

**Analysing trainee beliefs about thesis writing and  
professional development  
in a constructivist thesis writing experience**

by

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A thesis submitted in fullfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Applied Linguistics

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December 2008

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract .....	xiv
Statement of candidate .....	xv
Dedications .....	xvi
Acknowledgements .....	xvii

### Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Introduction to the problem .....	5
1.3 Purpose of the study .....	7
1.4 Research questions .....	7
1.5 Significance of the study .....	8
1.6 Research content and organization .....	9

### Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Teacher education .....	10
2.2 Constructivism in language teacher education .....	12
2.3 The role of reflection in teacher education and its relation to professional development .....	19
2.4 Pre-service teacher beliefs and the effect of teacher education on those beliefs.....	24
2.5 Teacher and supervisor beliefs .....	27
2.6 Novice research and thesis writing .....	31

## **Chapter 3. Study 1**

3.1 Introduction .....	36
3.2 Literature Review .....	36
3.3 Problems experienced by thesis writers and methods confronting them in the two Research Seminars.....	41
3.4 The study .....	47
3.5 Findings and discussion .....	52
3.6 Conclusions .....	221

## **Chapter 4. Study 2**

4.1 Introduction .....	224
4.2 Questionnaires as instruments in ELT cognition studies .....	224
4.3 An autobiographical reflexive approach .....	226
4.4 Study .....	245
4.5 Findings and discussion.....	249
4.6 Conclusions .....	283

## **Chapter 5. Conclusions**

5.1 Answers to the research questions .....	288
5.2 Directions for further research .....	295
5.3 Final considerations .....	296

<b>References .....</b>	<b>299</b>
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## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Julian's diary.....	328
Appendix B: Thesis and Professional Development Questionnaire .....	340
Appendix C: Activities to foster reading strategies and autonomy .....	345
Appendix D: Activities to foster reflection with quotes and collaborative learning.....	346
Appendix E: Activities to foster reflection with movies .....	347
Appendix F: Text of consent forms.....	348
Appendix G: Participants answers to Section 2 of TAPDQ with commentary.....	349
Appendix H: Participants answers to Section 3 of TAPDQ with commentary.....	351
Appendix I: Participants answers to Section 4 of TAPDQ with commentary.....	353
Appendix J: Individual Scores of TAPDQ with commentary.....	355
Appendix K: Participants answers to Section 5 of TAPDQ with commentary.....	356

## **List of Tables**

### **Tables of Study 1**

Table 1. Categories and colour key to process the data .....	50
Table 2a. Patterns of content in the diaries of the 1st Research Seminar .....	51
Table 2a. Patterns of content in the diaries of the 2nd Research Seminar .....	51
Table 3. Sub-categories of beliefs about thesis writing .....	52
Table 4. Sub-categories of beliefs about professional issues .....	52
Table 5. Sub-categories of beliefs about personal issues .....	53
Table 6. Sub-categories of beliefs about thesis writing and professional issues..	53
Table 7. Sub-categories of beliefs about the personal experience of writing a thesis .....	53
Table 8. Sub-categories of beliefs about professional and personal issues .....	54

Table 9. Sub-categories of beliefs about thesis and professional and personal issues .....	54
Table 10. Sub-categories of beliefs about the teaching methodology used in the Research Seminars .....	54
Tables 3	
Table 3a. Beliefs found on the diary entries about thesis writing in relation to attitude requirements to do it successfully.....	57
Table 3aps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about attitude requirements presented on Table 3a .....	58
Table 3b. Beliefs found on the diary entries about thesis writing in relation to its social responsibility .....	60
Table 3bps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the social responsibility presented on Table 3b .....	60
Table 3c. Beliefs found on the diary entries about thesis writing in relation to the writing and defence processes .....	61
Table 3cps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the thesis writing and defence processes presented on Table 3c .....	63
Tables 4	
Table 4a. Beliefs found on the diary entries about professional issues in relation to professional practice .....	68
Table 4aps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about professional practice presented on Table 4a .....	68

## Tables 5

Table 5a. Beliefs found on the diary entries about personal issues in relation to life truths .....	69
Table 5aps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about life truths presented on Table 5a .....	71
Table 5b. Beliefs found on the diary entries about personal issues in relation to family and friends .....	75
Table 5bps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about family and friends presented on Table 5b .....	76
Table 5c. Beliefs found on the diary entries about personal issues in relation to graduation requirements .....	78
Table 5cps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about graduation requirements presented on Table 5c .....	79
Table 5d. Beliefs found on the diary entries about personal issues in relation to teacher- student relationships .....	81
Table 5dps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about teacher- student relationships presented on Table 5d .....	83
Table 5e. Beliefs found on the diary entries about personal issues in relation to learning success .....	86
Table 5eps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about learning success presented on Table 5e .....	88
Table 5f. Beliefs found on the diary entries about personal issues in relation to personal growth .....	95
Table 5fps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about personal growth presented on Table 5f .....	96

