samples have been translated from Spanish.
[3]   These samples have been translated from Spanish.

After observing the way the school culture strongly represents a model that permeates student-teachers' identity early in their practicum, the existence of new possibilities *to act and to be* within the school context emerged as a product of day to day interactions.

Disjunction between dependent and independent decision making: The choice to be an actor instead of a spectator. Moving from a dependent to an independent position caused student-teachers to become aware of whom they were in relation to the context in which they were immersed. Hence, in search of taking risks to produce changes, they were covered by feelings of uncertainty, doubt, or anxiety while assuming a position in the face of a new situation. And then, the dichotomy among beliefs, philosophies, experiences, and understandings was described by student-teachers in following examples:

> I believe that more than teaching a subject, a teacher may let his/her students know that their lives and conflicts matter. Being a student teacher made me realize that more than learning English, I have to be ready to give love to my kids. (Di, P40, Angy)

> Teachers told me to do things but I don't follow I make my own tries. (S8, P7, Diana)

The previous descriptions showed how student-teachers moved from dependent decision makers to independent ones. In other words, reflection is the fuel that generates action, actions being one of the manifestations of identity.

Teaching is a social and sensible practice; it is not isolated from school realities. Bartlett (1990) points out that the classroom then turns into a universe of identities in which the prospective teachers evolve from the moment they start making decisions and guiding actions. In this regard, understanding teaching as an interactive process implies being in contact with real worlds similar to or different from mine. At that juncture, to teach any subject, including English, involves being in contact with the real world and all that it represents as well as all that living in it implies. Freire (2001) states that the individual "can gradually perceive personal and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, become conscious of his or her own perception of that reality, and deal critically with it" (p. 13).

> Early in my experience as a student teacher, I realized that teaching goes beyond the classroom walls. A teacher has to deal with familiar and personal relationship issues among students and teachers. The student teacher does more than to teach a subject like English and French. A student teacher really has to be a helping hand and solve different kind of conflicts that take place in and out the classroom.[4] (Di, P22, Dora)

The previous reflection shows how her identity was shaped by the context where she developed her practicum. Here, she recognized that her experience as a student-teacher in a particular context drove her to think about her labor beyond the classroom and even beyond

---

[4]   This sample has been translated from Spanish.

the school structure. Being in contact for one semester with students of all ages, fellow teachers and parents served as an illustration of the complexities that encompassed her identity as a teacher. The nature of learning lies in interaction. In this sense, "teaching is not about transferring knowledge or contents nor is it an act whereby a creator gives shape, style, or soul to an indecisive and complacent body. There is, in fact, no teaching without learning" (Freire, 2001, p. 11).

Conclusion

The main question of this research allowed me to understand that identity is a social process that evolves in the settings where people learn and interact simultaneously. While listening to students' experiences in school, I perceived how student-teachers' identity moved from a dependent state towards independent decision making; and even if at some point in their histories they became followers throughout the cycles of reflection, I witnessed transformations and awareness of their responsibilities.

On the other hand, there were student-teachers who kept on being dependent and adopted the structure of the school, but through their partners' decisions, they learned that there always exists a different alternative *of reading the world*. Freire (1970) asserts that the oppressed who "has adapted to the structure of domination in which they are immersed and has become resigned to it, are inhibited for waging the struggle for freedom so long they feel incapable of running the risk" (p. 47).

There were students who showed their willingness to make independent decisions from the beginning but they learned that in the school they had to follow top down instructions, and often had to get adjusted to them. The reality in which student-teachers evolve as prospective teachers is better illustrated by them through a conscious process of reflection. Therefore, the incorporation of reflection in the practice helps advisors to support prospective teachers' actions and decisions related to this profession.

Pedagogical Implications and Limitations

The creation of formal spaces to reflect on the realities where education takes place may be considered in any program and university; therefore, serious reflection on student-teachers' development at a school and the realities they have to respond to may be tackled from different courses early in the student-teachers' career.

Reflection on teachers as models and the replication of these models in student-teachers' identity are issues that may be discussed in detail regarding the implication these may have in education.

Reflection cannot be guided in an accelerated way; therefore, dedicating many hours to this practice represented the most relevant limitation.

References

Alsup, J. (2005). *Teachers identity discourses: Negociating personal and professional spaces.* New Jersey, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Álvarez, A. (2005). *An approximation to teachers' knowledge base through teachers' reflection* (Master's thesis). Universidad Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá.

Bartlett, L. (1990). Thinking about reflective teaching. In L. Bartlett (Ed.), *Teacher development through reflective teaching* (pp. 202-215). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Barton, D., & Tusting, K. (2005). *Beyond communities of practice: Language power and social context.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Beauchamp, C., & Thomas, L. (2010). Reflecting on an ideal: student teachers envision a future identity. *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, *11*(5), 631-643.

