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Maestría Profesional en Lingüística Aplicada



**Perceptions of EOP Student Teachers Regarding Lesson Planning for Adult
Learners during their Practicum at the Master's Program in Applied
Linguistics, Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica**

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Abstract:

Most language instructors that embark in the teaching of English for specific purposes would work with adult learners (Lytovchenko et al., 2018). Lesson planning for this adult participant population remains a relatively unexplored field in ESP teacher training, for andragogy principles should prevail over pedagogical ones. This case study describes the perceptions of two EOP student teachers about lesson planning for adult learners before their teaching practicum in the Master's Program in Applied Linguistics at Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica. The data collection was conducted by means of two semi-structured interviews, two reflective narratives, and a lesson plan document review. Through a thematic analysis, the research project yielded two main themes that resemble how the EOP student teachers perceived lesson planning for adult learners and how they planned the lessons through a set of strategies and activities. Among the findings, it looms the overall perception that lesson planning for adult learners poses several challenges or burdens that language instructors hardly encounter in general English classes. Also, the EOP student teachers employed several strategies to plan lessons, among which a subject matter expert (SME) represented a valuable source of support and guidance through a team-teaching process.

Keywords: English for occupational purposes, adult learners, andragogy principles

Resumen:

La mayoría de los profesores de idiomas que se forman en la enseñanza del inglés con fines específicos podrían trabajar con estudiantes adultos (Lytovchenko et al., 2018). La planificación de lecciones para esta población de participantes adultos sigue siendo un campo relativamente inexplorado en la formación de profesores de inglés con Fines Específicos (ESP), debido a que los principios de la andragogía deben prevalecer sobre los pedagógicos. Este estudio de caso describe las percepciones que dos estudiantes de inglés con Fines Ocupacionales (EOP) sobre la planificación de lecciones para estudiantes adultos antes de su práctica docente en la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada de la Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica. La recolección de datos se realizó por medio de dos entrevistas semiestructuradas, dos narraciones reflexivas y una revisión del documento del plan de clase. A través del análisis temático, el proyecto de investigación arrojó dos temas principales que se asemejan a cómo los futuros profesores de inglés con Fines Ocupacionales (EOP) percibieron la planificación de lecciones para estudiantes adultos y cómo planificaron las lecciones a través de un conjunto de estrategias y actividades. Entre los hallazgos, se destaca la percepción general de que la planificación de lecciones para estudiantes adultos plantea varios desafíos o cargas que los instructores de idiomas difícilmente encuentran en las clases de inglés general. Además, los estudiantes de inglés con Fines Ocupacionales (EOP) emplearon varias estrategias para planificar lecciones, entre las cuales un experto en la materia (SME) representó una valiosa fuente de apoyo y orientación a través de un proceso de enseñanza en equipo.

Palabras clave: inglés con fines ocupacionales, estudiantes adultos, principios de andragogía

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I. Introduction

Student teachers at the Master's Program in Applied Linguistics at Universidad Nacional in Campus Omar Dengo, Costa Rica, can choose to specialize in either the teaching of English as a foreign language or the teaching of English for Specific Purposes ([Article about MPLA - UNA], n.d.). This study focused on those student teachers specializing in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and they fulfilled a practicum during their fourth and last term. Student teachers have to take three key courses before their practicum: Historical Perspectives in ESP, the first term; Needs Analysis (NA), the second term; and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) course design, during the third term. First, the NA course allows student teachers to observe their future participants, their needs, their stakeholders, and the target communicative tasks. Next, the EOP course draws on the NA and empowers student teachers to design the ESP course syllabus that they would later implement during the practicum. In this way, EOP student teachers gain a broader perspective on the model of language curriculum design and its outer and inner components (Macalister & Nation, 2019).

Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) aims to strategically address the students' communicative needs by carrying out a thoughtful needs analysis and craftly course design process (Basturkmen, 2010). Attention is given to target communicative tasks, discourse communities, learners' gaps, learning styles, and proficiency levels, among other factors (Brown, 2016). However, a particular difference among these English language learners is the age when they embark on English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), which posts additional challenges (Cozma, 2015). Evans (2010) emphasizes how handling or lacking professional "registers or jargon can also augment the [adult] speaker's self-image" and involvement in target communities (p. 444). Limited research has been done on how

EOP student teachers handle the fact that adult EOP learners could respond to teaching mediation differently from younger generations.

Problem Statement

EOP practitioners still tend to draw on pedagogical principles (Bocanegra-Valle & Basturkmen, 2019) because most student populations belong to tertiary levels. However, taking a closer look at andragogy and its relationships with EOP remains unexplored when approaching adult learners. This flaw could be a side-effect of what Kakoulli Constantinou and Papadima-Sophocleous (2021) affirm: “the field of ESP Teacher Education (TE) remains neglected” (p. 89). Therefore, a particular interest has risen because most EOP populations are adult language learners who could defy EOP student teachers with very particular challenges due to their age (Hashim & Othman, 2006). Schwarzer (2009) suggests “look at adult learners as whole persons rather than just ESL learners... as parents, spouses, employees or business owners, neighbors, churchgoers, and members of various communities” (p. 28). This concept of the adult learner broadly sense represents a wake-up call because other more personal factors like family life and responsibilities deserve the instructors’ attention due to their clear interference with the teaching and learning processes.

EL instructions may be caught up in hectic schedules, and they could lose track of how relevant their students’ age could be when planning lesson. The careful consideration of the age factor in Second Language Learning (Saville-Troike & Barto, 2016) forces the exploration of how EOP student teachers from the Master’s in Applied Linguistics at Universidad Nacional are approaching and tailoring their adult language learners during lesson planning. As these student teachers attempt to implement the tenets of teaching EOP during their practicum in the graduate program, it would be interesting to discover how they embrace teaching adult learners in their lesson plans. The problem is that most English

teaching methodologies have been developed with children and teenagers in mind without fully addressing adult language learners' needs.

Even during the early stages of needs analysis before designing and launching EOP courses, student teachers start to consider how adult learners approach and perform better in new academic endeavors (Anthony, 2018; Brown, 2016; Woodrow, 2018). The next stage of lesson planning could be problematic for EOP student teachers as to how to suit adult learners' occupational, cognitive, and affective needs. Adult teaching is even more troublesome because most English teaching methodologies have been developed with children, teenagers, and young adults in mind. However, it would be beneficial to find out how EOP student teachers go about with their adult learners during lesson planning because pedagogy differs greatly from andragogy, and lesson planning in an EOP course could require a careful review and consideration of andragogy, the theory of adult learning. This research proposal seeks to unveil how EOP student teachers address lesson planning for adult learners and eventually spark further research.

Purpose Statement

Despite the increasing interest in teaching English for occupational purposes in Costa Rica (Blanco-Navarro, 2021; Chevez, 2009; Córdoba-Cubillo & Navas-Brenes, 2012; Quesada-Pacheco et al., 2019; Yeraldín et al., 2015), most literature reviews yield this problem that practitioners may be neglecting the fact that most EOP language learners are adults. Thus, adult learning principles must be considered (Purwati et al., 2022), for EOP student teachers ought to bear in mind the fact that although adult language learners have invested several years to get their credentials in diverse professional and occupational fields such as accountants, nurses, secretaries, waiters, or waitresses, they still face the challenge to improve their English skills past their youth and risk misunderstanding professional

registers or jargon in the target language (Evans, 2004). Adult language learners may not have devoted the same time and energy to master this foreign language when first majoring in their current professions or occupations, and they may have experienced learning difficulties, anxiety, frustration, and fears of failure or ridicule during previous attempts to master English (Castañeda, 2017). Thus, their urgent goal to use ESP in a particular moment in their lives when they are no longer in their youth also poses EOP student teachers with a problematic scenario to account for these students' cognitive and affective needs in terms of adult learning principles and the age factor (Araujo, 2018). The purpose of this qualitative research project is to describe the way EOP student teachers approach lesson planning for adult English language learners during their practicum in 2022 at the Master's Program of Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica.

Research Questions

1. What are EOP student teachers' perceptions about lesson planning for adult learners?
2. How do the EOP student teachers plan lessons for adult learners?

II. Literature Review

Defining adulthood is a paramount prerequisite in this research project. This term could be defined biologically or legally, but being an adult is more than mating and voting. Most short-term and long-term studies of age in SLA focus on adolescents, older children, and younger children. Researchers have coined terms such as a critical period and ultimate attainment. However, Larsen-Freeman and Long (2014) acknowledged that “a good deal of controversy has been generated around whether the age at which someone is first exposed to a [*sic*] SL... affects acquisition of that language in any way” (p. 274) without clearly defining who an adult learner is. Despite listing age differences in SLA, Saville-Troike, and Barto (2016) also refrained from stating an exact age when an SL learner could be considered an adult.

In this case study, the complexity of determining who is an adult learner would be managed by establishing age boundaries. The United Nations established in the 1985 General Assembly that young adults include individuals with ages between 15 and 24 years of age, a definition that aligns with Arnett’s (2000) term of emerging adults for those individuals with ages under such range. In Costa Rica, citizens over the age of 65 years are considered senior adults. Much debate can occur over to establish what being an adult means, either in or out of SLA research. However, establishing an age range is just an estimation because the social construct of adulthood includes factors associated with economic independence, marriage, parenthood, and others (SNTCWebinars, 2019). For this research, adult English language learners include individuals aged between 25 and 64 years at the moment of attending EOP classes and whose exact age of onset of acquisition (AoA) (Herschensohn, 2013) is disregarded.

Needs Analysis

The departure stage in ESP is to conduct a needs analysis prior to the course design and its implementation. This is because ESP follows a backward-design process or ecological approach to curriculum that is nurtured by the students' needs (Richards, 2017). This initial step is even more critical when the participants are adult learners seeking to improve their English skills in occupational contexts, so EOP student teachers must pick a needs analysis model based on either communicative or linguistic competence (West, 1994). Still, detecting language needs in occupational contexts is not a straightforward process, for it requires deep analysis, adjustments, and even validation before and during the course implementation, as Macalister and Nation (2019) described:

These [needs] are discovered by a variety of means: by testing, by questioning and interviewing, by recalling previous performance, by consulting employers, teachers, and others involved, by collecting data such as textbooks and manuals that learners will have to read and analyzing them, and by investigating the situations where the learners will need to use the language. (p. 5)

These methodological challenges in NA can affect “assuring the validity and reliability of the measurements of the actual status of needs” (Sava, 2012, p. 79). One way to overcome these challenges is to welcome the support and guidance of subject matter experts (SME) in the NA (Cheng, 2015), so the EOP student teachers can surmount any concerns over highly specialized terminology or vocabulary (Guerid & Mami, 2017; Kırkgöz, 2019) and possible in-class subject knowledge dilemmas (Anthony, 2018). Plenty of theoretical principles, time, and energy should be invested to detect adult learners' needs before and during the course implementation.

An SME may contribute during the NA, the course design, and its implementation by reassuring EOP student teachers of their feelings of uncertainty. These language instructors could suffer from imposter syndrome, which embeds individual beliefs of being somehow fraudulent in a field they have little expertise. According to Cisco (2020), “highly-abled people inevitably achieve some sort of professional success and when they do, they likely feel proud of their accomplishments; those suffering from the impostor phenomenon may lack this pride” (p. 4). Certainly, student teachers are not experts in the occupational field in which they are teaching the EOP course. However, the SME has the specialized knowledge to nourish the instructional process and diminish EOP practitioners’ negative feelings related to the imposter syndrome.

Conducting a needs analysis and taking advantage of its findings post-EOP student teachers with many perils. First, adult learners may need help to distinguish among their latent, manifest, intrinsic, and extrinsic needs (Sava, 2012), leaving EOP student teachers with a blurred vision of their occupational needs. Another risk is that adult learners may offer solution statements instead of need statements, for they “prematurely” focus on the solution rather than on the need(s) themselves (Stefaniak, 2020, p. 28). Then, EOP student teachers conducting a NA face another challenge: selecting the type of view on needs and the type of analysis on needs. Brown (2016) listed four viewpoints (democratic, discrepancy, analytic, and diagnostic) and eleven types of analysis on needs (target-situation analysis (TSA), present-situation analysis (PSA), job analysis, performance analysis, cost-benefit analysis, etcetera). On top of these challenges, Khalid (2016) concludes that how a NA unfolds “would be determined by time, money and resources” (p. 41). Therefore, adult learners’ needs may never be fully identified or comprehended, so EOP student teachers should constantly reflect on the NA results during lesson planning.

As EOP student teachers finish the NA stage and approach their practicum, a frequent challenge they may encounter is that “ESP language classes are usually mixed-level classes, where some students might be left behind” (Benmassoud & Bouchara, 2021, p. 177). EOP student teachers must reflect upon certain factors that adult learners struggle with along the learning process, such as age, cognitive skills, family affairs, lack of time, type of behaviors, emotional burdens, aspirations, learning styles, and workloads. This fact calls for more attention to individual differences during lesson planning (Brown & Lee, 2015), for this is a strategic stage (Damayanti, 2020) in which even “urgent” needs should be prioritized (Guerid & Mami, 2017, p. 775). Regarding lesson plans, Jensen (2001) affirmed that “[adult] students need to understand the rationale for each activity” (p. 406), for they come to the class with lots of expectations about classroom procedures of what a productive instructional environment would be like (Cozma, 2015, p. 1211). However, prevailing English teaching methodologies have been developed with children, adolescents, and young adults in mind. Therefore, the fact that adult learners learn in different ways compared to younger generations challenges student teachers to have new perspectives about being aware of their needs. Some of the adult learner principles that cannot be avoided are the adult “readiness to learn” and “self-direction”, because they want to perform effectively in their jobs and take control of their own lives (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 294). Adult learning became a research field early in the twentieth century, and its foundation and principles have steadily professed since its early stages.

Attempts that brought up the concept of andragogy were first just isolated theories. Knowles et al. (2020) can provide an overview of the historical development of andragogy. In an early publication titled *Informal Adult Education* in 1950, Knowles also concluded that adults progress most if learning environments are more informal, welcoming, adaptable, and

supportive. Next, the first conception of andragogy was introduced in 1967 by Savicevic. Later, Knowles wrote *Andragogy, Not Pedagogy*, in 1968. Thus, research studies on the distinctive features of adult learners started taking place over fifty years ago.

The term *andragogy* has been popularized since it strictly considers adult interests and learning motivations. The differences between pedagogy and andragogy have led to identifying of adult learners' characteristics worth paying attention to. Knowles et al. (2020) indicated that the andragogical model is founded upon the following adult learning assumptions: the need to know, the learners' self-concept, the role of the learners' experiences, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation. This is a response to adults' needs for a flexible learning environment that can propitiate hands-on experiences where self-direction occurs as adult learners match their experiences with new knowledge.

These assumptions differ from the views of young learners on which traditional pedagogy is premised. Yet, other authors like Hägg and Kurczewska (2019) suggested that “a dualistic view of both andragogy and pedagogy is needed” (p. 131) for emerging adults – ages 18 to 29 as defined by Arnett (2000). On the other hand, Bocianu and Radler's case study (2018) supported the following:

...the importance of making the difference between pedagogy and andragogy in the instruction process for adult education in general and ESP in our case, with a focus on adapting the adult learners' instructional strategies as suitable to meet both their needs and those of national and international labor markets. (p. 70)

Implementing andragogy within ESP contexts has already taken place, though not fully explored.

Development of Andragogy Principles

These andragogy principles are distinctive from the pedagogical model in which traditional learning takes place. Adult learners are independent while children entrust their language teacher “to take full responsibility for making the decisions about what is to be learned” (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 61). Designing lesson plans for adults requires a careful selection of meaningful activities that can lead to an experiential learning process that Kolb (2005) described as “an idealized learning cycle or spiral where the learner touches all the bases-experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting-in a recursive process that is responsive to the learning situation and what is being learned” (p. 194). Thus, English language instruction for adult learners could become valuable and meaningful as long as the lesson is shaped by their previous life experiences, based upon their learning styles, designed according to their needs, and launched towards problem-solving tasks; ESP instruction also seems to take advantage of these aspects.

Lesson planning for adults includes many tasks that are often cyclical. Having a general overview of these processes can guide the EOP student teachers. Knowles et al. (2005) indicated that an andragogical endeavor includes the following steps:

preparing the learners, considering the physical and psychological climate setting, involving the learners in planning for their learning, involving their learners in diagnosing their own needs for learning, involving the learners in formulating their own learning objectives, involving the learners in designing learning plans, helping the learners to carry out their learning plans, and involving the learners in evaluating their own learning outcomes. (p. 295)

In this way, an effective EOP practitioner should consider adults’ life experiences, interests, and needs. These components should be seen as the core gear to design, assess, and evaluate

their ESP lesson plan in an interdisciplinary and collaborative way because both adult learners and language facilitators contribute to the learning process. This is cooperative work because these parties can negotiate instructional tasks, prepare materials, create a meaningful learning environment, and assess the entire process. In a sense, cooperation between ESP and the ESP client population resembles an andragogical process.

Self-Direction

The adult learning principle of self-direction is based upon the adult learners' want and need to take ownership of their learning. Self-directed adult learners see themselves in charge of their education and move forward to constructing new knowledge in any possible way. For this reason, EOP student teachers could strategically boost adult learning self-direction by developing participants' learning-to-learn skills. Blumberg (2009) mentioned that "these skills include determining a personal need to know more, knowing whom to ask or where to seek information, determining when a need is met, and development of self-awareness of one's own learning abilities" (p. 133). Indeed, adult learners' involvement and ownership can occur in ESP settings from the beginning stages when a needs analysis is conducted. ESP student teachers should consider the active participation of adult learners in determining their needs, arranging lesson plans, conducting tasks, and assessing the processes (Merriam et al., 2006, p. 85). Self-direction is clearly an andragogy principle that may be implicitly followed and implemented in ESP settings.

Adult Readiness to Learn

Another andragogy principle from Knowles is the "adult readiness to learn." While children may not realize what contents or skills they are missing, adult learners can quickly identify what they should learn and focus on that. In this sense, Knowles (2005) declares: "Their readiness to learn may be stimulated by helping them to assess the gaps between where

they are now and where they want and need to be” (p. 294). Thus, ESP language instructors could act as leaders to guide adult learners as they discover and recognize what those areas of improvement are. The adult readiness to learn allows the learner and professor to work together and recreate the path to reach the learners’ goals and guarantee the desired outcomes.

Adult Motivation

Adult motivation to learn represents an andragogy principle too. EOP student teachers should conceive adult learners as highly motivated participants because their jobs and chances of supporting their families act as both external and internal motivational factors. According to Dirkx (2001), experiential learning nurtures the adults’ emotions to boost engagement and self-knowledge as these learners internalize what is (as cited in Zeivots 2016, p. 356). In addition, adult learners will be highly motivated if they are offered constant recognition and praise over their life experiences and accomplishments within their occupational or professional contexts. Peterson and Kolb (2018) mentioned: “It is not experience, but experiencing that is the source of learning...Through a Gestalt perspective, we accept that learning and change can only occur when the individual perception and meaning-making are interrupted” (p. 288). The adult learners’ emotions would play an important role in any educational endeavor because these participants are often goal-oriented whenever there is a chance to grow professionally, have a better quality of life, boost self-confidence, increase self-esteem, or achieve further recognition.

EOP student teachers should consider adult learners’ aspirations instead of their limitations or burdens. Most motivation rests on the extent to which adults can contribute to being the protagonists of their learning by enriching the class with real-life experiences (Peterson & Kolb, 2018). Adults remain highly aware that any academic journey represents better salary and job opportunities. Furthermore, Knowles et al. (2005) also stated that adult

learners are “oriented to learn after they experience a need in their life situation,” thus benefiting more from problem-solution and task-centered methodologies (p. 294). Significantly, Manolis et al. (2012) explained: “Interactions refers to the degree to which an experience relates to the goals of an individual. In experiential education, students’ personal experiences come to the forefront” (p. 45). Most adults would eagerly put into practice at their jobs what they learn and experience in workshops or training sessions, so the instructional activities in an EOP lesson plan for adults have to be relevant to their needs and occupational contexts.

These core principles that andragogy sets for adult learning could enlighten EOP student teachers as they design and implement lesson plans that most effectively address adult learners’ interests and needs. Traditional EFL settings in elementary schools, high schools, or even tertiary levels could explicitly offer a rigid, official curriculum, but ESP projects involve more adult learners and call for flexibility. In this sense, Lindenman and Dewel (1926) claimed:

In conventional education the student is required to adjust himself to an established curriculum; in adult education, the curriculum is built around the students’ needs and interests. Every adult person finds himself in specific situations with respect to his work, his recreation, his family life, his community life, and other situations which call for adjustments. (as cited in Knowles et al., 2020, p. 37)

This premise calls on EOP student teachers to consider andragogy principles in depth when designing lesson plans. In this regard, Schwarzer (2009) suggested seven other fundamental principles that reinforce the whole-person approach as part of a holistic perspective. These principles include notions that are somehow ingrained in EOP: authentic learning, curriculum

negotiation, inquiry-based lessons, language learning, a developmental process, alternative assessment, and community of learners (p. 28).

In addition, EOP student teachers shall consider that some adult learners may be resuming their studies and competing with younger generations regarding job demands and new career opportunities. To a certain extent, adult learners find themselves competing for job openings simultaneously, so learning English is a valuable tool in this pursuit. Castañeda (2017) explained that there are “growing motivational, personal or affective difficulties that unemployed adult learners are currently facing in the English subject when they decide to retake their studies” (p. 136). Within an accelerated globalized economy, adult learners are certainly resuming their English language studies that help them fulfill the current demands in the labor market. However, an important reminder is that “adult ESL students in community programs are a shifting population; they move and change jobs often, and their motivation to learn ESL also transforms and evolves with the changes they face in their lives outside the classroom” (Schwarzer, 2009, p. 27). Still, employment is intrinsically linked to English learning for most adults.

Along this journey of learning English, adult learners often have to cope with many daily life affairs, personal responsibilities, and even a lack of technological skills. These side or parallel tasks are often time-consuming, so Yao (2019) stressed that adult learners “have stronger self-control [but] their study time is fragmented” (p. 120). This fact has also led Tarnopolsky (2016) to establish other three principles of teaching English to adults, and these could guide EOP student teachers: considering learners’ attitudes to the methods of teaching English, limited intensiveness of the teaching/learning process, and avoiding home tasks (pp. 10-12). Lesson planning in EOP settings represents a decision-making process in which instructors cannot dismiss such key adult learning principles. Moreover, their adulthood,

participants clearly struggle to invest their time in formal education, so their EOP instructors seem to have no other choice but to make the adjustments to decrease both the number of direct classroom instructions and assignments.

Therefore, language instruction within general English (GE) and ESP settings should carefully explore the link between andragogy and strategic lesson planning according to adult learners' needs and motivations (Manangsa et al., 2020). Finding and abiding by their needs and motivations could be considered as the trademark in ESP. According to Constantinou and Papadima-Sophocleous (2021), one of the first steps is to realize that “the learning outcomes are decided based on the learners' needs, and these determine the curriculum” (p. 94). Benmassoud and Bouchara (2021) agreed that students' needs should be a priority as teachers plan their lessons, order the activities, and choose the materials. Certainly, EOP planning processes can be enriched by considering mature learners' skills, motivations, and behavioral characteristics; for example, the EOP student teachers can take advantage of their adult participants' experiences and “identify [language learning] strategies used by adult learners” (Hashim et al., 2018, p. 40) to plan instruction that can contribute to task operationalization within their daily life duties. However, lesson planning challenges EOP student teachers because “adult learners come to the English lesson with lots of expectations about the learning procedures and in the case, these expectations are not accomplished they may become critical towards the new environment of instruction” (Cozma, 2015, p. 1211). This type of student rejection must be avoided at all costs with adults because they can drop out and stop attending classes.