Table 5g. Beliefs found on the diary entries about personal issues in relation to personal history in academic writing .....	98
Table 5gps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about personal history in academic writing presented on Table 5g .....	99
Tables 6	
Table 6a. Beliefs found on the diary entries about thesis writing and professional issues in relation to research opportunities .....	100
Table 6aps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about research opportunities presented on Table 6a .....	101
Tables 7	
Table 7a. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to the role of the teachers in the process .....	102
Table 7aps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the role of the teachers presented on Table 7a .....	103
Table 7b. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to choosing and defining a research topic .....	107
Table 7bps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about choosing a research topic presented on Table 7b .....	109
Table 7c. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to writing a thesis chapter .....	112
Table 7cps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about writing a thesis chapter presented on Table 7c .....	116

Table 7d. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to the thesis writing process .....	122
Table 7dps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the thesis writing process presented on Table 7d .....	125
Table 7e. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to writing the literature review .....	133
Table 7eps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about writing the literature review presented on Table 7e .....	136
Table 7f. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to the role of peers in the process .....	139
Table 7fps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the role of peers presented on Table 7f .....	140
Table 7g. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to personal and attitudinal issues in the process .....	143
Table 7gps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about personal and attitudinal requirements presented on Table 7g .....	146
Table 7h. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to writing a thesis in pairs .....	149
Table 7hps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about writing a thesis in pairs presented on Table 7h .....	150
Table 7i. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to the editing process .....	152
Table 7ips. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the editing process presented on Table. 7i .....	153



Table 7j. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to importance of the thesis for the student .....	155
Table 7jps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the importance of the thesis presented on Table 7j .....	155
Table 7k. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the personal experience of writing a thesis in relation to the importance of the foreign language in which the thesis is written .....	157
Table 7kps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the importance of the foreign language in which the thesis is written presented on Table 7k .....	158
Tables 8	
Table 8a. Beliefs found on the diary entries about professional and personal issues in relation to career development .....	160
Table 8aps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about career development presented on Table 8a .....	160
Table 8b. Beliefs found on the diary entries about professional and personal issues in relation to future professional life .....	162
Table 8bps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about future professional life presented on Table 8b .....	162
Table 8c. Beliefs found on the diary entries about professional and personal issues in relation to programme evaluation .....	164
Table 8cps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about programme evaluation presented on Table 8c .....	164

Table 8d. Beliefs found on the diary entries about professional and personal issues in relation to personal growth as professionals .....	165
Table 8dps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about personal growth presented on Table 8d .....	166
Tables 9	
Table 9a. Beliefs found on the diary entries about thesis,professional and personal issues in relation to career development .....	167
Table 9aps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about career development presented on Table 9a .....	167
Table 9b. Beliefs found on the diary entries about thesis,professional and personal issues in relation to future professional practice .....	168
Table 9bps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about future professional practice presented on Table 9b .....	169
Table 9c. Beliefs found on the diary entries about thesis,professional and personal issues in relation to social responsibility .....	170
Table 9cps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about social responsibility presented on Table 9c .....	170
Tables 10	
Table 10a. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to oral presentations .....	171
Table 10aps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about oral presentations presented on Table 10a .....	173
Table 10b. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to giving and receiving peer feedback .....	176

Table 10bps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about giving and receiving peer feedback presented on Table 10b .....	179
Table 10c. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to the movies .....	183
Table 10cps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the movies presented on Table 10c .....	186
Table 10d. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to humanistic activities .....	190
Table 10dps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about humanistic activities presented on Table 10d .....	191
Table 10e. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to metaphors .....	194
Table 10eps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about metaphors presented on Table 10e .....	195
Table 10f. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to group work .....	197
Table 10fps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about group work presented on Table 10f .....	198
Table 10g. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to the role of the teacher in the course .....	200
Table 10gps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about the role of the teacher in the course presented on Table 10g .....	203
Table 10h. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to electronic dialogue diaries .....	206
Table 10 hps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about electronic dialogue diaries presented on Table 10h .....	208

Table 10i. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to quotes .....	210
Table 10ips. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about quotes presented on Table 10i .....	211
Table 10j. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to music .....	215
Table 10jps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about music presented on Table 10j .....	215
Table 10k. Beliefs found on the diary entries about the teaching methodology in relation to thesis writing .....	216
Table 10kps. A problem solution approach analysing the beliefs about thesis writing presented on Table 10k .....	218

## **Tables of Study 2**

Table 11. Professional development beliefs .....	250
Table 12. Participants comments from Section 2 .....	255
Table 13. Thesis writing and professional development beliefs .....	256
Table 14. Participants comments from Section 3 .....	261
Table 15. Personal development and thesis writing beliefs .....	262
Table 16. Participants comments from Section 4 .....	268
Table 17. Beliefs about their strengths and weaknesses as thesis writers .....	269
Table 18. Beliefs about their strengths and weaknesses as future professionals .....	274
Table 19. Beliefs about ways to overcome their weaknesses as thesis writers using their strengths .....	277

