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Chilean English Language Teachers Transforming Their Beliefs and Practices Through Reflection

Transformación de las creencias y prácticas de docentes chilenos de inglés mediante la reflexión

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This qualitative study aims to show how the beliefs and teaching practices around listening comprehension of four Chilean English-as-a-foreign-language teachers were transformed after attending an eight-session reflective workshop. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and video-recorded and audio-recorded sessions. Information was analyzed using content analysis. Results evidenced that reflective practice positively affects the changes in beliefs and teaching practices in different ways. Conclusions show that this reframing is especially favored if certain factors (personal, professional development, and contextual) are given.

Keywords: beliefs, foreign languages, professional development, teaching practice

El objetivo de este estudio cualitativo es comprender cómo cuatro docentes chilenos de inglés transformaron sus creencias y prácticas docentes en relación con la comprensión auditiva después de asistir a un taller reflexivo de ocho sesiones. Los datos se recolectaron a través de entrevistas semiestructuradas y de sesiones grabadas en audio y video. Se realizó un análisis de contenido de la información recopilada. Los resultados evidenciaron que la práctica reflexiva incide positivamente en los cambios de las creencias y prácticas docentes en diferentes niveles. Las conclusiones muestran que esta reconfiguración se ve especialmente favorecida si se dan ciertos factores: personales, de desarrollo profesional y contextuales.

Palabras clave: creencias, desarrollo profesional, lengua extranjera, práctica docente

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Introduction

It is imperative for the Chilean educational system to improve teaching and learning, especially in the subject of English. However, despite the efforts of the different stakeholders (i.e., government, institutions, teachers) in this regard, the professional development of English language preservice and in-service teachers still has some deficiencies, which is reflected in students obtaining poor results (Agencia de Calidad de la Educación, 2014). Some factors that could be affecting students' performance are a shortage of adequately skilled educators, limited resources, an unsuitable curriculum, classrooms packed beyond capacity, and the division and inequalities within the education system (Barahona, 2016). Lack of reflection on the part of teachers also affects students' learning process, but, as Akbari et al. (2010) and Gözüyeşil and Soylu (2014) state, robust professional development fosters teachers' predisposition to reflect on their practices. Likewise, Farrell and Bennis (2013) and Kissau et al. (2013) mention that contextual factors directly influence teachers' beliefs and practices as they can promote or hinder reflection.

Reflection is one of the main characteristics of a high-quality teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2017), and it should be an explicit and deliberate practice (Harvey & Vlachopoulos, 2020). Reflective practice allows teachers to improve their teaching practices and skills, thus facilitating evidence-based decision-making for teachers to evaluate the educational process of their students (Castellanos Galindo & Yaya Escobar, 2013). It is also a powerful tool that promotes the construction of teacher identity (Yang & Han, 2022), playing an important role in defining teachers' practices (Yuan & Mak, 2018) and promoting the resignification or generation of professional knowledge (Viáfara & Largo, 2018). Teacher identity starts to develop at university during initial teacher education, and it has been shown that the process is favored if preservice teachers implement reflective practice during their practicums (Vega et al., 2021). Despite this, Ruffinelli Vargas (2021) states

that, in undergraduate programs, reflection tends to be merely derived from direct experience; that is, the preservice teachers are faced with classroom realities without proper preparation, and they do not usually receive guidance on how to analyze the teaching-learning process. This prevents them from engaging in generative reflection whereby they can change teaching practices and improve performance.

Reflexivity in training second/foreign language teaching is fundamental because evidence shows that when teachers expand their understanding of teaching, their decisions are less impulsive and intuitive (Sze, 1999). Yoshihara et al. (2020) mention that reflection helps teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) identify classroom challenges. For instance, in most EFL classrooms, instruction tends to be focused on the product rather than on the process. Teachers seem predisposed to rely on their own beliefs to choose approaches and methodologies. If teachers consider that the language is better learned in a certain way, then their practices will reflect that way of thinking (Nishino, 2012). Hence, reflective practice is significant for EFL teachers as it allows them to change their attitudes and explore alternatives.