Another key aspect to consider when drafting lesson plans for EOP adult learners is their multi-level language proficiency. There is an increasing frequency for adults to resume their English classes. Despite having a basic or medium level of English, they need to

remember some vocabulary, gain fluency, or increase their accuracy while using this foreign language. This leads to mixed-level classroom settings (Benmassoud & Bouchara, 2021), where adult learners may be trying to remember what they had previously learned. Thus, EOP student teachers could encounter what Quynh-Na (2007) described as adult learners with diverse proficiency levels, paces of learning, educational background, learning strategies, learning behaviors, learning aims, and expectations. Kurbanova and Ataeva (2020) affirmed that “the methodological basis of multilevel training is individualization, a differentiated level of requirements, a high level of the proposed material, a multilevel system for testing” (p. 721). *Tiered tasks* are a common type of accommodation to address multi-level populations (Bowler & Parminter, 2016, p. 59). Quynh-Na (2007) stressed that the entire group of students might work on “the same project, text, teaching material,” but each student will get a customized or tailored task “that is appropriate for their [English proficiency] level” (p. 311). Lesson planning for adult learners in EOP settings is linked to the student teacher’s success to handle the fact that there most likely would be multiple language proficiency levels in their classes.

A departure consideration in lesson planning is to review the differences between younger and adult learners, which some authors have been arranged into three categories. Cozma (2015) enumerated cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral characteristics to be considered when teaching adults (p. 73). In terms of cognitive factors, Park and Reuter-Lorenz (2009) and Reuter-Lorenz and Cappell (2008), they have suggested the scaffolding theory of aging and cognition (STAC) as “a process present across the lifespan that involves the use and development of complementary, alternative neural circuits to achieve a particular cognitive goal” (as cited in Castañeda, 2017, p. 318). There is a clear connection between cognitive and attitudinal issues since this STAC mechanism was highlighted as a great way

to increase adult learners' motivation and predisposition to learn. This link between cognitive and attitudinal factors leads us to reflect on adult-learner brain plasticity. Leuner and Gould (2010) studied how structural plasticity changes in the brain over the years and reminded us that as we age, our capacity to grow new neurons diminishes. Student teachers should consider these neurological differences between young and old participants.

It has been widely accepted that language learners, especially adults, can be easily frustrated if their affective filter is blocked. EOP student teachers could design and implement lesson plans in which cognitive and affective factors are carefully considered to reduce anxiety, fear, insecurity, or low self-esteem. Even within a blended learning environment, EOP student teachers could benefit from what Yao (2017) indicated that adult learners tend to accomplish and display the traits of overcoming learning anxieties, cultivating autonomous learning abilities, and fostering the ability to choose their learning strategies. It is important to consider their learning styles to further ease these negative feelings. In regard to experiential learning theory (ELT), Kolb and Kolb (2005) mentioned that "learning styles are influenced by personality type, educational specialization, career choice, and current job roles and tasks" (p. 195). Therefore, student teachers who are mindful of adult learners' styles and characteristics would ingrain these aspects in their lesson plans.

Regarding language learning, younger students could be cognitively faster at processing information and better at pronunciation due to working memory (WM) and short-term phonological memory (PSTM) (Mackey & Sachs, 2012, p. 709). Thus, Araujo (2018) advised that novice adult learners be encouraged not to do the following: write every idea down before expressing it aloud and analyze every single language component (p. 66). This author also suggested language teachers offer these students with manageable amounts of content and information. Instead, adult learning could be more effective when teachers foster

question-asking and answering, problem finding, and problem-solving (Hashim & Othman, 2006, p. 11).

Nonetheless, several authors affirm that adult learners can achieve high levels of proficiency in a foreign language. First, Shevchenko (2015) even claimed that “there is no tough connection between age and success in acquiring a foreign language intonation” (p. 612). Adult learners tend to acquire more solid knowledge despite their need for “a more repetitive and slower learning” (Castañeda, 2019, p. 319). Next, Cozma (2015) described adults as more cooperative learners in spite of their low levels of energy due to their multiple responsibilities (pp. 2011-1212). Finally, Tripathy (2019) claimed there is a “distaste of adult learners toward English sounds.” If the mastery of basic English sounds were reached, EOP student teachers would “boost their [adult learners’] confidence in carrying out daily conversations” (p. 103). Overall, their chances to improve their English language skills should be seen as high and achievable, regardless of their age.

Thus, it is interesting to see how adult learners are totally capable of learning the target language despite the challenges individuals may have as they grow older. In formal educational settings, adults have the lead over younger learners. Herschensohn (2013) claimed that adult learners have the upper hand in a higher AoA (Age of Onset of Acquisition) due to “more developed cognitive skills and academic strategies that furnish an advantage in instructed language learning” (p. 323). Although English language instructors may not have realized it, their older students are ahead of younger pupils because of higher cognition and studying tactics they have already acquired earlier in life.

Nonetheless, an affective and cognitive implication of teaching adult learners is that they usually repeat and fossilize errors, thus most likely falling into an emotional struggle. Castañeda (2017) acknowledged that “this limitation leads to fears of ridicule when speaking

in public and a sharp decrease in confidence and self-esteem, which affects the possible satisfactory outcome of any communicative learning strategy” (p. 140). As EOP student teachers offer feedback or assessment, they must carefully select the best strategies to correct their adult learners’ errors. Macalister and Nation (2020) suggested monitoring and assessment as ways to keep track of what students do; they pointed out monitoring as an informal way of observing learners’ outcomes that do not involve testing (p. 231). Similarly, this in-class observation contributes to meaningful error analysis and friendly feedback by means of recasts and other techniques. A non-threatening class environment suits adult learners.

For this reason, elaborating the objectives or mediation activities within an EOP lesson plan could result from a profound analysis of such affective factors. A way to overcome fossilization and emotional burdens is to follow Bocanegra-Valle and Basturkmen’s (2019) advice on providing adult students with accurate materials adapted to their target needs, a strategic move that prioritizes motivation and self-direction. In this sense, Crawford (2002) emphasized how “Materials must contextualize the language they present” to empower students to fully comprehend the language exchanges (p. 84). Therefore, a pertinent component of the EOP student teacher’s role in lesson planning is finding relevant, authentic, and interesting materials. These sources facilitate interaction with accurate language usage and a chance to boost self-esteem as they can easily understand the contextualized materials. Because of the particular language interactions that take place in occupational contexts, adult learners would benefit greatly from tailor-made materials in terms of error correction and lower emotional burdens. On the other hand, Aguilar (2016) advocated, in the midst of remote learning, that “the interactive nature of emergent technologies and this characteristic can be used to enhance student learning” (p. 488). Virtual

learning could support adult participants as well because traditional materials like reading passages should be carefully analyzed. In this respect, Chacón 2012 suggested that ESP texts need to be relevant and raise the reader's interest, proposing a material selection criterion based on authenticity, relevancy, difficulty level, length, and appearance (p. 8).

Another factor to consider and take advantage of when planning EOP classes is adult learners' life experiences. Early on, Lyndenmman (1926) emphasized that "adult orientation to learning is life-centered, and adult learners are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy" (as cited in Knowles et al., 2014, p. 40). Quynh-Na (2007) favored even a focus on "a certain topic in daily lives, rather than focusing on language skills" (p. 311). In this sense, Hashim and Othman (2006) suggested including learners' experiences in their content syllabus, negotiating content with them, creating good rapport, and conducting peer evaluation. ESP hosts a very special teacher-student relationship called shared expertise because "learners are likely to have more experience than the teacher in the specific area being targeted" (Hall, 2012, p. 1). This shared expertise empowers EOP student teachers to overcome possible obstacles within the language learning process (Bocanegra-Valle & Basturkmen, 2019, p. 137). Moreover, Purwati et al. (2022) argued that "teachers should explore and understand adults' experiences as this information plays an essential role in assisting adult learners to meet their needs" (p. 3). After all, adult learners' enthusiasm for language learning could increase even more in an EOP context as long as they play this active role of sharing and reflecting on their expertise and life experiences.

When EOP student teachers take advantage of their adult learners' life experiences, a sense of belonging starts to develop. Schwarzer (2009) suggested establishing a "Community of Learners" to boost student investment and commitment "when they feel welcome and part

of a caring learning community” (p. 26). Making the adult learner feel at home builds on their class involvement by letting them share their own culture; this can help adult students take ownership of the learning environment. Conversely, Dufour et al. 2010 mentioned that “the very essence of a learning community is a focus on and a commitment to the learning of each student” (p. 11). This integrative, collaborative view generates much more meaningful experiences within the EOP lesson plan, that could further boost adult learners’ motivation and language skills (Pontón & Fernández, 2014). Zeivots (2016) characterized “emotional highs as inner deep satisfaction learner experiences when they have absorbed something meaningful” (p. 368). Even in remote learning, EOP practitioners can devise virtual environments and provide new community-building opportunities. As part of a case study within a Chinese context, Yao (2017) affirmed that a blended learning environment could decrease adult learners’ anxieties and promote autonomy. However, this may not be true within the Costa Rican context.

In conclusion, EOP student teachers will encounter many factors with adult learners during their practicum. As part of their ESP teaching and teacher education (Papadima-Sophocleous et al., 2019), this research proposal would shed light on how EOP student teachers perceive and adjust their lesson plans for their adult learners during their practicum. Certainly, the effectiveness of andragogy principles still needs to be tested and studied in depth because all adult populations can be varied in EOP settings. Implementing the tenets of a new language teaching methodology requires constant revision of “the resources to support the change, the people involved in the change, and the people who will receive the ultimate benefit of the change” (Macalister & Nation, 2020, p. 201). In this regard, some of the aspects of EOP lesson plans worth examination and on reflection include their methodological choices (Richards & Rodgers, 2002), traits of eclectic methodology

(Mwanza, 2019), the incorporation of the six components of assessment (Gallavan, 2009), learning-oriented assessment (Jones & Saville, 2016), and eventually the “special focus on [productive skills] based on the specificity of each ESP class” (Benmassoud & Bouchara, 2021, p. 177). Because syllabus implementation through lesson plans is just a component into a broader model of language curriculum design (Macalister & Nation, 2019), EOP student teachers could grow as professionals by reflecting on their teaching practices (Farrell, 2018) and their effectiveness with adult learners’ needs in mind.

III. Methodology

Methodology and Research Design

The methodology for this study aligns with the epistemological framework of constructivism. This choice reflects the meaning-making process that often takes place within qualitative research endeavors. Among the vast array of qualitative research designs, the problem and research questions here will be approached from a case study methodological stand, specifically with a single-case (holistic) study design (Yin, 2018). Case studies aim to obtain information about an event or phenomenon in a specific context. This case study focuses on understanding this phenomenon of how EOP student teachers plan for adult learners from a humanistic and interpretive perspective because qualitative methods neither manipulate nor control. In the problem statement section, a unit of study or bounded system (Mills & Gay, 2018) has been defined as how student teachers address adult learners while planning instruction for an EOP course during their practicum. This research proposal would comply with the five interrelated steps in the process of qualitative data collection as established by Creswell (2012): identification of participants and sampling strategy, gaining access and permissions, determining information needed to answer the research questions, designing protocols, collecting and recording information, and complying with ethical issues.

Context and Population

Sampling Strategy

The participants were EOP colleagues from the Master's Program in Applied Linguistics who worked on an NA in 2021 and their course design early in 2022. The selection of the participants was criterion-based sampling (Shaheen et al., 2019) because only EOP student teachers fulfilled the requirement of working with adult learners, and these language instructors may have been considering the needs of "whole adult learners"

(Schwarzer, 2009, p. 28) and planning accordingly. Further screening of these initial candidates took place through a brief survey that was designed based on “a set of operational criteria whereby candidates will be deemed qualified to serve as cases” (Yin, 2019, p. 145).

Such criteria included:

- Two female participants were chosen for this study in order to gather perspectives on the research questions
- Participants were younger than twenty-six years of age
- Participants had under four years of professional teaching experiences
- Participants were going to teaching adult learners with ages over 25 years during the ESP teaching practicum.
- There were more than five adult learners in the participants’ classes.

Data Collection

Primary sources included two semi-structured interviews with the EOP student-teachers, two reflective narratives, and two lesson plans to be implemented during the first month of their practicum – either in August or September 2022. These initial perceptions towards lesson planning for adult learners represented the departure of the interaction with this participant population, and these early perceptions might have evolved and changed as ESP student teachers interacted more with their adult learners. As qualitative data were gathered through these three data collection methods, further inductive coding and interpretation stages took place to construct knowledge around the unit of study or bounded system (Mills & Gay, 2018), of ESP lesson planning for adult learners.

These instruments provided freedom to the respondents to express their perspectives, expand on the topic, and provide reliable and broad data. In the same way, “semi-structured interviews steer the interview yet allow for flexibility” (Whitehead, 2013, p. 128). The

researchers strongly believed that during the second stage, the information may have been more detailed, extended, and complex because participants already had taught their first lesson, which contributed to data representativeness and authenticity.

Interviews

The strongest criticism against semi-structured interviews has come from the tendency that some researchers may show “an unreflexive rush to opt for semi-structured formats” (Mann, 2016, p. 91) or interviews in qualitative research. However, that was not the case in this study because an interview protocol and matrix were designed (See Appendix #1) by taking into consideration the Interview Protocol Refinement Framework proposed by Castillo-Montoya (2016). Validation with experts on adult learners and andragogy occurred before this instrument was implemented. Because there were two researchers in this case study, one researcher conducted the interviews while the other one took notes and observed. This decision was made considering the researchers’ previous experiences. During the interviews, the researchers bore in mind that “case study interviews will resemble guided conversations rather than structured queries” (Yin, 2018, p. 160). The interview inquiries were carefully chosen to promote a smooth transition between different types of introductory, transition, key and closing questions as part of an “inquiry-based conversation” (Castillo-Montoya, 2016, p. 824). Interview transcripts were done following a template (See Appendix #2).

The interview was conducted through computer mediated communication (CMC), specifically the Zoom video conferencing tool, because research had showed that its usage and benefits “outweighed the challenges encountered” (Archibald et al., 2019, p. 5). The degree of formality was high because these “interviews are planned/scheduled, and consent forms are signed beforehand” (Mann, 2016, p. 92)

Although there was a set of guiding questions, the subject's response gave the researcher the flexibility to pose more enhanced questions than the initially drafted ones (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017, p. 89).

Reflective Narratives

Reflective narratives from participants were the second data collection instrument in this case study. Akinbode (2013) mentioned, "if the purpose of a narrative is to promote communication and meaning-making, a narrative of experience can be of greater value than official reports" (p. 64). The researchers considered this source as a data collection tool and as a way for participants to engage with the research process. Thus, participants provided information from their experiences designing lesson plans and delivering a class. The reflective narratives could have lowered the participants' anxiety that they may have faced during the direct interviews. In this way, student teachers were able to take a private moment to freely video record their reflections. Regarding reflective narratives analysis, Liamputtong (2009) stated,

The researchers must familiarize themselves with the content and structure of the narratives by reading and re-reading the transcript closely. They should look for some crucial aspects of the narratives, for example, events, experiences, feelings, images, meanings, reactions, accounts, explanations, or excuses. (p. 136)

In this respect, the researchers examined the narratives' transcripts, coded accordingly into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and grasped every detail from participants' meaning-making reflection. Once the transcripts of the first reflective narrative were coded, the researchers had an opportunity to "further inform subsequent data collection. For example, [the second reflective narrative and] interview schedules may be slightly modified in light of emerging findings, where additional clarification may be required" (Burnard et al., 2008, p. 430). For

this reason, the reflective narratives could have expanded the initially collected information from preliminary semi-structured interviews (see Appendix #3).

Lesson Plan Document Review

Lesson plans were a valuable source of information in this case study, and these teaching tools fall into the documentation as a source of evidence in case studies. Participants would arrange detailed lesson plans for their ESP classes, where adult learners would participate. In this sense, Yin (2019) mentioned that “For case study research, the most important use of documentation is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources” (p. 157). Therefore, lesson plans were a useful source of data to triangulate the thematic units and codes emerging from the other two data collection instruments of interviews and reflective narratives (see Appendix #4).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was done through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) as part of an inductive process of “building patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom-up... organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information” (Creswell, 2013, p. 38). This means researchers refrained from deductive coding and a fixed list of thematic units. Researchers in this case study considered what Burnard et al. (2008) claimed about the researchers’ role to move from the initial descriptions in the data gathered into the actual exploration and interpretation. By keeping a coding journal (see Appendix #5), each researcher was expected to record their initial insights as they assemble the data. Then, the coding process started to take place, which “is an interpretative act” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Saldaña, 2021), and a manual of codes were arranged (see Appendix #6) separately by each researcher first. Later on, both researchers virtually met through Zoom in order to exchange their codes and collaboratively arrange a final codebook manual. Then, researchers

followed a spiral process of thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2006), and triangulation was done the three data collection instruments.

Ethical Issues

As stated at the beginning of this methodological framework, ethical issues were carefully considered throughout the research project, starting with establishing research questions, elaborating interview matrixes, participant validation through member-checking, and even in the last stage of publication. Every step of the research was monitored under Yin's (2018) case study tactics to address construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability will be followed. Informed consent agreements were sent to the participants through email for them to read carefully, sign digitally, and submit to the MPLA head office (See Appendix # 7).

Trustworthiness

The relationship with the participants and the researchers was close because we were classmates in the master's program. Although this closeness may represent a drawback as researchers could become biased and alter the participants' insights, it provided the opportunity to gain their trust, gather more reliable data, and enrich data collection. Thus, the researchers' role was as insiders and members of a community of practice as ESP student-teachers.

To briefly state the researchers' positionality contributed to the development of qualitative research. Researchers who engage in reflexivity are more likely to shape their positionality, thus becoming more aware of their preconceptions, roles as insiders or outsiders, and their influences in the research process (Darwin-Holmes, 2020). The following positionality statements offered some insights into the researchers carrying out this case study.

Researcher: Milady Liseth Esquivel Ibarra

I began as a teacher in 2002, teaching students of all ages from kindergarten ages, adolescents, and adults up to 67 years old. I had the opportunity to teach (GE) at MEP for more than 10 years, especially to adults at a night school in Liceo Nocturno Hermán Lopez Hernández, Plan Modular, Nuevas Oportunidades, and Educación abierta at IPEC (Instituto Profesional de Educación Comunitaria) also, in private institutions with children and adolescents. Besides these teaching experiences, I had the opportunity to work in Bilingual Schools for more than 8 years teaching Science to elementary using Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). In addition, I have worked at CEIC (Centro de Estudios de Idiomas Conversacionales de la Universidad Nacional), specifically with the Communicative approach (CLT), for more than five years. I am currently teaching at INA (Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje) in a program called Inglés Conversacional para el Sector Empresarial. My passion for ESP started in 2018 when I was requested to teach accounting students at Saint Thomas Institute a course. When I started teaching this course, I realized that their program was based on GE, not ESP. Then, I was offered to create a new program aligned with the accounting topics that the specialist teacher was teaching. Students liked the change, and they immediately got engaged in the process.

Researcher: Randal Esteban Blanco Navarro

My teaching practices have resembled, to a certain extent Content-Based Instruction (CBI), more specifically, the use of the Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol (SIOP), because of my three-year cultural teacher exchange experience in North Carolina. The methodological principles guided both my pull-out ESL classes and inclusion classes with math, social studies, and language arts instructors in a middle school. Without realizing I was getting acquainted with CBI and SIOP for three years, so now I seek the relevance of these

methodological choices to approach ESP courses in my current teaching position as a college instructor in the southern region.

After teaching English for 22 years, the field of English for Specific Purposes has become the next frontier or challenge. ESP, along with my passion for sports fishing have been fueling sources behind four college extension projects I have developed since 2015. In these projects, adult participants have prevailed in the GE and ESP courses that I have taught. Having witnessed how adult learners struggle with traditional English classes, my research interest in this population has grown. I have experienced first-hand that adult language learners represent a very special group of ESP participants.

IV. Presentation and Analysis of Results

Data Coding and Analysis

The results of this study were elaborated by transcribing, coding, describing, categorizing, and analyzing two semi-structured interviews and two reflective narratives. These data collection instruments were administered to ESP student teachers who delivered an EOP course for call center agents needing improving customer service skills. The research informants were teaching EOP client participants ages between 25 to 40 years old. After collecting the data, the interview and reflective narrative recordings were transcribed using the online software Otter.ai. We carefully reviewed these transcriptions, listened to the recordings several times, and corrected typos. Then, our professor reader revised them as well. After this transcription process, we met regularly to work together through Zoom We manually coded the interview and reflective narrative transcripts using the following tools: a code template, a codebook, a codebook log, and analytic memos.

We implemented a strategy during our coding sessions. Because the main trait of outstanding qualitative research is the possibility “to draw interpretations and be consistent with the data that is collected” (Ibrahim, 2012, p. 40), our goal has been to vividly reflect how the informants construct their interpretations, perceptions, and insights around the research questions and unit of study, or bounded system (Mills & Gay, 2018), of ESP lesson planning for adult learners. To grasp a closer sense of what the informants expressed, we listened to each recording again, followed along the transcript sections being played, analyzed in depth what the interviewee was saying, and proceeded to code accordingly.

During the first data reduction phase, we broke down the interview transcripts into smaller segments with an initial list of codes. As a result, we obtained three hundred and eleven codes. These codes were grouped into two documents: a coding template and a

codebook. The coding template format consisted of five columns that indicated the line or page coded, the quote of each specific code transcription, the code itself, and another space for notes. The code book also had different columns where the codes were written. Next to each code, the corresponding description and transcription quote were included. The coding process lasted about fifty-eight hours, and every meeting was documented on a code book log. The insights of both researchers were included in a personal analytical memo.

We implemented elemental coding methods in this first phase of data reduction because the research questions in this study led us to identify what the EOP student teachers' perception about lesson planning for adult learners were and traced how these student teachers plan lessons for adult learners. For this reason, the prevailing types of codes were descriptive and process; just a few of them were In Vivo codes. We were cautious of Saldana's (2016) concern about "choosing Descriptive Coding as a default method" (p. 76), for the aim of this study goes well beyond listing subtopics but construing meaning out of the informants' perspectives instead. Given our interest in how EOP student teachers plan their lessons for adult learners, the most appropriate type of coding was the process or action coding. Almost all of these process codes start with a gerund. The relevance of process coding for a study like ours has been summarized by Saldaña (2016) in this way: "Processes also imply actions intertwined with the dynamics of time, such as those things that emerge, chance, occur in particular sequences, or become strategically implemented through time" (p. 111). Our informants have been applying in their practicum a new English language approach, referred to as ESP, and for an adult participant population, so process coding was the most appropriate coding choice for us to comprehend how these student teachers make meaning out of their planning process in this educational setting.

On the other hand, another data collection method was the participants' first EOP lesson plan. This instrument was analyzed using a checklist in which the researchers corroborated evidence of other possible interconnected categories and themes. This instrument helped to triangulate the previous data collection.

As part of the thematic analysis and further stages of data reduction (Ibrahim, 2012), the researchers re-read the codes and descriptions in order to search for patterns and start grouping similar codes into categories. Categories were finally arranged into four initial themes. To manipulate the qualitative data, we arranged all of the codes, categories, and themes in an Excel document to speed sorting. After each theme and category was named, both researchers reviewed, discussed, and analyzed these preliminary results with their professor to ensure that themes and categories were self-explanatory, informative, concise, and catchy (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 67). Once the codes were closely connected into categories and these into themes, we proceeded to define and describe each theme and category, organizing the results and making connections for the analysis. The themes found were EOP student teachers' reflections on adult learning lesson planning and strategies to suit EOP lesson plans for adult learners.

Results

According to the results, codes were grouped into several categories that portray the student teacher's perceptions about planning lessons for adult learners and how they actually proceed to plan lessons. These categories responded to both research questions: What are the teacher's perceptions about lesson planning for adult learners? How do the EOP student teachers plan lessons for adult learners? The categories were then embedded into two themes. In light of the first research question, we named the first theme—"EOP Student Teachers' Reflections on Adult Learning Lesson Planning." The second theme answered the second

research question, and we entitled it: “Strategies to Suit EOP Lesson Plan for Adult Learners.” We proceeded then to offer further explanations with explicit references to the research informants’ claims during the interviews and reflective narratives. The corresponding categories for each theme are displayed in these charts.

