

Initial Development of English Language Teachers in Mexico

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Abstract

This research focuses on the analysis of the beliefs of pre-service Mexican student- teachers from a public university in central Mexico who have learned English as adolescents or young adults. Specifically, it examines their beliefs about teaching and about themselves as English teachers in different stages of initial professional development. The participants reflected on their experiences as English language learners, students, teaching practicum students and as first year teachers in a follow up study.

This thesis is composed of three studies that are linked by involving the same participants. The studies follow these participants through different stages in their initial development as teachers. The research is set within the qualitative research paradigm and draws on qualitative data and interpretive analysis. The data were retrieved using the following procedures: autobiographies, a focus group interview, journals, personal interviews and short narratives.

Responses to the following research questions emerged through the different stages of this thesis.

1. What initial beliefs do pre-service and beginning students hold about being a teacher?
2. Do these beliefs evolve or change during the initial stages of their teacher development?
3. Do their experiences during their initial stages of their development influence their beliefs?

There is little research on English language teacher beliefs in Mexico. It is considered that research in this area can contribute to the understanding of the processes of what English language teachers' beliefs are and how they evolve or develop over time and the influences that they may have on the actual teaching process. This research may contribute to bring to the attention of English language teacher preparation programs the necessity of providing opportunities for student-teachers to unpack their beliefs and reflect and view them in the light of the courses and their practice in order to create an understanding of the Mexican educational context of which they will be a part.

Statement of Candidate

I hereby certify that the work in this thesis entitled “**Initial development of English Language teachers in Mexico**” has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University.

I also certify that the thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me. Any help and assistance that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself have been properly acknowledged.

In addition, I certify that all the information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

The research presented in this thesis was endorsed by Macquarie University Ethics Committee, HE27APR2007.DO5135.

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