Despite such significance, teacher reflection has traditionally received little attention, and EFL teachers are found to lack robust critical analysis skills (González Marín et al., 2018; Lara Subiabre, 2019). Thus, the purpose of this article is to analyze and report the changes in the beliefs and teaching practices of four Chilean EFL teachers after reflecting on and reframing how they teach listening comprehension.

Literature Review

Reflective Practice

More than a century ago, Dewey (1910) called attention to the importance of how we think. He mentioned three characteristics of a reflective professional: open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness

(Dewey, 1989). The first is the willingness to hear more than one point of view and pay attention to possible alternative views. The second means carefully considering all the consequences that certain decisions or actions entail. The third implies that teachers can overcome their fears and insecurities.

However, it was not until the 1980s that the notions of reflexivity and reflective practice began to take on their current importance in the work of teachers when Schön (1983) drew on his understanding of Dewey's work to formulate his ideas in a new way. For Schön, the reflective practice seeks to make a professional's tacit knowledge explicit to improve his or her learning from experience. It becomes important when a professional is confronted with an unusual or unexpected situation and looks for new courses of action. This may occur at different moments, and Schön distinguishes two: *reflection-in-action* and *reflection-on-action*. In the same vein, Harvey and Vlachopoulos (2020) added one more moment: reflection before action. Reflection-in-action is especially important because it allows teachers to respond to unexpected, surprising, or puzzling situations, generating the possibility of constantly trying new strategies or methods. It is also in this process of experimentation that learning from experience arises.

In this sense, the concepts of frame and reframing refer to what Russell (2012)—mentioning Schön's work—calls *double vision*. This means that the original or old interpretive frameworks (frame) are maintained while evidence is sought as to whether the new frameworks (reframing) turn out to be more appropriate or not. In other words, reflexively dialoguing with the situation in a metacognitive way (after a trigger) allows the professional to be aware of the assumptions applied when deciding to act in a particular way. Thus, triggering and reframing affect the process of professional change, both in beliefs and in teaching practices. In this way, beliefs and practices can undergo deep transformations. For Argyris and Schön (1974), learning implies detecting and correcting errors. The authors suggest that when faced with a

situation in which one does not know how to respond, a starting point may be the search for a strategy that works within the already established variables. If what has already been established is not questioned, this is single-loop learning.

On the other hand, if the chosen strategy questions the variables already established to modify them and provide a solution to the problematic situation, the authors call it double-loop learning. Single-loop learning emphasizes more efficient techniques: Any reflection is aimed at making the strategy more effective. On the other hand, double-loop learning “implies questioning the role of framing and learning systems that underlie actual goals and strategies” (Usher & Bryant, 1989, p. 87).

From this perspective, reflective practice can help teachers improve their self-knowledge (Sellars, 2012) through rigorous and critical analysis of their practices. Following Zeichner (1993), a main characteristic of reflective teachers is that they are always questioning “why they do what they do in their classes” (p. 46). Reflective practice allows them to gain awareness of their implicit assumptions and to make less intuitive and more informed decisions (Farrell, 2007). It is also important to consider that learning from past experiences helps them make better decisions in the future (Eraut, 2004).

Foreign language teachers can be considered reflective if they question what they do in the classroom, why it is done, what the result could be, what changes could be made based on the information collected, and what challenges they encounter in their classrooms (Yoshihara et al., 2020). Depending on the answers generated, teachers may enter a spiral of analysis, feedback, and adaptation of their practices to identify possible contradictions and be able to take new courses of action for improvement (Russell, 2012). If foreign language teachers consistently reflect, they should be in a better position to understand the possible distance between what is taught and what students learn (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). Despite this, many teachers do not know how to conduct effective reflection; thus, it becomes necessary to instruct them

so they can strengthen their teaching and professional identity (Yin, 2018).