Table 1

Results of Research Question 1

Categories	Theme
Cognition and pronunciation burdens	EOP Student Teachers’ Reflections on Adult Learning Lesson Planning
Feelings and emotional burdens	
Time management and responsibilities	
Job demands and income goals	
High level of language proficiency burdens	
Personalities and learning styles burdens	
Technology burdens	
A lack of adult learning theory	
Previous teaching experiences	
A lack of EOP lesson plan procedures for adult learners	

Table 2*Results to Research Question 2*

Categories	Theme
A Needs Analysis	
MPLA Professors' Recommendations	
Time Constraint Management	
Material Design	Strategies to Suit EOP Lesson Plan for Adult Learners
Formative Assessment	
Affective and Cognitive Support	
Open Communication	
Avoid In-Class Recreational Games	
Learners' Opinions and Validation	
Task-Based Language Teaching	
Subject Matter Expert (SME) Support	
Effective Team Teaching	

EOP Student Teachers' Reflections on Adult Learning Lesson Plan

This theme captures a set of reflections that the EOP student teachers have expressed about what lesson planning for adult learners has meant to them. These reflections, which are mainly challenges or burdens about planning lessons for adult learners, clearly answer the first research question about what the EOP student teachers' perceptions are. Moreover, their insights illustrate several challenges and burdens that we have grouped into ten categories, shaping up this first theme.

Cognition and pronunciation burdens

This category refers to the EOP student teacher's consideration of adulthood issues in terms of their cognitive difficulties in internalizing the new language, learn vocabulary,

pronounce correctly, and completing tasks in a certain period. According to the interviewed student teachers, adults process information more slowly due to age. Similar difficulties are faced when they utter words in English. For example, one of the interviewees mentioned that she had “to teach pronunciation courses to adults,” and she noticed how adult learners struggle to pronounce new sounds. As a result, she would expect her EOP participants to face pronunciation burdens; she was planning strategic activities that could reduce these adult learners’ frustration and anxiety when pronouncing words in English. In contrast, one of the advantages the student teachers have noticed is that adults are more aware of the teaching process and the development of activities in class, and this awareness leads to quicker self-identification of pronunciation mistakes and other inaccuracies.

In addition, participants pointed out that adult learners tend to think in Spanish or have difficulties vocalizing certain sounds. One of the interviewees clarified, “It was very difficult for them to stop thinking in Spanish, like, stop translating everything... [and] understand the grammar, to understand how it was pronounced. It was very difficult for them.” In this way, the student teacher considers this mother tongue usage as a difficulty or a disadvantage that adult learners face due to the physical changes that adults tend to experience as they age. For example, an informant affirmed: “Your muscles need to be trained, right? And even though if you train them, you might not get that pronunciation that you expected.” It is perceived that despite pronunciation training and muscle exercises, the adult learner might not reach the expected pronunciation. Participants perceive adults’ difficulties in learning English as a Second Language.

The EOP student teachers view adult learners as individuals who tend to struggle due to factors related to their age and physical and emotional conditions. Part of the implications perceived about planning for adult learners by the EOP student-teachers was adults’ physical

and cognitive limitations toward completing a task within a certain period of time. One of the interviewees affirmed that adults need more time to process the information, so they considered the time factor and type of activities during their lesson planning. The student teacher referred to an experience she had with one of the participants of her EOP course: “So [this adult learner] needs this time in order to think and analyze everything, but when... when she needs to do it in a short period of time, she just can’t think in English, and that’s also what we need to help her with”. Even though informants believe that adult learners “are more focused and more proactive” than younger learners, they surely consider the time factor and choose the most appropriate type of activity for this specific population: “So, we have to take that into consideration also, that they... the certain [grammar and pronunciation] difficulties that they are having”. Thus, adult learners faced cognition and pronunciation burdens, so they sought to take advantage of their time to learn. For this reason, EOP student teachers mentioned they adjusted their lesson plans to make sure that class activities were practical and insightful for adult learners, but without providing any details about how they would proceed with this.

Feelings and Emotional Burdens

This category embeds emotional factors that affect adult learners, and EOP student teachers seem to be fully aware of such feelings and adjust their lesson plans accordingly. The category also describes how the informants perceive their adult learners going through the learning process emotionally and language instructors’ role in guiding these older students within a safe environment. Because adult learners are “more aware of” their linguistic performance and the learning process, they can notice their language gaps that justify why they should embark on a new learning process. EOP student teachers would adjust their lesson plan and implementation to actually redirect those negative feelings and

emotions by explaining to adult learners how they are going “to be more confident when picking up the phone... more confident and faster when writing an email”. This category of feelings and emotional burdens reflects EOP student teachers’ perceptions of their adult learners.

According to the interviewees, these gaps or linguistic errors could lead the adult learner to experience feelings of frustration, embarrassment, and shame due to mispronunciation or other language deviations. An informant stated, “I have noticed that adults... they can be a little bit shy sometimes”. This is the reason why EOP student teachers are expected to be careful when providing adult learners with feedback: “If you interrupt the person to correct them, that person in front of the classmates, right and maybe that person is having issues, that person might not want to participate any more or might get very frustrated.” EOP student teachers perceived that adult learners might even drop out of the course if they feel uncomfortable with the learning process.

On the other hand, the informants seem quite aware that there would be limitations despite their attempts to motivate adult learners by creating a positive lesson environment. For some, the emotional burdens would be insurmountable, as a student teacher expressed: “you can create a comfortable environment, but not all of them respond as you expect them to do.” Adult learners can be unpredictable sometimes, and EOP student teachers feel frustrated when despite all their efforts to assist older students, they still cannot improve. For an informant, this inability to make progress is beyond their control as language instructors and linked to the theoretical concept of ultimate attainment. In addition, emotionally monitoring older participants seems to be one of the informant’s strategies to address the issue of feelings and emotional burdens: “I constantly paid attention to them and how they were feeling. I wanted to know if they were motivated, if they were interested in the class, if

the course that we have planned actually fulfilled their needs, and I asked them like openly.” This strategy to read the participants’ emotions, motivation, and interest in class is an effective way of finding out if the course is fulfilling their needs or not. Part of the adult learners’ expectations about an EOP course is a sense of self-fulfillment, progress, and growth.

Time Management and Responsibilities

The third category regarding time management and responsibilities embodies another set of reflections that EOP student teachers make while planning their lessons for adult learners. The informants seemed very aware of the fact that adult learners “are more busy than other people. As I was saying, probably have families and everything. They have other responsibilities.” These adulthood duties included their families, economic responsibilities, and other factors that could reduce the amount of time they would invest in the EOP course. It was found in twenty-four codes that EOP student teachers constantly referred to the time constraints adult learners have, and these time challenges play a very valuable factor in lesson planning because adult learners want every hour they spend in the course “to be worth it.” Elements such as workload, personal duties, or job schedules may affect their attendance; therefore, they may lose interest or invest very little out-of-class time, which, in turn, might impede their continuity in the course.

These issues about adult learners’ time constraints and broad responsibilities awaken EOP student teachers’ interest in planning the lessons considering all the sides that unveil being an adult learner. For this reason, student teachers have expressed their sensitivity towards their adult participants’ personal affairs to take action and prevent those from affecting “their progress.” Adult learners have limited time on their hands, so “time is key in these processes,” they need to understand what the profit will be after completing the course.

EOP student teachers considered their participants' expectations in terms of return on investment, and above all, these older students have families and "need to bring the income [home]." Adult learners want to see their needs fulfilled in order to accomplish their expectations, but with minimum time investment, as our informants pointed out. Despite being careful about planning the lesson according to all those needs, EOP student teachers could face more considerable unanticipated challenges that trigger the class stability; for example, they had to be ready for "unexpected situations that might arise" and foresee possible rearrangements or adjustments to be done within the lesson plan.

Job Demands and Income Goals

This category describes the learners' greatest goal to improve their performance at the workplace, keep their jobs, and eventually apply for another position. The informants' perception in this regard is that older students "value more their job" because they have family responsibilities and most often need to "have a better income." Consequently, the EOP student teachers reflected on how such job demands and income goals become a motivational factor to consider when selecting, arranging, and planning class tasks that would "be useful for them, for their daily tasks at work." There was also a sense of urgency to meet the job demands because EOP student teachers were also "aware that in certain situations, if [EOP participants] don't improve at their job, right, their job is at stake." The most likely class activities to be included in the lesson plans were "a situation that we know that it's, it's common... a very common call and we add that into a roleplay, or a conversation, or a dialogue" because adult learners would ask "How can I apply this to my daily life [and occupational context]." The informants' perception is that these learners have a great desire to improve their performance at the workplace to keep their jobs or to apply for another

position, and these facts were apparently considered when planning their lessons for the practicum.

The EOP student teachers considered that younger participants in their early 20's usually live with their parents, which diminishes the role the EOP course would have. Young learners would have other priorities such as traveling when they study English, so they may not hesitate to quit their jobs whenever they want as the informants affirmed during the interviews. Indeed, an EOP student teacher proposed that adult learners usually look for economic stability and cannot take such an attitude, so polishing their English language skills represents a chance to grow in the call center and expand their career paths.

High Level of Language Proficiency Burdens

This category refers to the burden EOP student teachers perceived over the fact that their adult learners had high English language proficiency levels, mainly B2. Lesson planning was presumed as more challenging for these participants in the practicum because the classroom activities must be meaningful enough to respond to their higher English levels. An interviewee declared that the adult learners they would work with during the practicum “already know English, we have a population, that all of them are B2. It’s something that’s more challenging”, and this situation turns lesson planning even more challenging “because what [high proficient adult learners] want or expect is very specific. They want tools; they want something that can help them improve their job position.” In the informants’ viewpoint, their adult learners’ high English language proficiency levels was a determining factor in how to plan a lesson.

Personalities and Learning Styles Burdens

The category about adult learners’ personalities and learning styles was a clear sign of the student teachers’ awareness of how these factors could determine lesson planning

decisions. One of the informants believed that “with older people... you have to tell them why you are doing what you are doing,” especially when providing language feedback to individuals with certain personalities. The EOP student teacher intended to reassure her participants that mistakes are usual because all EL learners make mistakes, so these should be seen as typical by-products of learning a foreign language. An informant argued, “We are always going to be learning. We make mistakes.” The way EOP student teachers communicated feedback to their adult learners determined the way in which they behaved towards correction and the class itself. For EOP student-teachers, it was essential to foresee such adult learners’ individual characteristics when planning their lessons.

An EOP student teacher perceived the issue of personalities and learning styles as very relevant because this was going to determine how their adult learners would react toward the planned classroom tasks. “[For] people that are more visual, [EOP student teachers should] create materials that are appealing to them,” exclaimed an informant. Considering adults’ preferences influence how lessons are planned. A student teacher affirmed, “one of the things that we asked in our needs analysis was how they learn. And we got to... they're very visual and auditory learners. So, we try to plan based on that.” In this way, the EOP student teachers perceive that the diversity of adult learners’ personalities and learning styles plays a role in lesson planning.

Technology Burdens

This category refers to the EOP student teachers’ perception that adult learners struggle when using technology and practicing their English simultaneously. Although both informants have noticed that only a small percentage of their adult learners encountered this constraint, one of the student teachers narrated how she had witnessed an adult call center agent struggle “when she combines like...technology and English, that’s when we have most

of the issues in her job.” Adult learners are not digital natives, so the student teachers highlighted the fact that their course participants could struggle with technology. Thus, the fact that EOP student teachers perceive adult learners as having difficulties with using technology, practicing English, and multitasking at their workplace raised the alarm because their EOP course was delivered in a virtual modality. One of the interviewees summarized such a burden in this way: “As I mentioned, if they are not maybe so skillful with computers, and our course is going to be virtual, we have to be very careful with all of that.” In sum, EOP student teachers were considering how some burdens or barriers were also related to technology and these must be also tackled in their lesson plans.

Lack of Adult Learning Theory

This category embraces EOP student teachers’ concern regarding not knowing theoretical principles about adult learning and their desire to learn about this field because they sometimes feel uncertain about planning for adult learners. One of the respondents mentioned “I would like actually to see what the theory says.” As part of this first theme about EOP student teachers’ reflections on adult learning lesson planning, these instructors believed that not knowing about adult learning theory is a limitation. Consequently, they have expressed their interest in reading theory about adult learning. One of the student teachers affirmed, “honestly, I have not read like any research about that.” In addition, the informants indicated that they would like to know what the theory may unveil about adult learners in as much as they feel uncertain about what other strategies to use when planning their lessons.

Therefore, EOP student teachers want to know more about adult learning theories and compare these to their experiences. In fact, one of them mentioned, “But I would like to know what the theory says and see if it reflects, like the experiences that we have with adult learners. I think it is going to be very interesting.” Furthermore, age-related issues have now

sparked their academic interests because they can perceive the relevance of a deeper understanding on how aging influences foreign language learning and teaching: “Even if I have talked to the person that I know that this person is, is doing their best, to improve, there are some things that I think that are more related with age, and... and that's something that intrigues me a lot.” In sum, our informants are eager to discover what other teaching accommodations are available to address adult learners in an EOP course besides considering their needs and openly communicating with them.

Previous Teaching Experiences

This category includes the EOP student teachers’ reflections based on their teaching experiences with adult learners in the past and the connections they can make between their professional background with their teaching practicum in an EOP course. One of the interviewees pointed out: “I can relate this to adult learning because is something that I have seen during my years of teaching.” This EOP student teacher claimed to be acquainted with adult learners because she has been teaching this population since the beginning of her professional career, and the importance of basing their decisions on previous teaching experiences with adult learners. In fact, one of the research participants said, “because I have been teaching adults since I started working. So, I am already acquainted with that population. But what has changed is the format.” In the light of the previous category about a lack of insights in adult learning theory, the informants have drawn upon their teaching experiences to plan lessons for their practicum while they remained open to explore this field and expressed their interest in knowing about what the theory and the research can yield about to teaching English to older participants. Consequently, there is a reflection process that leads student teachers to approach lesson planning for adults based on their previous teaching experiences with this population.

Lack of EOP Lesson Plan Procedures

This category reflects the EOP student teachers' discouragement about needing EOP lesson plan procedures to follow when planning lessons for adult learners. This uncertainty becomes a burden when designing activities and materials, so their perception is that "ESP is very tricky." The informants reported that they encountered this additional challenge when planning. Besides coping with the particularities that adult learners may bring to the practicum, the informants had to surmount the shortage of EOP lesson plan samples, a lack that made lesson planning a stressful situation. The fact that EOP student teachers needed a path to follow in planning for adult learners raised concern among them. Another stress trigger while planning their lessons was the fact that their classmates had different teaching contexts in their own practicum.

Therefore, student teachers were not sure if the procedures that they were following when creating their lesson plans were appropriate in an EOP context; in the midst of few lesson plan samples available, the informants started contrasting what they were doing for their practicum with what other EOP student teachers from the same cohort were accomplishing. In fact, one of them mentioned: "everybody was doing a different thing. I was so stressed out because of that." Notably, this EOP student teachers' perception about not knowing a path and not having samples made their lesson planning even more stressful; for instance, one of them declared: "we didn't know, we didn't have like an example something to follow." In this way, EOP student teachers have shown concern that her MPLA classmates had different levels of detail in their lesson plans, so she sought to place her planning in some middle ground in regard to ESP lesson planning; one of them mentioned "because everybody, either I mean, either had more detailed lesson plans and others were shorter and we were like..." This hesitation about what was right or wrong, what may work

or fail within their EOP settings and lesson plan construction increased their stress levels; this uncertainty represented a negative burden the informants had to carry on as they also incorporated or managed the component of what really means to plan an EOP lesson for adult learners. Thus, an EOP student teacher reaches a state of acceptance or resignation that she does not have a path or sample to follow while planning lessons in ESP, and this category of no path, no samples is an inevitable challenge to be faced in this field. One of the interviewees mentioned: “Maybe I would say that this is part of ESP because, well, every... what everyone was doing was very different from our course.”

In this sense, another EOP student teachers’ perception about designing ESP courses, lesson planning, and teaching adults is that whatever format, path, or set of principles language instructors decide to follow could be suitable or effective. To illustrate such reflection, we would share what the interviewee mentioned: “You do what works for you and that’s part of I would say that...that’s part of teaching is ESP and teaching... in teaching adults that you do what works for you and for your course, if it works, then go ahead.” This informant even went on to suggest the following: “don’t try to... have like something like... a draft or what you have to do because it’s gonna be impossible.” In conclusion, it is the informants’ suggestion that novice EOP teachers should not expect to have in advance lesson plan guidelines, course design templates, or drafts when they actually proceed with EOP courses for adult learners. Their conclusion claims that whatever EOP student teachers decide to plan, it would be their path to follow as long as it works.

Strategies to Suit EOP Lesson Plan for Adult Learners

This theme embraces lesson plan strategies or adjustments that the EOP student teachers have made to plan lessons for adult learners. This group of strategies and modifications in the lesson plans answer the second research question about how EOP student

teachers plan lessons for adult learners. By using these strategies and making the following adjustments, EOP student teachers expect to offer more tailored, strategic instructional activities to their adult learners.

Carrying Out a Needs Analysis

The first strategy or adjustment that the EOP student teachers have made to plan lessons for adult learners is to conduct a Needs Analysis (NA), for they made frequent reference to following these NA results when lesson planning - “a more specific” process when teaching adults. Thirty codes concern the NA’s. In this regard, the NA yields details about what it is that the EOP student teachers should take into consideration while planning. Even though the initial NA was carried out months before the EOP course implementation, the EOP student teachers remained vigilant and on guard to spot and consider further participants’ needs and “the purpose of each task, how they can apply it to their job” as a way to make other planning adjustments if necessary. They highly trust that the right path to planning lessons is to follow what they discovered or would eventually find out in regard to the learners’ skills, needs, interests, lacks, wants, or aspirations.

The informants have based their lesson plans mostly on the results of the needs analysis and affirmed that it is impossible to teach adult learners without conducting an NA; for example, one of the student teachers stated: “So, it’s better we do the needs analysis since the beginning and we know what they can do, what they cannot and all this and then we can start preparing the course activities.” Paying attention to what the adult learners determine as needs seemed to be their way of identifying needs; an informant indicated: “I am not anyone to just impose what I think their needs are; I need to listen to them.” Still, more than an NA may be needed. Although the NA was perceived as a great source of information to plan their lessons, an informant suggested that a needs analysis is an ongoing process because a pending

task is to become familiar even more with her adult learners: “That depends on my students, I would say. I still don’t know, my students because I have not started the practicum.” Such a claim suggests certain characteristics cannot be observed within the NA and will only be seen once their practicum starts. These insights should be portrayed within the lesson plan activities in which the EOP student teachers offer the participants “a more active role in our classes.” Also, one of the informants mentioned “taking into consideration their abilities, yes, ask them what they can do, and what they cannot do. What are their strengths? What are their weaknesses? What are their needs? What do they want to achieve? Like, listen to them a lot, definitely carry out needs analysis before”. In addition, one of the strategies that they have implemented is to be conscious that changes are normally unpredictable and that they have to foresee such lesson plan adaptation.

Furthermore, another informant referred to the fact that some of the participants from the NA were not in the company anymore, taking away with them some of their needs. EOP student teachers considered that they might be facing a totally different scenario due to drop-outs, and they had to be flexible to the changes because “their needs might have changed.” Although this is part of a transition from a NA into their practicum, they have expressed their preference to stick to the Needs Analysis and reflect this into the lesson plan objectives: “we copy-paste the objectives before we start because when I see something that it’s not quite related, I go back. And I read again, and I know that this is based on the needs analysis, their needs, and then I, I rearrange everything or change what I have to change.” This declaration embeds the EOP student teacher’s consideration of being flexible toward lesson plan adjustments to target the adult learners’ needs detected during the NA or along the course implementation.

MPLA Professors' Recommendations.

A second group of adjustments in their lesson plans reflects how the EOP student teachers have recalled and followed the recommendations and the lessons learned from their MPLA instruction and their professors in this master's program. A recommendation from their MPLA professor was to plan lessons in a straightforward way because adult learners are often busy, so language instructors should relate all class activities to the course content. In the MPLA professor's view, the warm-up or ice-breaker, the main topic, the class objectives, and the tasks must be aligned. Moreover, an EOP student teacher shared an anecdote that when she and her team teacher were planning an EOP class, they remembered what an ESP MPLA professor had recommended, so they proceeded to comply with such a recommendation about arranging warm-ups intrinsically related to the class topic. The interviewee concluded: "We tried to do some activities that were not related to the topic in the warm-up just for the students to relax, for our practicum ... mmm but the professor, ESP MPLA professor suggested that maybe we should be using activities that were related somehow to the topic." The strategy under consideration is that adult learners often expect practical and advantageous class development instead of starting with out-of-context activities that may be fun or relaxing but do not contribute to their occupational positions.

In this second strategy, student teachers also followed the recommendation to ask students in the EOP course to bring their work samples; for instance, an informant explained it this way: "a MPLA professor also told us, sometimes we just need to ask them: Okay, bring your work samples. And you're the ones who are there. So, bring whatever you... you always do. And we can start figuring it out." Certainly, if student teachers consider they are reaching a dead end in planning a class, their adult learners could bring realia or work samples to comprehend their communicative tasks in the occupational context. This strategy of

following their ESP MPLA professor's advice and teachings has offered more direction in lesson planning. Now in this practicum, informants are aware that their participants most likely prefer starting the class by doing job and topic-related tasks, for these language instructors were considering that time and topic focus matter for adult learners. Therefore, they want to show flexibility by aligning their lesson plan strategies to job-related contents and time-management issues as instructed by their ESP MPLA professor.

Time Constraint Management

A third adjustment has been to maneuver several time constraints. Part of this strategy is to fit their lesson plans into the time attainable for class instruction during the professional teaching practicum or EOP course. An informant explained: "we are going to have very little time, we're going to be with the students just for two hours each week." Despite the broad needs, wants, or lacks detected in the NA, EOP student teachers had reconciled the former to the "limited [class] time, and I know they're not going to practice maybe as much after the class, maybe in their homes;" time constraints had been a relevant factor when arranging their lesson plans because an instructional "task has to very concise, very short, maybe a little article... but again, it has to be something very short and meaningful." This situation pushes them to plan and select only practical and meaningful activities for their adult learners' occupational contexts. This fact forces the EOP student teachers to plan shorter activities, despite the advantage of teaching the adult learners with their work schedule in the call center.

This strategy to adjust to time constraints has somehow forced EOP student teachers to plan "very short" asynchronous activities that can compensate for the little contact they have with their students in class. In light of adult learners' busy personal agendas and work schedules, student teachers had appealed to this strategy to make every single interaction

minute count towards the final goal of addressing language needs in their job environment. To practice exactly what participants do in their workplace has become a must, and this priority has made lesson planning for adults “time consuming” too. However, the EOP student teachers do not mind such workload “even though we spend hours creating these [suitable materials and planning].” Again, EOP student teachers displayed flexibility to adjust to adult learners’ home, job, and class time constraints to avoid the unfulfillment of tasks or even worse the assignment of unrelated job tasks. According to one of the informants, any attempt to deliver language instruction to adult learners without first conducting a NA would be “to waste our time simply. If we plan activities, they are not going to be able to complete, all the time is going to be wasted, we will need to start all over again.” EOP student teachers stated their concern over time constraint management. Some of those informants’ adjustments to time constraints were to deliver language instruction to adult learners after having conducted a NA, invest their planning time wisely, include asynchronous tasks, and select only job-related activities.

Material Design

The fourth category of lesson plan strategies holds together the EOP student teachers’ procedures to search for, adapt and elaborate the instructional materials for their lesson plans. These materials for adult learners should resemble their work environments, be authentic, and have “multiple functionalities,” regardless of the difficulties EOP student teachers may face finding and adapting materials. They offered a solution to such a challenge with materials: to take advantage of the company’s support website and the resources there, such as manuals. Still, the EOP student teachers adjusted materials that were not intended for their EOP client population or specialized subject; however, the materials were related to the language skills targeted in the EOP course, like paraphrasing or holding small talk. In this

search for tailored materials, the EOP student teachers' strategy was to adapt materials that are actually intended for customer service within the participants' company website in hopes to "make it appealing."

The fact that the informants do not have materials for the EOP course became a great challenge, so they remained vigilant to find sources: "Again, we are looking for some more tools, oral communication skills that they could use, not technical vocabulary because they have the vocab there. So, we didn't have a lot of materials." It was important for them to use the company's website sources to plan lessons in which participants will read an article, summarize it, and even paraphrase it by using the reading strategies of skimming and scanning. The informants' perception about material design for adult learners was that class resources should be authentic, and the abundance of this type of resources may not be the same when planning for younger students. One of the interviewees claimed: "You can add more, let's say. Authentic material, for example, TV shows or movies that maybe are not very appropriate for children or the children are not going to understand." Thus, their view was that potential materials should be adapted in different ways because these sources have different functionalities or uses. For instance, the informants argued that students can bring sample materials to the class, which can be enhanced later on with other realia sources.