Beijaard, D. (1995). Teachers' prior experiences and actual perceptions of professional identity. *Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *1*(2), 281-294.

Beijaard, D., Verloop, N., & Vermunt, J. D. (2000). Teacher's perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education Journal*, *16*(7), 749-764.

Bengtsson, J. (1995). What is reflection? On reflection in the teaching profession and teacher education. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 1*(1), 23-32.

Blase, J. J. (1988). The everyday political perspectives of teachers: Vulnerability and conservatism. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *1*(2), 125-142.

Boreham, N., & Gray, P. (2011). Professional identity of teachers in their early development [Word document]. Retrieved from http://petergray.eu/site/pages/research.php

Bullough, R. V. (2005). The quest for identity in teaching and teacher education. In G. F. Hoban (Ed.), *The missing links in teacher education design: Developing a multi-linked conceptual framework* (pp. 237-258). The Netherlands: Springer.

Castellanos, J. (2004). *Preservice teachers' construction of self-image as teachers.* (Unpublished master's thesis). Universidad Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá.

Chong, S., Low, E. L., & Goh, K. C. (2011). Emerging professional teacher identity of pre-service teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *36*(8), 50-64.

Cooper, K., & Olson, M. (1996). The multiple I's of teacher identity. In M. Kompf (Ed.), *Changing research and practice: Teachers' professionalism, identities, and knowledge* (pp. 78-89). London, UK: Falmer Press.

Danielewicz, J. (2001). *Teaching selves: Identity, pedagogy, and teacher education.* New York, NY: State University of New York Press.

Day, C., Kington, A., Stobart, G., & Sammons, P. (2006). The personal and professional selves of teachers: Stable and unstable identities. *British Educational Research Journal*, *32*(4), 601- 616.

Dewey, J. (1910). *How we think*. Boston, MA: D.C. Heath & Co.

Díaz, D. (2012). *Am I ready to be a teacher? Advisor teachers' reflections on preservice teachers' narratives about themselves as teachers* [PowerPoint Slides]. Paper presented at the Encuentro de Universidades Formadoras de Formadores, Pereira, Colombia.

Freeman, D. (1998). *Doing teacher research: From inquiry to understanding*. Boston, MA: Heinle Publishers.

Freese, A. R. (2006). Reframing one's teaching: Discovering our teacher selves through reflection and inquiry. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *22*(1), 100-119.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. USA: Penguin Books.

Freire, P. (2001). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Gibbs, G., (1988). *Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Retrieved from http://www2.glos.ac.uk/gdn/gibbs/

Jenkins, R. (1996). *Social identity*. London, UK: Routledge.

Korthagen, F. A. J. (2005). In search of the essence of a good teacher: Towards a more holistic approach in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *20*(1), 77-97.

Korthagen, F. A. J., & Vasalos, A. (2005). Levels in reflection: Core reflection as a means to enhance professional growth. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, *11*(1), 47-71.

Lopes, A., & Tormenta, R. (2010). Pre-service teacher training, primary teachers' identities, and school work. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal (LICEJ)*, *1*(1), 52-58.

Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Niño, C. (2007). *Students' voices about their realities in and outside the school as shaped by a dialogical relationship* (Unpublished master's thesis). Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, Tunja.

Norton, B. (2008). Identity, language learning, and critical pedagogies. In J. Cenoz and N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education* (2nd ed., pp. 45-57). New York, NY: Springer.

Olsen, B. (2008). *Teaching what they learn, learning what they live*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Richards, J. C. (2011). Classroom observation in teaching practice. In J. C. Richards & T. Farell (Eds.), *Practice teaching: A reflective approach* (pp. 90-105). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Sachs, J. (2005). Teacher education and the development of professional identity: Learning to be a teacher. In P. M. Denicolo & M. Kompf (Eds.), *Connecting policy and practice: Challenges for teaching and learning in schools and universities* (pp. 5-21). Oxford, UK: Routledge.

Schön, D. A. (1982). *The reflective practitioner*. USA: Basic Books.

Viáfara, J. J. (2005). The design of reflective tasks for the preparation of student-teachers. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *7*, 53-74.

Walkington, J. (2005). Becoming a teacher: Encouraging development of teacher identity through reflective practice. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, *33*(1), 53-64.

Wallace, M. J. (1991). *Training foreign language teachers: A reflective approach*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Wallerstein, N. (1983). *Language and culture in conflict: Problem-posing in the ESL classroom*. Reading, MA: Prentice Hall.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

The Author

Diana Mayerly Díaz Benavides holds a BA in Foreign Languages from Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia. She is currently an M.A. candidate in the Masters Program in Language Teaching at UPTC in Tunja. She works at Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia in Tunja.