Little research has been found regarding the link between reflective practice and language skills (e.g., Ilmi et al., 2022; Juhary, 2014). Many studies focus on identifying the influence that teacher reflection has on microteaching (Hama & Osam, 2021; Murphy Odo, 2022) and the use of reflective tools, like portfolios, journals, or diaries (Altalhab et al., 2021; Wilson & Lengeling, 2021).

Teachers' Beliefs and Practices About Listening Comprehension

Authors such as Graham et al. (2014) and Thuy Dung (2021) state that teachers consider listening comprehension as a challenging skill to teach. For this reason, the focus of the teachers' assessments tends to be on searching for the right answers. An important finding of the study conducted by Graham et al. is that teachers seldom report using the strategies and activities that research and literature suggest, and 82% of the participants said they had not had training in evaluation. Thus, the emphasis that academic research places on working with conglomerates of words or detecting the most general ideas of an oral text is usually left aside in classroom activities. Additionally, activities aimed at recognizing words in concatenated discourse tend not to be promoted.

Traditionally, foreign language classes tend to revolve around listening exercises found in international and standardized exams. However, the literature provides a variety of alternatives to develop this skill in the classroom. Examples include metacognitive strategies (An & Shi, 2013), using conglomerates of words or *chunks* to reduce the burden on short-term memory (Tang, 2013), and using authentic videos and materials (Emerick, 2019) or technology (Talia, 2021). Nevertheless, Renandya and Farrell (2011) state that, in most classrooms, students may be asked to listen

to an audio recording without being able to interact with the speaker or track non-verbal cues that may facilitate comprehension of the message. This induced anxiety does not favor the students' development of their comprehension skills or their awareness of the learning process. Thus, tasks should be based on authentic texts that encourage the development of skills applicable in real life. These materials not only introduce students to different types of genres and linguistic varieties but also represent meaningful learning experiences. In this same line, Emerick (2019) mentions that there is "a need for more attention to listening pedagogy in L2 teaching environments and teacher training" (p. 107).

Consequently, this lack of innovation could result in students having low levels and difficulties of listening comprehension in a foreign language (Nadhira & Warni, 2021), as has been observed in Chile, where students tend to display significant difficulties in understanding L2 speech at normal speed and words in concatenated speech; they also struggle to make sense of what they hear in different communicative contexts (Sanhueza Jara & Burdiles Fernández, 2012).

Method

This study is framed within a qualitative research approach (Cohen et al., 2018). It aimed to understand how the beliefs and practices of the participants were transformed after attending a reflective workshop and to identify how different reflective strategies influenced the incorporation of listening comprehension as an important dimension in the teaching of EFL.

Participants

Four in-service Chilean EFL teachers (one man and three women) participated in the study. They all had at least one year of teaching experience and worked in public or subsidized private schools in the Metropolitan and Valparaíso Regions of Chile. To preserve confidentiality, we use pseudonyms. The teachers were

invited to participate voluntarily and signed an informed consent form before data collection. As part of the methodological design, the teachers participated in individual and group activities (an initial interview, a reflective workshop, and a final interview).

For the selection process, we called for EFL teachers with at least one year of experience and who worked in public or private subsidized schools. To this end, we contact teachers through personal visits to educational institutions, social media (e.g., Facebook and LinkedIn), and EFL teacher databases. We chose to work with in-service teachers, considering that more experience promotes professional development by allowing teachers to recognize, verify, update, and reflect on the knowledge and intuitive judgments they formed during their practice. We invited around 100 teachers, of whom seven responded affirmatively in the first instance. Three declined to participate before the intervention period, meaning the final sample consisted of four teachers.

Rubén

Rubén started working as a teacher in 2009 while still studying English pedagogy. He worked in high schools with vulnerable students. When he graduated in 2011, he obtained a scholarship for a TESOL certificate in Costa Rica; subsequently, he returned to Chile to work in vulnerable secondary schools, where he participated in projects related to English improvement programs. Currently, Rubén works in a private subsidized secondary school, which is considered a school of excellence within the community. He also works in university settings, which has allowed him to expand his work and do classroom research.