An informant described her process of searching for materials on a specific topic - paraphrasing strategies. What this informant did was to arrange the EOP material by summarizing key concepts in the original source and adding practical job examples. To follow along with the previous strategy of adjusting to time constraints, the informant arranged in a worksheet what would be suitable for the communicative goals, so participants "would have it there, right there. So, they just have to click open it and read what they have

to read and I would add an example related to the job position.” Basically, these EOP student teachers have created and adapted all the materials according to adult learners’ job reality.

Formative Assessment

The fifth strategy that the student teachers followed in their EOP lesson plans was to offer a variety of assessments. The informants affirmed that adult learners may not seem interested in traditional, summative evaluations, so their strategy in this case has been to offer a variety of assessment options including self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, and mainly formative feedback through recasts. These informants considered that adult learners “are not interested in just getting a score, right, a good score or passing a test.” In this sense, EOP student teachers will refrain from summative evaluations although they do not reach an agreement about when to offer feedback; an informant seeks “to correct them at the moment” while the other does not “like to interrupt the person.” Both student teachers were interested in offering a variety of assessments such as peer assessment, so any participant could “correct the other ones. I think that’s also very important. When they are maybe working in groups, so okay, pay attention to everything that your classmate says, right? And correct them respectfully.” Providing respectful feedback and informing learners about its relevance are also prerequisites in this lesson plan strategy.

Evidently, the EOP student teachers expect not to harm adult learners’ feelings when providing feedback and error analysis, so they plan to warn their participants and explain why they are providing the feedback and how making the corrections would help them improve their job performance. This has been employed in the past, but the informant expects to implement it during the EOP practicum: “I mean, that is something that I always tell [my adult learners] and I have noticed that it works because I am telling them why I am doing this.” Another expectation regarding assessment is the chance student teachers had during

the wrap-up activity to apply the formative assessment because, at their sight, that first class activity was an appropriate moment of the lesson where adult learners can reflect on how they can apply the lesson instruction to their current jobs.

Finally, EOP student teachers considered formative assessment in their lesson plans as a way of following up with participants' needs, checking out the course progress, and appraising their teaching performance. This type of assessment constitutes a great source of information; an informant expressed: "So yeah, definitely I want to incorporate a lot of formative assessment and also for them to assess the course and assess us." The EOP student teachers prefer immediate formative feedback because both instructors and participants can forget about the punishing nature of summative assessment. Instead, their assessment choice will create more positive experiences while delivering feedback by praising strengths before mentioning "areas of improvement." The different types of assessments they offer are versatile and help them to gather valuable information about their participants and the course.

Affective and Cognitive Support.

The sixth strategy embraces a set of adjustments that EOP student teachers expect to make in their lesson plans and class implementation to provide affective and cognitive support to their adult learners. Several codes convey this category because the informants listed ways about how they would offer adult learners extra support by encouraging them emotionally, lowering their affective filter, leading group reflections over the advantages of improving job performance, and explaining concepts as needed. Significantly, the EOP student teacher's goal was to make students "feel relaxed" and at ease in a class, preventing them from having negative feelings of shame or embarrassment. In addition, the teachers wanted to maintain open communication with their adult learners and motivate them by "being in a good mood" within the virtual class and showing empathy toward their

limitations. An example of this would be their attempt to keep track of their adult learners' by discovering the reasons behind their tardiness or reasons to "skip the class." Whatever could make their progress more difficult would be worth paying attention to, so student teachers would keep constant "communication with them to show that you care is something very important that we are not there just to... I mean to complete a practicum." In this way, adult learners would notice they are supported by their language instructors because these professionals care and expect none of their participants to be left behind or aside from the course.

Open Communication

Another category that functions as a lesson planning strategy within the second theme of adjusting EOP instruction reflects the informants' expectation to establish open and frequent communication with the adult learners prior and during the course. Certainly, the student teachers seek to take advantage of open communication and learn about adult learners' experiences and "even talk about different situations that are affecting" them as adult learners. Also, this engagement strategy would allow "them to start speaking... something that I really want to do." This transferring of adult knowledge and life experiences into the class complements previous strategies such as asking for their work samples in an attempt to understand the language task and possible performance gaps collectively. According to student teachers, "to have open communication with them all the time" would guide these student teachers to make adjustments in their lesson plan by listening carefully and taking into account every contribution or suggestion the participants can give towards the course improvement.

This frequent exchange of information and open communication plays a crucial role in checking if course expectations are being met. An informant concluded that "in this case,

what I do is I try to have open communication with them and I plan to do so if at a certain point... they don't feel that they are getting what they expect, that they can use their voices, right? To ask for it. So, we can make changes." In sum, the EOP student teachers expected to communicate with their participants constantly to find out how they perceive the classes, the effectiveness of the activities, personal issues, responsibilities, or even unfulfilled expectations that may block their class participation.

Avoid In-class Recreational Games

To suit their adult learners, EOP student teachers are expected to plan only those activities that are clearly linked to the course objectives and topics, regardless of the potentially entertaining nature of the tasks. Their adjustment or strategy embraces a deliberate attempt to prioritize and include tasks that really resemble the adult learners' job environment, rather than offering funny or entertaining activities intended for kids. An informant summarized the strategy in this way: "So, considering adults, I try not to add very, I don't know, a lot of activities that are meant for kids or children." Definitely, the EOP student teachers would prioritize those activities that are relevant to adult learners' language needs and occupational contexts. The language instructors would most likely disregard games as part of their lesson plan because adults "are not interested in just go [to class] and spend an hour playing... playing games."

Instead, adult learners expect meaningful activities that can resemble their job tasks. There is a focus switch as an interviewee pointed out: "I have taught children and that was like my main focus actually, to entertain them to keep them busy," and this cannot be the same case with adults. While reflecting on a teaching pitfall, this informant also explained how she expected her adult students to play a game that was originally intended for children or teenagers. The outcome could not be any more distressing because the participants were

not physically capable to play it. Her conclusion about doing this type of funny or entertaining activity was that adult learners may not find certain games appealing due to two main reasons: the task's irrelevance to their jobs and the physical discomfort they could experience. As a result, the informant stressed the importance of being careful with planning classroom activities that only children can do or find meaningful.

Learners' Opinions and Validation

With this strategy, the student teachers opened up their lesson plan procedures to welcome feedback and opinions from their adult learners about the class exercises, contents, and materials that they are expecting from the EOP course. This strategy implied openly asking their adult learners for their opinions and validation to make any necessary lesson plan adjustments to really suit their needs, interests, and expectations. This consultation process takes place not only during the NA, but also even days before the EOP course is launched because "if we stay with the needs analysis and the results from the analysis, and we don't ask them for an opinion, I think that we might have a problem." Adult learners are even asked for job samples of their target situations: "Tell me how you're implementing all these topics in your job." For this reason, the EOP student teachers' strategy to comply with the course objectives and students' needs is based on the frequent consultation of their adult learners and consideration of their views in order to make rearrangements and modifications to their lesson plans, even before the beginning or during the practicum. This strategy was implemented as a way to shape their lesson plans as they acknowledge their adult learners' job expertise.

The participants' opinions and validation are expected "even now that we start with the course, we might have to ask them... to modify something, or to rearrange something." This lesson plan adjustment or strategy allows the language instructors to monitor if the

course contents and activities are aligned with what adults actually do in their jobs. In this way, student teachers felt somehow more confident because they could validate the course effectiveness. In fact, an informant approached their adult learners in order to gather this type of information: “tell me how you’re implementing all these topics in your job? Can you give me a presentation? How do you do it? And these types of things.” This strategy of asking for opinions and validation compensates for the EOP student teacher’s unfamiliarity with the specific occupational issues and the specialized field. Thus, this language instructor also requested work samples to better comprehend and to take advantage of their adult learner experiences at the workplace.

Task-Based Language Teaching

This category refers to an indirect adjustment made in their lesson plans for adult learners, for the student teachers incorporated the tenets of the Task-Based English language teaching approach (TBLT). As a matter of fact, EOP student teachers “don’t have experience with the task-based approach,” but they could implement this language teaching (LT) approach in the practicum. Informants accepted the challenge and also embarked in the new field of ESP despite also using TB for the first. It is the student teachers’ perception that TB actually suits adult learners, for they will carry out more job-related pre-tasks and target tasks. In this respect, the EOP student teachers suggested the implementation of this strategy also represents a dual burden in terms of using this new LT approach for the first time and implementing it right away in an EOP context.

As a result of using this strategy and the others in this theme, these language instructors derailed from the lesson planning dynamics and teaching methodology they used to follow before. Instead of following the tenets of the Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT) and having a basic course textbook to plan a lesson, the student teachers

realized that “what has changed is the format of the ... of the lesson plan.” Now that they are no longer teaching general English (GE), the informants have found EOP lesson planning to be “more challenging, I would say, because what [adults] want or expect is very specific.” As a result, the student teachers’ perception was that language instructors in GE prepare for common linguistic environments or contents, e.g., grammar or pronunciation, whereas ESP practitioners sought the implementation of more innovative approaches such as TB, and the lesson planning strategy is to employ the new LT approach to link language instruction to the adults’ occupational contexts. Therefore, the challenge of lesson planning in an EOP course for adult learners leads to the exploration of content and task specificity as well as the implementation of a new LT approach such as TB.

Subject Matter Expert (SME) Support

This category answers both research questions at the same time, but what it means or represents to have a company witness or insider as part of the EOP teaching team may deserve the elaboration of a third theme due to the relevance of a subject matter expert (SME) nurturing lesson planning for adult learners. The SME was also one of the student teachers, so she “knows many different situations that I would never know, if I didn’t have her working there [in the call center].” However, for the sake of clarity in the results section of this research report, this strategy has been kept as part of the second theme, given its strategic nature in how student teachers plan lessons. For example, a student teacher recalled this category in the following way: “[Lesson planning] has been difficult for [Informant 1]... because sometimes, she is kind of blind in all these processes that we followed, and how... actually the language is used, and that’s why I can give a little bit more of help in that sense [as a witness or company insider].” To witness the adult learners’ occupational environment through the lenses of an SME who was also a member in the teaching team represents “an

advantage” to work collaboratively, discuss their lesson plan ideas, reflect on the class activities, rearrange their lesson plans as needed, and make sound decisions that would ultimately benefit their adult learners. This is why this category could fit into both themes, yet we have decided to place it here instead of pulling it out and placing it all by itself.

These two EOP student teachers who participated in this study were definitely not only team teaching but also enriching the lesson plans through the one who happens to be a SME in the call center. This lesson planning strategy or advantage over other student teachers during the teaching practicum in the MPLA was summarized by one of them in this way: “So, having someone whole is from that company and knows what is done in that company, is definitely going to be useful, like to, to keep [the adult learners] focused.” In the meantime, the other team teacher who has more teaching experience functions as an outsider in the call center and wonders about issues regarding the adult learners and their occupational contexts that she “wouldn’t know if [the team teacher] weren’t working there.” Both student teachers would offer views and insights, but the contributions and insights from the SME’s give origin to this lesson planning strategy.

The EOP student teachers claimed that participants would have to provide their job knowledge and occupational experiences to plan the lessons if a SME “were not there” as part of the teaching team. Still, they were really glad about the fact that one of them was the SME, and of course, they took advantage of her call center expertise to plan. This meant that the strategies, tasks, and class materials they included in the lesson plans were totally validated by a SME because “if I created this, I don’t know, a roleplay, I asked her [or SME]: ‘Do you think that is something that they are going to face at their job?’ and she [the SME] would say: ‘Yes or no. I think that we can modify this content’.” Their ideas were intertwined and scrutinized through the views of the SME when creating the lesson plan. One of the

informants mentioned: “Again, I consider myself very lucky because my partner, I mean, she’s there all the time and she knows what we're doing, and she knows that they are going to apply that a specific strategy communication strategy, and she knows that it's going to work.” Such knowledge as a call center insider yielded this strategy to tailor and boost EOP lesson plans for adult learners.

Effective Team Teaching

This category portrays another lesson planning strategy the EOP student teachers employed - to work as a team of teachers harmoniously. Their perceptions about this adjustment or strategy revealed how the student teachers could reach a positive outcome from their team-teaching work. They felt gratitude for being “much alike” and hardly ever disagreeing in terms of their planning decisions and activity elaboration, so they could work smoothly without disagreements and quickly approve each other’s contributions. Even though the student teachers have expressed their great frustration “because we don’t have experience teaching in this field,” they are glad about the teamwork that they were able to accomplish. Indeed, there is a close connection between this strategy to team teach harmoniously and the previous one to witness through an SME. A final aspect in this strategy is that the EOP student teachers affirmed they “would have to rely on [the participants] and the stakeholders” as members too of this teaching team in case an SME were not available. A student teacher expressed: “something that I'm very grateful for the activity that she prepares, I love it.” This harmonious teamwork positively influenced lesson planning and guards a careful consideration of the adult learners’ needs.

V. Discussion and Findings

EOP Student Teachers' Reflections on Adult Learning Lesson Planning

After considering the student teachers' reflections, we can state that lesson planning for adult learners differs greatly from the process followed by younger generations. In ESP, there are key processes--such as conducting a NA-- that bring this language teaching approach closer to adult education. For example, the informants constantly referred to the NA, but they could not pinpoint why they were following a different road and mindset while planning lessons for adult learners. Perhaps, to recall the main difference, a theoretical principle, or an author could lessen the challenges and enable the student teachers to explain this paramount difference between lesson plans for children and adults. Richards (2017) defined it as a "backwards" curriculum design process, for adult learners' needs should be identified and analyzed first through a NA instead of the more traditional "forward" design in which objectives are set up in advance regardless of who the students and their needs are. The informants had ingrained, implemented, and referred to ESP principles such as a NA, but they struggled to mention this difference regarding curriculum design.

Another important finding is that the EOP student teachers drew on their teaching experiences with adults and frequently compared them to younger participants. These previous teaching encounters with adults reflect what has been defined in SLA as "age of onset of acquisition (AoA)" in the sense that younger learners experience some premature lead in language acquisition over adult learners (Herschensohn, 2013, p. 317). From these evident cognitive and pronunciation burdens that adults tend to experience early on in L2, the student teachers reflected on adult learning lesson planning. The informants needed a point of reference or comparison to comprehend the teaching challenge at hand, so they recalled their teaching experiences with adults and children. They were frank to admit

knowing very little about adult learning, so lesson planning for adults deserves closer attention and literature revision in ESP settings where the likelihood of having these participants seems very high. Consequently, we would suggest that ESP teacher training should offer practitioners chances to compare GE and ESP, adults and youngsters, backward and forward curriculum design beyond the isolated and rather personal teaching experiences that the student teachers may have had.

We would like to suggest that this dichotomy between the backward-and forward curriculum designs ought to guide most EOP student teachers when lesson planning for adult learners. To a certain extent, the difference between pedagogy and andragogy also shapes how language instructors approach adult lesson planning. The ten categories under the first theme can be labeled not only as perceptions but also as burdens or challenges encountered while planning lessons for adults, but these may be perceived instead as logical and natural differences between a forward or backward teaching process.

EOP student teachers perceived that adult learners may go through cognitive burdens such as memorizing new words, reaching accurate pronunciation, or processing information rapidly due to age factors. However, previous research has shown that neuron production undergoes a progressive reduction during adulthood (Leuner & Gould, 2010, p. 114). In addition, Cozma (2015) enumerated cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral characteristics to be taken into account when teaching adults (p. 73). In this regard, EOP student teachers seemed concerned due to their limited teaching experience with adult learners, but they still managed to make adjustments and employed diverse strategies based on their previous encounters with adult learners. However, we would like to suggest that cognitive burdens cannot be generalized to all adult learners.

An andragogy principle that informants could further internalize is the role of life experiences as instructional resources. Adult learners come to the class with far more life experiences than children, which enhances their language learning. Depending on their background, adults could also have gone through academic and professional processes. Thus, EOP student teachers' lesson plans should incorporate activities in which their participants can disclose the previous personal life or job experiences in regard to the lesson contents.

Both naturalistic exposure or instructed exposure do not guarantee younger learners' superiority over adults because adult learners have more advanced cognitive abilities and intellectual tactics that benefit in instructed language learning or any other field (Herschensohn, 2013, p. 323). These advantages over children -- more developed cognitive skills and academic strategies -- deserves more careful and explicit incorporation in lesson plans for adult learners. In this way, the "advantage in rate of acquisition" over younger learners in terms of more developed cognitive skills and academic strategies deserve more careful and explicit incorporation in lesson plans for adult learners (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2014, p. 276). Therefore, EOP instructors should promote more opportunities for adult learners to share their past academic accomplishments and occupational experiences as part of their lesson plan activities. These interactions would challenge their intellects to the extent to which the adults' experiences also relate to their instructional goals (Manolis et al., 2012, p. 45). In fact, adult learners demand meaningful experiences, job-related tasks, and cognitively demanding activities within their learning processes.

On the one hand, EOP student teachers affirm that adult learners also struggle with time limitations and responsibilities. Consequently, this issue could interfere with their academic process and class attendance, and the EOP student teachers are concern about this risk. On the other, considering that adult learners expect straightforward explanations

because they have little time to spare in class, student teachers should continue planning concise and meaningful activities. In other words, adult learners want to gain knowledge rapidly and be able to apply it within their daily lives. Thus, EOP student teachers should take into account their adult learners' aspirations and not only their burdens. This prerequisite belongs to a careful environmental analysis prior the design and implementation of the lesson plan for adult learners. Besides this step, it is also crucial to foresee possible future lesson plan adaptations as this population might experience changes that must be strategically tackled. For example, we cannot overlook the fact that adult learners and their motivation to learn English shift as their lives change outside the classroom (Schwarzer, 2009, p. 27). Their different roles as active members of a society embody Schwarzer's broad perspective of adult learners as whole persons. In this respect, EOP student teachers must show their flexibility to change and show their assertiveness by making strategic decisions regarding the lesson plans without affecting the participants' lifestyles.

On the other hand, the informants' reference to consider their adults' learning styles may deserve further revision. There is much more to learning styles beyond having the inclination to be more of a visual, auditorial, or kinesthetic learner. Given the diverse learning styles and complexities to suit all learners, EOP student teachers should deem the adult's educational background because learning styles are influenced by individual singularities, occupational roles, academic background, and current job positions (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 195). Thus, each adult learner contributes to the class through their essence and diversity which all of their previous life experiences have determined.

Another important finding worth discussing is that EOP student teachers needed to be certain about the proper type of strategies they should implement during their lesson plan design. According to one of the informants, "communication between the language instructor

and the adult participants will be key” to fill this gap. Open communication with the EOP participants and even SMEs can offer the reassurance over lesson planning decisions that the student teachers need. The interviewees were very open and listed many inquiries about lesson planning in adult education. Their eagerness to learn more on the topic and discover how to plan an EOP lesson for adult learners more effectively seems to display a very responsible attitude toward ongoing professional development and future areas of academic growth after graduating from the MPLA. As a suggestion, EOP student teachers could create adaptive spaces and collaborative tasks in which adult learners’ responses to the lesson might be more effective. For example, lesson material design is an opportunity to allow adult learners’ participation in this matter. This exercise could boost adult learner self-direction by enriching the material with their own expertise because adult learners bring with them plenty of knowledge and experience.

Strategies to Suit EOP Lesson Plan for Adult Learners

The informants employed several strategies to suit EOP lesson plans for adult learners. When faced with the lesson planning process for adult learners, the student teachers unconsciously plead for those tools, resources, and strategies from their own teaching tool box. This finding reveals the informants’ creativity or ingenuity to adjust to a new lesson planning process regardless of the amount, quality or effectiveness of the theoretical or practical foundations behind the strategies they were trying to implement.

The initial step prior to a “backwards” course design is to carry out a Needs Analysis (Brown, 2016; Richards, 2017), so EOP student teachers could detect adult learners’ needs, weaknesses, aspirations, or wants. The NA results determined which path to follow in terms of content specificity and course design. The fact that the informants in this study complied and constantly referred to this first step is highly important because the ESP field courses are

tailor-made; thus, the NA becomes a huge source of information for language instructors for them to analyze the different situations and foresee future strategies to be applied within the instructional setting. Although EOP student teachers carried out the NA, they affirmed having a pending task which was getting to know the course participants more personally. This constitutes an important element that cannot be left aside because it is within the classroom environment that an instructor can actually see learners' behaviors and other unanticipated aspects that were not first derived from the NA.

In the midst of lesson planning after the NA, EOP student teachers encountered what could be perceived as a minor setback. They mentioned their concern over the fact that some agents who participated in the NA dropped off the company. These agents leaving the company and the EOP course make the student teachers question the validity of the NA results. Their concern over the effectiveness of their lesson plans increased, for the drop-outs "may have taken away with them some needs." This misinterpretation could be overcome by considering Anthony's (2018) claim that two NAs take place: a large-scale NA prior the EOP course design and a smaller-scale NA just days before class implementation (p. 63). During the analysis of these research results, we could not help questioning such informants' reflections and added these questions in the analytic memos: "How come their needs might have changed because other workers left the company? In a call center, the agent's language requirements ought to remain the same in spite of other workers leaving the company." This sense of instability about the adult learners' needs clearly does not contribute to the student teachers' emotional and cognitive well-being prior or during the practicum because we believe that most EL teachers expect and deserve stability in their educational contexts.

ESP teaching may be a more volatile instructional environment than GE, but this fact should not be a factor affecting the language instructors' work. Sava (2012) explained this

controversy over the NA results as a consequence of validity and reliability issues over “the actual status of the needs” in adult education (p. 79). We even got trapped into this controversy because we kept reflecting in our Analytic Memos about this matter: “Is it that there would be other agents joining the EOP course?” We concluded that to a certain extent some needs may have changed due to drop-outs and new enrollments, but it would be just a matter of EOP student teachers making some minor adjustments in their lesson plans because the core needs remain the same. As long as student teachers employ task-based instruction and welcome multilevel participants, having some adult learners drop out or enroll in the EOP course should not affect the essence of their lesson planning. Macalister and Nation (2019) claimed that NA is not a straightforward process in occupational environments; certainly, it requires deep analysis and adjustments throughout the course implementation as well. This is why the research informants finally mentioned they would seek the adult learners’ validation over the relevance of the instructional activities and tasks included in the lesson plans.

As a final observation to this finding regarding the strategy to carry out a NA, it is highly important to remind EOP student teachers to be on guard and distinguish the real and urgent occupational needs (Guerid & Mami, 2017). Language instructors may have a limited view if they take as needs everything the participants list or view as such; some scrutiny on the EOP student teachers is fundamental to distinguish between intrinsic or extrinsic, real or perceived needs the participants might mention (Sava, 2012). This situation was clearly detected and stated in the analytical memo entry on September 10th: “The EOP teacher seems to concern too much on what her participants say about their needs, even though these may end up being just perceived needs.” In this regard, it is not possible to start another NA from scratch due to time constraints. Just a small-scale NA may take place before the course starts.

Even though the EOP course has been already designed and there should not be significant changes to the course syllabus that was already offered. Some minor accommodations for adult learners are still possible in light of any new learners enrolling.

In their search for a lesson planning path to follow, EOP student teachers found it important to follow recommendations from their ESP MPLA professor. For instance, one of the recommendations provided by this professor was to arrange warm-ups intrinsically related to the lesson as a result of adult learners' expectations of straightforward class development. Even though EOP student teachers wanted to plan fun or relaxing activities to make their adult learners feel relaxed or out of the routine, the ESP MPLA professor warned the student teachers that isolated or decontextualized class activity could trigger a lack of interest among the participants. The suggestion was that the lesson plan activities should be closely linked to the class topic, so the adult learners would feel they are investing their time wisely as there is a learning chain where class tasks and topics are interrelated. This strategy to recall recommendations is intrinsically related to the one about adjusting to time constraints because the main goal behind is to be effective and strategic when planning for adult learners.

