

The impact of an EFL graduate tutoring experience at a university context

El impacto de una experiencia tutorial por egresados de lenguas extranjeras en el contexto universitario

Rivera-Arias, Javier Alexander ^a, Mejía-García, Marta Liliana ^{*b} and Lopera-Medina, Sergio ^c

^a  Universidad de Antioquia •  KMY-2735-2024 •  0000-0003-3168-5551

^b  Universidad de Antioquia •  KMY-2718-2024 •  0000-0001-9276-2480

^c  Universidad de Antioquia •  AAH-5661-2020 •  0000-0003-2773-0890

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This research shows the importance of creating professional development strategies for graduates in tutoring. As dropout in tertiary education is a prevalent phenomenon that requires analysis and intervention, this chapter describes the inquiry of a group of graduates in language teaching to contribute to students' permanence at the university level. Since research supports that tutoring is beneficial as learners enhance their domain knowledge and metacognition and strategy use, a group of graduate English teachers incorporated tutoring sessions with some students. In their inquiry, they wanted to explore the effects of their first tutoring experience in a public university. Conclusions suggest that this experience helped graduates understand and learn in a more academic way about the process of tutoring. Regarding the students, it is concluded that they showed a good attitude and increased their autonomy level toward their learning process after the tutoring sessions while building some rapport. Conclusions also indicate that designing a tutoring session protocol that includes an introduction, instruction, and assessment is vital. Finally, it is important to consider a list of do's and don'ts when conducting a tutoring session in language learning and other areas.

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* ✉ [\[marlig74@gmail.com\]](mailto:marlig74@gmail.com)

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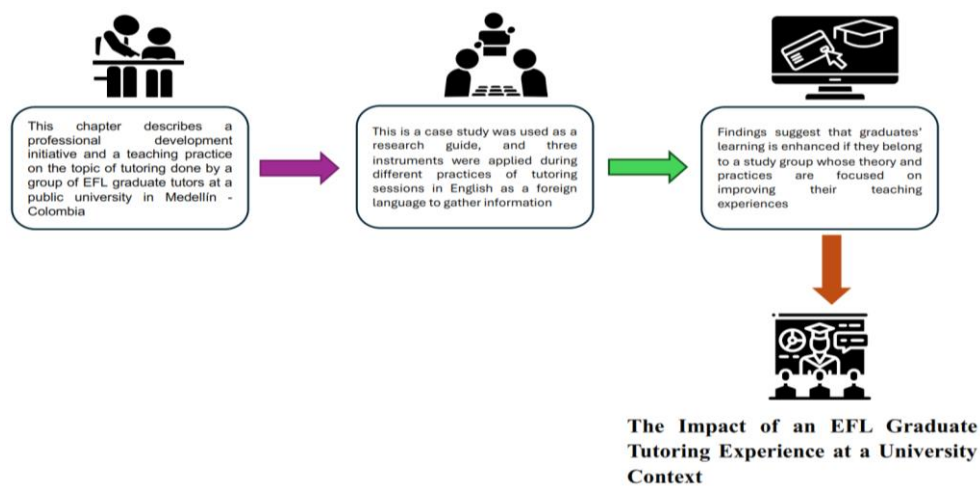
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Abstract

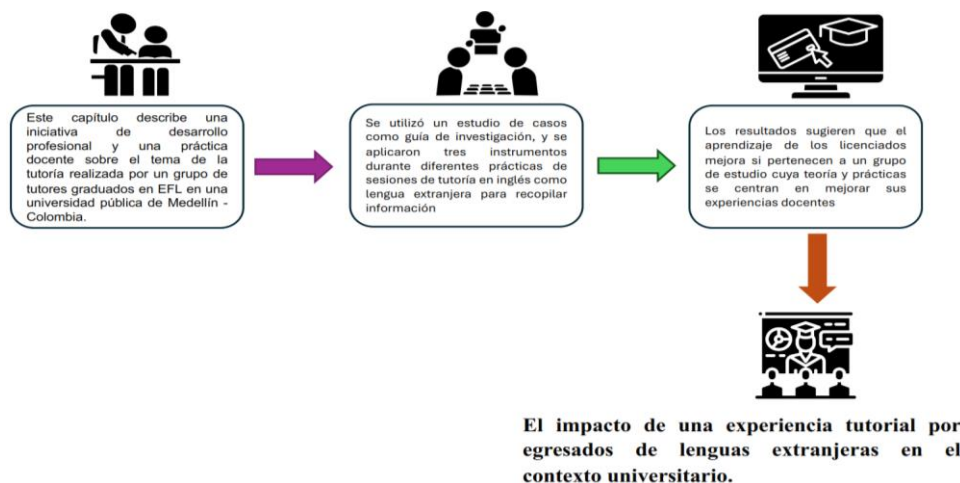
Professional development strategies are essential for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) graduate tutors to better perform their language instruction with their students. This chapter describes a professional development initiative and a teaching practice on the topic of tutoring done by a group of EFL graduate tutors at a public university in Medellín - Colombia. Following a visionary professional development strategy (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004), a case study was used as a research guide, and three instruments were applied during different practices of tutoring sessions in English as a foreign language to gather information. Aiming to get the student's rapport, diaries of EFL graduate tutors, interviews, and tutees' materials were implemented. Findings suggest that graduates' learning is enhanced if they belong to a study group whose theory and practices are focused on improving their teaching experiences. Regarding the students, it may be concluded that they showed a good attitude and increased their autonomy level toward their learning process after the tutoring sessions while building some rapport. This process also helped students acquire new vocabulary knowledge and provided them with more pedagogical strategies to develop linguistic activities. Conclusions emphasize the importance of designing a tutoring session protocol that includes an introduction, instruction, and assessment. Finally, recommendations involve a list of do's and don'ts when conducting a tutoring session.