Pilar

Pilar started working as an English teacher in 1998. First, she trained as a translator, but after working as a teacher for a few years, she decided to study pedagogy. In 2005, she won a position in a public school. In

2016, she completed a graduate degree, specializing in methodology and didactics for elementary education. Currently, she works in two schools in the same area, but with the difference that one of them offers her more resources to work. The other school does not have an internet connection, and there are always problems with the electricity. Pilar points out that the activities she carries out in her classes do not have a high level of complexity because many students have poor English command, mainly due to limited exposure to the language.

Consuelo

Consuelo's first experience as an English teacher was teaching this subject to students from other undergraduate degree programs at the university where she studied. Even as a university student, she went to work in an English-speaking country for a few months. This allowed her to improve her English and increase her confidence as a future teacher. Upon graduating in 2014, she worked as an examiner for international English tests in some schools in Santiago, and she was also a volunteer in a program of the Chilean Ministry of Education, where she taught English in rural schools. She works in a public school, teaching English to preschool and elementary children.

Marion

Marion has worked as a teacher since 1982. Due to the country's political reality during the military dictatorship, she considers that she suffered deficiencies in her teaching education. Upon graduating, she worked in a private subsidized school with a high level of vulnerability. At the same time, and to improve her job prospects, she completed a graduate degree in Administration. Since 1989, she has worked in a public school where most students are at high social risk. Additionally, she works in an evening adult school and conducts a mentoring course. Table 1 summarizes the participants' relevant characteristics.

Table 1. Summary of Teachers' Profiles

Pseudonym	Years of experience	Work context	Degree or certification
Rubén	11 years	Public school Private subsidized school University	English teacher TESOL certificate Master's degree in TEFL
Pilar	22 years	Public school	English teacher English translator A diploma in Primary Education Methods and Didactic
Consuelo	6 years	Public school Rural school	English teacher
Marion	38 years	Public school	English teacher Course for mentoring novel teachers

Data Collection

Reflective Workshop

For five months, we implemented one weekly two-hour group session (eight sessions in total). The meetings were audio- and video-recorded to permit careful analysis of the teachers' discourse and behavior (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

The sessions sought to promote the participants' reflection on the teaching of listening comprehension in EFL. However, on some occasions, the teachers also reflected on other aspects of their teaching, such as time management, group control, teacher evaluation, and their relationship with the Chilean Ministry of Education.

After each session, we designed a plan for the following session and came up with some questions based on what we found in the literature on teacher reflection. The participants would answer these questions, and while doing so, they were expected to identify the main strategies proposed by scholars and how to adapt and use such strategies in their classrooms. The knowledge gained thus, we hoped, would spark the participants' interest in doing their classes differently and implementing possible changes.

Table 2 describes the reflective strategies used in this work and points out that the specialized literature is beneficial for promoting the reflective practice in foreign language teachers, focusing on different types of reflection and teachers' attention to different aspects of teaching.

Table 2. Reflective Strategies Used in the Workshop

Reflective strategy	Brief description	Session(s)
Critical incidents	Intends to raise awareness of why a situation occurs and its possible solutions.	1 and 2
Reading academic articles	Seeks to foster the link between theory and practice.	3
Exemplary practices	Through classroom observation, provides teachers with new methods they could apply in their contexts. This also reinforces	4
Modeling	the association between theoretical and practical knowledge.	5

Reflective strategy	Brief description	Session(s)
Class recording	Seeks to increase understanding of pedagogical decisions and aspects that may have changed. So, some of the participants' lessons were recorded at different points and then shown to the others to increase their understanding of pedagogical decisions and aspects that may have changed.	6
Teacher development group	Promotes reflective, collaborative work. All the strategies were grouped to help the participants express their prior beliefs and practices.	7 and 8

Interviews

The initial and final interviews were conducted individually, with semi-structured and open-ended questions. These kinds of interviews are flexible, allowing the interviewer to delve into certain topics or introduce new ones. Also, their sequence can be tailored depending on the interviewee's replies (Cohen et al., 2018). We designed the questions for both interviews, which were reviewed by three colleagues (two Chilean and one Canadian) with experience in pedagogical reflection, teacher professional development, and English language learning. These experts confirmed that the questions fulfilled the criteria of methodological rigor for qualitative research: credibility, confirmability, transferability, and dependency (Plaza Guzmán et al., 2017). Finally, we audio-recorded the interviews with the participants.