One of the most troublesome issues with adult learners is the time constraints that prevent them from attending classes regularly, focusing during class time, and doing homework. These time management and responsibility burdens are always present when teaching adult learners, so EOP student teachers cannot control but can adjust their lesson plans. Even though the EOP student teachers have mentioned that they are aware of adults' lifestyles and time constraints, these instructors were still considering assigning homework through an asynchronous class. Despite the language instructors' strategy to adjust to time constraints, their adult learners would have to take time out of their busy agendas to comply

with the asynchronous work. However, learners enroll in the EOP course with many expectations, and one of those most likely would be having few or no homework assignments. This awareness of those adult learners' time constraints deserves some more careful thought and strategic planning.

On one hand, the student teacher mentioned that “the most important element of the lesson plan was the asynchronous work since some of their adult participants may not stay during the whole class” and for the other that they have time constraints to cope with all the programmed activities outside the class. The EOP student teachers may not be considering Tarnopolsky's (2016) suggestion about having limited intensiveness of the teaching/learning process and avoiding home tasks with adult learners. In this respect, it is crucial to discover the participants' reactions and completion levels to the asynchronous components or homework to make the decision of keeping these or not.

It is evident that there is a contradiction about whether or not to assign homework; the EOP student teachers' standpoint seems unclear because of the asynchronous lesson they expected to implement. In the end, assigning homework and the asynchronous class component are exactly the same thing. This incongruence or tension arises between one could wonder if the adult learners' time constraints are really being taken into consideration when planning. Yao (2019) stressed that adult learners “have stronger self-control [but] their study time is fragmented” (p. 120), so they may remain focused doing an assignment in spite of the little time they can truly devote themselves to it. Considering this limited time adults have available in order to do any asynchronous work, the EOP student teachers could adapt these homework assignments or asynchronous components to be performed or implemented right at their workplace without much effort or time investment. As long as the stakeholders may allow some work time to do homework, their strategy to plan an asynchronous component

will be grounded. Otherwise, the chances for task completion will be narrow. As for self-assessment and follow up, adult participants could narrate their experiences about this immediate job implementation and work time investment in doing homework.

Another finding that merits attention regards material development, the most difficult tasks for the EOP student teachers. Tailored instructional materials require a closer look at the occupational context, content specificity, and the foreign language needs. Despite the challenge of having few materials, the EOP student teachers' strategy to use the company website sources proved to be useful to prepare reading comprehension activities for the EOP course participants, considering their need to apply skimming and scanning strategies while assisting clients at their workplace. This "on-site material" allows the EOP practitioners to incorporate customized activities and derive others from it, so their lesson plans were enriched with authentic materials. The EOP student teachers still remained open to integrating any other videos, sources, or realia by asking their students to bring their job samples to class. Their strategy to elaborate tailored-made materials endorsed Crawford's (2002) principle: Language instructors ought to know their participants socially and psychologically, comprehend their occupational context, and provide significant EOP materials in this case (p. 84). Consequently, careful observation of the adult learner's occupational environment becomes a necessity when designing instructional resources for adult learners. The company website hosts diverse resources, so the informants in this study adjusted the resources there because it is important to choose what really contributes to the unique course content wisely. To avoid feelings of frustration, EOP student teachers should carefully tailor authentic materials and devote extra class time for student training when using digital sources that require some technical skills.

Other strategies these EOP student teachers incorporated into their lesson plans were the formative assessment tools and the respectful and encouraging ways in which they expected to deliver feedback. This diversity of assessment instruments empowers their adult learners to have a wider perspective of not only their gaps but also their language improvements. On the other hand, EOP student teachers have demonstrated the relevance to encouraging and empowering adult learners to participate in the diagnosis of their learning needs, the lesson plan construction, and the self and co-assessment of their performance in the instructional tasks. These adjustments are aligned with what Meriam et al. (2006) had stated about how adult learners could get motivated if they were allowed to participate in such decisions. In addition, close observation of the participants' interactions in class can be a great assessment source, for Macalister and Nation (2020) argued that "monitoring occurs whenever the teacher observes what the learners are doing" (p. 231). Similarly, this in-class observation could complement the EOP practitioners' feedback choice included in their lesson plans - recasts.

This array of formative assessment tools offers a less threatening environment of instruction for adult learners. EOP student teachers can also perceive if their adult learners are motivated and how much progress their students have made towards the improvement of their English occupational skills. Such class monitoring could be challenging because Zeivots (2016) defined emotional highs as "inner deep satisfaction learner experiences when they have absorbed something meaningful" (p. 368), thus close observation and communication with the participants would be the only ways of truly confirming their motivational stages. Therefore, the strategies that EOP student teachers are implementing, such as showing empathy and preventing adult learners from experiencing feelings of embarrassment, are valuable to boost a sense of belonging to the community of learners. When asked about ways

to motivate, one of the informants provided three motivational strategies. However, we still have doubts about how these motivational strategies have influenced or contributed to her lesson planning. A pending task is to verify if the student teacher has explicitly stated in her lesson plans when and how such implementation of the motivational strategy occurred. Her remarks about motivating participants require verification in the lesson plans.

Open communication among the learning community members is a strategy that seems to suit lesson plans for adult learners. This practice becomes a vital way of transferring the adult learners' occupational expertise to the class and portraying it in the lesson plans. To adapt their lesson plans, the EOP student teachers must have a complete and realistic view of the ESP student population to identify starting points of dissatisfaction. These new changes should involve all the participants as well as their varied points of view about language instruction and emergent adult learners' needs. Thus, the strategy to have open communication with her adult learners empowers these EOP student teachers to find out or discover if the pupils' expectations are being met, so both parties could together make changes or adjustments in the teaching process.

Pedagogy and andragogy principles differ greatly in terms of the complexity levels to design materials and arrange lesson activities. Expecting to learn about adult learning theoretical principles, the informants seem open to make improvements and adjustments in their lesson plans for adults in the future. These EOP student teachers have considered their past experiences teaching adults and decided to discard entertainment, mainly those games in which adults may not feel physically comfortable playing in the classroom. Clearly, the materials and task construction in the lesson plan merits close examination. In this respect, EOP professors should implement tasks that can boost not only interaction but problem-solving skills as recommended in the andragogy principles (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 294).

Adult education deserves more attention in ESP teacher training programs. Therefore, further comparison and contrast of pedagogy and andragogy should become a priority in ESP contexts.

Undoubtedly, when making materials or thinking in the lesson strategies, participants should always take into account specific elements that are distinctive among their adult population. For instance, technology becomes an interesting way to recreate different topics within the class. Surely, adult learners as well as any other population may need some technical training before using any software, website, or interactive app, for this constitutes a way to be at the forefront of language instruction by helping them to be skillful in technology while managing the foreign language (Hashim et al., 2018). Certainly, this will help to provide support to those adult participants who struggle to overcome such limitations.

Even though assessment becomes a key instrument to collect valuable information about learners' weaknesses or strengths, other alternatives such as developing learn-to-learn and self-direction skills are key to validating the class tasks. According to this research finding, one of the EOP language instructors' strategies was to verify if their participants are really reaching their needs fulfillment by encouraging them to provide their honest opinions. Similarly, the EOP student's teacher who participated in this research mentioned that they could make changes in the lesson plan if students were not in agreement with the outcomes.

However, if the EOP student teachers trust their Needs Analysis, they cannot keep the sense of uncertainty by making drastic changes during the course. Otherwise, the NA was made in vain. Evidently, it is important to take into account students' feedback and adapt activities or materials, if necessary, but it is a constraint to be hesitant about what was already designed and constantly feel like walking on ice. For this reason, EOP student teachers should not improvise; they have to strategically boost adult learning self-direction by using other

mechanisms such as developing participants' learning-to-learn skills. Blumberg (2009) mentioned that "these skills include determining a personal need to know more, knowing whom to ask or where to seek information, determining when a need is met, and development of self-awareness of one's own learning abilities" (p. 133). These abilities involve to detect a personal necessity about knowing more, whom to ask and where to look for information, deciding when a need is accomplished, and notice the evolution of own learning skills (Blumberg 2009, p. 133). As the NA requires administering multiple instruments such as diagnostic tests, and consulting participants or stakeholders, among other sources of data collection, self-direction becomes less transactional and can be propitiated during different moments of the course. Therefore, increasing autonomy could help the EOP language instructors to reach out to more observable behaviors within the lesson environment by leading a continuum process of evaluation throughout the course.

For novice EOP student teachers the fact of using a new LT approach becomes a challenge. They declared that they have never used it for not having experience in ESP. As a consequence, they do not know if it is going to work until they put it into practice. For these EOP instructors, it is relevant to base their lesson plan strategies on their Needs Analysis. It is important to take into account constraints such as time, students' motivation, and teachers' availability in order to make sure that the selected approach will work. The lesson plan can only be installed within the lesson if the designer first considers aspects such as teachers' training, students' contexts, language level, or background, and even the type of materials they will use. However, the success of the approach perhaps depends on how adult learners behave towards it because there are incidental situations that can arise from the learning situation itself. In fact, the Task-Based Approach can be used in combination with other approaches.

Significantly, the role of the instructors, SMEs, and adult learners was key in the construction of the EOP lesson plan. The establishment of a learning community started with consistent teamwork, so the EOP student teachers' strategy to team teach harmoniously strengthened their effectiveness in lesson planning by maintaining constant communication and displaying high levels of commitment and perseverance. As a team, the informants in this research study set a clear horizon to plan lessons for adult learners strategically. Having an SME onboard as a company insider highlights that a critical part of this teamwork enforces constant exposure and monitoring of the adult learners' occupational environment because active student teachers in any learning community remain focused and engaged with their participants' learning (Dufour et al., 2010). On the other hand, EOP student teachers who work together in their MPLA practicum assume diverse roles; as team members, they become researchers, material makers, curriculum designers, needs analysts, and beyond. When co-teaching or team teaching, student teachers cannot assume that they are just working together to teach an EOP course during their practicum. Team teachers cannot act in isolation, and this is a clear lesson that our EOP student teachers were extremely aware of as they planned lessons for adults. There are some remarkable EOP experiences in which a team of language teachers and SMEs work as teaching teams by sharing diverse insights, giving opinions, setting up common goals, respecting diverse perspectives, etcetera. All these team teachings aspects will be valuable in terms of unifying efforts to really engage and support their adult learners in their EOP courses.

Overall, the EOP student teachers' perceptions about lesson planning are clearly negative as they have almost any reference to theoretical principles of adult learning, beyond a set of recommendations provided by the ESP professor from MPLA. She seems to have a fair sense of the participants' needs, so they basically proceeded their lesson planning by

making adjustments into what could be defined as the basic planning skills and formats they have employed or mastered before with younger students.

As EOP student teachers embarked into lesson planning for adults, they clearly drew upon their past experiences teaching adults in order to make adjustments that they perceived as necessary in their lesson plans. Although they may not have yet to be fully aware of these sets of teaching adjustments or even grouped them together as a theme, participants search for ways to tailor their lesson plans for adult learners, within their own teaching toolbox. The more the informants sailed into their lesson planning, the EOP student teachers held on to a set of claims that could be traced back to their NA and ESP course design professor. Such a set of claims or assumptions cannot be compared to any theoretical set of principles, for these were not grounded on adult learning theories and formal instruction in their master's program (MPLA).

This theme about team planning is really a determining and influential factor in how the EOP student teachers proceeded with their lesson planning. As the informants highlighted in their interviews, the outsider EOP student teacher could have mistakenly taken the wrong path if it were not for the guidance provided by the call center specialist, who happened to be part of the teaching team. Perhaps, the very first step that novice ESP practitioners may or should take while planning for adult learners is to look for a company insider or subject matter expert (SME) who could enrich the NA and get involved as a team teacher. This has been the case elsewhere, in even more competitive and demanding international settings like ESP training for air traffic control. Many of the lesson planning hurdles or challenges for adult learners that were grouped and listed under that theme can be overcome by strategically seeking and welcoming the support of another teacher or content matter specialist.

However, this attempt to plan lessons as a team still does not imply a careful consideration, yet far less implementation, of adult learning principles. It is our position that these theoretical considerations about adult education need to be discussed prior conducting the NA, so that more direct adjustments in light of the adult learning theories can be made during the NA itself and later on in the ESP course design and teaching practicum.

VI. Conclusions

Restatement of the Main Idea of the Study

The age factor in EOP settings has been given some well-deserved attention in this research project, for a closer look at how EOP student teachers proceed with lesson planning for adult learners has yielded several considerations. First, by describing how two English language instructors perceive what it means to teach adult learners and how they plan their lessons for this population, ESP teacher training can be boosted in the near future by incorporating more adult learning principles in more deliberate ways. In other words, pedagogy differs significantly from andragogy, and student teachers should clearly distinguish the differences between the two fields to proceed more strategically when working with adults.

The results obtained in this research project could enlighten lesson planning decisions for adult learners as long as further research and scrutinizing of adult learning theories occur. EOP student teachers, stakeholders, and any other academic authorities should pay attention to the fact that most of their participants are adult learners. Despite attempts or appeals for common sense estimations to teach these participants and consider their ages, lesson planning ought to be strategically adjusted in terms of adult learning principles. The likelihood of having adult learners in an ESP class is very high in settings beyond the university campuses, or tertiary education. The relevance of ESP instruction keeps growing in many diverse specialized fields such as call centers, business management, medical services, and others. This fact calls on significant adjustments to diversify ESP teacher training beyond pedagogical-based English teaching approaches, like including an adult learning theories course in the MPLA.

In this regard, creating engaging activities in which students feel part of a community is important. If they share the same company environment as the ones the EOP student teachers worked with during the practicum, adult learners would most likely leave aside for a moment their job pressures and start enjoying by activating their self-interest in improvement. Along with the research, it has been identified that the interviewees are really worried about motivation and feelings, and they are willing to do whatever possible to make students feel integrated and make the class time worthwhile. They were conscious of learners' struggles, fears, family issues, or affairs. Moreover, they have even mentioned the desire learners have to keep their jobs or have another position which makes EOP student teachers more conscious about what their adult learners want and provides them with attainable strategies to encourage them to reach such goals. However, more than just noticing their feelings, what they should do is devote some time to recreate a safe environment full of meaningful tasks considering adult learner principles in order to integrate the new knowledge into their job scenarios.

EOP student teachers should display interaction and flexibility within the community of learning they establish with their adult learners to make collective decisions and arrangements toward the instructional environment. Along this research, EOP student teachers were conscious of the importance of consulting their participants and having an SME because this support brings clarity and validity to the lesson plan content specificity and task design. Another important trait EOP student teachers can develop to become more sensitive and concerned about their adult learners' struggles, family responsibilities, time limitations, motivations, learning styles, feelings. Part of this flexibility EOP student teachers ought to acquire includes an explicit attempt to follow recommendations from the ESP MPLA

professors in the sense of designing straightforward classroom tasks and limiting the traditional entertaining tasks intended for younger students.

Significantly, the EOP student teachers have displayed what planning for whole adult learners means in terms of discarding pedagogy principles in order to incorporate adult learning principles and theories. Indeed, andragogy and pedagogy can nurture and complement EOP lesson planning in tertiary occupational settings with emerging adults. This complementary support could be a transition period as English language learners grow older and gain more experience in their occupational fields, for it becomes more critical to incorporate more adult learning principles in EOP lesson plans intended for truly older participants beyond the emerging adult stage. On the whole, the distinctive principles that characterize the adult learners such as self-direction, wider experiences, their readiness to learn, stronger learning orientation after experiencing a life situation, and motivation to learn by internal and external factors cannot be set aside because they should function as the lighthouse of the EOP student teachers lesson plan.

Summary of Findings

The answer to the first research question about student teachers' perceptions of lesson planning in an EOP course portrays a blurt, a fuzzy panorama that is packed with several challenges or burdens. Such a set of overwhelming impressions include adult learners' difficulties in pronouncing English words accurately, cognitively process language features faster, handle negative feelings, manage personal time and responsibilities, meet job demands and income goals, surmounting a lack of adult learning theory and lesson plan procedures for this population, among others. This discouraging panorama along with these perceptions, should be reversed because it is human nature to stay away from tasks and environments that are not appealing, harmonious, or uplifting. On the other hand, both researchers concluded

that the EOP student teachers unconsciously employed several strategies that serve as lesson planning adjustments to suit adult learners, and this theme answers the second research question. Informants' planning procedures were clearly drifting away from how student teachers used to plan their GE lessons before their teaching practicum at the master's, so they openly describe how they now plan their lessons into a new EOP setting for adult learners by employing what we have named as strategies or activities. Some of these strategies include carrying out a needs analysis, recalling recommendations from MPLA professors, offering mainly formative assessment, managing time constraints, designing and adapting authentic materials, offering more affective support, taking advantage of a subject matter expert support, and others. In summary, the EOP student teachers have openly described their impressions on lesson planning for adult learners and how they have proceeded with the utmost professional resources available in their teaching repertoire.

The cognitive and affective burdens that adult learners seem to have demand more careful review and consideration of psychological principles and strategies. Those negative feelings such as anxiety and fear can block learning at any age, but adult learners require more careful monitoring of their emotions during the class delivery by adding reminders or check-ups in the lesson plans. Even though EOP student teachers may be aware of such feelings arising among their adult participants, psychologists could emphasize how language instructors could tackle or manage these negative feelings. These psychological support and professional counseling would lead to improvement by reviewing human reactions and emotional management in classrooms with adults.

Team teaching plays a key role in EOP courses, and this relevance cannot be neglected or taken for granted. Our informants exemplified how the English language instructor may need help to strategically plan a lesson all by himself or herself; at least, the

participants should be consulted in case there is not a bilingual SME. Having an insider or witness of the occupational contexts can save time and inform decision-making, for EOP student teachers face many burdens or challenges. Time constraints demand closer cooperation between team teachers. The involvement of an SME can offer more than just reassurance while transforming the needs analysis results into the actual lesson plan. The informant who was just the language instructor and outsider to the participants occupational contexts displayed a thankful tone towards the team teacher because of her role as call center insider and specialist.

Contributions of the Field of Study

EOP courses often welcome adult learners who clearly seek to improve their English skills within their occupational contexts. As found and concluded in this study, EOP student teachers perceived lesson planning for adult learners a bit more challenging, and they could benefit from a more explicit consideration of andragogy principles. Andragogy could strengthen EOP courses if adult learning theory became more explicitly addressed even during the initial stage of a Needs Analysis. Student teachers should have more adult teaching principles at their disposal instead of relying on isolated initiatives or strategies without direct link to adult learning theory. Considering that most adult learners have very tight agendas, the needs analyst, EOP course designer, and the language instructor could quickly disregard planning tasks that would not serve the needs of this participant population. A NA conducted under the tenets of adult learning theory could speed up the process of spotting the participants' expectations, suggestions, wants, lacks, perceived needs, and most urgent language needs. Finding ways to blend the language training into their busy lifestyles could represent just the departure to plan lessons for adult learners even more effectively and

strategically because EOP student teachers may handle more andragogy principles rather than exclusively relying on pedagogical notions meant for younger students.

Student teachers find ways to adapt to the educational challenges. A significant contribution of this research study is the description of EOP student teachers' diverse lesson-planning strategies in the midst of no former explicit teacher training on andragogy principles or any other adult learning theories. We had a brief encounter or reference to team teaching, particularly the contributions of a company insider or SME during the lesson planning stage. A closer look at the ins and outs of a collaborative path between SMEs and ESP practitioners could yield more strategically elaborated EOP lesson plans for adults. As we recall our ESP courses in the MPLA, we can conclude that the collaboration between an SME and an ESP instructor could have been given more attention and analysis. This team-teaching effort during the practicum cannot be left up to the student teachers to understand what it means and how to proceed with its implementation. Clearly, the informants in this research study have validated the importance of effective team teaching and a close collaboration of SMEs and ESP practitioners, so further studies on this regard are pending.

In the vast field of learning difficulties that can be traced back or derived from cognitive and emotional burdens, EOP student teachers may find answers and teaching accommodations for this participant population. The MPLA coordination and professors may consider promoting other methodologies beyond a Case Study design for future research studies. Other study designs should be considered because student teachers deserve a broader panorama of educational research rather than the exclusive implementation of Case Studies.

Limitations and Suggestions

The participants had done a NA and designed an ESP course accordingly, but they may have been handling several issues during their practicum besides considering their adult

learners. As an example of these many issues, Staples (2019) reported how time constraints negatively affect ESP implementation and called for “integrating lexico-grammar, pronunciation, and non-verbal behavior” (p. 28) in ESP courses. Such an expert claim clearly indicates that ESP practitioners, and even more student teachers like in this case study, often face many issues at once during their lessons. Our participants could have regarded the addressing of many issues during their practicum as troublesome, so getting acquainted with adult learning and planning their lessons with these students in mind may not have been a priority to the participants in this study. In fact, Staples (2019) viewed teacher training in her longitudinal study as a variable in addition to other processes such as corpus-based needs analysis, course design, and corpus-based materials. Therefore, participants in this study are trying to handle many ESP aspects during their practicum, which could distract them from their adult learners and plan for them accordingly.

On the other hand, time constraints interfered with the rigorous examination, exhausting coding and deep analysis that qualitative research often demands. Unlike quantitative studies, these processes in qualitative research are time-consuming to allow careful revision and interpretation. In this regard, both researchers in this case study could reach diverse interpretations while coding and doing peer review of their findings, so the “value of this approach is questionable since it is possible that each researcher may interpret the data, or parts of it, differently” (Burnard et al., 2008, p. 431). However, this is something that researchers have to manage wisely in order to keep research validity and trustworthiness.

Member checking or member checks could have enhanced rigor and credibility to the results and the overall thematic analysis conducted. For scientific publication purposes, this stage of member checking becomes a significant requirement because it “involves taking the findings back to participants and asking them (in writing or in an interview) about the

accuracy of the report” (Creswell, 2012, p. 259). Therefore, we are considering complying with member checking in the months to come, so the EOP student teachers would corroborate if the themes and categories reflect the essence of their perceptions on lesson planning for adult learners prior to their practicum. Mills and Gay (2018) explained member checks as one of other ways to establish credibility “to test the overall report with the study's participants before sharing it”, and the seminar professor frequent and meticulous revision stands for “peer debriefing to test [our] growing insights through interactions with other professionals” (p. 560). These and other attempts to increase credibility prior publication would be enforced.

Two interviews with EOP student teachers and the time constraints to rigorously collect qualitative data and analyze it in less than three months represent two important limitations. Despite the case study nature of this research project, interviewing and including the perceptions of more EOP student teachers could have offered more data saturation and expanded the results beyond the single adult learner occupational context of a call center. Yin’s (2018) warned qualitative researchers to “avoid thinking in such confusing terms as the sample of cases or the small sample size of cases, as if a single- or multiple-case study were equivalent to respondents in a survey” (p. 39). In addition to this increase in the number of participants being interviewed, we would respectfully highlight administrative aspects that could either enrich or hinder the academic success and scientific rigor of final graduation projects. We may fully comprehend the fact that gathering qualitative data, coding, analyzing, and reporting it could take a lot of time. Besides interviews, more data collection instruments could provide more insights. What student teachers have claimed in the interviews and reflective narratives deserves careful follow-up through observations, document analysis, and focus groups. Therefore, we suggest two main adjustments, either

lowering the level of academic and scientific rigor or conducting data collection before the final cycle when the teaching practicum is conducted as well.

What qualitative research entails seems to be interpreted and understood differently by the many scholars within the country and even abroad. More academic agreements could be reached within the MPLA by means of a detailed revision of the qualitative research principles that would govern how to proceed with research studies in the courses and final graduation research project. The entire experience of conducting research in the MPLA has been overwhelming due to the high-level uncertainty about what is understood by qualitative research. Once more consensus is reached among scholars on this regard, the student teachers would have a clearer overview of what to accomplish in the final research project. Definitely, more qualitative research training should be provided during the first and second cycles in the master's program. Given the paramount role this final graduation project represents, we would have benefited from an early familiarity with the expected rigor level. Coding manually was time-consuming; we should have been trained early on how to do it both manually and with free coding software during the first year of the master's program. We could have benefited greatly from using coding software in light of the likelihood of conducting more qualitative research soon after graduating from the MPLA. Indeed, a qualitative research course should be offered during the first cycle because, to conduct a sound Needs Analysis, novice ESP practitioners ought to gain research skills and tools to gather and analyze qualitative data.