Professional development strategy, Rapport, Protocol

Resumen

Las estrategias de desarrollo profesional son primordiales para los profesores egresados de idiomas para afianzar sus prácticas pedagógicas. Este capítulo describe el desarrollo profesional y práctica sobre las tutorías de un grupo de docentes graduados en lenguas extranjeras de una universidad pública de Medellín, Colombia. Siguiendo de forma visionaria una estrategia de desarrollo profesional docente (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004), se utilizó un estudio de caso como guía de investigación y se aplicaron tres instrumentos durante las diferentes prácticas de las sesiones de la tutoría en inglés como lengua extranjera para recoger información. Con el fin de lograr una empatía con el estudiante, se implementaron diarios de los tutores egresados, entrevistas, y materiales de los tutorados. Los resultados sugieren que el aprendizaje de los graduados mejora si éstos pertenecen a un grupo de estudio cuya teoría y práctica apuntan a mejorar las experiencias de enseñanza. Con relación a los estudiantes, estos mostraron una buena actitud y aumento de su nivel de autonomía ante el aprendizaje después de las sesiones de tutoría y una relación de empatía con el tutor. También, este proceso los ayudó a adquirir nuevos conocimientos de vocabulario, estrategias lingüísticas, y habilidades de estudio. Las conclusiones resaltan la importancia de un protocolo para las sesiones de tutorías que incluya una introducción, instrucción y evaluación. Por último, las recomendaciones presentan una lista de acciones que se deben hacer o no hacer al momento de las tutorías.



Professional development strategy, empathy, protocol

Introduction

Ali, Al-Saadi and Scatolini (2022) highlight the importance of graduates demonstrating that they have acquired skills and abilities for their jobs. The authors also state that graduates have to show initiative to overcome difficult situations in their working contexts. They must design proposals, programs, or strategies to improve those problematic issues. When graduates lead processes to find solutions without being asked or ordered, that means that they are critical agents who are motivated to find ways to change realities.

In this chapter, a group of graduate teachers describes their professional development initiative in tutoring as a way to contribute to lessening student dropout at the university level. Ramírez-Romero and Smith-Zamorano (2009) mention the importance of creating professional development strategies to propose solutions to problems in the places where graduate teachers work, as this is part of their job performance. Dropout in tertiary education is a factor that must be considered in many scenarios. According to Navarro-Charris et al. (2017), university student dropout is a prevalent and expensive family phenomenon that requires analysis and intervention. Societies suffer a loss due to this detrimental effect on the educational system regarding labor force participation and individual agent satisfaction. Many factors impede students from continuing their studies and stop their learning process. One of these factors is the lack of adaptation to the university context. Tinto (1975) states that educational institutions have goals, systems, and methodologies that are constantly changing, and sometimes students become unable to assume adaptive practices to adjust to such a system and decide to abandon their programs. In this regard, Rodríguez-Urrego (2019) analyzed higher education dropouts in Colombia from 2006 to 2016, and results suggest that age, gender, marital status, number of siblings, personal goals, economic incomes, parents' academic levels, and academic history are some of the factors associated with educational dropout during the process. In the same line, (Tinto, 2006) adds the implications of the dropout phenomenon at the end of the student's programs, as once they abandon the programs, it is not possible that other students will take the enrollment process. As a result, there are fewer undergraduate students and then fewer professionals in the labor force. Thus, academic institutions have to look for alternatives to control this negative effect. Theory suggests that a variety of strategies, including giving students access to high-quality resources, suitable guidance, opportunities for positive socialization, highly qualified professionals, and financial support, may help lower the rate of student discouragement. This may eventually reduce dropout phenomena (Barrero, 2015; Guzmán et al., 2009; Parada, Correa, & Cárdenas, 2017; Tinto, 2006).

Tutoring is also one of the ways in which graduate teachers help to control academic dropout. Viáfara and Ariza (2008) support the idea that tutoring is a process in which a tutor provides a tutee with some guidance, learning strategies, study skills, comprehension, motivation, and constant feedback to achieve an integral development of foreign language learning. Conversely, other writers add that tutoring involves a method that promotes permanence, progression, and completion in addition to formative guidance aimed at helping tutees in their intellectual, personal, professional, and academic development (Guerra-Marin, Lima-Serrano & Lima-Rodríguez, 2017; Perandones & Lledó, 2009). As a result, educational institutions must encourage in-service teaching activities in addition to providing tutoring for students.

Tutors can go beyond acting as intermediaries between the students and other individuals related to their academic development process, that is, partners, directors, teachers, and even parents. Hitherto, viewing tutors as a key component in developing stronger academic and social relationships with tutees is critical. This is possible because of the theoretical background on tutoring practices, which allows them to establish connections and create a sympathetic environment while tutoring.