Data Analysis

The interviews and conversations from the reflective workshop were transcribed verbatim. We conducted qualitative content analysis on the data (Bengtsson, 2016) using the AtlasTi software. First, we read the transcriptions several times to identify representative sentences and paragraphs. We noted similarities and differences from the selected extracts to create categories emerging from the data. Then, we

determined a set of descriptive categories, which were reduced by subsuming some within others. This kind of analysis allowed us to construct categories that reveal the beliefs and practices of the participants when they refer to listening comprehension. In addition, each category was structured in terms of frame, trigger, and reframing, making it possible to understand each teacher's change process based on the reflection that occurred during data collection.

Results

The transcripts of individual interviews and group sessions were read for coding (Andréu, 2000). Based on what was indicated by the specialized literature, we could establish five large categories: Beliefs, Teaching Practices, Participants' Initial Frame, Trigger for Reflection, and New Interpreting Framework. The last three allowed us to understand the process of change that teachers went through during this research.

On the other hand, four subcategories emerged within the categories Beliefs and Teaching Practices: Conceptualization on Listening Comprehension, Time, Listening Comprehension Activities, and Technological Resources. In this way, a matrix like the one in Table 3 was generated for each of the four participating teachers, facilitating the interpretation and analysis of the results.

Table 3. Category Matrix

	Participant's initial frame	Trigger for reflection	New interpreting framework
Beliefs			
Conceptualization on listening comprehension			
Listening comprehension as time-consuming			
Teaching Practices			
Listening comprehension activities			
Absence of technological resources			

Participants' Initial Frame

Regarding the identification of teachers' beliefs about listening comprehension, in the subcategory of "Conceptualization on Listening Comprehension," it is possible to mention that the participants agree that listening comprehension is a difficult skill to teach:

In my opinion, listening is like writing...it's like the poor relative of teaching English. (Rubén, Initial interview)¹

[Listening] is the last skill acquired; so, for the students, you can imagine. (Pilar, Initial interview)

[Listening] occupies the second place of importance, I think. The first place is oral production. I speak a little; they speak a little. I make them read...that is the first place to me; speaking is paramount. (Consuelo, Initial interview)

I think it needs too much work: putting on a cassette, bringing a radio, and everything. Instead, you read something, and they listen to the teacher...it's simpler. (Marion, Initial interview)

Additionally, in the subcategory of "Time," the original interpretive frameworks found here conceptualized this skill as requiring too much planning, implementation, and correction time compared to the other three language skills:

In other words, in my opinion, both [listening and writing] are too time-consuming. (Ruben, Initial interview)

Let's see what the reason is and what is missing. I consider that it is the preparation time for the material. (Pilar, Reading academic articles)

For me...it also takes time; it takes time to prepare a listening activity because you must have the resources in the classroom. (Consuelo, Initial interview)

It requires more preparation than anything else, I think. (Marion, Initial interview)

On the other hand, when describing the initial teaching practices used by the participants, in the subcategory "Listening Comprehension Activities," it is possible to find more traditional exercises focused on listening and searching for the correct answer, not on developing the skill. That is, a focus on the product more than on the process:

In the case...of listening, I think the same thing happens, that is, the listening activity begins, and suddenly you realize that students didn't understand; then you have to go back...you realize that you chose the activity wrong, you didn't know how to choose it, or that suddenly the listening activity is only "listen and respond." (Rubén, Initial interview)

So, what do I do? First, I'll give the students the...main vocabulary, and after that, I'll put the audio. Well, after that, we see the meaning of the words, more or less what the audio is about. Sometimes I work with songs from...very childish, why? Because they have rhymes...since the rhythm is sticky, the students begin to repeat...