The development of research skills, the necessary guidance over the design options, and the disclosure of requirements for the final graduation project should start during the first year at the MPLA. To rigorously conduct research, student teachers need time to internalize the differences and rehearse with paradigms, designs, data collection tools, analysis

techniques, among others. Pursuing high quality and rigor in this research project, we were also incorporating a new set of qualitative research principles and using remarkably unfamiliar coding tools. More familiarization with both quantitative and qualitative designs should have occurred early on in the MPLA.

Most of our classmates conducted case studies as well, a similarity among research projects that offered a sense of collective guidance. Other research designs such as classroom ethnographies or action research, could be added to a narrow list of research designs as an attempt to diversify final projects but still add scientific rigor and mastery of very specific preselected designs. If this limited list of research designs to choose from for the final graduation project were to become a policy in the MPLA, student teachers would make smoother and faster decisions over the research problem and questions they would set. Another advantage for novice researchers would be to gain more orientation among themselves and from one MPLA generation to another.

A final limitation to address was the exclusive consultation or involvement of EOP student teachers. Further research is needed because the adult learners' perceptions and voices should be also gathered and heard. The adult learners themselves deserve a more active participation in similar future research studies because they are the final beneficiaries of any EOP course after all. Most of the results from the interviews with EOP student teachers require further revision, scrutiny, and expansion from the adult learners and their perspectives. Valuable insights could only be present once these primary beneficiaries can express what learning English for occupational purposes as an adult learner in Costa Rica represents based on their experiences.

VII. References

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VIII. Appendixes

Appendix #1

Interview Protocol

The following protocol has been designed in order to guarantee an ethical and systematic collection of the research participants' perceptions about lesson planning for adult learners. For this purpose, the researchers have considered the Four-Phase Process to Interview Protocol Refinement (IPR) established by Castillo-Montoya (2016).

Phase 1: Ensuring interview questions align with research questions

There are twenty-four questions in the interview matrix aligned to the two research questions in this study.

Phase 2: Constructing an inquiry-based conversation

To establish an inquiry-based conversation, the researchers have enough introductory, transition, key, and closing questions.

Phase 3: Receiving feedback on interview protocols

Two college professors from the Universidad Nacional and Universidad de Costa Rica have been asked to review this interview protocol and matrix protocol by individually filling out the following checklist for close reading of the interview protocol and submitting their revisions by email. These professors were chosen because of their ample experiences in either teaching English as a foreign language or working with adult learners. The EFL professor has more than twenty-five years of teaching experience while the psychology specialist has been the coordinator, for eight years, of an extension project at Universidad de Costa Rica, Sede del Sur, that supports adult learners to get their high school diploma.

Checklist for Close Reading of Interview Protocol

Instructions: Read the questions aloud and mark yes or no for each item depending on whether you see that item present in this interview protocol and matrix. Provide feedback in the last column for items that can be improved.

Aspects of an interview protocol	Yes	No	Feedback for improvement
<i>Interview Protocol Structure</i>			
Beginning questions are factual.			
The interview has been organized in a way that interviewees can respond to introductory questions, key questions, and ending questions.			
Questions at the end of the interview protocol are reflective and provide participants an opportunity to share and expand on their final comments or conclusions.			
A brief script throughout the interview protocol provides smooth transitions between topic areas.			
The interviewer closes by expressing words of gratitude and any intent to stay connected to follow up on the written instrument.			
The interview is organized to promote conversational flow.			
<i>Writing of interview questions & statements</i>			
Questions/ statements are free from spelling errors(s)			

Only one question is asked at a time			
Most questions ask participants to describe experiences and feelings			
Questions are mostly open ended			
Questions are written in a non-judgmental manner			
<i>Length of interview Protocol</i>			
All questions are needed			
Questions/ statements are concise			
<i>Comprehension</i>			
Questions/statements are devoid of academic language			
Questions/statements are easy to understand			

***Taken from Castillo-Montoya (2016, p. 825).**

Phase 4: Piloting the interview protocol

A third collaborator will be helping with the piloting of this instrument. An ESP student-teacher who had to temporarily stop taking courses from the ESP emphasis in the MPLA program will contribute to this final phase of piloting the interview protocol. In fact, this ESP student-teacher was a former classmate of the main research participants in this study and already holds a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics with more than ten years of teaching experience, including a college extension project aimed at adult English language learners.

Conditions Fostering Quality Interviews. Now that the Interview Protocol and Matrix Protocol have been piloted, the researchers will contact the participants through an email to request their involvement in the study, provide a copy of the Informed Consent, and ask for possible dates and times to conduct the interview. Once the Informed Consent has been read and signed, the participants reply to the email within a week, attaching a scanned version of the signed informed consent. Next, the researchers send a second email to finally schedule the date and time for the interview and share the Zoom meeting link. On the day of the interview, the synchronous Zoom meeting will start at the set time and researchers will comply with the Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and the recommendations gained from academic experiences over the usage of this video conferencing tool (Archibald et al., 2019).

Gaining access and selecting participants. The sampling strategy is criterion-based (Shaheen et al., 2019), so the semi-structured interview with the selected participants will unfold into three different stages: ice-breaker, inquiry-based conversation, and conclusion. Researchers will begin with an ice-breaker that will allow the interviewers to start with a friendly conversation over the subject of adult learning. This initial activity will boost the social interactions between the participant and researchers as they reach the introductory questions in the interview matrix. This will serve as a strategic procedure, so the researchers and the participant can begin the interview by commenting over a cartoon and with non-threatening questions. Then, the researcher will continue with further transition and key questions that require more elaboration on the topic. After that, closing questions will be asked before the interview ends with some thanking words (Castillo, 2016, p. 822).

Building Trust. The participants will be informed about the role of technology during the interview, and how data - interview video recording - will be confidentially collected, stored, analyzed, and shared just between both researchers. In addition, each

participant will be treated equally and genuinely (Rau & Coetzee, 2022, p. 704) during the separate individual interviews (Flick, 2014, p. 704). Besides, the four phases of the interview protocol (IPR) will be “considered to offer a systematic framework for developing a well-vetted interview protocol that can help us obtain robust and detailed interview data necessary to address research questions” (Castillo, 2016, p. 812). Also, this protocol has been reviewed by our research reader, a professor from Universidad Nacional already holds a Master’s degree in Applied Linguistics, and our professor of this Seminario en la enseñanza del inglés con fines específicos course of the master’s program.

The location and length of the interview. This semi-structured interview will be held using a Zoom meeting on a scheduled date and time, participants have the freedom to join the meeting from a location of their choice. During the interview, both researchers will hold the meeting, but only one researcher is going to ask the questions while the other researcher will take notes. The entire interview will last approximately an hour in accordance with the interview protocol script (Castillo, 2016, p. 214). Just before the interview starts, the participant can orally double check the title, the purpose of the research, and the ethical considerations about how data is collected, stored and analyzed as it was stated in the Informed Consent. In addition, the interviewees will have the opportunity to ask any further question before the interview begins.

The overall process of conducting an interview. Before the interview starts, the researchers and the participant should be ready to:

- Turn off their cellphones to avoid interruptions.
- Remain a quiet, safe, and comfortable location while the interview unfolds.
- Close other software or apps in their computers or cellphones to focus entirely on the Zoom interview.

- Join the Zoom meeting promptly on the date and time they have agreed upon
- Devote their attention and energy to this interview for the next 60 minutes.
- Reflect, think critically, and answer the questions in depth.
- Be recorded in the Zoom app for further transcription, coding, and analysis.
- Review later on the code book and results for member checking and validation purposes.

The researchers should verify these requirements and embrace the importance of “establishing and maintaining a warm and non-judgmental manner towards the participants”

(Lopez & Whitehead, 2013, p. 129)

Interview Protocol Script

Opening script:

Good morning/ afternoon/ evening!

Thanks for joining this meeting. We are glad to have you as an important participant of our research project. The title of our research is “Perceptions of EOP Student Teachers Regarding Lesson Planning for Adult Learners during their Practicum in 2022 at the Master’s program in Applied Linguistics, Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica.” We are seeking to describe the way EOP student teachers approach adult English language learners within their lesson planning during their practicum in 2022 at the Master’s Program of Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica. Your opinions, beliefs, and experience as an EOP course designer will be of great help for our research.

The results of this research will be shared as part of our final graduation work (TFG) during the final presentation as it is required in the Master’s Program in Applied Linguistics with an emphasis in English Teaching for Specific Purposes of Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica. These results will also be sent via e-mail to the participants and will be published in a scientific article. Your personal information will not be revealed; instead, we will be using pseudonyms to keep the ethical considerations of this research.

As you already read and signed the informed consent, let us recap on what is needed for this semi-structured interview. The whole interview will be recorded in the Zoom meeting; the transcriptions will be stored and managed in a safe way.

Previously, you completed a consent form indicating that I have your permission (or not) to video record our conversation. Are you still ok with us recording (or not) our conversation today? ___Yes ___No If yes: Thank you! If not: The Zoom meeting stops. Please let us know if at any point you want me to turn off the recorder or keep something you said off the record. If not: Thank you for letting us know.

I will only take notes of our conversation. Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions? [Discuss questions] If any questions (or other questions) arise at any point in this study or sections from this interview that you may want to be deleted, you can feel free to ask them and contact me at any time. My cellphone number is 6089 1554. I would be more than happy to answer your questions.

Interview Matrix

EOP Student Teachers' Perceptions on Lesson Planning for Adult Learners

Interview Stage #1. Ice-breaker Activity. (5 minutes)

First, interviewers greet the participant and express their gratitude for being part of this research process following the Interview Protocol Script below. Then, an ice-breaking activity will take place, but it should not last more than five minutes; the participant will look at three cartoons, select one and comment on its messages. The ice-break task is titled “Cartoon Reflection on Adult Learning”.

Instructions: Look at the following cartoons. Reflect on one of them. Then, answer the question: How can you relate them to adult learning?

Cartoon 1



Cartoon 2



Cartoon 3



Next, there is a formal presentation of the objective of the interview: Describe initial EOP student-teachers' perceptions towards lesson planning for their adult learners and the corresponding lesson plans before their interactions and perceptions evolve as they progress in their practicum. After that, reassurance of all ethical considerations will take place by double-checking if participants have read and signed the informed consent, using of pseudonyms, and offering reassurance and freedom to ask any questions, or even ending the

interview at any moment). Finally, interviewers friendly remind the participants that the interview will be recorded and that all their answers will be stored, protected, and used only for academic purposes. Some other interview delimitations are:

- ✓ This semi-structured interview will last for no more than 70 minutes.
- ✓ Participants will be consulted during the first week in August about the most convenient date and time when they could be available to schedule two interviews.
- ✓ The interviews will be held and recorded in Zoom for further transcription.
- ✓ The interviewer will be Randal Esteban Blanco Navarro.

Interview Stage #2. Interview Matrix. (40-60 minutes)

Research Questions	Interview Questions
What are EOP student teachers' perceptions about lesson planning for adult learners?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What stages or steps do you follow when planning your lessons? 2. What do your lesson plans look like? 3. Please describe the adult learners you would have during your practicum. 4. How has your lesson planning changed now that you have adult learners in your practicum? 5. Considering your adult learners, which lesson plan components do you tend to focus on more? 6. What adult learner characteristics do you consider relevant when planning your lessons? 7. What are some adult learners' expectations or interests that you are now paying attention to when planning your classes? 8. What elements of adult learners do you consider advantageous within the lesson plan operationalization? 9. What elements of adult learners do you consider disadvantageous within the lesson plan operationalization?
How do EOP student-teachers plan the lesson for adult learners?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please describe your experiences preparing your lesson plans for your practicum. 2. Do you consider psychological or affective factors on your lesson plan? If yes (go to question 3) 3. How do you address the psychological or affective aspects of your adult learners in your lesson plan design? What strategies do you use to address these needs? 4. How do you match or reflect the adult learners' job environment within a lesson plan?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. How do you incorporate adult learner's autonomy (learn to learn) as part of your lesson plans? 6. On which specific aspects do you lean towards when making decisions on your lesson plan methodology for adult learners? 7. Considering your adult learners, how do you select or prepare materials in your lesson plans? 8. How do you plan content specificity for adult learners? 9. How do you plan to motivate adult learners? 10. What kinds of feedback would you offer adult learners? 11. How do you boost adult learners' interest and motivation? 12. How do the adult learners' job knowledge and experiences shape and influence when you plan EOP lessons? 13. How do you plan to transfer the adult learners' job knowledge and experiences within the lesson plan?
Closing Question	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What else could we be missing about what it means to plan lessons for adult learners? 2. What else intrigues you about planning lessons for adult learners? 3. Is there something else that influences how you plan your classes for adult learners that we have not yet had a chance to discuss? 4. If you could give advice to another EOP student teacher about planning lessons for adult learners, what would that be?

Interview Stage #3. (5 minutes)

Participants are warmly thanked for their collaboration and insights in this interview. In addition, the interviewer reminds the confidentiality issues about this interview and asks if they have further questions. Member checking will take place once preliminary results are reached after coding processes; in this way, participants will check the accuracy and resonance between the results and their intended messages or perceptions.

Appendix #2

Reflective Narrative Matrix

Reflective Narrative Guidelines	
<p>Dear participant,</p> <p>Please video record yourself while reflecting on your experiences, perspectives, and insights on the topic of lesson planning for adult learners in an EOP course during the practicum. You can choose the recording device: your cellphone or Zoom. The following questions will serve you as a guide while recording for at least five minutes, but not more than ten minutes. Once you are done recording, please let us know through an email, a phone call or WhatsApp message. The last step for you will be to share the video by uploading to this Google Drive site:</p> <p>https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jSDMQNGWpdqRAN0CUev0DYdXu0sndff9?usp=sharing</p> <p>We deeply thank you for taking the time, energy, and commitment to contribute to this research project.</p>	

Research Questions	Reflective Narrative Questions
What are EOP student teachers' perceptions about lesson planning for adult learners?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How has been your experience with planning for adult learners?2. How is it different to plan for adult learners than for younger learners? Why?
How do EOP student-teachers plan the lesson for adult learners?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. As you plan for adult learners, what exactly do you keep in mind or consider?2. What steps or procedures are you following when planning for adult learners?

Appendix #3

Documentation Revision Checklist: Lesson Plan

Rationale. Considering Yin’s (2019) remark that qualitative researchers could use documentation in case study research, this checklist is divided into three sections. First, a list of codes obtained from the interviews is included to “corroborate and augment [such] evidence” to verify if those are reflected as well in the lesson plans. Second, a set of elements regarding adult learning has been selected by the researchers based on the literature review to see if these are addressed in the EOP student teachers’ lesson plans. The participants have not been informed that these elements were going to be analyzed in their lesson plans. Third, there is a section to include any other codes or themes that could emerge from reviewing the lesson plans so that both researchers can write them down. Finally, each researcher reviews the lesson plans separately with this checklist. Once they are done revising each lesson plan, both researchers hold a Zoom meeting and exchange their results.

First Section. Corroborating and augmenting evidence from the interviews.

Previous categories and themes detected in the interviews and reflective narratives	Explicitly found in the lesson plan	Somehow found in the lesson plan	Not found in the lesson plan
Theme 1: EOP Student Teachers’ Reflections on Adult Learning Lesson Planning			
Cognition and pronunciation burdens		X	
Feelings and emotional burdens			X
Time management and responsibilities	X		

Job demands and income goals	X		
High level of language proficiency burdens	X		
Personalities and learning styles burdens			X
Technology burdens		X	
A lack of adult learning theory		X	
Previous teaching experiences	X		
A lack of EOP lesson plan procedures for adult learners	X		
Theme 2: Strategies to Suit EOP Lesson Plan for Adult Learners			
A Needs Analysis	X		
MPLA Professors' Recommendations	X		
Time Constraint Management	X		
Material Design	X		
Formative Assessment			X
Affective and Cognitive Support		X	
Open Communication	X		
Avoid In-Class Recreational Games	X		
Learners' Opinions and Validation	X		

Task-Based Language Teaching	X		
Subject Matter Expert (SME) Support	X		
Effective Team Teaching	X		

Second Section. Revising for the implementation of adult learning theoretical considerations

Elements of adult learning within the lesson plan	Always	Sometimes	Never
The language instructor considers the learners' experience within the lesson plan design.	X		
Activities are linked to their job environment / planned accordingly to learners' daily life tasks.	X		
Time is managed accurately and according to learners' personal affairs.	X		
Students' interests and motivations are considered.	X		
The affective filter is considered by motivating learners' positive attitudes toward language acquisition.	X		
There is assigned time during the lesson plan for students' training regarding technology.	X		
Learners' own culture is taken into account.	X		
There are opportunities for students to express their experiences or opinions within the class.	X		
A cooperative environment is considered.	X		
Alternative assessment takes place during the class.		X	
Material is authentic and relevant to the participants' job environment and their previous experiences.	X		
The lesson plan shows a logical sequence.	X		

Content is relevant and according to the participants' occupational fields.	X		
Objectives are planned considering adult learning skills such as self-direction and readiness to learn.	X		
The methodological strategies are planned according to the objectives	X		
Diagnostic assessment is taken into account during the first lesson plan.			X
Allows a time to recap and repeat the most important concepts developed in the session	X		

Third Section. Emerging codes and themes from reviewing the lesson plans.

As the researchers review the lesson plans, they should also include other details, aspects, or features they find or notice that were not included in the previous checklist or code notebook. In this way, other codes or themes could emerge from reviewing the lesson plans.

Emerging code or theme	Description

Appendix #4

Interview Transcript Template

Semi-structured Interview # 1 - # 2

Date of interview: ____

Starting time: ____

Ending Time:

____ Interviewee: #____

Interviewer: Randal Blanco

Basic Procedures Followed:

1. Welcoming words and thanking remarks about her participation in the study.
2. Interviewee is reminded about her rights such as ending the interview at any time.
3. The interviewer informs the participant that this interview will be recorded in his laptop.
4. Recording starts.

Time:	Person:
Transcript:	

Observations / Incidents:

Appendix #5

Codebook Log & Coding Journal

Coding Journal				
Researcher: _____				
Date	Hours coding	Document being coded	Section being coded	Activities done

Appendix #6

Codebook

Procedures:

1. Once both researchers have worked independently on their Coding Journal and reviewed the interview transcripts, they would meet through a Zoom meeting.
2. Collaboratively, these researchers work on this code booklet, share their initial impressions and codes from the code journal, discuss and agree on the emerging codes.
3. By following this inductive coding process, both researchers complete this final code booklet by naming each code and defining it.

Final Manual of Codes		
Tree branch level	Code:	Definition:

Appendix #7.

FORMULARIO PARA EL CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Título del Proyecto:

Perceptions of EOP Student Teachers Regarding Lesson Planning for Adult Learners during the Practicum at the Master's program in Applied Linguistics at Universidad Nacional in Costa Rica.

Antes de que usted decida ser parte de la investigación, le agradecemos leer detenidamente la siguiente información. Si tuviese alguna duda, favor consultar a los investigadores sobre cualquier información que no quede clara.

Código (LPB724) de proyecto: Seminario en la enseñanza del inglés para fines específicos.

Nombre de las personas investigadoras:

Milady Liseth Esquivel Ibarra & Randal Esteban Blanco Navarro

Nombre de la persona participante: _____

Medios para contactar a la persona participante: números de teléfono _____

Correo electrónico: _____

Contacto a través de otra persona _____

A. PROPÓSITO DEL PROYECTO

El propósito de este proyecto de investigación cualitativa es describir las perspectivas que los y las profesores-estudiantes de la maestría profesional en la enseñanza del inglés con fines específicos de la Universidad Nacional tienen acerca del planeamiento de clases para estudiantes adultos del idioma inglés, y que implementarán durante su práctica supervisada.

B. ¿QUÉ SE HARÁ?

Su participación en la investigación tomará lugar previo a la práctica profesional por espacio de dos meses una vez que los planes de lección hayan sido diseñados. Los instrumentos de recolección de datos se aplicarán en tres etapas. Durante la primera etapa se realizará una entrevista semiestructurada, se le solicitará el primer planeamiento didáctico que implementará durante su práctica docente supervisada y un relato de reflexión. Los frutos, desenlaces e interpretaciones de la recolección de datos cualitativos con cada instrumento se divulgarán vía correo electrónico primero con las personas participantes y luego se publicarán en un artículo científico.

Procedimiento específico para las entrevistas

1. Los participantes deberán participar en una entrevista semiestructuradas de máximo 60 minutos.
2. La entrevista será grabada por motivos de respaldo de datos y procesos de transcripción y análisis.
3. Los participantes deberán profundizar, ser reflexivos y críticos en las preguntas que se harán durante la entrevista.
4. Los participantes deberán estar en un lugar tranquilo, para garantizar la calidad de la conexión a internet.
5. Los participantes deberán estar disponibles para cualquier aclaración antes, durante o después de la entrevista.
6. Los participantes deberán, si se perdieran los datos, estar disponibles para realizar la entrevista nuevamente.
7. Las entrevistas se realizarán mediante la plataforma para reuniones Zoom. El enlace para la reunión se les facilitará a los participantes con antelación.

Procedimiento específico para la recolección de documentos

1. Los participantes deberán facilitar el primer planeamiento didáctico de una lección completa en su práctica profesional docente.
2. El plan de lección deberá ser adjuntados mediante los correos de los investigadores Randal Esteban Blanco Navarro y Milady Liseth Esquivel Ibarra y que se detallan a continuación randalblanco@gmail.com o miladyesquivelibarra@gmail.com

Procedimiento para los relatos narrativos

1. Los participantes emplearán la guía para la elaboración del relato narrativo.
2. Los participantes adjuntarán y enviarán a los correos electrónicos previamente asignados, la grabación o el hipervínculo a un video que consiste en un relato narrativo sobre las experiencias y percepciones de planear clases para personas adultas.
3. Este relato narrativo durará al menos 5 minutos, pero no más de 10 minutos.
4. Los participantes cumplirán con la entrega de este relato narrativo en la fecha establecida por los investigadores.

C. RIESGOS

Su participación no conlleva riesgos físicos o molestias corporales. Con respecto a la privacidad de sus aportes, se mantendrán en total anonimato al resguardar los datos solamente en la computadora del investigador responsable y con una codificación que no revelará su nombre o identidad. Por otra parte, usted podría experimentar incomodidad o ansiedad al participar de las entrevistas o al mostrar sus planes didácticos, pero se fomentará un ambiente virtual cordial y se exigirá un trato respetuoso y acogedor entre las personas participantes.

D. BENEFICIOS

Como resultado de su participación en este estudio, usted no obtendrá ningún beneficio directo porque no se dará compensación económica. Sin embargo, es probable que esta experiencia brinde datos importantes que contribuyan al fortalecimiento de los planes de lección de los diseñadores e instructores en la enseñanza del inglés para estudiantes adultos. La devolución y divulgación de los resultados de la investigación se hará vía correo electrónico.

E. VOLUNTARIEDAD

Es importante aclarar que su participación en esta investigación es voluntaria y puede negarse a participar o retirarse en cualquier momento sin verse afectada por su retiro o falta de participación.

F. CONFIDENCIALIDAD

Las personas investigadoras garantizan el estricto manejo y confidencialidad de la información al resguardar los datos sólo en su computadora personal y bajo una codificación que no revela nombres o identidades de las personas participantes, inclusive durante el momento de divulgación de los resultados en ponencias y artículos científicos.

H. INFORMACIÓN

Antes de dar su autorización para este estudio, usted debe haberse comunicado con Randal Esteban Blanco Navarro o con Milady Liseth Esquivel Ibarra y quienes deben haber contestado satisfactoriamente todas sus preguntas acerca del estudio y de sus derechos. Si quisiera más información más adelante, puede obtenerla llamando a Randal Esteban Blanco Navarro, al teléfono 8304-9040 en el horario de lunes a viernes de 8:00 a.m. a 5:00 p.m, o bien con Milady Liseth Esquivel Ibarra al teléfono 60891554 en el horario de 3:00 p. m. a 6:00 p. m. Cualquier consulta adicional puede comunicarse a los correos electrónicos que aquí se detallan randalblanco@gmail.com o miladyesquivelibarra@gmail.com

- I. Como participante de esta investigación NO perderá ningún derecho por firmar este documento y recibirá una copia de esta fórmula firmada para su uso personal.