Regarding research, pioneer studies have investigated the impact of tutoring in math and some others in physics and health (Chi, Roy, & Hausman, 2008; Graesser, Person, & Magliano, 1995; Guerra-Marín, Lima-Serrano & Lima-Rodríguez, 2017), but few have aimed at language learning at the university level (Herrera, Largo, and Viáfara, 2019; Matthews, 2001; Parada, Correa, & Cárdenas, 2017). Thus, our study will contribute to the area of language learning at the tertiary level in a specific setting. Besides, our public university does not have an official tutoring program for language learners, and it is important to explore a case study that leads to our rationale to build it. So, the research question that will lead our inquiry is *What are the effects of a tutoring experience in an EFL context done for a group of graduate teachers on the students' permanence?*

This chapter will explain how the experience of being receptors of a theoretical framework at the core of a study group allows the graduate teachers to improve their background knowledge. Also, the exploration of the concept of tutoring and how this process can help the student's permanence is part of these lines, together with the innovative applied methodologies in the university context. Finally, this paper will dive into the findings of the tutoring experience as well as the perceptions of the tutees in relation to tutoring sessions.

Theoretical Framework

Professional Development

Ramírez-Romero and Smith-Zamorano (2009) describe that some different factors and variables support the job performance of graduate teachers. Socioeconomic factors, educational factors, personal factors, and job factors are involved when analyzing the information of graduate teachers. These factors may include job opportunities, job experiences, professional development, socio-economic situation, motivation, methodology implemented, and academic performance, among others. Regarding job factors, graduate teachers are called to analyze problematic issues and are asked to act to control them. Thus, professional development is a possibility to begin discussing an academic issue, as in the case of tutoring. Professional development is defined as:

...an ongoing learning process in which teachers engage voluntarily to learn how best to adjust their teaching to the learning needs of their students. Professional development is not a one-shot, one-size-fits-all event, but rather an evolving process of professional self-disclosure, reflection and growth that yields the best results when sustained over time in communities of practice and when focused on job-embedded responsibilities (Díaz-Maggioli, 2003).

Díaz-Maggioli (2004) divides professional development into two categories: traditional professional development and visionary professional development. The former involves top-down decisions, prescriptive ideas, a lack of ownership among teachers, and decontextualized programs, among others. The latter has to do with collaborative decision making, a growth driven approach, and context-specific programs, among others.

The visionary professional development approach was considered to describe in this chapter due to a group of graduate instructors' self-motivation to investigate tutoring as a tactic to control dropouts in a university context. The group of graduate teachers also followed this approach as they wanted themselves to grow professionally and co-build a strategy in their teaching context that, in this case, is related to tutoring.

Tutoring

Some universities have adopted tutoring programs as a strategy to improve not only academic performance but also student permanence (Cooke, Barkham, Audin, Bradley & Davy, 2004; Fandos & Ruiz, 2014; Hernández & Vallejo, 2017; Nieto-Cruz, Cortés-Cárdenas & Cárdenas-Beltrán, 2013). Different authors also argue that tutoring is one of the most effective ways of learning (Graesser, Person, & Magliano, 1995; Lepper & Woolverton, 2002), as it allows students to solve individual doubts about academic issues. Fandos and Ruiz (2014) define tutoring:

as an important part of the university teaching-learning process designed to improve student success rates and enable students to achieve their professional goals. It is regarded as a basic strategy for any model of student learning, student guidance, individualization, and monitoring (p. 90).

This strategy ordinarily enables students to resolve specific academic issues related to the subject matter. It also creates an environment where graduate teachers support students who are reluctant to pursue their education further. Thus, tutoring programs are helpful for students.

Research has supported that tutoring is beneficial. In fact, learners enhance their domain knowledge as well as their metacognition and strategy use when they are tutored (Bloom, 1984; Hock, Deshler & Schumaker, 1999; Rings & Sheets, 1991).

Tutoring is not only a strategy for students to improve their grades but also a way to develop motivation and autonomy. Graesser, Person and Magliano (1995) support that success in tutoring has to do with skilled tutors. Years of experience, a domain of knowledge, and effective techniques are some of the characteristics of skilled tutors.

Topping (1996, as cited in Sanchez-Aguilar, 2021) states that tutors are taken as surrogate teachers, and that they are enriched by a linear model of the transmission of knowledge, which comes from teachers to tutors and then to tutees. This assertion makes people assume that tutors play an important role in the tutoring process and that a fine and skilled preparation of the tutor might help them conduct a session with more confidence. Research further reinforces that student receiving guidance from subject-matter experts—tutors—learn more than those receiving peer tutoring. (Bloom, 1984; Chi, Roy, & Hausman, 2008).

Additionally, tutors should be responsive to the needs of their students, which entails knowing when and how to provide guided support throughout the process and maintaining a positive rapport with the tutee. It is also important to establish a friendly learning environment to motivate tutees to learn, and the use of different motivational strategies is crucial to keeping students attentive during the process. Besides, it is vital to guide tutees at appropriate times to keep them on track. Finally, it is essential to consider the following learning components during the tutoring process (Graesser, Person, and Magliano, 1995):

- Active learning: The student has to take an active role during the tutoring process.
- Use examples: It is crucial to use real cases/examples in the learning process.
- Collaborative problem solving: There must be a balanced collaboration between the tutor and the tutee to answer questions or solve problems.
- Deep explanation: It is important to go deeper into explanations and concepts.
- Feedback, error diagnosis, and remediation: A good tutor gives immediate feedback on the student's contribution. Regarding errors, it is necessary to identify them, correct them, and then make a diagnosis about the misconception of the errors to rectify the misunderstanding.

Conversely, Jones and Brown (2011) divide the tutoring framework into three categories: traditional, reciprocal, and emergent. In the traditional model, the graduate teacher guides and supports the learning process, and the tutee takes on the role of receiver. It is worth noting that this model helps the tutee gain psychosocial and career-outcome benefits. Regarding the reciprocal model, both the graduate teacher and the tutee work collaboratively during the tutoring process to benefit them. Finally, the emergent model involves not only peer tutoring but also the role of the academic institution in the programs to support tutoring.

