

WHY IS THE NUMBER OF EFL TEACHERS WITH NO ENGLISH TEACHING  
DEGREE INCREASING IN THE PROFESSION? A CRITICAL STUDY

A thesis presented by

CLAUDIA YULIANA RAMÍREZ OSPINA

Submitted to the School of Languages of

University of Antioquia Medellín in partial fulfillment

of the requirements of the degree of

MAGISTER EN ENSEÑANZA Y APRENDIZAJE DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS

June 2015

Master's in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

©Copyright by Claudia Yuliana Ramírez Ospina 2015

All Rights Reserved.

WHY IS THE NUMBER OF EFL TEACHERS WITH NO ENGLISH TEACHING  
DEGREE INCREASING IN THE PROFESSION? A CRITICAL STUDY

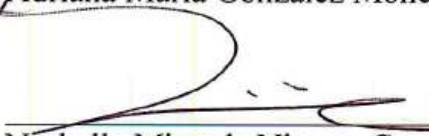
A thesis presented

by

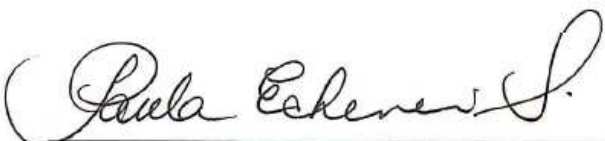
CLAUDIA YULIANA RAMÍREZ OSPINA

Approved as to style and content by:

  
Adriana María Gortzález Moncada, Chair

  
Norbella Miranda Nieves, Committee Member

  
Jaime Usma Wilches, Committee Member

  
Paula Andrea Echeverri Sucerquia, School Director  
Escuela de Idiomas

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to God for conspiring to make this happen. To my beloved parents, Gloria and Faber, and brother, Joan, for encouraging me to continue growing as a person and as a professional and for being always by my side. To Gustavo for all the support and for believing in me, even when I did not and for raising my spirit when I thought I was defeated.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Professor Adriana González, for her continuous support, patience and motivation. Her guidance and immense knowledge helped me during the whole process of doing the research and writing the thesis. I want to show my appreciation to all the professors of the program for sharing their expertise with us. I also want to thank my classmates Ricardo and Carlos for the support and for working hard the past two years to achieve this goal. Next, I would like to extend my gratitude to the jury members who I know will provide me with helpful comments and suggestions to improve this study. Furthermore, I want to thank the seven private language centers for the permission to carry out my data collection and the coordinators and teachers who volunteered their participation in this study. Finally, special thanks to Joan Ramírez for spending hours transcribing interviews, Juan Pablo Muñoz for helping me translate the quotes and Gustavo Severino for guiding me in the quantitative analysis of the data.

ABSTRACT

WHY IS THE NUMBER OF EFL TEACHERS WITH NO ENGLISH TEACHING  
DEGREE INCREASING IN THE PROFESSION? A CRITICAL STUDY

JUNE 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

M.A. CLAUDIA YULIANA RAMÍREZ OSPINA B.A. UNIVERSIDAD DE  
ANTIOQUIA  
MEDELLÍN  
COLOMBIA

Directed by: Adriana María González Moncada

The national program of bilingualism has caused the need for more EFL teachers in Colombia to accomplish its goals. This could be seen as an opportunity for graduates from teacher education programs. However, in some private language institutions teachers with no teacher education credentials frequently outnumber teachers who hold them. In this thesis, I will report the findings of an explanatory case study aiming at unveiling the reasons why this phenomenon takes place. Three data collection techniques were used: documentary analysis, coordinators' interviews and teachers' surveys. Three main issues appear to favor the choice for teachers who do not have a teacher education degree: their good language proficiency, their successful teaching methodologies, and an "X factor". Data analysis suggests that coordinators in language institutions (re)interpret the NPB and this leads to the unintended consequences of discriminatory practices, stereotypes, and deskilling of EFL teachers that hold a university-based ELT degree in private language institutions in the metropolitan of Medellín.

*Key words:* EFL teachers deskillling, labor discrimination, LEP, NPB, (re)interpretation and (re)creation of policies, stereotypes, teachers with no EFL university-based degree

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Theoretical framework .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Setting.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Methods.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Participants .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Data collection methods.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Documentary analysis .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Surveys.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Interviews .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Data analysis .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Findings.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Teachers' profile .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Demographic profile.....	22
Academic profile.....	23
Teaching profile .....	24
<b>They have better language proficiency.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Their teaching methodologies are more successful.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>The "X" factor .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Discussion .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Conclusions .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Limitations.....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Implications.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS FOR THE TELEPHONE AND WEB-BASED SELECTION.</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS FOR COORDINATORS.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>APPENDIX C: TEACHERS' SURVEY.....</b>	<b>68</b>



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Teachers' gender .....	23
Figure 2 Teachers' age.....	23
Figure 3 Academic profile.....	24
Figure 4 Years of teaching experience.....	25
Figure 5 Alternative teaching certifications.....	26
Figure 6 Language proficiency level.....	28
Figure 7 Facts that contributed to improve teachers' language proficiency.....	29

## **Introduction**

The number of teachers with no teacher education background teaching is not a new issue. Henning (2000) calls “barefoot teachers” unlicensed educational practitioners and states that are not a problem limited to the developing world (p. 3). In many countries, this phenomenon is common because there is laxity or no clearly defined credentials to teach it. Darling-Hammond (1998, p. 6) cites statistics of a national commission report to analyze the effect of having unequal access to trained teachers on students’ success. She shows how an increasing number of teachers “who lack the training required for their jobs” (p.6) are entering the profession in the United States. They may be unlicensed, not have a minor in the subject areas they teach, have substandard or emergency licenses. Sharkey and Goldhaber (2008, p. 505) state that private schools tend to hire more unlicensed or out-of-field teachers because “they are under less explicit state pressure to hire fully licensed teachers”. Ingersoll (1999; 2005) describes how American classrooms, mainly in high school, are staffed with teachers unqualified to teach their subject matter. He also states that this problem has had limited attention in the profession making it “largely unrecognized” (Ingersoll, 1999, p.27).

English teaching is not exempt of the problem of unqualified or under qualified teachers. Barduhn and Johnson (2009, p. 60) say that “the range of acceptable qualifications in our field, in which there are teachers with Ph.D.’s at one end of a continuum, and at the other there are teachers who can and do teach without any recognized qualifications whatsoever.” Barduhn and Johnson (2009) indicate that at the international level the diversity of accepted certifications in the field is very large. Ph.D’s and bachelors are the

highest acceptable qualification; in other settings it seems enough to have passed a proficiency exam, or to have attended workshops or being a native speaker with or without any credentials or expertise. In rural areas no qualifications are frequently needed to teach. Hu (2005) also exposes the situation in China where at the moment of implementing a Language Education Policy (LEP) called “bilingual education”, it was known that 53% of the teachers in ordinary schools and 69% of the teachers of key schools, “which were a small number of prestigious [secondary] schools set up as pivot sites of educational excellence” (Lewin, Little, Xu & Zheng, 1994 in Hu, 2005, p. 9), had never received any professional training. Actually, those teachers had very little knowledge of teaching skills and current methods and approaches in foreign language teaching.

Lengeling and Mora Pablo (2012), highlighting the contradictions of the professional discourses in the ELT (English Language Teaching), describe various types of teachers that include those highly qualified to the unprepared native speaker. One of the images identified by the authors is the “young white slender native teacher (usually blond and attractive)” (p. 98) known as backpacker teacher. This type of teacher moves from country to country and makes his/her living teaching English without any preparation.

This wide range of accepted certifications all around the world might be related to the demand and the supply of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. For instance, Nunan (2010) indicates that well-qualified teachers shortage is a worldwide phenomenon and that demand exceeds the supply (own translation). For example, in China in the 1970’s during the implementation of a language reform, the shortage of qualified teachers led to the admission of several untrained teachers and in the 1980’s in junior and secondary school only 30% and 26% of teachers respectively met the minimum requirements (Hu,

2005). The author adds that the recent policy on primary ELT has shown an evident shortage of EFL teachers in China given that there are only 200.000 qualified EFL teachers, but for the implementation of the policy 300.000 more are needed.

In Colombia, the number of EFL teachers has increased in the profession in the last two decades. Vélez-Rendón (2003) described the higher demand of English classes as a consequence of the evident educational and socio-economic growth of the country. The launching of the National Program of Bilingualism (NPB)<sup>1</sup> in 2004 has made the need for teachers more evident. This LEP was justified in the need to prepare bilingual citizens to be competitive in the globalized world and in the labor market (*Ministerio de Educación Nacional* (MEN), 2006; Usma, 2009). Some consequences have resulted from this policy design and implementation: one, the high demand of EFL teachers in all the educational levels (González, 2010); two, the shortage of well-trained teachers (González, 2009 p. 195); and three, the scores of mass testing of English in-service teachers that revealed a low proficiency among these professionals (MEN, 2005).