Table 20. Beliefs about ways to overcome their weaknesses as future professionals using their strengths .....	281
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## List of Figures

Fig. 1. Byram's model for intercultural communicative competence.....	11
Fig. 2. Personal information of participants .....	246
Fig. 3. Group scores for Section 2: Professional development .....	349
Fig 4. Group scores for Section 3: Thesis writing and professional development .....	351
Fig. 5. Group scores for Section 4: Personal development and thesis writing .....	353
Fig. 6. Individual scores for Sections 2 to 4 .....	355

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this case study was to identify the beliefs of eight pre-service teachers about thesis writing and professional development while and after writing their BA thesis through diary and survey inquiry. This research was conducted in the teaching area of the major in Modern Languages (LEMO) from the Autonomous University of Puebla (BUAP). The methodology used to identify trainee beliefs was applied in two periods: during the process to include *reflection in action*, and after the process obtaining *reflection on action* as suggested by Schön (1983, p. 26). Thus, the participants wrote their electronic dialogue diaries while taking the two Research Seminars and writing their thesis. In this diaries they expressed their thoughts and feelings, sent them to the teacher and the teacher answered them also via e-mail. Then, when the Research Seminars had finished, they answered the questionnaire called Thesis and Professional Development Questionnaire (TAPDQ), which was especially designed for this research taking insights from Eraut (1995), Fullan(1995), Burns et al (1999), Schmekes (2004) and Viaggio (1992). This questionnaire contains Likert scales and some open questions. The findings of these studies reveal that participants were aware of their lack of expertise in thesis writing and they looked for strategies to overcome this problem. Also, the findings suggest that the participants were benefited from the constructivist methodology employed in the Research Seminars. Most of the participants reported having acquired skills, knowledge, having improved their attitude and having become better students after writing their thesis. This doctoral thesis begins exploring an area that has not been explored on ELT teacher cognition at least as reported in the research reviews done by Borg (2003, 2006) and Reyes & Rodríguez (2007). It aims to contribute to get a better understanding the thesis writing processes in teacher education programmes in public universities in Mexico.

**MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY**  
**STATEMENT OF CANDIDATE**

I certify that the thesis entitled *Analysing trainee beliefs about thesis writing and professional development in a constructivist thesis writing experience* submitted for the degree of Doctor in Applied Linguistics is the result of my own research, except otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis or any part of it has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other institution.

The ethics committee approval to conduct the research for this thesis was obtained with the protocol number HE25MAY2007-D05245.

Rebeca Elena Tapia Carlin

December 27, 2008

## DEDICATIONS

I want to dedicate this thesis to my family, especially to my husband Ricardo, my children Cecilia and Bernardo and to my parents Alicia and Agustín -may he rest in peace-. I want to thank you for your valuable support and patience that were so important to the conclusion of this project.

Also, to my brothers and sisters Mercedes, Agustín, Carlos and Lourdes as well as my brothers and sisters in-law, nieces and nephews. I know you were there.

To my friends Orquidea G., Alicia M., Gloria D, Marina B., Lupita C., Lupita B., Silvia G., Pamela O. and Carmen V. Thanks for being there.

To my colleagues and friends at the Facultad de Lenguas-BUAP, ULSA-B, MEXTESOL and RECALE.

To those teachers who set the foundations of my education. The list is extense, but I would like to mention some of you: Lupita Osorio, Madre Mirna, Miss Lupe, Madre Angelina, Coral Ibarra, Connie Johnson, Paul Davies, Simon Harris.

To my doctoral teachers David Hall, Chris Candlin, Anne Burns, Jack Richards, Geoff Brindley, Steven Ross and Kathleen Bailey, Jill Murray. I learned a lot from you, it was a privilege having you as teachers.

To my doctoral classmates Carmen C., Carmen S., Paty G., Paty P., Elizabeth, Irais, Marlene, Vero, Tere, Michael, Marco and Tomás. I also learned from you, it was nice having you as classmates.

To the students who have been my students in different Research Seminars at BUAP, especially to the group with whom I conducted this research, you taught me so much.

Last, but not least, I want to dedicate this work to the Holy Family and to God, my strength and inspiration.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I want to thank the valuable support of my thesis supervisor, David Hall. Your comments were always important and crucial in the improvement of my work. Thanks for your support even on Holydays.

I also want to thank the valuable support of my associate thesis supervisor, Jill Murray. Your comments were also very useful to improve my work.

My thanks also go to Anne Burns, who kindly invited us to read books and gave us the opportunity not only to get them, but to develop professionally by writing their review.

I also want to thank for the support of professor Santiago Aguilar Márquez, the director of the Facultad de Lenguas of the Autonomous University of Puebla. His support to all the students of the Dappling (B) was important to do our doctoral studies.

Finally, I would like to thank my three examiners: Sue Garton, David Hayes and Sylvia Schmelkes. Your feedback was extremely valuable to produce the final draft of this doctoral thesis.