Some studies have investigated the impact of tutoring in different contexts. In Cataluña-Spain, Fandos and Ruiz (2014) analyzed the process of the implementation of tutorial plans in some Catalan universities. Findings suggest that the tutorial strategies to respond to students' need for guidance and academic progress were found. In a different study, Nieto-Cruz, Cortés-Cárdenas and Cárdenas-Beltrán (2013) examined the role of tutoring in the development of foreign language skills in a public university in Bogotá, Colombia. Participants included both teachers and students, and data collection was done through surveys, a focus group, and interviews. Results suggest that most teachers have served as tutors intuitively, and students prefer face-to-face tutoring. All participants also have a perception of progress in the process of learning a foreign language because of tutoring. In Ontario-Canada, Salinitri (2005) evaluated the impact of a tutoring program to check the permanence rate and program satisfaction of sophomore students. Tutors were intermediate/senior preservice teachers, and results indicate that both the permanence rate and grade point average were higher in the experimental group than the control group. Similarly, Crisp and Cruz (2009) support that Campbell and Campbell (1997, as cited in Crisp & Cruz, 2009), carried out the most rigorous study in the area of tutoring. Campbell and Campbell found that minority students achieved a higher-grade point average than those who were not tutored. Finally, Matthews (2001) questions if the use of L1 or L2 in the tutorial process might confuse or demotivate learners. In the study conducted by Cumming and So (1996), it was revealed that there were nearly similar discourse patterns in L1 and L2, in addition to similarities in the methods and content of tutoring. However, the tutees were intermediate and advanced students, and more research is needed to see the impact at lower levels.

In a blended modality, Medina (2009) analyzed the interaction between the teacher and student during the online tutoring session at a public university in Bogotá, Colombia. Surveys, chat transcripts, and the diaries of the teacher were the instruments used to gather data. Findings reveal how language, methodology, learning reflection, and social and personal issues made up the topics during the conversations. The researcher also found that the main interactions between the tutor and tutees involved double-way dynamics. In online modality and in peer tutoring, Herrera, Largo, and Viáfara (2019) aimed at examining how a group of students shaped their autonomy based on their exposure to an online-based peer-tutoring model in a public university in Colombia. Supported by the analysis of questionnaires, a focus group interview, logs of tutees, and records of students' engagement with the model's internet resources, researchers found a change in participants' concept of autonomy and an impact on their self-directed practices embedded in the accessibility, immediacy, availability, and comfort that online peer-tutoring offers. Alonso, Castaño, and Calles (2010) assessed the effects of a peer-tutoring program in Spain using two groups: four-year undergraduates acting as tutees and five-year undergraduates acting as tutors. Results indicate improvements in knowledge regarding the academic setting. Finally, some studies have investigated the impact of trained tutors and peer tutors in the tutorial process (Chi, Roy, & Hausman, 2008; VanLehn, 2011), and results suggest that learning gains are higher when experienced tutors lead the tutoring sessions. As stated above, more studies are needed, as other studies report no significant differences between experienced and non-experienced tutors (Cohen, Kulik & Kulik, 1982; Graesser, Olney & Cade, 2009).

Context of the professional development strategy

A group of graduate English teachers decided to form a study group called GREAT (Grupo de Estudio en Acompañamiento Tutorial) in order to reduce the rate of students dropping out of an English language program at a public university in Medellín, Colombia. This language program began to be implemented in 2014, and between 2017 and 2018, the English level 1 students' dropout rate reached 74.4%. During the implementation of the language program, a vast number of students from different academic programs might have some difficulties understanding the methodology. In this sense, a group of nine graduate English teachers joined to analyze certain pedagogical strategies to support the student population's language needs as a way to lessen this rate. In their visionary professional development (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004), they agreed on reasoning about tutoring as a professional inquiry.

After reading and discussing topics about university dropouts and tutoring, they conceived the initiative of both implementing tutoring sessions and developing an interactive process with students who showed difficulties in developing skills in English level 1 courses. Thus, they decided to carry out a three-stage plan to act on tutoring. It is worth noting that the plan and implementation of the tutoring action described in this chapter correspond to 2 tutors and 2 tutees, as there was academic support to do it.

Methodology

This professional development strategy follows the principles of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018), and it is based on a case study. Yin (1994) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident... [and] relies on multiple sources of evidence” (p. 13). In our inquiry, we wanted to explore tutees' thoughts and feelings in order to understand the effects of a tutoring experience in a foreign language.

The purpose of our inquiry was to give a holistic view of a single phenomenon as we describe the experience of a tutoring process. To do this, three instruments were used to gather data: interviews, a diary of the teacher, and artifacts produced by tutees (homework and activities).

Regarding tutees, two undergraduate students were involved in the tutoring process. Tutee A: male, 18 years old, who belongs to the third semester of the Statistics Program and has been tutored before in different subjects, but for the first time in English. He was interested in developing listening and speaking skills. Tutee B: female, 21 years old, belonging to the second semester of the chemistry program. She had not been tutored before and was interested in exploring reading, linking words, compound words, and numbers.

The language program

The English language program of this public university consists of five levels of 64 hours each. These courses are part of the compulsory subjects that undergraduate students must cover in their different programs to obtain their professional titles. The methodology is framed in the communicative approach (Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia; Dornyei & Thurrell, 1995; Instituto Cervantes, 2002; Savignon, 2001) and follows the principles of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) (Ellis, 2003; Van Den Branden, 2006).