Concerning the higher demand for teachers, and the subsequent shortage, the Ministry of education states that on the new national program of Bilingualism “Colombia very well” (2014) between 2.200 and 3.800 additional English teachers are needed to meet the requirements. Sánchez-Jabba (2013) informed that in Colombia there is a shortage of qualified English teachers, which can be seen in the number of graduates from English teaching programs. According to the author, the Ministry of Education reports 127

---

<sup>1</sup> Known as *Proyecto de Fortalecimiento al Desarrollo de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras* (PFDCLE) since 2013 and Colombia very well for the period 2015-2025.

graduates between 2002 and 2010 from these ELT programs (Sánchez-Jabba, 2013 p.21). He also establishes that in the country the demand is significantly higher than the supply given that 47.000 certified teachers are needed, but there are only 15.000 English teachers holding a university ELT degree. This implies a deficit of 32.000 EFL teachers.

The shortage of certified teachers in Colombia may have led to the phenomenon of interest in this paper, the acceptance and preference of non-certified teachers in the profession. This shortage has been widely reported in the news stating that there are not enough good English teachers, mainly in public education. There are many concerns about the insufficient English language proficiency of teachers also in public discourses from the Ministry of Education. News and opinions from representatives from the Ministry of Education, and even some ministers of education, make graduates from university-based teacher education programs look poorly prepared to teach the language. For example, in articles such as “English is not spoken in Colombia” (*Centro Virtual de Noticias*, 2006), “English teachers in the country are “flunked” speaking the language” (*Caracol Radio*, 2009) or “English teachers in Colombia are also flunked” (*El Tiempo*, 2011) EFL teachers’ language proficiency level is criticized. As a consequence of this information, many EFL teachers that hold a Bachelor's degree in English teaching may be disregarded as good candidates for teaching positions, mainly in private language institutes. Instead of hiring them, there seems to be an open preference for teachers with no university-based ELT credentials. For example, Torres-Martínez (2009) infers in his reflection that in the “current conditions of the language teaching market having a Bachelor of education in language teaching is not an essential requirement. It is how language centers have become informal

faculties of trial and error for didactics and pedagogy training of novice teachers” (own translation) (pp. 67-68).

This tendency to choose teachers with no teacher education background in English might be perceived by teachers holding a teacher education degree as professional discrimination. They feel that their job opportunities are reduced because they are considered second-hand teachers and their language proficiency is questioned, mainly when they are not native speakers of the language (See for example Corcoran, 2011; Rajagopalan, 2003). In the comparison with native speakers, if nonnative speaker teachers are hired, their salaries tend to be the same as the ones with no qualifications and usually remain as teachers of only basic levels. This is particularly evident when they are compared to native speakers of English (Selvi, 2010). I can also state this from my own experience. I used to work at a language institution where teachers with teaching education background taught beginners and we all made the same money, the ones holding a degree and the ones who do not. The discrimination based mainly on the language proficiency. Those who were native speakers or lived abroad were considered better instructors. This may mean that

[t]eachers are valued only because of their language skills in English, so it is not surprising that the very essence of teachers is undervalued. The mark of their suitability is their command of the four language skills; whether or not they are suitable teachers does not matter (Guerrero, 2010, p. 46).

The narrowing of the profession to language skills may be described as a simplification of the field. This simplification of the ELT profession evidences how the implementation of a LEP modifies the role teachers play and progressively their “professional status [is] no

longer relevant” (Runté, 1995, p.6). Hence, the limitation of the EFL teachers’ skills just to language skills and the irrelevance of their professional condition reveal that teachers holding a university-teaching degree are being deskilled. They have been deskilled reducing the profession to a status of technical knowledge (Guerrero, 2010). In this case, it would mean to underestimate the teachers’ knowledge base (Pineda, 2002) that teachers have as it seems that having some good language proficiency is enough to teach English.

Although the increase of teachers with non-English teaching university degree is evident for private language institutes in Colombia, “ there is very little research on the status of English learning in non-formal education in the country, but the growth of programs, the market demand for EFL teachers and the number of new language institutes are increasing” (González, 2010 p. 339). There is only one reference on the issue. The thesis “*Mi estudiante se olvida de ir encontrando su voz en otro idioma*”: *Estudio de la narrativa de una profesora de inglés no-licenciada*” written by Susana Betancourt (2009) represents the only initial approximation to study an English teacher with no degree. The author explores the teacher’s previous learning experiences, teaching practices and beliefs. She recommends having more studies on the actual teaching of these instructors in real classrooms. At a local level, I conducted a pilot study in a private language institution in Medellín, Colombia. The data collected showed that the teachers with non-English teaching university degree outnumber the teachers holding an English teaching degree in this institution. For example, in that language institution, identified as Language Center X, out of 17 teachers ten have different degrees from education in areas such as: public accounting, graphic designing, cooking, translation, industrial engineering and business administration and one holds a high school diploma. Regarding those with a university-

based ELT training, only four have English teaching background. Only one teacher has a bachelor degree in ELT and three teachers are still undergraduate students in foreign language education. This means that 58% of the teachers do not hold any English-teaching university degree in this institution.

To shed some light on the situation of teachers with no teacher education degree in the profession, in this study I will explore the reasons for the increasing number of this type of instructors in language centers in the metropolitan area of Medellín. Apparently, the main reason for this growth is the interest that their high language proficiency provokes. However, some other reasons may appear to explain that phenomenon. Thus, for this study I propose as a research question: “Why is the number of EFL teachers with no English teaching degree increasing in the profession?”

To answer the research question, I carried out a research under a qualitative critical paradigm. I used an explanatory case study which will be explained in the methods section. This research was implemented in seven private language institutions in the Metropolitan area of Medellín; I applied interviews to coordinators and surveys to English teachers from the private institutions and did a documentary analysis.

It is worth clarifying that for the purpose of the study, although it focuses on teachers who do not hold a teaching degree, it is unavoidable to compare this type of teachers with those who hold one. They are inherently correlated to one another (See for example Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Ingersoll, 1999; 2005; Sharkey & Goldhaber, 2008). Likewise, it should be noticed that in this comparison most teachers who hold a teaching degree belong to the formal field of education such as public or private



schools, and as the only referent and the directly policy implied collective it is inevitable to contrast both of the groups.

This study may contribute to the academic analysis of the conditions under which the NPB has been implemented. I take into consideration what Hornberger and Johnson (2007, p. 510) state, citing Sutton and Levinson (2001), about the need to have more locally situated qualitative studies on how people make, interpret and engage in language policies. Policies can create or restrict ideological and implementational spaces for multilingual pedagogy (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007). I will show how the NPB has affected the way EFL teachers that hold a teacher education degree are perceived as less qualified instructors. This may have created an unexpected ideological space that reproduces and legitimizes discourses that show teaching stratification (Ramanathan, 2005). I will explore the reasons for preferring teachers with no teacher education background in private language centers.

The study may be of interest to different actors in the foreign language educational context. First, teacher educators and teachers holding a university-based ELT degree will be able to know what the reasons are for the discriminatory treatment. Second, I will show what type of EFL teachers' profile the labor market is looking for and what the future of the profession might be based on this profile. Finally, I will raise awareness among stakeholders who may have incurred in discriminatory practices against teachers holding a university-teaching degree.

In the next chapter, I will state the theories and concepts that will be the foundation of this research project and that will help to understand the phenomenon of teachers with no teaching degree in private institutions due to the NPB.

## **Theoretical framework**

On this section I will define the theories and concepts that will enlighten this research project. To understand the increasing number of EFL teachers with no teacher education degree in the profession, I assume a situated approach to language policies and the complexity of its implementation. From that view I use various concepts: teachers as transformative intellectuals; the complexity and dynamics of language education policies and practices; and policies (re)interpretation and (re)creation.

Within the post-method theory (Kumaravadivelu, 2006), in this type of stance teachers are seen as transformative intellectuals who “try to educate themselves and their students about various forms of inequality and justice in the wider society and to address and readdress them in purposeful and peaceful ways” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 14). Transformative intellectuals use their professional and personal knowledge as a means of exploring society and raising sociopolitical awareness (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). They also carry out a holistic approach anchored in society and act as agents of change (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). In this study, I explored the issue of teachers with non-English teaching university degree preferred over teacher holding a university-based ELT degree analyzing it as an inequality issue with a sociopolitical background.

I embrace the concept of the complexity of language education policies and practices as presented by Ricento and Hornberger (1996). The authors propose the metaphor of an onion to represent the different actors that are involved in the design and implementation of language policies. External layers represent policy makers while teachers are located at the center of the onion, the heart of the language policy (Ricento &

Hornberger, 1996, p. 417). The authors stated four layers that go from the outer to the inner: legislation and political processes, states and supranational agencies, institutions and finally, classroom practitioners. All these layers “together make up the LPP whole and that affect and interact with each other to varying degrees” (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996, p. 408). They also stress the importance of evaluating the language policy “not only by official statements or laws on the books but by language behavior and attitudes in situated, especially institutional, contexts” (p.417). Consequent with this view, I also agree with Ramanathan (2005) and Menken and García (2010) when they describe the complexity and dynamics of language education policies and practices because human beings and institutions transform them in the processes of interpretation, negotiation and (re)construction. In this study I explore how the national policy for English teaching and learning is transformed locally in the language institutes and new understandings about EFL teachers’ quality and competences emerge.