CONSENTIMIENTO

He leído o se me ha leído toda la información descrita en esta fórmula antes de firmarla. Se me ha brindado la oportunidad de hacer preguntas y estas han sido contestadas en forma adecuada. Por lo tanto, declaro que entiendo de qué trata el proyecto, las condiciones de mi participación y accedo a participar como sujeto de investigación en este estudio

Nombre, firma y cédula de la persona participante

Lugar, fecha y hora

Appendix #8

Analytical Memo

Milady's Analytical Memo

August 29th, 2022

09:54 pm

This first exercise of coding was very interesting. Initially, I did not have any idea about the right way of doing it because this was my first time ever and I just wanted to be on the right track. I was glad to see that my partner and I had very similar codes. This was in fact a relief because we are rushing to start coding. Tonight, I heard one of the last videos for the fourth time and it was a long way until I saw clarity in the transcription.

Regarding codes, we could analyze only ten minutes of the interview transcript and I think we came up with more than five codes in which the participant talked about the importance of having experience as an EOP practitioner and having clear objectives by setting the topic first as a priority. Besides, the lack of knowledge about how to implement different approaches with adult learners. We will continue tomorrow reviewing the interview to come up with more codes that perhaps can enlighten us much more about what this participant was intended to say.

August 30th, 2022

8:50 pm

Today we started coding around 2:15 pm and finished our second session at 3:15 pm. I have felt that this is a time-consuming and slow process. Our attention was drawn to three different codes because we are struggling to decide how to narrow them down or how to select only the most relevant. I am concerned about the time we have to code and analyze the entire transcriptions.

September 06th, 2022

5:45 pm

This task of coding seems to be more familiar now; however, it is difficult to narrate the description and stick to the original idea of the participant. For this great labor, we have to be neutral and not add more information but just exactly what the participant was intended to say. In other words, we have to be loyal to the script. On the other hand, we had issues with the coding and codebook table because every time we had to fill in the chart with the transcript it became misconfigured, this was so frustrating that it took us a lot of time to paste it and double check the fidelity of the transcript. It was difficult to remember which codes were repeated but we are trying to do the hard work with patience and use our own strategies to control the changes or delete repeated codes.

Besides, we also found codes that were related to the theory of adult learner as the intrinsic motivation, readiness to learn, and behavior toward new learning. This is interesting to me because it is a way in which I can foresee a little light on further research results. We were also commenting on the time constraints we have because doing research is something that is time consuming and we think that it would be difficult to code, analyze data, and see the results in less than two months which is very stressful for us; though we are keeping busy to make sure that this will be finished for the due date, if not we have to request for some time to complete our task. I hope not!

September 07th,2022

02:42pm

One of the most important steps to be assertive while coding or writing our analytical memo is to be informed about What does it mean to code? What does it mean to do an analytical memo? What is the right way to do it? What types of codes are going to be more

accurate for our coding process? How to write them? How to detect inaccuracies. So, for this reason, it was relevant to read “The coding manual for Qualitative Research” by Saldaña (2016) and get in deep about the theory to really know the elements we need to manage within this process. The first step was to internalize what does it mean to write an analytical memo? Well according to Saldaña, (2016): “Analytic memos themselves from the study can be coded and categorized according to their content”. Also, he mentioned that:

One principle I stress throughout selected profiles in later chapters is that, even after you have coded a portion of your data and categorized the codes into various lists, analytic memo writing serves as an additional code- and category-generating method. By memo writing about the specific codes you have applied to your data, you may discover even better ones. (Saldaña,2016 p.54)

On the other hand, we got to the point to analyze and internalize the elements that embed the analytical memo these are:

1. Reflect on and write about how you personally relate to the participants and/or the phenomenon
2. Reflect on and write about your code choices and their operational definitions.
3. Reflect on and write about the participants’ routines, rituals, rules, roles, and relationships.
4. Reflect on and write about emergent patterns, categories, themes, concepts, and assertions.
5. Reflect on and write about the possible networks and processes (links, connections, overlaps, flows) among the codes, patterns, categories, themes, concepts, and assertions.
6. Reflect on and write about an emergent or related existing theory.

7. Reflect on and write about any problems with the study.
8. Reflect on and write about any personal or ethical dilemmas with the study.
9. Reflect on and write about future directions for the study.
10. Reflect on and write about the analytic memos generated thus far (meta memos)
11. Reflect on and write about tentative answers to your study's research questions.
12. Reflect on and write about the final report for the study.

As Saldaña also cite Birks, Chapman, and Francis (2008) provide a clever mnemonic for remembering the overall purposes of analytic memo writing, simply labeled "MEMO" (p.56):

M – Mapping research activities (documentation of the decision-making processes of research design and implementation as an audit trail)

E – Extracting meaning from the data (analysis and interpretation, concepts, assertions, theories)

M – Maintaining momentum (researcher perspectives and reflexivity throughout the evolutionary journey of the study)

O – Opening communication (for research team member exchanges)

We were also analyzing the scope of the type of coding we are doing since we consider that process coding gives us the chance to see how student-teachers approach their lesson plan activities. We also discussed that sometimes descriptive codes can also be a choice for our coding exercise. Now, there is another consideration regarding coding, we discovered that causation and longitudinal coding could offer links between phases, stages, and cycles of process and actions which enlightens us regarding considering this for our coding process.

Regarding the codes that we have found until now, it is important to highlight two elements of adult learners according to the principles established in the theory of Malcolm Knowles. These are showing up until now; the first one is “adults’ readiness to learn” and “adults are motivated to learn”. The concept of these two elements is fed when we noticed in the description that if participants (learners) embark on an EOP course it is because they perceive a need in their life situation. They want to perform more effectively in some aspects of their lives. So, participant 2 mentioned that most of them are highly motivated because they want to do better at their workplace because they have families and need the job. Participant contrast this affirmation with younger workers. Adult learners want to have a better quality of life and they want to have self-confidence. In this way, the student-teacher seeks to promote activities that are practical, less time-consuming, and meaningful for adult learners.

On the other hand, there is another code that we took out which is “struggling combining technology” with English. This code refers to the different constraints adult learners have when they are using technology due to age factors and also when they are asked to multitask. Participant 2 mentioned that they are unable to do certain tasks under pressure.

Sunday September 11th,2022

1:32 pm

Today we started checking codes and descriptions. The fact that we are finding some answers to the research questions, even themes or categories is key to feeding this memo. One of the codes that caught my attention was the “expecting task completion” . Originally this code was set as “need for success” but one of the researchers disagreed. However, the original code enlightened me to think about the adult-learner principles, especially adult learners’ “readiness to learn” since they perceive a need to know or do something in order to

perform more effectively. Also, this code refers to adults' "self-direction" since they want to take the responsibility for their own lives including evaluating their learning activities. Both concepts or elements of the principles of adult learning refer to the question about the advantageous elements that the EOP student-teachers consider when planning for adult learners. The interviewee also mentioned the differences between young and adult learners when she mentioned the type of behavior; for example, when one of them mentioned "No, I want to take this course and I want to learn English because I need to grow because I have family right? And I need to bring the income" All those aspects made allusion to the Knowles principles of adult learning.

On the other hand, the researcher mentioned that adult participants have expressed that they do not have much time to stay in the course because of family and personal affairs. On one side the student-teacher mentioned that the most important element of the lesson plan was the asynchronous tasks since some of them may not stay during the whole class. In this way, she contradicts herself about assigning homework or not; she seems unclear about what she needs to implement or include as a strategy to accomplish the lesson objective. Considering the number of time participants will spend doing the asynchronous work.

September 13th ,2022

6:18 pm

There are some codes which result interesting to analyze and that are part of the adult-learner brain plasticity. I was looking for some information related to brain plasticity which led me to take a look at an article named "Structural Plasticity and Hippocampal Function" by Benedtta Leuner and Elizabeth Gould. This article explains structural plasticity in the hippocampus over the lifespan. In fact, it was very interesting because it talks about neurogenesis which is the growth of the nervous tissue and the changes that it entails

throughout adulthood. So, the authors mentioned: “although neurogenesis is not limited to the postnatal and juvenile periods, the level of new neuron production undergoes a progressive decline during the transition into adulthood” (Leuner et al., 2010, p.114). It reminds me of one of the courses we had taken in this Master’s program about second language acquisition. We studied that as we grow up our brain becomes less plastic and we become more fixed in what we know.

This makes me reflect that adults may have a harder time performing or getting engaged in the L2 or even tend to struggle to participate in certain activities. This represents a real challenge for these student teachers who are planning for adult learners. They have to consider what it means to be an adult learner in order to adapt their materials and activities according to their capabilities. Participant 2 mentioned this “I need to take into account their abilities. It is difficult for them to see, or even if it is very tiring for them to keep on seeing the screen” also she mentioned that some of them have difficulties with technology or struggle when combining technology with English since multitasking is sometimes difficult for adults. This responded to the EOP student teacher’s consideration of adult learners’ abilities and needs. Another source that I found according to what participant 2 said was about experiential learning. Adult learners need to transfer the experience they have to their lesson environment. This becomes enriching within the lesson plan for student teachers because they can recreate experiences for adult learners to live and experiment and make the class a real-life scenario. Peterson and Kolb (2018) mentioned

It is not experienced, but experience that is the source of learning.

Because of our habits and stereotypes, we live through many experiences without actually experiencing them. Through a Gestalt perspective, we

accept that learning and change can only occur when individual perception and meaning-making are interrupted. (p.288)

Thus, it is essential to plan lessons where adult learners' can experiment with job-related tasks and recreate those meaningful scenarios while they are learning, considering the value of their time and expectations. Adult learners may not be interested in those activities that are not related to their job's reality or that are not responding to their needs. Adult learners' motivation rests on the extent to which they can contribute to being the protagonists of their own learning by enriching the class with their own experiences and real-life examples. If we create adaptive spaces and collaborative work adult learners' responses to the lesson will be more effective. Material design should embed adult learners' participation. For example; put them into groups to create or redevelop materials in order to boost self-direction and enrich the material with their own expertise. Adult learners bring with them plenty of knowledge and expertise.

September 17th,2022

6:51 pm

Today we realized that there are some codes that are repetitive or similar. There are many factors that our interviewees, the student teachers, are considering when planning for adult learners. Student teacher shows themselves very concerned about how to make the adult learners catch up with the lesson when they missed a class. She mentioned the disadvantage of having to adapt to the activities when somebody misses a class. Adult learners' lifestyles and the difficulties they face attending classes become an inconvenience when delivering the lesson. However, the student teacher shows understanding about the different situations that they may face such as work schedules and family affairs. On the other hand, it was interesting to notice how aware and worried the student teacher is about the burden she feels regarding

helping adult learners to reach their expectations, especially because they strive to have better incomes to support their families.

September 19th,2022

11:14 am

While we were coding, we realized that one of the codes we found out was repetitive; for example: to consult ESP fellow student teachers in order to surf the uncertainty to lesson planning and find other ways of carrying out this stage. Through this declaration, we may perceive that there is a lack of knowledge and uncertainty that student teachers experience towards planning their ESP lessons for adult learners. They are not sure about what it means to plan for an adult learner within an ESP context. Suddenly a question arose in Randal's head... he said: How many times have we been exposed to a single sample format about what it means to plan for adult learners? and we realized that we haven't been exposed to a single sample format named it video or any other example of what it means to teach an ESP lesson or how to plan it. Even though we had an entire course about that, we haven't had the experience of seeing how to plan an ESP lesson for adult learners and what it implies. As student teachers, we have been led through the process of creating them but we haven't seen or experienced how this is. We were impressed with the level of incertitude we perceived from the interviewees. It would be of great help to reflect on that and see what it implies for the student teacher's learning process.

September 23rd,2022

2:00 pm

The hesitancy that we perceive in this interviewee, especially when talking about the lesson plan is broad. She does not know if she is actually planning the right way since she noticed that other student teachers were doing different lesson plans, especially when setting

the objectives. She also mentioned that if something does not work, she has to change it immediately. On the other hand, she is not certain about what are the strategies that could be implemented within the language lesson. She said “communication between the language instructor and the participants will be key”, but she did not mention how it is that she plans to address their needs. What are those methodological or strategic components shown on the lesson plan to reach such goals? In general, this question was not responded to as we expected. Seems to be that the interviewee has lots of queries and indecisions about how to plan an ESP lesson for adult learners or what strategic methodology she should use when planning.

Another aspect that caught our attention was to notice how interviewee 1 mentioned a change in the learners’ needs due to the fact that some agents who participated in the NA left the company. For this reason, we were discussing that the needs will remain the same for the participants who remain in the company and we wondered, how come their needs might have changed because other workers left the company. A call center agent’s language ought to remain the same in spite of other workers leaving the company. Is it that there would be other “unknown” agents who would join?

This thought led me back in time to when we coded interview 2 because she commented that some people who struggle are part of the class but not all of them have the same needs. So, if these people leave the company of course the needs must change since the focus will be on other types of needs, especially if there are new participants. However, it is not possible to start another Needs Analysis because of time constraints; also, because the course has been already designed and there should not be significant changes to the course syllabus but some possible adaptations for the new learners.

September 26th, 2022

10:32 pm

I was surprised by some of the aspects that I noticed within the reflective narratives. Again, there is a tendency for insecurity. The student teacher reflection 2 mentioned that we have to take into account students' opinions and validation of the course; she said:

...I asked them, "What do you think about this? What do you think about the units? Were they according to what you do? And also, uh, what you are ... or what you can improve?"

I think that students' perceptions and opinions can go beyond the fact of asking them. If they are really reaching the needs fulfillment or not you will notice it. As language instructors and course designers who have gone through the exhaustive process of doing a Needs Analysis, you can perceive if students are motivated or not and if they are really improving their flaws. Thus, it is interesting to notice that this student's teacher mentioned that she could make changes to the lesson plan if students are not in agreement with the outcomes. I think that if you trust your Needs Analysis you cannot keep the sense of uncertainty to make drastic changes, otherwise, your NA was made in vain. It is important to take into account students' feedback and modify or adapt activities or materials, but it is a constraint to be hesitant about what you have already designed and constantly feel that you are walking on ice. Student teachers should not improvise; they have to strategically validate their findings from the NA using other mechanisms such as an evaluation between the two language instructors, the students, and other ESP professionals who can observe the class before making changes. This is an excellent way to triangulate the information. It is probable that one can incorporate something "accidentally" new within the class, but there are other elements that we can foresee within the lesson plan.

As a matter of fact, in this reflective narrative interviewee 2 mentioned that there was an activity that was not planned, for example, to introduce the two language instructors to students in order to create rapport. This was expressly mentioned by interviewee 2, she improvised an activity; she said: In the middle of the class and just like spontaneously, I. I thought about, “OK. No, it's very important that we introduce ourselves because they may know me as their boss and... as their coworker in the past, but they do not know me in this new facet of the teacher! So, the feeling that there is something missing is not a good practice within the lesson since learners will detect immediately that you are insecure about organizing, designing, or planning your activities.

On the other hand, it is important to create engaging activities where students can feel part of a community especially if they share the same company environment where they can leave aside for a moment their job pressures and start enjoying and activating this self-interest of improvement that adult learners have. In fact, I have identified that the interviewees are really worried about motivation and feelings and they are willing to do whatever possible to make students feel integrated and make the class time worthwhile. They are conscious of learners' struggles, fears, family issues, or affairs. Furthermore, they have even mentioned the desire learners have to keep their jobs or have another position. However, more than just noticing their feelings, what they should do is to devote some time to recreate a safe environment full of meaningful experiences where learners can actually integrate the new knowledge with their experience and implement it right away in their job tasks.

October 5th

9:30 am

The impostor syndrome

Adult learners need to be right and certain about the instructor's knowledge. Even though they tend to be self-directed, they also need to be part of a substantial construction of knowledge. There is a need for adult learners about being sure that the language instructor masters either the language and the topic itself and that he or she knows exactly what he or she is talking about, otherwise they are going to feel that the class is not worth it. No one is perfect if we're not willing to admit that foul ability lots of strength strange things happen unconsciously. Participants could develop a either conscious or unconscious idea that the facilitator in front of the class knows everything which is impossible and that can lead to feelings of doubt in their ideas. This might make the class weaker and lose credibility around what the instructor plans or performs in the class. I read something about the imposter syndrome or the imposter effect and you know it can lead to some maladaptive behaviors. This not only affects adult learners' perceptions but also greatly influences the quality of the lesson and therefore the EOP practitioner's performance. Individuals, in this case, adults, learn through social interactions too. They really are interested in sharing their knowledge and experience. I can say that if the language instructor implements collaborative ways to construct the lesson together there is no way in which the impostor syndrome could invade our lessons. One has to be humble to accept improvements or even knowledge that learners, who play the role in certain cases of SME, suggest because as ESP course designers we must show that flexibility that is going to be the raw material that will lead to a constructivist strategy where all the participants (EOP teacher and learners) would be facilitating learning. This way of "teaching" encourages active participation within the class and creates a secure community of learning. There is no impostor effect when the course is collaboratively constructed taking into account adult learners' expertise, SME clarifications and guidance, and a conscious language instructor.

Analytic Memo

By: Randal Esteban Blanco Navarro

August 29th, 2022

6:08 p.m.

After some initial doubts about the documents, we must comply with during this coding process, I am including this first analytical memo entry. First of all, I would mention an impression I have at this moment. We may be rushing to start coding. In just two days, the video transcripts were arranged into a minute-by-minute template, but due to time constraints, I encouraged my co researcher to stick to have our first experience coding together.

In regards to the first codes and the section coded from the second interview transcript (around four minutes from the interview), I have a second impression or guess: the participant was relying a lot on her previous experiences teaching adults and making informed guesses on how their adult learners may respond or behave during the practicum. However, this could be my biased perception, so I would continue with the coding process first, without still making claims.

At this time, I feel somehow confident in our job coding because I have done this before and I keep reminding myself to be neutral and let the data speak to us and answer the research questions. Also, I encourage myself to arrange one code at a time. This process would be time-consuming, which worries me a lot.

August 30th, 2022

Today I found it hard to arrange smaller codes titles. I continue using process coding, but it was very evident that today's codes were longer. I shared this difference and commented it with Milady, and she highlighted that today's codes were more complex in her

point of view. I do not agree with her, for there is clearly a difference in the way I started coding yesterday and how I did it today.

August 31st, 2022.

Yesterday, I asked Milady to write into the Codebook the descriptions for the new codes. However, as I read the descriptions, I could see how some codes' descriptions needed further revision so we spent today's session revising these descriptions in the Codebook. In addition, I made an effort to reduce the length of the codes' titles or names in order to further summarize the sense of the codes.

September 6th, 2022

5:54 p.m.

Today we worked for more than five hours by coding new sections from the second interview, revising previous codes, defining new codes, adjusting the matrices or charts, and reflecting over this process. Overall, my impression is that we have been struggling over minor details in terms of the format requirements with charts, transcripts, and instruments. This really frustrates me because I feel as if I were asked to arrange statistical analysis I had never done before and comply with the requirements in such a short amount of time.

As we coded today, I noticed that it became "easier" to code longer chunks of transcript because I was relying more on theoretical principles and paying closer attention to both the research questions and interview questions. Most of the ideas the participant mentions have already been summarized or described in the theoretical principles of adult learning, so there seems, up to know, nothing new. However, I am aware there may be new ideas, principles, or lessons about adult learning that we could discover with this research, so we must move along the investigation and expect those discoveries or findings to appear later on. For example, adult learners have a slow processing time, struggle combining English

learning with technology usage, expect to apply their new knowledge of the target language, etc.

A main concern I have at this time is to establish a systematic process of coding with my partner first, and then filling out the instruments right away in order to type the codes in an orderly matter. A second concern is that Milady told me we should not repeat the same code. I believe this is a risk because we may end up omitting information. Besides feeling tired after so many hours coding, I also became concerned with the fact that I should read more in depth about process coding. In a way, I am confident that I have this talent or skill to code. However, not knowing exactly how well I am doing increases my worries.

September 7th, 2022

2:10 p.m.

Yesterday, I ended our session with my concern about missing theoretical aspects about coding, and that further reading of Saldaña was needed. So, I woke up this morning around 4:45 a.m. and read Saldaña for almost two hours. The section that caught most of my attention was about the role of this analytic memo. There are many considerations or roles that this tool plays in the actual success of the entire research project.

In the afternoon when Milady and I started our coding meeting, I shared a screen with her and highlighted the eleven aspects to address in the analytical memo. After arranging an infographic, we read together Saldaña's explanation on Process Coding and took notes.

Then, I went over the Codebook to polish the definition of the codes that were either inaccurate or pending. In the meantime, Milady reviewed the Codebook and the Coding Template before elaborating more ideas on her analytical memo. We remained together in the Zoom meeting.

For now on, I will be more aware of how Process Coding could lead us to answer our research questions by finding stages or events within the lesson planning process itself. I am going to follow Saldaña's recommendation to "Code smarter, not harder".

September 10th, 2022

This is very interesting because the EOP teacher seems to concern too much on what her participants say about their needs, even though these may end up being just perceived needs. It seems she should observe more objectively and empower herself to actually determine and justify what the real needs are and not what participants may just express as needs.

This truly contradicts my belief that as ESP practitioners we should consider what participants have to say about their perceived needs but still conduct the NA, course design and implementation from a more objective and searchable mindset

September 11th, 2022

As we were revising the codes Milady created yesterday, we approached a section in which we invested more time. It seemed that the EOP student teacher made a comparison of young and adult learners in terms of the expectations they expressed to her during the NA. This consideration and comparison of both age groups in terms of their ESP course expectations could have been an element she paid attention to. As our informant expresses, adult learners may be more likely to stick to their ESP training more in this workplace whereas younger learners may end up leaving the company.

After a tiring process of revising the codes that Milady prepared yesterday on her own, I guess we have reached a conclusion that we should code together. Once we finished this revision process, we finally coded like two more pages in a fast way because it was easier to relate the interview questions, research questions, and the participant's responses towards

the establishment of codes. However, there are still three pages left to code from the second interview because I am extremely tired.

When asked about ways to motivate her adult learners, the informant provided what seems to be three motivational strategies. However, I still have doubts about how these motivational strategies have influenced or contributed to her lesson planning. Has she explicitly stated in her lesson plans when and how to implement the motivational strategy? Her remarks about motivating participants are a bit general and eventually lack reference to her lesson plans.

September 13th, 2022

Again, we had to fix the codebook for almost an hour and a half, before we could actually start really coding the rest of the second interview. I am extremely disappointed with this slow process. Most delays are the result of typing skills, technological issues or omissions in filling out the several instruments we need to use. In the end, I ended up filling out the coding template because Milady seems to struggle too much to keep up with my coding pace. It is overwhelming to read the script, think about possible codes, define the codes, and fill out the forms.

Some of Milady's codes are fine, but I still have to ask her what she means in order to properly define the code for the codebook. However, on most of the occasions Milady tends to get a participant's remark out of context because she is considering neither the research questions nor the interview questions. I wish I could be more pragmatic and empower my partner more as long as she shows more process in being analytical and elaborating more on her ideas to actually reflect what the participant has expressed.

The participant again recalls how she and the team teacher often keep in mind recommendations from their professor 1 in the MPLA UNA. She started and ended the

interview with these references. As the interview reached an end, the participant expressed her interest in finding out about adult learning theories. These facts have made me reflect and realize that most of her understandings are based on three sources: her previous teaching experiences with adults, her ESP professor's recommendations, and her observations at their occupational environment. Therefore, I may speculate that there is clearly a wish to have known more about adult learning before the actual teaching practicum.

The informant shows concern about how the participants may feel, specially when getting her feedback or from their classmates, and it would be interesting to see in her lesson plan if there is reference to this and other aspects.

Now that the entire second interview has been coded, I would summarize the EOP student teacher has carried several burdens while planning her lessons: limited amount of class instruction, adult learners' busy schedules, implementing ESP for the first time, incorporating a new English language teaching approach, bringing the occupational context into the ESP classes, making clear or evident connections, among others.

One of the participant's remarks that really caught my attention was how General English teaching tends to be much broader than ESP. Is it because I have the same tension to really drift apart from GE and assure we follow ESP in fact?