Action Plan on Tutoring

The first stage consisted of our inquiry about the tutoring process, and it was necessary to have theoretical support. Thus, we read different authors and began to explore theory, characteristics of tutors, models and research on this field (Bloom, 1984; Alonso, Castaño & Calles, 2010; Chi, Roy & Hausman, 2008; Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Fandos & Ruiz, 2014; Graesser, Olney & Cade 2009; Graesser, Person & Magliano, 1995; Hernández & Vallejo, 2017; Jones & Brown, 2011; Herrera, Largo & Viáfara, 2019; Medina, 2009; Nieto-Cruz, Cortés-Cárdenas & Cárdenas-Beltrán, 2013; Salinitri, 2005; VanLehn, 2011). This first step helped us gain not only confidence but also insight into the tutoring process. We also read articles about permanence in education to understand the reasons why some students did not continue studying in academic settings (Barrero, 2015; Guzmán et al., 2009; Parada, Correa, & Cárdenas, 2017; Rodríguez-Urrego, 2019; Tinto, 2006). We then designed a protocol for the tutoring process, which contains three basic steps: introduction (building rapport and exploring the tutees' needs), instruction (content or topic explanation), and assessment (evaluating the tutee's learning of the content/skill as well as the tutoring session itself). Finally, we decided to implement this protocol in all tutoring sessions.

The second phase concentrated on how to convince prospective tutees to attend tutoring sessions. For this, tutees (belonging to levels 1, 2, and 3) received an invitation/survey from the GREAT members. Twenty-nine students of these levels answered the invitation/survey, but we focused on describing the process of two tutors (A and B) and two tutees sharing our experiences in this chapter as we had tracked the process. It is also important to mention that the invitation/survey required potential tutees to inform us of their possible experience with tutoring sessions in general, their needs (either linguistic, technological, program, content, or adaptation to university life, among others), some other information about the program at the university, their age, and their expectations about the process. All tutees voluntarily signed an informed consent form in which they authorized being interviewed after each tutoring session and stated that the information gathered would only be used for research purposes.

The third stage was the implementation of tutoring sessions, and we based our teaching practices on the traditional model (Jones & Brown, 2011). One of the important aspects of the tutoring methodology was the number of tutoring sessions for each tutee and the time devoted to each tutoring session. We decided to conduct three tutoring sessions for each tutee, with each session lasting 45 to 50 minutes.

The Tutoring Sessions

In the introduction of the sessions, both tutors and tutees discussed the tutees' needs. To establish effective human interaction during the tutoring sessions, the tutors built and maintained rapport and empathy with tutees to foster understanding and linguistic learning. In this regard, Wood and Tanner (2012) state that building rapport in one-to-one scenarios (such as tutoring sessions) becomes easier than in diverse groups, and this leads to a better learning process (Nieto-Cruz, et al., 2013).

Establishing rapport involved discussing personal information, academic interests, hobbies, and learning methodologies. Both tutors and tutees talked about their roles and components during the tutoring sessions (Graesser, Person, & Magliano, 1995) to work more effectively. Regarding tutees' needs and interests in developing listening and speaking skills, tutor A organized material for three different moments in which the listening skill practice would be developed, aiming to know the main tutee's needs, expectations, and objectives (see Appendix A).

During the first session, the tutor aimed to elicit her tutee's motivation with a listening practice activity. Thereafter, tutee A was assigned a listening activity as homework for the following tutoring session. Within the second tutoring session, the tutor planned different moments, revised the short listening activity assigned, did a second practice with a test to meet her tutee's skill needs and those related to vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, and finally, assigned material to be completed. For the last tutoring session, the tutor checked the last material assigned to the tutee and inquired to know if suggestions were followed in the classroom sessions. Furthermore, dictation materials were created and applied during this session to meet basic oral practices. It is worth mentioning that during the three tutoring sessions, both tutors applied the protocol previously mentioned to adjust the tutoring session itself to both tutees' practices, needs, and improvements (see Appendix B).

Given that tutee B's needs were concerning linguistic features, the tutor prepared three different tutoring sessions. For the first tutoring session, some printed material to explain compound words was chosen and some writing exercises to use these words in context as homework. For the second tutoring session, the tutor considered bringing a literature book for tutee B to practice the compound words. Besides, he chose a list of the most used linking words and their categories to help the tutee understand the book readings. As homework for the second session, reading the first two chapters of the book was assigned. For the last tutoring session, two exercises for basic reading comprehension were planned as well as the oral report of the chapters previously read. Overall, the tutoring session protocol was also purported for tutee B to meet her linguistic needs in the time given as well as to promote her autonomy and independent work.

Findings

Findings suggest that this experience helped graduates understand and learn in a more academic way about the process of tutoring. They also value the benefits of belonging to a study group. Regarding students, it may be concluded that they showed a good attitude and increased their autonomy level toward their learning process after the tutoring sessions while building some rapport.

Graduates' comments about this professional development experience

This visionary professional development experience helped a group of graduate English teachers understand, in a more academic way, why students drop out. They also began the journey to create alternatives to lessen dropouts and found tutoring an excellent way to improve students' performance in language learning. They even concluded that being part of a study brings many academic benefits for graduate teachers. One of the graduate teachers mentioned that:

I have learned a lot in this study group, and I feel more confident when applying for tutoring sessions with language learners. It is also so valuable to have an academic protocol, as it helps guide the process.