Under centralized educational policies, such as the NPB, teachers tend to lose control of their work and are seen as simple implementers of what is mandated without giving back any input (Gür, 2014; Mulcahy, 2009). Teachers and their teaching are assessed depending on the students’ achievements in tests. In this conception, “pedagogic skill not only is not required, but is not undesirable” (Mulcahy, 2009 p.247). For the case of Colombia, Guerrero (2010) claims that teachers are seen as passive technicians whose professional activity seems to be reduced to follow instructions from the Colombian government and its advisor, the British Council. She states that “MEN (*Ministerio de Educación Nacional*) conceives teachers from a deficit perspective who need training in basic skills and privileges the British Council models for teacher education” (Guerrero,

2010, p. 46). In fact, teachers are detached from the complex tasks of their profession and they are believed to have only limited knowledge to implement the experts' thinking (Guerrero, 2010) which reflects how the Government portrays teachers as deskilled for playing their role.

Teachers' deskilling is defined for the purpose of this research as a form of reducing teachers' competencies to language knowledge disregarding their teachers' knowledge base (Mulcahy, 2009). Teachers' knowledge base is defined by Pineda (2002) like the six variables that are paramount in the teaching profession: content knowledge; curriculum knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge; pedagogical content knowledge; knowledge of the learner and knowledge of educational goals and their philosophical bases. In this study I will address EFL teachers' deskilling as most stakeholders overlook teachers' teaching competences and tend only to focus on their language skills. This is especially evident for teachers who hold a university-based English teaching degree.

In the following section, I will describe the methodology used, the participants, data collection techniques, and data analysis procedures.

## Setting

This study was conducted at seven private language institutes in the Metropolitan Area of Medellín. These institutions are medium-size and have students from strata 2 to 6. Their monthly wage varies from \$50.000 to \$990.000 Colombian pesos. These institutions are recognized by the Ministry of Education like “*Instituciones de Formación para el Trabajo y el Desarrollo Humano*” under the *Norma Técnica Colombiana* (NTC) 5580. The general mission of the institutions is to have citizens able to communicate in a foreign language, mainly English. The levels taught there are from A1 to C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

These language institutions offer face-to-face classes and some of them also have a Course Management System (CMS) platform for students to practice the language outside the classroom. Regarding the teachers, in these institutions most of them do not have an EFL teaching university-based degree and the majority of teachers hold an alternative certification.

In the next section, the methods sections I will give a detailed description of each of the seven institutions, their coordinators and teachers.

## **Methods**

In this section, I will explain the research design planned for the study and I will contextualize the reader by presenting the participants and explaining the data collecting methods used. This research and the data collection and analysis were framed as a qualitative explanatory case study. This type of research was proper for the study because it focuses on answering “why” questions (De Vaus, 2001) and gives the possibility of comprehending and explaining practices or procedures based on theories (Scapens, 1990). This understanding and knowledge of the phenomenon of teachers with no English teaching degree preferred over teachers with an ELT degree was obtained through case study. A case study can be defined as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units” (Gerring, 2004, p. 342).

This research aimed to study the reasons for the increasing number of EFL teachers with non-English teaching university degree in private language institutions in the Metropolitan area of Medellín. For this study I needed a selection of documents related to English teachers’ profiles required in private language institutes. The study also involved seven recorded interviews to the institution coordinators and surveys to the teachers to discover the reasons behind the preference of English teachers with no teaching degree. To answer this question the participation of seven private language institutions to have a meaningful sample and the use of three data collection methods and data analysis, which will be described below, were paramount.

## **Participants**

A purposeful sample in which the cases are information-rich for a profound analysis and depending on the purpose of the research was selected (Patton, 1990). I chose the language institutions based on their academic reputations and the number of students they had. A sample of ten private languages institutions was initially considered. I selected the private language institutions through a telephone and web-based interviews in which the respondents, either the coordinator or a secretary, were asked three basic questions related to teachers' profiles (see appendix A).

From the ten institutions chosen seven were part of the data collection process. Three institutions did not respond to my invitation, one reported deep curricula changes which meant a modification in the hiring policies. The representative of another institution said that they openly preferred teachers with a teaching degree, and the third one was not included because the coordinator did not commit to the data collection requests. From the seven institutions seven coordinators and 33 teachers participated in interviews and surveys respectively. These were medium-size language institutes in the Metropolitan area of Medellín. They have between 300 to 800 students. I will refer to the private language institutions as institutions A to G.

Institution A is located in the central-western area of Medellín. It has three teachers, and its coordinator is a business manager. They offer English classes from basic to advanced levels. Their methodology is based on the communicative approach with the use of technology, as they make use of ICT, and they have a multiple virtual room. Besides, they offer a personalized methodology which means they have a small number of students per class. They also have a Course Management System (CMS) platform with tutors 24/7.



Students can have access to some online resources to develop their language skills. They have a password to log in on the institution CMS platform and they can do different exercises related to listening, reading and writing skills. The students are from social strata 3 and 4. The monthly pay for students varies from \$50.000 to \$180.000 Colombian pesos.

Institution B is located in the south of the metropolitan area of Medellín, in Itagüí. It has six teachers and one coordinator who has the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) certification. The language institute has three different programs for students according to the number of days and hours they study per week. This means that according to the frequency of the classes they can advance faster or slower and it also influences the cost of the monthly payment. The students are from a 3 to 4 strata and pay between \$50.000 to \$120.000 Colombian pesos per month. Their methodology is conversational, ludic and with small classes, between five to ten students. Among their resources, they have a multimedia laboratory and audio, video and written materials such as a textbook.

Institution C has two locations in Medellín and some headquarters in some towns in Antioquia. The institution offers basic, intermediate and advanced programs through a communicative approach. Their purpose is to contribute to have citizens able to communicate in a second language. The students are from strata 2 and 3 in one of the headquarters in Medellín and towns and students from the other headquarter in the south east area are from strata 4, 5 and 6. Therefore the monthly payment varies from \$70.000 to \$170.000 a month. The institution has ten teachers and its coordinator who is a translator.

Institution D, located downtown, has programs from level A1 to level C1 based on the CEFR. They also have conversation club, classes at lunchtime and live events broadcasting. There are about 20 teachers and their purpose is to develop students'

linguistic skills through dynamic and trend-setter processes according to their institutional mission. The students who attend this institution are from strata 3 and 4. Prices can vary from \$90.000 to \$210.000 pesos. The coordinator has a B.Ed. in English language teaching.

Institution E has its headquarters in two different places in southeast Medellín and one in Bogotá. Their methodology is influenced by the communicative approach, audio-lingual method, direct approach, cognitivist approach and language learning communities. They have programs for children, adults and a program for business language needs. The students belong to strata 5 and 6. Prices start from \$400.000 Colombian pesos a month. There are approximately 50 teachers. The coordinator studied international business administration.

Institution F located in the southeastern area of Medellín. It has programs from level A1 to C2 where students can develop the four skills through repetition and task automation. They also offer a CMS platform for the students to practice the different skills. They have students from strata 4, 5 and 6 and prices start from \$400.000 Colombian pesos per module. There are approximately 15 teachers. The coordinator of the institution did not provide the type of degree he holds.

Institution G located in southeast Medellín and in Bogotá is an international organization. The objectives of this institution are to create bonds of confidence and understanding between their country and the rest of the world and to strengthen cultural relationships with America. They have students from strata 5 and 6 and students pay from \$400.000 to \$990.000 Colombian pesos per course. There are three teachers in the local headquarter in Medellín and they offer courses for teenagers, adults and companies. According to the institution web page, their methodology includes fun and interactive

classes, educational technology, social activities in English, a learning center and conversation and reading clubs. The coordinator is a native speaker, but he did not provide information about his type of degree or credentials.

### **Data collection methods**

I collected the data from April to September of 2013. The process of data collection began on April the 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The data collected included: (a) documentary analysis before interviews, (b) Individual interviews of the language centers' coordinators, and (c) surveys with the participants' demographic, academic and linguistic information. Before starting the data collection in each institution, I carried out a meeting to inform the participants about the nature of the study and I asked them to sign the consent forms for each of the data collection sections that would allow me to use them (interviews, surveys and documents) for academic purposes. I informed them that their names and the institutional names were going to be kept private and pseudonyms were used unless they allowed me to use their real names.

### **Documentary analysis**

Qualitative document analysis “refers to an integrated method, procedure and technique for locating, identifying, retrieving and analyzing documents for their relevance, significance, and meaning” (Altheide, 1996 in Altheide et al., 2008, p. 128). The documentary analysis, which I considered paramount for this research study, was carried out at the beginning of each data collection in every private language institution. The documentary analysis included two types of documents: some produced by the government and some produced by the language institutions.