¹ The participants' quotes have been translated from Spanish.

and I have excellent results in some grades, in which I have taught a song, for example, and they learned it by heart, and do the choreography. (Pilar, Initial interview)

My activities are fill-in-the-blanks, matching, and paired terms, for example. (Consuelo, Modeling)

I use a lot of questions and answers. (Marion, Initial interview)

Finally, the subcategory “Absence of Technological Resources” is characterized by the use of textbooks or radio rather than the use of computer or digital platforms:

I prefer what a colleague who is already retired once told me. He told me, “I am a faithful friend of my radio.” For example, you suddenly want to work with a YouTube video, you connect to the internet, there is no connection, or you are going to connect the multimedia projector, and the light bulb has burned out. This issue is super complex. (Rubén, Initial interview)

Sometimes, we have blackouts. We don’t have a radio or an amplifier, so, as the class is large—here generally the classes are over 30—it’s tough to plan the class. (Pilar, Initial interview)

I bring the audio tracks, and we work with that and a text from the textbook. (Consuelo, Initial interview)

With my students, we got to the computer room, and then I sat each one on their computer and tell them: “Look at this link and answer...try to understand and answer.” (Marion, Initial interview)

Trigger for Reflection

This category focused on understanding which of the reflective strategies mentioned before produced triggers in the participants to give rise to a reframing of their beliefs and practices. It should be noted that there was no agreement among participants. In this way, it is impossible to establish conclusive results since the different reflective strategies worked differently in each participant.

In the case of Rubén, no specific strategy produced a moment of change because, according to him, change occurred in all the sessions. For him, most of the triggers came from the researchers’ questions. For example, “What place should listening comprehension have in your classroom?” prompted Rubén to reconsider. His answers were:

Because [the students] have listening comprehension inside...inside the classroom, they can understand that they will also be able to understand the messages that I want to give them; they will be able to understand all the activities that we are working on, and they can practice something that...they do not see outside the classroom. (Initial interview)

It’s fascinating that, traditionally, the listening activities are “questions and answers,” but you do not...you do not think this [activity of phonetics] also involves listening. (Modeling)

For Pilar, unexpected, puzzling, or surprising situations that could have produced some triggers appear more explicitly at the level of her teaching practices. It is important to mention that, according to her, no reflective strategy was more significant than another (Final interview). However, she highlights reading academic articles as a strategy that she especially liked: “Do you know which strategy I liked the most? The texts we read. I haven’t had time to finish reading the others...but I liked that part, the literature. I had never read about listening” (Final interview).

In Consuelo’s case, it is also difficult to pinpoint a specific trigger for the changes she experienced. She especially emphasizes that the interaction with the researchers and the other participants was significant because this allowed her to question what she did “and improve it” (Reading academic articles).

Finally, the triggers that Marion experienced made her begin to consider new perspectives in listening comprehension teaching. For her, the last two sessions

were the most significant because she gained knowledge from the class recordings:

Yes, I liked [seeing the recorded classes of the other teachers] because it's good . . . to see the work of another teacher. You can say whatever you want, but seeing it is different. It is the same as the students. (Final interview)

As can be seen, the reflective strategies impacted each of the four participants differently, producing different results. For the participants, there was not a strategy that was more significant than the others.

New Interpreting Frameworks

Although there was no consensus on the reflective strategies, it is possible to affirm that they produced triggers that led to new ways of conceptualizing listening comprehension, that is, reframing the participants' beliefs and practices.

Regarding the identification of new teachers' beliefs about listening comprehension in the subcategory of "Conceptualization on Listening Comprehension," teachers began to give it a more relevant role within their classes.

I still think that it is a difficult skill, but . . . depending on how one approaches it as a teacher, that is, if you as a teacher look at it as...we mentioned earlier, that it is like a poor relative. (Rubén, Final interview)

I no longer think that listening comprehension is an unimportant skill. Now I'm aware that how I planned listening activities had to do with what I had learned and believed was effective. I have also implemented a phase before any listening activity, which is something I had not done before. (Consuelo, Final interview)

Now, I try to give [listening comprehension] much more value. (Marion, Final interview)

The only participant who mentioned the subcategory "Time" in his new interpretive framework was Rubén. He acknowledges that listening may require a

little more time for planning, but it is not an excessive burden, as he initially thought.