Another member of the study group highlights the importance of empowering graduate teachers to discuss academic problems in their contexts and act to provide possible solutions.

In our visionary professional development strategy, we empowered ourselves and did not wait for the administration to propose actions. We started to reason about student dropout in our context and found a way with the tutoring process.

Finally, Diaz-Maggioli (2004) highlights that teachers must reflect on their teaching practices and find a constructive perspective on learning. This professional development strategy helped a group of graduate teachers propose an alternative to contributing to the permanence of students.

This finding concurs with the suggestion of Topping (2000), who stated that tutors should consider tutees' personalities while conducting a tutoring session and communicating with them for an effective result leading to proper learning, rapport, and performance to avoid relationship clashes. Therefore, the author proposes to think of possible personality traits when choosing a pair for tutoring work. For example, reserved tutees do not match well with a very bossy tutor. Otherwise, if tutors and tutees' personalities are similar, a kind of 'academic friendship' might help the tutees learn more effectively and focus on the core of the tutoring session. However, both tutees and tutors should accept working with all types of personalities.

Tutees' Behaviors during Tutoring Sessions

It must be acknowledged that a tutee's attitude becomes a key factor in the success of the tutoring sessions, and this influences his /her motivation to perform activities, whether in the tutoring session or the classroom. Furthermore, personality is another issue worth mentioning. In this regard and based on the teachers' diaries, tutee A behaved as an introverted and reserved person who preferred to pay attention during his regular classes.

This attitude is evident since he said he did not ask many questions because he was afraid of asking meaningless questions in front of his classmates. In addition, during the tutoring session, he mentioned that his class teacher implemented dialogues and other activities in which he did not participate. Conversely, tutee A was more open throughout the tutoring session, asked several questions, and took notes. Likewise, he showed satisfaction with the assigned listening activities and responsibility for homework.

Unlike tutee A, tutee B's attitude was somewhat extroverted and talkative. It was evident to see her smiling, participating, posing questions, and doing the exercises during the three tutoring sessions. Accordingly, she never canceled a tutoring session and even apologized for coming late to one of the sessions due to transportation reasons. Furthermore, tutee B was characterized as being respectful to tutor B's comments on her process and was significantly responsible for the assignment of the tutoring sessions.

Tutees' Perceptions of the Tutoring Practices

Graduate tutors explored and analyzed the interviews, and findings suggest that tutees have a positive perception during this process. In this respect, both tutees clearly expressed their satisfaction with the process, as stated in the following excerpts:

"I achieved progress concerning words from listening. I got more vocabulary; I caught more from the listening exercise, and let's say that the vocabulary of that audio was more understandable than the previous one." (TA-I2.)

"Tutoring sessions helped me because he taught me compound words. I understood all the text much better, but in text number 2, I can say that when I used to read an unknown word, he told me to analyze which of the two concepts was more relevant. I implemented that strategy, and I think it worked. I did well in the tutoring after all." (TB-I2)

Another positive aspect that should be highlighted during the tutoring sessions is methodology. Both tutees agreed that the tutoring session methodology was appropriate, motivating, and useful for learning purposes, as shown below:

"I think that tutoring session is very appropriate because there are things that we usually do not do in class. The fact of being face to face with another person (the tutor) is more comfortable than being in the classroom and talking to many other people." (TA/I2).

"The tutoring session was appropriate because the tutor provided practical examples that one can use in daily life for a better understanding. Images were also important. Words were not only pronounced; instead, the tutor gave me a piece of paper so that I could write to them and underline them. He didn't speak only in English because otherwise, I would be in trouble (laughter)." (TB-I1).

In this regard, Schmidtke (2009) claimed that one of the main aspects of a tutoring session is the tutor's attitude. Schmidtke found that tutors influence students' success, as was found with both tutees A and B. In like manner, Vogel et al. (2007) argue that the level of satisfaction of the tutees with the whole tutoring process would make them recommend tutoring practices to others and continue attending them when necessary. In our case, participants noted that graduate tutors seemed enthusiastic about their process, no matter how long or demanding it was. Learning positively affected them. Indeed, enthusiasm was described through dynamism, enjoyment of the tutoring session, positive feedback, and respect for their particular processes.

In the same vein, it is important to mention the concept of alignment (Atkinson, Nishino, Churchill, & Okada, 2007) in this tutoring process. This concept gives the basis for developing interaction with other humans or situations in different learning environments and using tools, class situations, and teacher consultations. In particular, we consider this a fundamental element for conducting EFL tutoring sessions while building rapport and fostering learning. In this regard, tutees were able to follow guidelines during the tutoring sessions and put them into practice:

“One of the positive aspects is the recommendation (by the tutor) of taking notes in my university classes because that is why we come to tutoring sessions; to learn. I felt confident with the teacher and with the topics discussed” (TA- I1).

“Actually, I felt very confused concerning the topic of linking words and compound words, but as I told him, sometimes they are present in a text and one can't understand them. So, I think it can help me understand what I am studying at the university” (TB/I1).

Regarding the learning process, findings also suggest that the tutoring sessions helped both tutee A and B gain new vocabulary knowledge and provided them with more strategies to develop language activities. Furthermore, those sessions had a significant impact on tutees' confidence and emphasized their individual constraints when learning a foreign language. Both tutees considered that tutors adjusted and customized all the activities according to their needs, leading to self-reflection and learning. The following excerpts support the above:

“The tutoring session helped me because we identified a problem that I had to understand some words starting with H, L, T, and E. Currently, I can understand some more words with these sounds” (TA/I3).