The documents produced by the Government include official documents from *Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN)* such as *Altablero magazine (2005)*, *Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo Colombia 2004 – 2019 slides (n.d)*, and *documento de socialización programa nacional de Inglés “Colombia very well” 2015 -2025 (2014)*, also a document from the local government was taken into account, it is the Acuerdo 089 de 2013. Moreover, the official document called “*Norma Técnica Colombiana 5580*”(NTC) (2007) and the bilingualism law of bilingualism 1651 of 2013, that regulate private language institutes in Colombia, were explored in this research study.

These documents were analyzed in order to know what hiring policies for English teachers should be according to national standards. I carried out this official documentary analysis only once for the seven language institutions.

Additionally, official documents and reports from the language institutions included mission, vision and institutional philosophies of the participant institutes. The previous documents were collected and analyzed before the interviews with coordinators to know in advance the regulations in order to plan more accurate interview protocols and to see what they have on paper and how the teaching staff is composed.

These documents were analyzed with two purposes, first, getting accurate qualitative information about the teachers with or without English teaching university degree hired in the institutions; second, unveiling the possible reasons for the preference of teachers with no university-based ELT degree in our EFL teaching context.

## **Surveys**

The word “survey” is used most often to describe a method of gathering information from a sample of individuals (Scheuren, 2004). Surveys can be web-based and collect

descriptive and behavioral information (Rea & Parker, 2005). The surveys in this study gathered information via e-mail and paper-based about the teachers in the seven private language institutions. This included personal information such as age, gender, and origin, academic background, language background and their opinions about the issue being investigated (see appendix C). Through these surveys I expected to find teachers' demographic information, linguistic background, teaching training and experience. The surveys showed me the teaching and language characteristics that each of these types of teachers had.

### **Interviews**

Interviews are interactions between two or more people in which respondents answer questions in the context of dispositions (Glesne, 2006), interviews can be topical that focus "on a program, issue or process" (Glesne, 2006, p.80) or about life histories which are concerned with one or several people's life experiences (Glesne, 2006). The individual topical interviews were carried out with the seven academic coordinators from each institution. The coordinators interviews aimed at inquiring about the hiring policies and criteria, their vision, mission and institutional philosophy, records of the teachers' hired and rejected and about their opinions on certified and non-certified teachers in the EFL teaching field. The interviews for the coordinators were divided into three different themes: Vision, mission and institutional philosophy, teachers' profiles in the institution, and hiring policies (see appendix B).

### **Data analysis**

Surveys were analyzed from quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The quantitative analysis involved obtaining figures to compare them and calculate the mean and the median of the number of teachers holding an English teaching university degree or not. In addition, I wanted to quantify some aspects such as their type of degrees, level of language proficiency, experience living abroad and years of teaching experience.

In the process of analyzing data, first, interviews were transcribed to get specific extracts and information. The interviews and institutional documents were analyzed through content analysis. Second, I started by coding all the relevant information for answering my research question. Third, I grouped the codes according to frequency and with similar patterns into themes. After naming, grouping and simplifying I constructed the categories. The qualitative analysis was done from an inductive point of view (Creswell, 2007), it means using data to generate ideas. Finally, after constructing the categories, the findings were shared with the advisor to confirm my own interpretations.

## **Findings**

In this section, I will report the findings that answer the research question of this study. I will also seek to raise awareness about the real situation of language teachers and (re)interpretation and (re)creation of the LEP in some language institutes. The section will be structured as follows: first, I will describe the most common teachers' profile in private language institutions to have a clear picture of the type of teacher that is mostly hired in these institutions. Second, I will answer the question stated above and I will include testimonies from teachers and coordinators.

### **Teachers' profile**

#### **Demographic profile**

According to the surveys answered by the teachers, most of them are men (82%) (N=27) while 18% (N=6) are women (see figure 1). Regarding their ages 37% (N=12) are between 23 to 27 years old; 21% (N=7) are between 33 to 37; 12% (N=4) are between 18 to 22; another 12% (N=4) are between 48 to 52; 9% (N=3) are between 28 to 32; 6% (N=2) are between 38 to 42 and 3% (N=1) is between 43 to 47 (see figure 2).

Figure 1 Teachers' gender

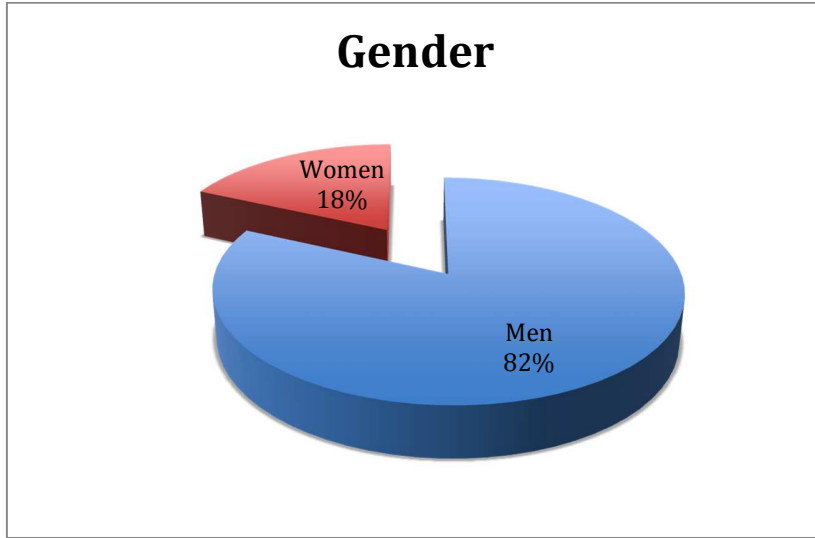
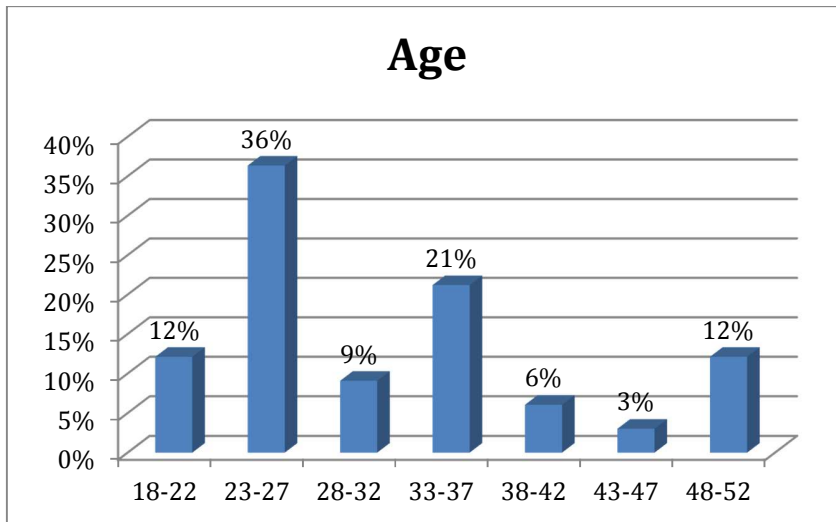


Figure 2 Teachers' age



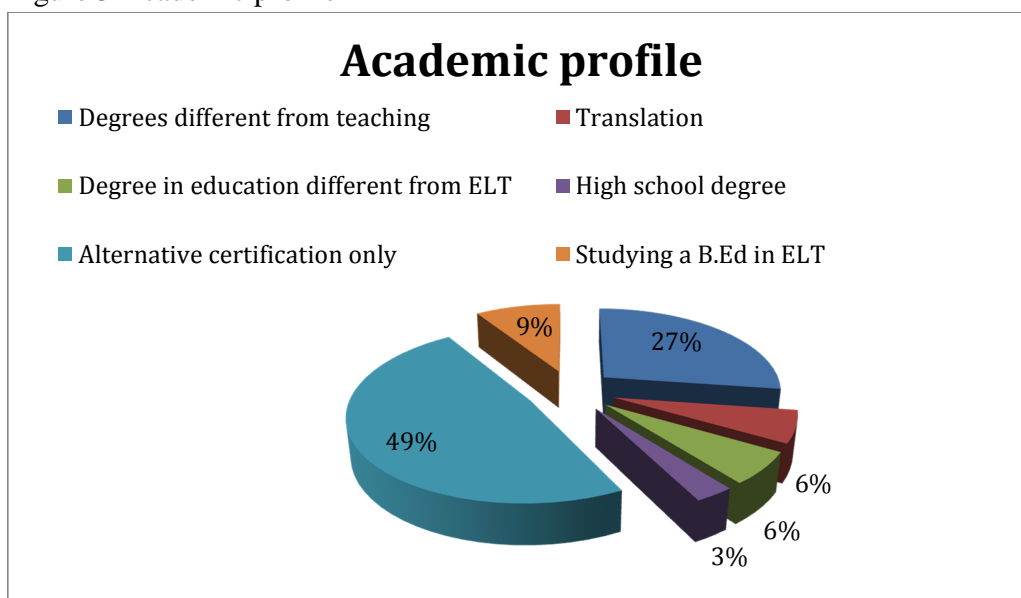
### Academic profile

In their academic profile from the total of those polled, 91% (N=30) do not hold an English university-teaching degree and only 9% (N=3) are studying a B.Ed. in ELT. This means there is not any teacher with a Bachelor in English teaching among the survey respondents. From the teachers who do not have an English teaching degree 27% (N=9) have a bachelor degree in a different field from ELT, and hold degrees such as:



technical degree that was not specified in the survey, construction management, journalism, graphic design, telecommunications engineering and degrees related to business and economics, another 6% (N=2) have a degree in translation, 6% (N=2) in education different from ELT such as: childhood education or health services and education, and 3% (N=1) only have a high school diploma. Finally, 49% (N=16) did not report any type of degree, only an alternative certification in English teaching. In this case, it was mainly the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) (see figure 3).