The big problem that I mentioned at the beginning was time, but I realized that, in the end, it does not take that much time to plan. (Rubén, Final interview)

After all, time is not as big an issue. It is something that can be addressed. (Rubén, Reading academic articles)

All things considered, listening does not really imply much more work. There is indeed an extra workload, but it's minimal . . . It would probably take no more than 30 minutes to plan a lesson. (Rubén, Final interview)

Concerning teachers' practices, in the subcategory "Listening Comprehension Activities," the participants began to teach listening differently, according to their context and students' needs:

The issue of realizing that in all classes, regardless of the grade, even if it's the same class, you can't put the class on autopilot because every day will be different, different hours, different dispositions; the students feel differently. (Rubén, Final interview)

I try at least to listen to more songs, texts, despite all the technical and logistical problems I have. . . I try harder to implement the activity. I had left it quite aside for the same reason: because it becomes difficult. (Pilar, Final interview)

We played the hangman, and I gave them a word from vocabulary we had previously learned about the professions. We practiced the alphabet and pronunciation. I had a great time, and it was something different, and I went in with a different methodology. (Consuelo, Critical incidents)

I asked students to divide a sheet into six parts and have them number them; then, I would narrate situations. As I was narrating, they had to draw. I was telling them, "In square number four. . ."—first they had to identify the numbers—"there is a bank. The name of the bank is Boston." So, they had to write all the things that they comprehended. I liked it, and that was like new. (Marion, Final interview)

Finally, the subcategory “Absence of Technological Resources” was not mentioned by any participants when referring to their new interpretive frameworks. This is not necessarily an indication that there was no transformation but rather that this was not such a significant aspect for the teachers.

Discussion

This research aimed to analyze and understand the influence of reflective practice as a tool to produce a change in the beliefs and practices of four Chilean English teachers in the teaching of listening. In this sense, the dynamic and transformative nature of the research served to gain a better understanding of the role of teacher reflection as an element of professional improvement.

Results evidence that reflection is a powerful and effective way to promote change in complex professional contexts such as teaching. Reflection allowed teachers to become more aware of their beliefs and practices to mobilize them toward using more effective and rich strategies that motivate learning and the development of listening comprehension, increasing the students’ competence in the target language. In addition, the participants incorporated dimensions into their work that they did not have before, leading them to plan their classes and carry out their activities differently. These findings confirm what was found by Nishino (2012), who affirms that the practices chosen by teachers when planning their classes and activities, as well as the approaches and methodologies used, will reflect what they believe.

In this sense, in terms of understanding the role of reflective practice in changing the beliefs and practices about listening comprehension, this study suggests that there were different change processes. Rubén and Marion were more available to question and learn from their reflections and experiences, reframing their beliefs and practices about listening comprehension and producing deep or double-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1974). For their part, Pilar and Consuelo experienced rather

superficial or single-loop learning, in which they did not open up to the possibility of testing and implementing new strategies. This allows us to establish that, while the original interpretative frameworks were similar among the four participants, the final interpretive frameworks had significant variations.

Based on the above, three factors arose inductively. First, the experiences of teachers show that personal factors are crucial. What differentiates whether this questioning will occur superficially or deeply is related to the three characteristics of reflective teachers that Dewey (1989) described: open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness. Both Rubén and Marion have these three traits. They gave credibility to what the researchers were proposing. Despite possible previous resistance, they were open to trying new teaching strategies such as drawing, theater, greater interaction, and student participation, among others. They proposed new activities to their classes throughout the sessions and took responsibility for the change.