“I feel that I have progressed very much in reading comprehension. Well, I see much difference now on this. After all, this was the reason why I took the tutoring sessions because I did not understand the texts that I read. When he taught me the compound words, I could understand most of the texts” (TB/I3). This finding particularly supports those tutoring sessions helped and positively filled the tutees' needs. This process of academic gain for the tutees enriches the activity of the tutors. It fosters them to continue working in the same direction for the academic progression of the tutees.

Conclusions

This professional development strategy was designed to determine the effect of implementing a tutoring session protocol to meet some students' needs. In this respect, we assert that the training of the graduate teacher for implementing tutoring sessions and the design of a protocol contribute to the tutee's linguistic, motivational, and cognitive processes.

The training phases previously described may help graduate teachers plan tutoring sessions, considering students' needs. Sobrado (2008) establishes that tutoring planning is an activity that goes thoroughly and deeper into the administrative processes because academic sessions of this kind set different challenges for the tutor. In the same way, our recommendation concurs with that of Manzanares and Martinez (2015), who assert that it is essential not only to construct tutoring guidelines but also to make this process sustainable and implement it effectively. It is also essential to be trained after the graduate process in the tutoring dynamics.

Another aspect has to do with interaction. The interaction process in the tutoring session becomes a noticeable issue since this gives the tutees enough extrinsic motivation to show their disposition for learning. This interactive process between tutors and tutees aligns with what Madaio et al. (2018) found in their research. These investigators stated that there is a close connection between rapport and self-efficacy. They also claimed that those tutees who need more support from tutors would better benefit from rapport, as in tutee A's case. Consequently, we propose that tutees with a high level of autonomy and self-efficacy would see rapport as an extra point for learning, as was done with tutee B. We conclude that the tutor-tutee interaction process encourages tutees to gain knowledge and apply it in the current EFL tutoring session to enhance self-efficacy and autonomy.

In this professional development strategy, graduate tutors perceived that alignment is one of the critical factors in second language learning. This happens when some components, such as a good set of affordances, clear instructions, an organized methodology, and an assertive evaluation, work harmoniously to achieve the learning process during the tutoring sessions. Thus, it may be concluded that teachers' learning can be enhanced if they belong to a study group, aiming to grow together as influential language professionals. Undoubtedly, this experience will support us in creating an official tutoring program to help foreign language participants and contribute to student permanence.

Finally, based on the literature and the effects of the above tutoring experience in a foreign language on tutoring, we will consider the following academic elements to discuss and build an official tutoring program in a university context:

- Statistical information about student dropouts in our language programs.
- Theory and research information about tutoring.
- Tutoring in our language context.
- The framework for the construction of our tutoring program.
- Objectives for our tutoring program include both face-to-face sessions and online ones.
- Students need to create a tutoring program.
- Learning and motivational strategies.
- Rapport building and alignment.
- Inclusion and critical issues to be considered.
- Personal and economic elements are to be included.
- Professional development in tutoring.
- A platform to establish the logistical part of program tutoring sessions.
- The design of formats to conduct tutoring processes.
- Research proposals to check the impact of tutoring.

Recommendations

Given the results of this professional development strategy and our new experience as EFL graduate tutors in this process, we have set a list of guidelines for forthcoming graduate tutors and their tutoring practices. In this sense, we recommend considering the following list of do's and don'ts:

Do's for EFL graduate tutors

- EFL graduate tutors should essentially be acquainted with the pedagogical principles and methodology of the language program to better address tutees' needs. Thus, tutors can adjust the tutoring protocol to make connections with the content explanation and the types of activities and/or assignments that particular tutees may need.
- EFL graduate tutors should also be able to improvise, customize, and recommend activities that facilitate the learning of their tutees. We suggest this given that each tutee's conditions, learning styles, and expectations toward the tutoring sessions vary, so the tutor must gather expertise and knowledge to address these tutees' needs.
- EFL graduate tutors should use assertive and friendly language to build rapport and empathy with tutees. This tutor's attitude would enable tutees to show more confidence and express their linguistic needs or doubts related to technology or other aspects.
- EFL graduate tutors should also be open to accepting suggestions from the tutees facing their tutoring method. Thus, tutees would be active participants in the assessment process, and tutors could be regarded as more human individuals who permit themselves to learn from others.
- EFL graduate tutors should provide clear and timely feedback to the tutees concerning any aspect. In this scenario, tutees may have a broader idea of how to work independently and self-reflect on the aspects of the language that they need to focus on. If feedback is clear enough, the tutee's learning process will undoubtedly be maximized.
- EFL graduate tutors should consider any tutee's personal or particular situations that may affect their performance during the tutoring sessions. In fact, tutees sometimes attend the tutoring session to be advised or at least heard due to any personal issue not related to academic scenarios. In this sense, EFL tutors are principally human individuals rather than merely language instructors and must act as listeners without ignoring the academic bond.

- EFL graduate tutors should be suitable for the management of technological tools. This is suggested not only for being able to plan and conduct tutoring practices using computerized programs but also to be able to meet any tutee's needs regarding technology and the use of online files, folders, or assignments for their regular classes that may demand digital sources.
- Finally, EFL potential tutors should be flexible to work in the setting assigned, resources provided, and time given. This is important due to the lack of space in some academic settings, which may affect tutoring practices. We then suggest adapting tutoring sessions according to each institution's conditions and contexts.