Figure 3 Academic profile



### Teaching profile

In terms of teaching experience, 61% (N= 20) of the teachers have between 1 to 5 years of teaching experience; 24% (N= 8) have 6 to 10 years of experience; 9% (N= 3) have 16 to 20; 3% (N= 1) has 11 to 15 and other 3% (N= 1) is teaching for the first time (see figure 4). Contrary to the popular belief of the importance of having teaching experience, it seems

three coordinators agree on the negative effect that experience may have on teachers'

methodology. Coordinator F stated that:

“It is a lot easier to have an inexperienced person for that person could merge with both us and our methodology. On the contrary, when someone has lots of experience, they are already too full of vices and things that are not good for us” (September 3rd, 2013).

From the total of those polled, 82% (N= 27) have an alternative certification, which serves as qualification to teach English, and from those 64% (N= 21) have the TKT. The TKT is a very popular exam among EFL teachers who hold or do not hold a university-based ELT degree. According to the Cambridge English web page (2014) teachers take this test because it improves teachers' career opportunities, they can take a flexible course and this test is a starting point towards other teaching qualifications. 12% (N= 4) have taken other courses such as: TESOL, *Conocimientos pedagógicos en la enseñanza del idioma Inglés*, this is a 90-hour teaching course offered by the academic coordination of one of the private institutions to those people who know the language, but do not have teaching experience or certifications, and 6% (N= 2) have CELTA (see figure 5).

Figure 4 Years of teaching experience

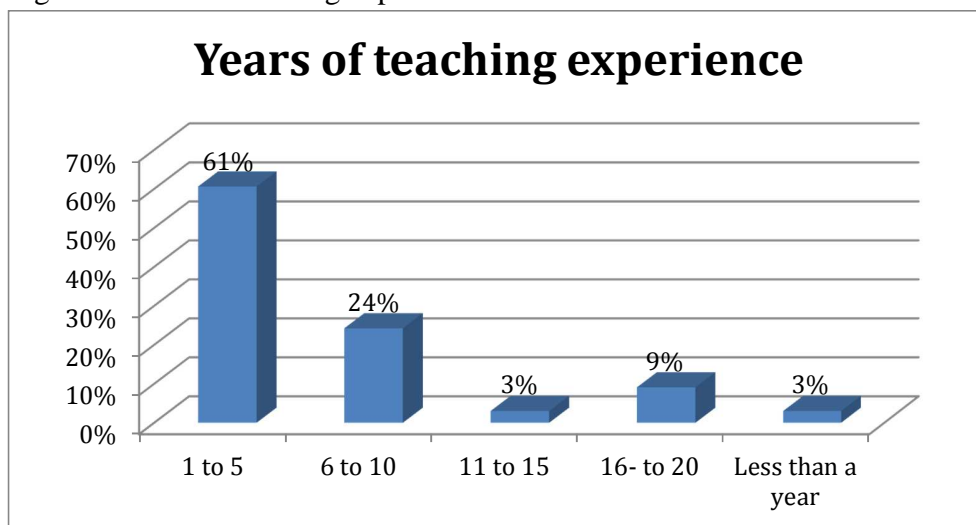
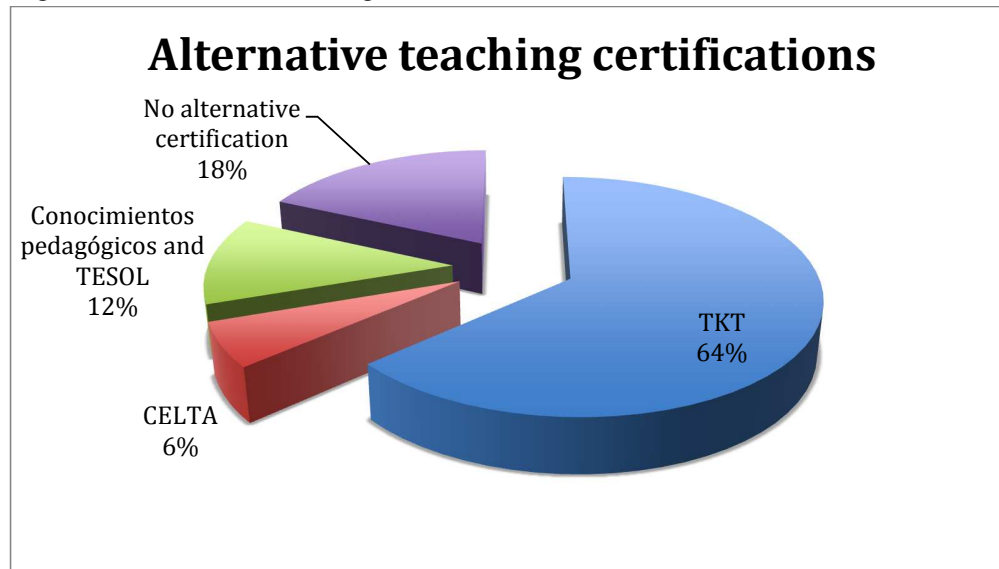


Figure 5 Alternative teaching certifications



Summarizing, a typical EFL teacher in a private language institution in Medellín where most of the teachers did not have a university teaching degree, is a man (82%) between 23 to 27 years old (37%). A teacher with 1 to 5 years of teaching experience (61%). It is a teacher who does not have a teaching-based degree in ELT (91%) and who possesses an alternative certification (82%), especially the TKT. This is unusual for most studies because teaching tends to be a female profession (Commonwealth Secretariat & UNESCO, 2011), with usually older people with longer teaching experience.

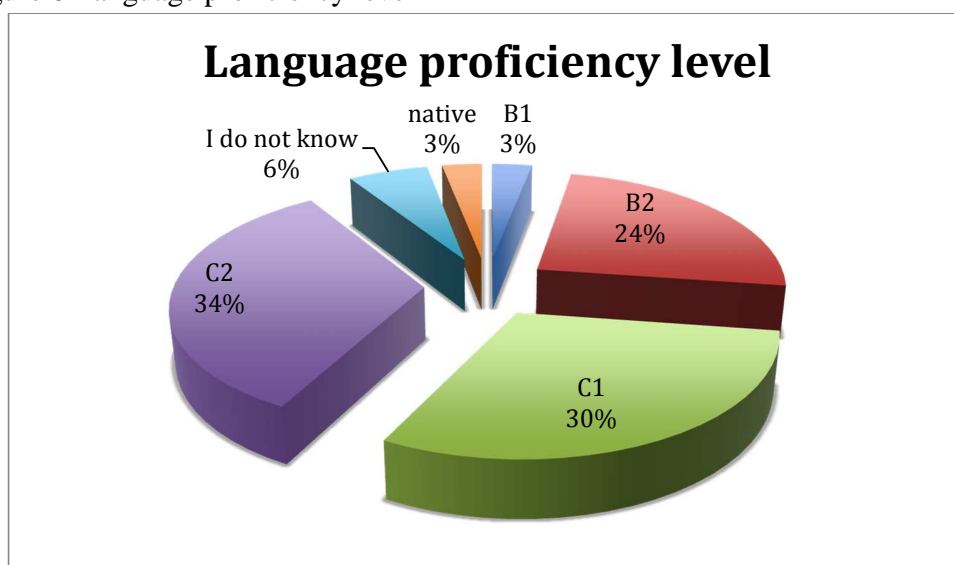
As answer to the research question, the data showed three main attributes that seem to motivate these language institutions to prefer teachers with no ELT teaching degree. These findings are organized around those three attributes: Better language proficiency, more successful teaching methodologies, and the “X” factor.

## **They have better language proficiency**

It seems that one of the main reasons why some private language institutions prefer teachers who do not hold an English teaching degree is because they appear to have a better language proficiency level than those who actually have an English teaching-based degree. By language proficiency, in this research, it is meant the high command of the linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic components of the language, which consist of knowledge and skills and know-how to communicate on the target language (Council of Europe, 2001). For this segment, I will describe the teachers' language proficiency level and the aspects in which teachers who do not hold a teaching-based degree stood out according to coordinators. These aspects are: idiomatic expressions and cultural knowledge, fluency and accent.