September 17th, 2022

Today I had to stop coding the second interview and add this comment here in the analytical memo. As the first participant pointed out, the second participant also mentions that she is using a new English language teaching approach. This is clearly a burden for EOP student teachers because they add a new element or challenge to the endless list of new information they have to handle and seek to implement during their practicum. On top of this, I cannot restrain from mentioning in this analytical memo entry the fact that as ESP

student teachers in this masters program, we have been forced to do several things at once. I was part of the previous program twelve years ago, and an advantage back then was that from the very first term or semester, there was a research course, which is not the case with this new curriculum. Therefore, it has been a challenge for this generation of EOP student teachers to conduct a Needs Analysis, a course design process, and course implementation without an in-depth knowledge of qualitative research and the latest teaching approaches. I would even venture to mention that Qualitative Research and Recent Teaching Approaches should be the first two courses in this masters.

We made smooth progress coding, fifteen minutes for the interview, in a row. There are many similarities in the informants' answers, which clearly reflects they are a team teaching the EOP course during their practicum. For instance, they emphasized the difference between GE and ESP, the recommendations from their MPLA ESP professor, the first planning stage of the asynchronous component, the use of a new LT approach,

5:20 p.m.

I saw the word income in this second interview transcript and it rang a bell because I realized I had missed the same word in the first interview transcript. It took us a while to locate this word in the first interview transcript and codebook, but eventually we added this descriptive code: income. The EOP student teacher seems to be caught in a burden over her perception that the participants have certain expectations over the training because it would eventually lead towards job and economic stability for their families. This seems to increase her sense of responsibility over her teaching duties, which clearly from my modest point of view is beyond her control and scope, which she is quite aware of that. Indeed, I have felt the same way before over my adult learners and their need for job stability, increasing my feelings of responsibility too and “incapacity” or frustration to actually make their “dream”

come true. Bearing this in mind, could we venture to affirm that ESP practitioners tend to feel overly responsible over their student progress due to the high stakes the training implies in their chances of making more money and better supporting their families?

I cannot help bringing this issue up. Adult learners miss classes very often due to diverse issues, and their absences truly mess up with our preconceptions as language instructors to ensure learners attend classes regularly and do not “miss” the order in which we are presenting contents. This situation is exactly what I have been struggling with since 2015 when I started my first college extension project in rural communities with an early attempt to implement ESP. There were occasions when tour guides could not make it to class on time in Drake because they were caught up in the middle of a storm in the ocean after a tour trip to Sirena, Corcovado, and eventually they had to spend the night there because of the heavy rains. On other occasions my participants had to miss class because they finally had an overnight trip as a tour guide to Corcovado after weeks without a job, so their priority most likely was to work instead of attending my classes. In a way I do not struggle as much as I used to with these feelings of frustration, and our informant is clearly just getting used to this, and obviously she really struggles more to be this “flexible” about working with adult learners. All this situation brings me to previous reflections that I have reached over almost six years of teaching experiences with adult learners in college extension projects I have been in charge of. How could we, language instructors and coordinators, accommodate our preconceived expectations of course and lesson development in which there is often a rigid content delivery plan and summative assessment to those realities that adult learners bring to our classrooms and projects?

The code “Adult learners’ having to catch up” was a bit difficult to arrange. What caught my attention was the fact the informant unconsciously expects absent adult learners

to catch up with the contents and classroom activities carried out in their absence. This is an ideal, noble expectation that, given my experience with adult learners, I would say it would not be fulfilled. In this sense, Milady clearly agreed with me and therefore the code became more solid and evident as we both could easily reach the agreement that adult learners most likely would never catch up.

Monday, September 19th, 2022

11:14 a.m.

Once again, I had to stop coding and come here to my analytical memo. As we were going over a passage in one of the interviews, I couldn't help it, but laughed. Then, I asked Milady: "In this masters program, how many real ESP classes have you observed?" She also just laughed briefly and said: "None". Right after this simple question, we started reflecting on this issue that I would summarize in this way: "Asking student doctors to operate on a cancer patient without first having seen cancer". The participant's stressful experiences and challenges to plan her EOP lessons for the practicum have this root, and despite her resignation that such uncertainty is apparently engrained in ESP, I cannot help rejecting such preconception that actually reveals, in my subjective view, a serious flaw to expose novice ESP practitioners to ways in which real ESP classrooms often unfold. Somewhere, in a database, there should be a video or more of such "real" ESP lessons which ESP student teachers could watch and grasp a sense of what sort of lesson planning process they may be actually undertaking. Our informant in this interview was desperate and evidently under a stressful mood because indeed neither her classmates nor she knew how to plan lessons in ESP. Perhaps, I am reaching extremely biased conclusions because I have been part of this cohort. Besides, it really worries me what reactions we may face from the MPLA coordination and professors if we were to openly share these findings and interpretations.

Friday, September 23rd, 2022

Despite Milady's attempt to push me to define a code, I remained thinking over the participant's words for a while. There was something that seemed strange to me, and it did not quite allow me to establish a code. What I had trouble with was the informant's view about how "the needs" might have changed as some of her participants left the company and the ESP project. However, it seems to me that the needs do not change because she still has the other call center agents that contributed during the NA. These participants' needs will remain the same because they have stayed in the company. How come their needs might have changed because other workers left the company? A call center agent's language needs ought to remain the same in spite of other workers leaving the company. Is it that there would be other "unknown" agents joining the EOP training? What changes, it seems to me, is the degree of specificity to which the EOP student teachers can tackle, in their lesson plans, the needs of the remaining participants or call center agents, whose needs remain the same. If the participants who left the company were the ones with fewer language proficiency levels, then necessary adjustments in the lesson plans would have to be made now in order to focus more on the specific needs of those workers who did stay in both the company and the EOP training.

For those newcomers to the language training, if any at all, the EOP student teacher has to realize that it would be almost impossible to "effectively" target their own language needs because they were not part of the NA. These new arrivals would have to adjust to what has already been arranged in the course syllabus and what would be offered in the teaching practicum or course; it would be unbearable or undoable to carry out any further NA for these new participants, besides her strategy to keep open communication. To me, this concern or

doubt of hers seems a distraction or an unnecessary concern the EOP student teacher has, that actually prevents her from moving on with her lesson planning and focusing on ways to strategically tackle “the needs” with activities, tasks, exercises, and others.

For sure, there are implications if participants leave the EOP training as they do take away “their needs”. However, the remaining “ingredients” in the plate do not change. That means “the needs” stay the same in the lesson planning the participant is about to embark on. What does change is how much more individualized instruction could be offered.

Saturday, September 24th, 2022

We coded after our meeting with professor Patricia, so we agreed about some sardines and one of the big whales in our data. Today’s codes confirmed what our previous informant also pointed out: the importance of having a Subject Matter Expert (SME) on board during both the NA and course design. I wish I had a SME too during my NA, but as Milady and I commented on this, we were at least lucky enough to find these YouTube videos arranged by a bilingual accountant in Costa Rica, sort of a SME. However, these were just resources and not the actual involvement of a person in the NA and course design that we could have consulted as many times as needed. I would add that the role of SME also goes way beyond the NA and course design because the informant is actually referring to the SME’s involvement in lesson planning.

Another interesting aspect is the lack of materials, so the EOP student teacher cleverly arranged or adapted listening and reading exercises by adding samples related to the participants’ occupational contexts. In their case, vocabulary was not a main concern. Listening skills and reading skills applicable to their jobs were what mattered the most for these B1 participants, and it seems that these needs belong to any basic training the call center agents must have had before actually picking up calls or answering emails. As our informant

explored materials and sources, she realized that even the company offers some articles about job related procedures and issues in their support websites, so participants can once again go over these company materials in order to practice reading skills such as skimming, scanning, and paraphrasing.

Sunday, September 25th, 2022

I noticed that our informant is making planning considerations based on her previous teaching experiences in terms of providing feedback and how adult learners tend to react or manage it.

For the last two coding sessions, I have been reflecting on how the informants are tackling needs and gaps that may be the result of poor job training or basic preparation to perform at a call center. What I have noticed is that what she has noticed as language needs may be, in fact, job training needs. Therefore, it turns out to be a bit challenging to distinguish between language needs and job training needs, or at least, both may be the same. To me, these are interconnected somehow but we can refer to them interchangeably because these needs belong to different need categories. Even English native speakers can fall into the mistakes of using negative language while assisting customers, so it is not just a matter of language training but of job training instead. The call center will continue facing these problems unless proper job training is offered to the agents, even if they have a C1 level.

Regarding other adult learning aspects that intrigue our informant, I noticed how she has some theoretical notions such as her references to the ultimate attainment.

After coding the last sections in the interview, I cannot help reaching this conclusion. Our informant has given so many incongruent suggestions. For example, her commands about “do what you can, be patient, and don’t try to do more than you can or know” are applicable to any teaching practicum in any subject or field, so why would these suggestions

be so meaningful or applicable to ESP? Her conclusion that ESP is tricky is like a death sentence to me, and even more heartbreaking is her resignation that she would graduate from the MPLA without feeling “completely confident in her ESP skills” despite knowing the theory. I find no other words, except these: Too sad.

Monday, September 26th, 2022

For some reason, our informant 1 seemed a bit more relaxed while she was recording her reflective narrative. And it seems to me that this state of mind influences her contributions to the topic, particularly when she mentions that planning for adult learners is different but still not much more challenging than doing it so for children. Another factor that may influence her in this reflective narrative is the fact that she has already taught her first classes in the practicum, so she now may not be as tense during the interview that took place just prior the beginning of her EOP course.

Again, the participant makes references to learning styles, but I still have not accepted this idea after listening to it for more than two decades. The webinar I watched about how irrelevant learning styles can be in teaching just reinforces my rejection if EL teachers should pay that much attention to learning styles. In the end, we still need to provide varied learning activities that involve visual, auditory, and kinesthetic exposures.

While coding the informant’s response about what else she considers about her adult learners when planning, it became evident she mentions factors she tries to find out more but without actually explaining how her considerations influence lesson planning. This brings me to a position in which I also reflect about my own experiences with adult learners in college extension projects for the last seven years. It is fine we find out about the reasons why participants are late or absent, but those findings do not matter much or allow me to make adjustments in my teaching when it comes to overcoming those obstacles that block

adult learners' class participation and study time. I know Pedro was absent because he had to work late, but the following class, if he ever arrives, Pedro would still be behind in terms of the language content the rest of participants were exposed to in the class. This tendency for adult learners to arrive late or be absent actually piles up language content mastery and delays progress in terms of increases in language proficiency. In the end, what can the ESP teacher do with adult learners' busy lifestyles, personal affairs, and work overload as obstacles in L2 learning and deal with these adult learners' issues?

Unfortunately, our informant derails from answering our research questions in her last response in the reflective narrative because she focuses on planning lessons for adult learners beyond her practicum.

In regards to the second reflective narrative, it was very evident that our second informant did not show the same level of interest or commitment in responding or elaborating her answers as the first informant did. There were background noises such as people interrupting or getting close to her, a TV set on and a bit loud at times, and a noisy street with motorcycles passing by. We had to rearrange the transcript and listen to the recording at least five times before actually coding it. From the very beginning, the second informant acknowledges that, for her, ESP lesson planning is interesting because she has taken into consideration the participants' needs from their own views and those from the stakeholders. In addition, she attempted to read their emotions about the first class and the course in general. However, it occurred to me that these lesson planning considerations seem applicable again to effective teaching practices in ESP and in any other subject or field. So, I could only continue wondering: What does it really mean or imply to adult learners? Of course, if I notice or read my students' negative emotions in and about the class, this means I have to make adjustments.

October 13, 2022

Unfortunately, I have not written much in this analytical memo for the last two weeks. Many things have happened. For example, we were able to create categories and labeled each code to a corresponding category. After a meeting with Milady, we finally agreed on a thematic map and started defining categories and themes.

What pushed me to write in the memo today was a clarification I had to make to Milady about the real nature of our study. She seems to understand it as a deductive process, but I know we are following an inductive path. After exchanging several messages with Milady and professor Patricia, it seems we finally agree and speak the same language in terms of how defining categories and themes implies working inductively.

Appendix #9

Samples of the Coding Process

A) Coding Template Sample:

<i>Line/Page</i>	Content (interview transcription)	Quote	Code	Note
	August 29th, 2022			
Page 1	I would say that the third one if I am going to be a lifelong learner. Why are you giving me a test now? Yes, because I think that when we are adults, we are not interested in just getting a score, right a good scored or passing a test, which was probably our concern when we when we were adolescents were even kids. If we got a good grade, probably we were going to get a prize right? Or Mom was going to purchase something for us or something like that, but... when we are adults, we actually like studying something in order to apply it to our lives because we have a need and we need to fulfill that need, right? We need to get knowledge in order to be able to complete certain tasks. So, a test is not really valuable for us. It doesn't matter if we have learned or not.	Yes, because I think that when we are adults, we are not interested in just getting a score, right a good scored or passing a test	Not interested in simply getting a score	
		when we are adults, we actually like studying something in order to apply it to our lives	Applying in everyday life	
		to apply it to our lives because we have a need. And we need to fulfill that need, right?	Fulfilling needs	
		We need to get knowledge in order to be able to complete certain tasks.	Completing a task	
		So, a test is not really valuable for us.	Not just passing a test	
Page 1	[Pause] Well, it is difficult, like to plan for it, an ESP class because we don't have experience teaching in this field and also, because we are going to use that task-based approach. So at least I don't have experience with the task-based approach. It has been a great help to be with Participant 1, since she has more experience teaching, and also she has been using this approach. But yeah, the first stage, let's say is to think about the topic, what is our objective, we need to have our objective clear and actually, we just copy and paste that objective in our lesson plans first and ... based on our objective, we start thinking about, about activities but we've tried to go through stages like first, warm up, right, in order for the students to relax a little bit.	Well, it is difficult, like to plan for an ESP class	Facing difficulties	
		because we don't have experience teaching in this field	Not having teaching experience in GE and ESP	
		So at least, I don't have experience with the task-based approach	Using a new LT approach	
Page 2		P1, since she has more experience teaching, and also she has been using this approach	Getting support through team teaching	

B) Codebook Sample

Codebook Interviews 1 - 2 & Reflective Narratives 1 - 2

Code	Description	Example / Quote
Not interested in simply getting a score	This code refers to the EOP student teacher's stating that adult learners go beyond the goal of getting a passing grade, so they do not concern about summative assessment and expect other learning results observable in their workplaces.	Yes, because I think that when we are adults, we are not interested in just getting a score, right a good scored or passing a test
Applying in everyday life	This code refers to adult learners seek to apply what they are learning in their everyday life such as speaking English in their workplaces. Application is a priority for adult learners.	when we are adults, we actually like studying something in order to apply it to our lives
Fulling needs	This code refers to the participant's affirmation that adult learners seek to fulfill a language need they have, and it could include needs such as improving their pronunciation and others.	to apply it to our lives because we have a need. And we need to fulfill that need, right?
Completing a task	This code embraces the participant's affirmation that as adult learners we seek to complete a specific task.	We need to get knowledge in order to be able to complete certain tasks.
Not just passing a test	This code states the EOP student teacher's impression that adult learners go beyond the goal of passing a test because they actually expect or concern more about using L2 in their occupational contexts and just while taking a test.	So, a test is not really valuable for us.
Facing difficulties	This code reflects the participant's impression that planning ESP classes for adult learners has been a difficult experience.	Well, it is difficult, like to plan for an ESP class
Not having teaching experience in GE and ESP	This code embraces the EOP student teacher's clarification that a possible reason for facing difficulties while planning classes for EOP adult learners is actually not having too much teaching experience in general, or not even having taught ESP before	because we don't have experience teaching in this field

C) Codebook Log Sample

Date	Coding time	Document being coded	Section of the document being coded	Tasks done
<i>08/29/22</i>	1h 20min	Semi-structured interview (participant 2)	min 3:15 to min 6:26	<p>The meeting started at 10:00 a.m.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interview of participant 2 was listened to and the transcription was read in order to identify possible codes. -The first ten codes were created and the first coding template (Step 1-session 1) was filled only with information about minute, code, and quote. - Codes such as “beyond getting a score”, applying in everyday life” “fulfilling needs”, “completing a task”, “not just passing a test” ,“facing difficulties” “not having teaching experience or in ESP”, “using a new LT approach”, and “setting the topic and objectives first” were found. -Codebook was filled with code and description. -The folders with documents about transcriptions, coding process, code book and analytical memo were created in google drive. -Coding was done by both researchers. -Meeting was recorded. -Meeting ended at 11:20 a.m.
<i>08/30/22</i>	1h 15min	Semi-structured interview (participant 2)	min 6:26 to min 10:16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The meeting started at 2:02 pm -Interview participant 2 was again analyzed in order to continue with the codification process (session 2) in minute 10:16 we struggled to choose an appropriate code and instead we came up with three. We have not yet agreed with this phenomenon . -Codebook was filled with new codes and descriptions. -Codelog was completed with basic information about today’s session. -Session ended at 3:15 p.m.
<i>08/31/22</i>	55min	Codebook template	min 6:26 to min 10:16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The meeting started at 3:50 p.m. -Descriptions of codes were reviewed as a way to reduce the length of the codes and provide further detailed explanations. -Meeting ended at 4:45pm

Appendix #10

Lesson Plan

Course: Communication Strategies in English for ...

Instructors: EOP Student Teacher 1 & EOP student teacher 2 Schedule: Wednesdays from 12 pm to 2 pm

Date: August 31st	Lesson Title: Week 1 (Unit: I hear what you say, let me write it down.)	
Communicative Goal(s): To use three note-taking strategies to gather clearer and more organized key information from customer-agent interaction that improves the quality of the calls, or email reports in English.		
Objective(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To accurately apply the “Somebody Wanted but so then” note-taking strategy to create more organized notes based on the notes template used by most agents in the company when summarizing highlights from cases. • To accurately apply the “5 W’s, One H” note-taking strategy to create more organized and detailed notes based on the notes template used by most agents in the company when summarizing highlights from cases. • To accurately apply the “Give Me The Gist” note-taking strategy to create more concise notes based on the notes template used by most agents in the company when summarizing highlights from cases. 		
Focal Language Feature(s): The skills/sub-skills that are the focus of the lesson.		
Grammar: Simple Past Tense/ Reported Speech in the Simple Present	Vocabulary: Technical vocabulary from the account: router, Sonos, system, reboot, etc./ Reporting verbs: indicated, said, advised, etc. Abbreviations such as cx that stands for customer, PB that stands for Playbar, US stands for the United States, UK stands for the United Kingdom, CA stands for Canada, tech stands for technical, TSO stands for transfer system ownership, TS stands for troubleshooting.	Listening: Main ideas from a conversation in the “Product Refund” video used for Task 1.

Speaking and Pronunciation:	Reading: Main ideas from a written text.	Writing: Somebody Wanted but so then, 5 W's, One H, and Give Me the Gist note-taking strategies
<p>Description of Classroom and Learner Population:</p> <p>This is a group of six agents from the Sonos account, three of them are answering calls, two of them are answering emails, and one is interacting in chat. The course is virtually delivered via Zoom and each class is divided into one asynchronous hour and two synchronous hours. The learners will be taking the course during their working hours, so they will use their job computers that work with a VPN connection. Hence, they will not be able to access all websites or download any program. The learners are from 20 to 52 years old with an English level of B2. They are mostly verbal, visual, aural, and social learners.</p>		
<p>Role of the Instructors:</p> <p>The two instructors are in charge of delivering this lesson. They will take turns to deliver each of the activities so both will engage and interact with the participants.</p>		
<p>Copies and Materials:</p> <p>Video about how to use Google Classroom: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gxkc8lo79hQ</p> <p>Permanent link to Google Classroom: https://classroom.google.com/c/MzA00TY3ODY5NT0y?cjc=jmoonot / Code: jmoonot</p> <p>Permanent link to Zoom: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88574447269?pwd=WHpNYmEvSUJ6SWtMLzVmWGpaK28vZz09</p> <p>Handout with the description of the 3 note-taking strategies. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EK69DGTQG8TLEmYFXOfwQWD5VSJBOxOVGZQJ4LqlrEO/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>“Everybody Has a Gift” mentimeter: https://www.menti.com/m8453o2bux</p> <p>“Product Refund” video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXGtFXRz2Lg</p>		
<p>Possible Challenges and Solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are any internet issues, participants will be informed via WhatsApp, and further actions will be taken by the instructors depending on the issue. • Agents who have other segments, such as meetings, vacation, time off or special tasks, and therefore, they cannot connect to the class due to that. When this happens, permission to record the session will be asked. • Agents who get stuck on a call, chat or email and cannot join on time. 		
<p>Asynchronous Session: This session is done by learners at their own pace before the synchronous session. The activities and material are sent on Mondays at 9 am via Slack and Google Classroom (1 hour).</p>		

Activity/Activities	Notes
<p>Learners watch a video on how to use Classroom. Then, they join the class using the link or code provided by the instructors.</p> <p>Learners get familiar with the course syllabus.</p> <p>Learners read a short article that explains the three note-taking strategies. Then, in a forum, they share which is their favorite note-taking strategy, why they like it, and how it can be used in the workplace.</p>	<p>Learners carry out these activities using the virtual classroom on Google Classroom: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gxkc8lo79hQ</p> <p>The outcomes of this session are shared in the Teach stage during the synchronous session.</p> <p>Handout with the description of the 3 note-taking strategies: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EK69DGTOG8TLEmYFXQfwQWD5VSJBOxOVGZQJ4LqlrEQ/edit?usp=sharing</p>
<p>Synchronous Session: This session is conducted on Wednesdays at 12md, and the sessions are delivered through Zoom. The lessons are conducted during the learners working hours, so there may be some agents who arrive late due to being on a call or email interaction. (1:30/2:00 hours)</p>	
Class Stages	Notes
<p>1. Daily Routine: An activity to build rapport and warm up for the class (10 minutes).</p>	
<p>Learners participate in a short activity called “Everybody Has a Gift” in which they share one positive aspect of themselves that can contribute to the development and learning process of the group.</p>	<p>Learners complete this task using mentimeter to write and collect their responses. https://www.menti.com/m8453o2bux</p>
<p>2. TEACH: Stage in which learners ask questions, clarify doubts, and review language forms (20 minutes).</p>	

<p>Modeling: Instructors explain the course program. They inform learners that the classes will be learner-centered (an explanation of what learner-centered is given), that the evaluation will be formative; in other words, there is not a passing grade, and that there will be classroom netiquette that will be followed. In addition, the roles of the instructors and the importance of completing the asynchronous tasks are explained. Then, there is a space for learners' questions, doubts, and suggestions. Afterward, there is an open discussion for learners to ask questions related to the note-taking strategies. Then, they review the simple past tense and the reported speech, which are structures that they can use to report the notes cases.</p>	
<p>3. Task 1: First activity in which learners put into practice the knowledge they acquired in the asynchronous session (20minutes).</p>	
<p>- Task Clarification: Learners are informed that a video of a customer service call pertinent to a product refund will be played three times. Before watching the video, learners are asked to select one of the note-taking strategies presented in the article they read.</p> <p>- Task Completion: In this task, learners work individually using a word document with the note-taking strategy they selected. The instructor monitors that the learners are including and summarizing all the relevant information on their notes.</p> <p>- Task Debrief: Learners share the notes and compare them with their classmates. Then, they receive feedback from their peers.</p>	<p>Learners watch a video from YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXGtFXRz2Lg</p>
<p>4. TASK 2: Main activity in which learners contextualize the knowledge acquired during both asynchronous and synchronous sessions (20 - 30 minutes).</p>	

<p>- Task Clarification: Learners are asked to contextualize the situations (types of calls and emails) that they might encounter at work.</p> <p>- Task Completion: In pairs, learners take turns simulating a customer-agent interaction based on a typical work scenario. While one learner is taking the role of the customer, the other takes the role of the agent that is taking the call and taking notes using one of the strategies. Then, learners will switch roles with a different partner.</p> <p>- Task Debrief: Once the simulations are finished, learners are called to the main room to share some of the simulations and notes they took and receive general feedback or clarify any doubts.</p>	<p>The pairs are sent to breakout rooms while the instructor visits each breakout room monitoring their progress, giving feedback, and answering questions.</p>
<p>5. Closing/ Homework: Stage in which learners reflect upon the learning (5 - 10 minutes).</p>	
<p>Learners use one of these strategies in their calls and are ready to share their experiences, next class.</p>	<p>Learners complete a KWHL chart to reflect on the class and the strategies learned. Appendix 4</p>