Don'ts for EFL graduate tutors

- EFL graduate tutors should not believe that their work expertise as teachers is adequate for tutoring sessions. Tutors should read, analyze, train, and put into practice all the theoretical aspects, embracing the tutoring practices as well as performing peer discussions. They will be informed about the motivational and educational theories implemented during the tutoring sessions.
- EFL graduate tutors should never make judgments regarding either the materials or the methodologies implemented by the tutee's teacher in classroom sessions. Tutors should then be proactive and supportive rather than negatively critical of the context and allow the tutees to express their perceptions and feelings toward their classroom teachers.
- EFL graduate tutors must not provide feedback about the grades previously obtained with the classroom teachers. Instead, tutors should explore with the tutees the origins of their failure. This could be possible by establishing clear dialogues and conversations during the tutoring sessions and always avoiding judgments concerning classroom teachers' evaluation processes.
- Given that a tutoring practice aims to help tutees discover the reasons why they do not succeed academically during the classroom sessions, EFL tutors should establish a comfortable environment for the tutee. This premise must include an academic and ethical affinity between parts, allowing the proper identification of tutees needs without crossing personal boundaries. Thus, the tutor and tutee are not close friends, and there must be an academic relationship.
- EFL graduate tutors should not exhibit disrespectful behavior and unfriendly language while conducting tutoring sessions. This recommendation is given since tutees deserve respectful personal contact, which may lead to better learning.
- EFL tutors should not be authoritarian in the sense of affordances, materials, and skills to be developed during the tutoring sessions. Conversely, tutors should bring different materials and propose diverse activities for the tutees' enjoyment and performance during the tutoring practice. It is suggested only in specific cases that tutors assign predetermined materials for the sake of the tutee's success, given their needs and particular contexts.
- Finally, EFL tutors should never conduct a tutoring session without any previous planning. Graduate tutors will provide a tutoring session protocol and a variety of general affordances intended to address these tutees' needs, having previously analyzed the reasons, or needs of the tutees to attend this session.

Declarations

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no interest conflict. They have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence this chapter.

Author contribution

Rivera, Javier Alexander: I contribute to writing the different parts of this chapter.

Mejia, Martha Liliانا: I contribute to writing the different parts of this chapter.

Lopera, Sergio: I contribute to writing the different parts of this chapter.

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Abbreviations

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
GREAT	Grupo de Estudio en Acompañamiento Tutorial
TBLT	Task-Based Language Teaching

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Basics

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Appendixes

Appendix A Tutoring session initial protocol Session 1

Name of the EFL graduate tutor _____

Name of the tutee: _____

Objective: Identify the tutee's expectations, weaknesses, background experiences with the language 50/ 55 minutes		
Phase	Activities	Suggested questions /Instructions
Introduction (15-minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greeting the student, - Establishing rapport with the tutee, eye contact. - Getting confidence with the tutee. - Explaining the objectives and the methodology of the session. - Inquiring about the reasons for attending the tutoring session 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are your expectations for this session? 2. Why do you consider it important to study a second language? 3. Where did you study English? Did you study other languages? 4. How was your experience studying English? 5. How many hours do you study English at home? 6. Best anecdotes about being in an English course. 7. How do you see yourself at the end of the tutoring process? 8. What is the topic of the class now? How are you planning to develop it? 9. What is your main reason for attending this tutoring session?
Instruction (25 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explaining the content or the topic of the session. - Validating tutee's linguistic needs using a diagnostic test. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform the activities as follows according to the assigned material and your particular needs. 2. Establish a relationship between the assigned material and the task you are developing in the classroom. 3. Please pay attention carefully to how I (tutor) do this. Now, try to do it by yourself (tutee). 4. Ask me any question at any moment during this tutoring session. 5. Write down the new vocabulary during this tutoring session and review it at home.
Assessment (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verifying tutee's language learning improvements during the tutoring session - Assessing the tutoring session methodology in terms of time, affordances, location and learning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you understand from the assigned material? 2. How did you feel within the tutoring session? 3. What did you learn during the session? 4. What strategies did you learn from the tutoring session to be applied at home or in class?

Appendix B
Tutoring session follow-up protocol
Session 2 – 3

Name of the EFL graduate tutor _____

Name of the tutee: _____

Objective: Follow up the tutees' progress regarding the language or content needs within tutoring sessions.		
45/ 50 minutes		
Phase	Activities	Suggested questions /Instructions
Introduction (15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greeting the student - Following up the particular learning process of the tutee - Assessing the assignment of the previous tutoring session. - Clarifying doubts about the task. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are your expectations for this session? 2. How did you perform the assigned task? 3. What difficulties did you have performing the task? 4. What affordances did you use for the task? 5. How much time did you spend doing the task? 6. What new questions do you have after doing the task?
Instruction (25 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explaining a new content or topic of the session. - Using a series of activities to exercise the tutee's linguistic competencies (oral production, written production, oral comprehension and written comprehension) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perform the activities as follows according to the assigned material and your particular needs. 2. What other connections can you establish between this assigned material today and the task you are developing in the classroom? 3. Please pay attention carefully to how I (EFL graduate tutor) do this. Now, try to do it by yourself (tutee). 4. Ask me any question at any moment during this tutoring session. 5. Write down the new vocabulary during this tutoring session and review it at home.
Assessment (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verifying tutee's language learning improvements during the tutoring session - Assessing the tutoring session methodology in terms of time, affordances, location and learning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you understand from the assigned material? 2. How did you feel within the tutoring session? 3. What did you learn during the session? 4. What strategies did you learn from the tutoring session to be applied at home or in class? 5. Have these tutoring sessions met your particular linguistic needs?