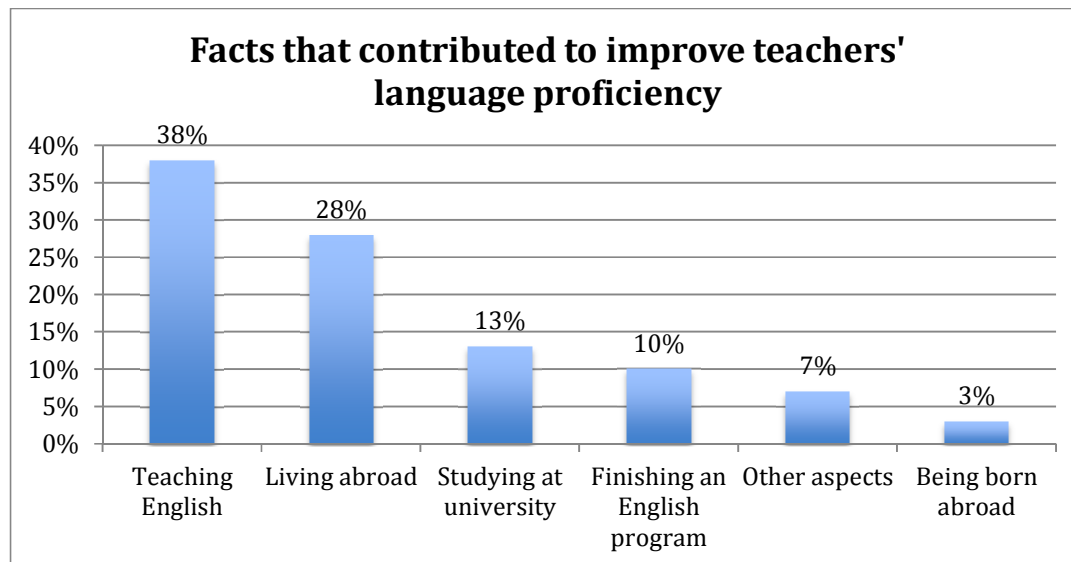
In terms of language proficiency, in the survey, teachers reported their English proficiency as follows: 34% (N=11) of the teachers have a C2 level of the CEFR; 30% (N=10) are in level C1; 24% (N=8) have a B2 level; 3% (N=1) are B1; other 3% (N=1) considered being native as their language proficiency level and 6% (N=2) do not know their language proficiency level(see figure 6). These language proficiency levels of the teachers allow the institutes to offer programs for the students from A1 to C1 levels given that these teachers have the required language proficiency to teach them as stated on the NTC 5580.

Figure 6 Language proficiency level



According to the teachers, the aspects that have contributed to improve their language proficiency were divided as follows, taking into account that they could choose more than one answer: teaching English (38%) (N= 23), living abroad (28%) (N= 17), studying at university (13%) (N= 8), having taken an English program in a language center (10%) (N= 6). Other aspects such as: reading newspapers, watching TV and/or movies, playing video games and love for the language (7%) (N= 4) and finally being born abroad (3%) (N= 2) (see figure 7). These results are according to what coordinators stated because for them it is very important that the teachers have lived in an English-speaking country before, as it will be explained below.

Figure 7 Facts that contributed to improve teachers' language proficiency



The fact that 17 out of 33 teachers (51,5%) have had the experience of living abroad has given them the advantage of having L2 cultural exposure. Through this exposure, teachers with no English teaching degree have learned a lot of idiomatic expressions and have cultural knowledge. In relation to the aforementioned issue, it was stated by four out of seven coordinators that teachers with no university teaching degree who have lived abroad have advantages on the two following aspects previously mentioned. In that sense, the coordinator D emphasized that:

“I insist that the others [those without an English teaching degree] have more idiomatic expressions ... I do not know. The fact of being in contact with the language has enabled them to enrich us with cultural views for example ” (July 3rd, 2013).

In relation to living abroad, four coordinators out of seven agreed that this is one of the aspects that influence hiring processes in their institutions. They stated that the fact that a

person lived in an English-speaking country for several years even if they have done unskilled work such as cleaning, serving food, homebuilding, etc., gives teachers more advantages in different aspects. Most of the coordinators are convinced that a person who had experience living abroad has better fluency and a neutral or native like-accent.

“...it is evident because of the teacher that we hired, to mention a specific case, who has been abroad. I mean that, not whether they have a better English or not. Not that. But the way they deliver the message, the way they teach, the way they, hmm, the way they change tones when using some words...”(April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013)

Additionally, teacher 22 from institution E said that from his own experience he has seen that the percentage of teachers with good language proficiency, better accent, and better pronunciation is significantly higher in teachers who have lived or studied abroad than the ones with an EFL bachelor degree. He said

“I respect any degree or certification that a teacher may have, but I have to say for experience that the percentage of teachers with good English proficiency, good pronunciation and pedagogical practices is significantly bigger in teachers that lived/ studied abroad than the ones with an EFL bachelor degree” (Teacher 22 institution E, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013)

On the other hand, in the case of teachers who hold a bachelor degree in English teaching, it was found that there is a general preconceived idea that they do not have a good language proficiency level as stated by coordinator E, she said “when someone mentions teachers who hold a university-based degree, the first thing I request is an English proficiency level exam because in that aspect I have found a deficiency”(august 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013). The only reference in the surveys about this aspect was the two teachers in the B.Ed.

program who had a B2 level from the CEFR. From the interviews, most of the coordinators, four out of seven, stated that teachers with an ELT degree do not have a full command of the language and that they have a very low level, especially in aspects such as lots of grammar mistakes and accent problems. For example, in the case of grammar inaccuracies the coordinator from institution B said:

“...when having to fully make use of the English language, they are not able to. I wonder why. But you realize when interviewing someone for a job, right? They lack grammar structures at the moment of having a conversation, because it does show, does it not? A sort of gap, the feeling that something is missing and you instantly realize when you are talking to someone” (May 14th, 2013).

The coordinator of institution E also pointed out that teachers with a teaching-based degree make grammar mistakes which can be easily detected by advanced students. Supposedly, teachers with a university-based ELT degree also have a regional accent. This opinion seems to be shared by three of the coordinators. These aspects make them conclude teachers who hold an English teaching degree do not have a good language proficiency level.

“... In a conversation, I feel the intonation becomes heavy at times; or the grammar when they are speaking. I manage to hear this in a way that even an advanced English student could identify... To instruct on a language, it is required to refine it more” (August 13th, 2013).

In fact, the coordinator of institution E was very specific about associating the presence of a heavy accent to a particular region in Colombia: Medellín. According to her, teachers holding a teaching degree and who are from Medellín do not seem to have a good language



proficiency level as teachers from other regions in Colombia, and of course teachers who have been abroad.

I have had the opportunity to hire people in Bogota, Barranquilla and, evidently, in Medellin. A big difference arises among the applicants from the different cities. For example, I would say that, in a way, Barranquilla has a naturally excellent English level. Thus, in Barranquilla, whether they have an English teaching degree or not, there are teachers with a quite good English and a neutral accent, because that is something that people from the coast regions have. They use a lot of particular intonations in Spanish, they do not on the other hand, do so in English, which is an upshot. At one point, we reached a 50% or 70% of the staff who had a teaching degree, because there is a very good profile not only pedagogically, but also linguistically. Unfortunately, that is the fault I have found. Whenever they mention me someone from here in Medellin, the first I ask from them is an English exam. This is because with the exam I always sort of find the fault and I have even come across people who are professional in other areas, who are not certified English teachers but are linguists [sic] and bring a wider usage of the language (August 13th, 2013).

In this case, the coordinator is implying that according to the region where the teachers with a B.Ed. belong to, their accent can be very different. Therefore, teachers from Bogotá and the North Coast apparently have a more neutral accent in English, while teachers from Medellín have heavy accents and do not have a good language proficiency level.

This situation of associating teachers with no EFL degree with good language proficiency and teachers with university degree with low proficiency level influences the

type of public they are assigned to teach. Four coordinators stated that in their institutions when they hire teachers who hold an English teaching degree, they are mainly assigned to teach at basic levels in which they think they can help students to get some grammar bases. Meanwhile, teachers with non-English teaching degree are in charge of the advanced students to help them improve their listening and speaking skills. Regarding this situation coordinator from institution B commented:

“Usually most of the people who hold a B.Ed. in ELT, the few I have known...they are only in charge of the children’s groups. We handle groups of children since 4 years old, then they come and get in charge of those groups” (May 14th, 2013).