The second group of factors is related to professional development. Gözüyeşil and Soylu (2014) state that a teacher’s instruction is directly related to their predisposition to review their practices and reflect on them. This is because teachers with greater specialization are more aware of the need to continue their professional development. That is, more reflective teachers seek greater specialization, and teachers with more specialization have better reflective capacities. This is further supported by Akbari et al. (2010). Both Rubén and Marion were willing to question their beliefs and practices about listening comprehension and take risks in search of possible new alternatives in their teaching. Rubén is pursuing a master’s in management and teaches at a university in the area where he lives, and Marion is finishing a specialization to be a mentor teacher.

Finally, the third element is contextual factors. Farrell and Bennis (2013) suggest that teaching contexts are elements that would affect the materialization of practices. Regarding beliefs, Kissau et al. (2013) emphasize

that contextual factors, such as curricular obligations, availability of resources, and instructional contexts, would affect the teachers' development and relationship with teaching practices. In Chile, this may be due to issues such as the lack of resources, an inappropriate curriculum, and inequities in the educational system, among others, that effectively influence teachers' performance (Barahona, 2016). This is observed when Pilar and Consuelo seem to feel that they are just implementing knowledge from outside. However, they do not see themselves as professionals capable of designing appropriate activities for their students and their learning needs, at least concerning listening comprehension. The characteristics of their work contexts may be a relevant component of this feeling because they do not have the support of their school administration teams to propose innovations in their teaching. On the other hand, Rubén and Marion have greater freedom within their schools to change the curriculum and carry out new activities. This caused these teachers to recognize themselves as professionals trained to generate adequate, useful, and effective knowledge for their contexts (Farrell, 2007).

Conclusion and Implications

The conclusions derived from this research show that reflective practice positively impacts a process of change in teachers' beliefs and practices regarding listening comprehension. It is especially favored if certain factors are given: personal, professional development, and specific contextual characteristics. Those teachers who are constantly interested in learning are more willing to take risks when reviewing their teaching.

Moreover, the lack of any of these three factors could hinder a possible transformation since, by being restricted to following purchased plans and not having the support of the school management team to innovate, the desire to learn and question oneself has also deteriorated. Thus, this work demonstrates that reflective practice is indeed a tool that favors the improvement of listening comprehension teaching

because participants incorporated new distinctions and practices in their work.

Regarding the reflective strategies, which were more significant for teachers in provoking a reframing of their beliefs and practices, there was no consensus among the participants. In this way, it is impossible to establish conclusive results since the different stimuli proposed worked differently in each participant.

Considering the foregoing, the pedagogical implications refer to a contribution in the training of English teachers, both initial and continuous, in teaching listening comprehension because the literature indicates that it is an area in which teachers present deficiencies. As a suggestion, it is necessary to design explicit instances of teaching strategies for this skill, such as those proposed by Rost (2013).

Additionally, there is a need to implement reflective strategies that challenge teachers through different questions and approaches, such as those put forward here, to mobilize teachers to rethink their work and favor their learning based on experience.

Finally, another practical implication is related to the application of this study according to the new Teaching Career Act in Chile. In this sense, this research is considered especially important within the framework of this new law (Ley 20903), specifically as a teacher development system, which seeks to promote the professionalization of teachers through the constant strengthening of their role as a key element for guaranteeing student learning. The new law establishes that teachers must have research skills and be knowledgeable about innovation and pedagogical reflection. However, the current Chilean public policy does not give indications for accompanying teachers and administration management teams of educational institutions to implement reflective pedagogical practices.

Furthermore, the limitations of this work are related to the small number of participants and the lack of available literature on the link between reflective practice and listening comprehension. For this reason,

the findings here are rather inductive and arose from the data analysis. In addition, due to its qualitative nature and the number of participants, they do not seek to be generalizable but to establish a deep understanding of the different transformations experienced. Likewise, other possible variables not examined here should also be considered, which may have affected, favored, or hindered the reframing or not of teaching beliefs and practices, such as work situations, professional self-image, economic resources of schools, workload, emotions, personal and family situations, unobserved personal characteristics, the possibility of practicing the language in English-speaking countries, among others.

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