### **Their teaching methodologies are more successful**

For the purpose of this research, methodology will be defined as: “The study of practices and procedures used in teaching, and the principles and beliefs that underline them” (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 363). In this study, successful teaching methodologies refer to the teachers’ capacity to adapt efficiently their teaching procedures to the specificity of the context and to the interests and needs of their students. These methodologies are also more conducive to students’ learning and are better evaluated by coordinators and students. On this segment, I will present the opinions of coordinators and teachers about the teaching methodologies employed by teachers who do not hold a university-based ELT degree. Their opinions are organized around three main themes: teachers with no English teaching degree can be easily trained in the institutional methodology, they have more modern teaching practices and anyone can learn how to teach.

In regard to the first theme of methodology, although coordinators accepted that teachers with non-English teaching degree lack the knowledge on theories about language teaching and learning, four out of seven of them did not see this issue as a disadvantage. Coordinator B thinks that the lack of this teaching knowledge might be easily overcome by allowing them to do class observation and four to five week training or even an 80 to 120 hours teaching course.

In fact, in institution C, the academic coordination provides the teaching course to certify those teachers to teach the language “We also have our own teaching program called Academic Knowledge in Pedagogic Usage in English Language Teaching which in turn also has a preparation in pedagogy aimed directly at English” (May 7th, 2013). Moreover, coordinator E expressed that when teachers (with a teaching degree or without it) are trained in the institutional methodology, teachers with no teaching degree are just as good at the teaching aspect as teachers who hold one. About this, she stated: “The class will be excellent, whether with someone having an English Teaching degree or someone without one, and that is why we ensure a constant training with the teachers” (August 13th, 2013).

Another advantage of teachers with no English-teaching degree, in terms of methodology, is the second theme: their practices are more modern according to four coordinators. In this case, modern methodologies mean, “the students are the most active element in this process that is to say that classes should be student-centered. The teacher is here not to explain but to encourage and help students to explore, try out, make learning interesting, etc” (Boumová, 2008, p. 20). About this issue, in institution A the coordinator claimed that teachers with non-English teaching degree have a methodology based on

conversational skills and they share their life experiences with students which is more effective and shows better results in students' performance. In fact, teacher 32 from institution G added that he receives a lot of compliments from his students due to his "non-traditional" teaching style, which he described as teaching dynamic, engaging and communicative classes. He indicated

"I'm one of them [English teachers who do not hold a degree]. From my own students' feedback I'd say it does not necessarily matter. I've often received compliments, particularly in Colombia on my "non-traditional" style. I've interpreted this as a meaning that my classes are dynamic, engaging and communicative, while many of my more formally educated colleagues stick to textbook, technical lessons" (teacher 32 from institution G, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013).

This is in agreement with the methodologies and goals stated by the institutions above.

About the third theme, some teachers agreed that a university-based ELT degree is actually not necessary to be a good teacher, but as long as they have passion, experience and will, they may improve their teaching skills by themselves. This assumption was shared by teachers 5, 6 and 7 from institution B, teachers 9 and 11 from institution C, teacher 23 from institution D and two (17 and 20) from institution E. This means that eight teachers (24%), almost a fourth of the participants believed that anyone with passion and will can teach. Another teacher (8) from institution C emphasized that a degree is merely the demonstration of having been through a learning process, but a teacher without a degree may have even better language and teaching skills.

I believe that a degree is just a proof of having been through a learning process.

Therefore, an EFL teacher without a degree might have an even better use of both language and pedagogical skills than an EFL teacher with a degree. (Teacher 8 institution C, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013).

As a matter of fact, teacher 21 from institution E asserted that the most important characteristic to be able to teach is having an excellent command of the language since anyone could learn how to teach more easily than mastering a language. He stated on the survey the following

“I don’t have a university-based degree. I think that the most important factor is an excellent command of the English language. Let’s face it, you can learn to teach a lot more quickly than you can learn to master a language” (September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013).

Additionally, teachers 32 and 33 from institution G suggested that the CELTA course is enough to learn how to teach and may be even better than many university-teaching programs. On this matter, teacher 23 from institution F indicated that teaching is not a skill you can learn, but you are born with it and with the ability to communicate knowledge. He also added that university may give you the tools to teach, but having that knowledge will mean nothing if you do not know how to share it.

It is also worth noticing that in the field all of these alternative certifications are just as valid as a degree. The range of accepted certifications is wide (Barduhn & Johnson, 2009). Therefore, in these language institutions, based on the ICONTEC document the NTC 5580 (2007), coordinators take advantage of this situation to hire teachers with no university-based degree.

Otherwise, according to most of the coordinators, teachers who hold an English teaching degree seem to be less successful using their teaching skills. Five coordinators agreed that although this type of teachers have the teachers' knowledge base (Freeman, 2009; Pineda, 2002) and may know how to plan their lessons according to that knowledge, that planning seems to be considered as a lack of flexibility. In fact, they are described as "too structured" (coordinator from institution A). Besides, they do not seem to have skills for incorporating ICT in their lessons and their classes are often book-centered (coordinator from institution A, teacher 32 from institution G). These issues are seen as a disadvantage since coordinators consider them as a traditional teaching approach that causes students to get bored. In relation to these matters, coordinator from institution A claimed:

Here is an experience. We have had two teachers with a teaching degree. So the difference in terms of style ... the style of the class is immensely different to the other teacher's. What happens? The teacher with a degree is more normative and stuck to the rules, right? So he comes and makes a working plan: "We're doing ... in today's class. Then in class number two we're doing this and this. These are the topics to cover". They are too enclosed to a textbook. Normally, they do not start a class if they do not have a textbook, because that is the main requirement. When another teacher comes, right? They do not need one ... In fact, they do not even ask for one. They do not ask for a textbook and if we provide them with one they ask: "Do I have to follow this text?" (April 25th, 2013).

Teacher 32 from institution G also commented how colleagues who hold an English teaching degree stick to a textbook and teach lessons that focus too much on metalinguistic analysis. For them, it seems that the way these teachers teach is not effective, and it is not

an advantage for their teaching practices. In fact, teachers holding a B.Ed. apparently stay in a comfort zone, the comfort zone of traditional teaching and make use of old-fashioned, out-of-context methods. For instance, coordinator B added:

...one of the requirements here is that you cannot speak Spanish. So you cannot just go into a classroom and translate, just like many teachers at schools and the sort. We cannot. We cannot afford to do that because if we did, we would not accomplish the goals we set for our students (May 14th, 2013).

Coordinator from institution B implied that all teachers with a university-based ELT degree use translation into Spanish in their classes in elementary and high schools and this is a type of methodology that is not accepted in private language institutions because it would not allow them to develop an appropriate English proficiency level in students.

Furthermore, the coordinator of institution D suggested that teachers holding an ELT degree may know the theories of teaching, but they do not have the ability to put those theories into practice:

It is not just about knowing some information; not just about knowing what the different methodologies are, Suggestopedia, Linguistic Methods [*sic*]. I mean, it is all right for them to know the information. The point is how to manage these methodologies according to the difficulties or the advantages of a class... (July 3rd, 2013).

The coordinator here suggested that teachers holding a university teaching degree may know the theory of different types of methodologies, but they do not know how to put that theory into practice according to the students' needs and profiles.

To sum up, teachers who do not hold a ELT degree seem to adapt easily and fit more appropriately language teaching institutions methodologies, and their communicative classes make their methodology seem more modern and adequate to meet the students in language institutions' needs. Plus, they have the ability to learn how to teach very quickly due to the fact that they already have a high command of the language.

### **The “X” factor**

The “X” factor could be defined as an indefinable quality, especially of someone’s personality. It combines both having a positive attitude and a good persona.

As for attitude, it will be defined according to Hogg andVaughan (2005) as a long-lasting system of precepts, sentiment and conducts to some objects, people, situations and/or representations which are socially meaningful or a generalized positive or negative evaluation regarding a person, object or matter. Regarding attitude towards the class and students, it was suggested by two of the coordinators that this is different for teachers holding a teaching degree and for those who do not. They expressed that a more easy-going and informal attitude of the teachers who do not have a B.Ed. in teaching English contributes in a positive way in the classroom atmosphere and it may be reflected in the students’ learning outcomes (coordinators from institutions A and D).

On the contrary, when talking about teachers holding a B.Ed. coordinator F suggested they might have a very strong and severe attitude that may not fit in the institution or the public they have to handle.

That is then a feature I would not know how to explain, but it is more of a style thing, something to do with the personality. If someone comes and they are too strict, they



will not partner with the institution. So I think that that personality thing and the style in pedagogy and teaching is indeed a rather important factor (September 3rd, 2013).

Three coordinators also implied that this rigid attitude in the classroom interferes with the relationship with the students and at the same time affects their learning process (coordinators from institutions A and D). Teacher 27 from institution F said,

There are a lot of empiric people on this specific matter and these people are trying to teach whereas some other professional people who had earned some degrees are trying to be perfectionist and they forget how is to be on the student's shoes which is the most important thing "why this person is here learning" (March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013).

He suggested that teachers holding a B.Ed. degree have a perfectionist attitude and they tend to forget that they once were students too and that pupils are there with the objective of learning, which may be a main reason why it seems that their teacher-student interaction is not good.

With respect to persona, on the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2014) it is defined as the way you act around other people and how they perceive you as an individual; it is the image you show to others. Carl Jung (cited by Seelbach, 2013, p. 34) added that persona is the outer part of our personality that adapts to the world. For the aspect of persona, teachers with no English teaching degree apparently have the personal and professional image that fit the institutional values. First, they seem to have good looks and a certain way to dress and behave to fit in the institutions. Second, supposedly teachers with non-English teaching degree do have a special characteristic. It seems that this "X" factor helps them to personify the mission, vision and philosophy of the institutions. In this regard, coordinator from institution D declared:

It is important at the moment of doing the teacher screening, that the person truly has the [X] factor” ... “That is why a special feature is needed and it goes beyond having a degree or a title, which everyone is so eager to get, or the information you can memorize. There is something bigger than that.

and he added “... and there is something within the human being, the heart, which has to virtually pump out of the teacher’s heart. And that is something you also have to tell your partners, for it is not just providing with the information...” (July 3rd, 2013).

The “X” factor is extremely important, yet intangible and unexplainable. Coordinators perceived it as a “je ne sais quoi” feature that influences decisions about who will be hired and who will not.

To sum up, in some private language institutions EFL teachers who do not hold an English teacher degree outnumber teachers who do. This phenomenon is due to three main attributes:

### **Teachers who do not hold English teaching degree have better language proficiency level**

Teachers with no teaching degree, apparently, have more advantages in terms of language proficiency. Their exposure to the L2 context gives them a wider use of idiomatic expressions, and more knowledge of the target language cultural aspects. They can also speak with fluency and a native-like accent. In contrast to that, teachers holding a teaching degree have very noticeable grammar mistakes and strong accent while speaking.

Additionally, teachers holding a teaching degree who are from a specific region of the country, Medellín, seem to have an even more marked accent.

## **Teachers who do not hold English teaching degree have more successful teaching methodologies**

It seems the teaching methodologies used by the teachers who do not have an English teaching degree are more effective because of three main reasons. First, since these teachers do not have much teaching experience, they can be trained in the institution methodology. Second, apparently they have modern and dynamic teaching methodologies that are appealing for the students. Third, they believe that anyone with will and passion can teach and since teachers with no degree have full command of the language, their lack of teaching knowledge can be easily overcome.

## **Teachers who do not hold English teaching degree have the “X” factor.**

Teachers with no degree have the “X” factor. This means they have an easy-going attitude in class and their persona embodies the institutional image and philosophies. They have better relationships with students and therefore, a more empathic atmosphere in the classroom. Their physical appearance and the image they project to others can represent these language institutions values and interests.

On the next section, I will discuss the findings in relation to both the research question and current knowledge on the issue of teachers with no university-based degree on private language institutions. I will also highlight how the research reflects, differs from and extends actual knowledge of the phenomenon

## Discussion

In the Findings section, I presented three main reasons that explain the increasing number of EFL teachers with no teacher education degree in some private language institutes in the Metropolitan Area of Medellín (Colombia). These reasons are: They have better language proficiency; they have more successful teaching methodologies and they have the “X” factor. In terms of language proficiency, many of these teachers have lived abroad and that fact makes them automatically better candidates in the eyes of academic coordinators and students of their language institutions. They are considered as better speakers with the advantage of having more knowledge of idiomatic expressions and the target culture, and having a superior fluency and native-like accent. About teaching methodologies, teachers with no university-based ELT degree are seen as having three advantages: their teaching methodologies can be shaped according to the institutional and students’ needs and interests; their teaching practices are considered more modern; and as anyone who is motivated can teach, they can master their teaching skills easily. Finally, teachers who do not hold an English teaching degree have the “X” factor. It means they have a better attitude towards the class and students and their type of persona can embody and represent the mission and vision of the institutions.

The private language institution’s stakeholders appear to take advantage of their possibility to (re)interpret and (re)create educational policies (EP) in the processes of LEP implementation (Sutton & Levinson, 2001). As other educational actors, they use their agency to change LEP in the translation into practice (Menken & García, 2010, p. 1). This possibility for (re)interpretation and (re)creation has motivated the emergence of the three

reasons to explain the increase of teachers with no teacher education background in ELT in the metropolitan area of Medellín.

At the national level, the policy of the NPB was designed by the Ministry of Education, but it has been implemented in different ways in various levels such as language institutions, schools and classrooms, i.e in the inner layers of the onion (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). The NPB has envisioned having competitive citizens in the global market by mastering English. However, the policy itself does not express clearly the requirements for the teachers or educational authorities in charge of making this happening. The only document that specifies the requirements for EFL teachers in private language institutions is the NTC 5580. This document establishes that institutions can hire teachers with no university degree or some studies in the disciplinary area as long as they have two years of teaching experience.

The gap in the policy requirements and the laxity in the NTC 5580 have led academic coordinators to the (re)interpretation and (re)creation of the policy as the option to hiring teachers with high command of the language overlooking their lack of academic background and teaching skills. This is reflected on the numbers presented in the Findings section in Figures 3, 5 and 6. Additionally, my study shared some common issues with some other academic work. Through the findings of this study I could confirm that the range of accepted qualifications in the EFL teaching field is very large (Barduhn & Johnson, 2009) and that private education tends to hire more unlicensed teachers (Sharkey & Goldhaber, 2008). Two thirds of the teachers that took the survey hold an alternative certification, the TKT. This goes in agreement with what González (2009) argued about

the preference of alternative certifications over a Bachelor's degree in the private sector. This situation might be happening due to the (re)interpretation and (re)creation of LEP in private language institutions.

These two processes have caused three unintended consequences of discriminatory practices, stereotypes, and deskilling of EFL teachers that hold a university-based ELT degree in private language institutions in the preference of teachers with no teacher education background. Examples of the discriminatory practices emerged from the interviews to coordinators in this study would include two issues: one, ranking as the favorite candidates for teaching those applicants who have been or grown up in an English speaking country; and two, confining teachers with the ELT degree who do not have the experience abroad to teach only basic levels. The first issue is based on the belief that being abroad automatically assigns them better language proficiency and no regional accent and let them possess the cultural competence required to teach the language effectively. There is no careful review of the conditions of being abroad and any previous job could qualify. This belief is reflected on what Academic Coordinator A stated when she said that even if someone had washed dishes in the U.S he/she would be a good English teacher she stated

...the academic team and the human team that qualify this, every time that assess teachers we like people that had been abroad, Colombians that had been abroad doing any type of job, not necessarily had to be a teacher there or have...doing any job, that learned the language, that came back to Colombia and... presented a proficiency test or a certification test... (April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013).

This preference of the time spent abroad is very similar to the favoritism of NS over NNS because of their language superiority (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Selvi, 2010). Confining teachers with ELT degree that have not been abroad to teach only basic levels is a common practice in the majority of the language institutions. Coordinators expressed that their strong grammar knowledge is needed to set the foundations of the language, but their limited language proficiency may affect the development of students' communication skills in advanced levels. It is commonly believed that teachers who hold a degree and are not native speakers have difficulties in the following areas: vocabulary, fluency and pronunciation while they have a better command of grammar (Reves & Medgyes, 1994; Arves & Medgyes, 2000; Madrid & Pérez, 2004). This practice of favoring stays in an English-speaking country was also found in Brazil. Corcoran (2011, p. 11) described how Brazilian teachers who were not native speakers of the language but had experience living abroad were considered superior teachers. He reported that students expressed their willingness to pay more for classes taught by these teachers.

I also found that coordinators held some stereotypes about teachers with a university-based ELT degree as the second unintended consequence of the language policy (re)interpretation and (re)creation. This is reflected in the belief of instructors with no formal teacher education training have more successful teaching methodologies and possess an "X factor" that makes them better teacher candidates. Coordinators expressed two opinions to explain the preference of teachers with no degree over teachers who hold a degree. One, that teachers with no teaching degree do not have much experience teaching or knowledge of teaching methodologies is an advantage; and two, that teachers holding a degree have bad teaching habits. These assumptions imply that teachers with no teaching

degree are preferred because they can be trained in the institutional methodology while it seems more difficult to indoctrinate EFL teachers with a university-based degree.

Three coordinators also expressed that students seem to prefer teachers with no English teaching degree because of their modern teaching practices. Among those teaching practices coordinators mentioned conversations, round tables and telling experiences without a specific teaching purpose. What they mean by “modern practices” are unplanned lessons and classes intended to please the clients’ demands of more relaxed and entertaining lessons. Coordinators described the classes of teachers with an ELT degree as “too structured”, grammar-based and not suitable for students’ needs. All of the above is remarkably comparable to the way native and non-native speakers’ attitude and attitude to teaching according to Arva and Medgyes (2000). The authors say native speakers are more flexible, innovative and casual and besides focus more on communicative aspects, set fewer tests and assign less homework while non-natives use a more guided approach, are more cautious and stricter, they focus on grammar, form and accuracy and assign more tests and homework.

The stereotypes about teachers holding an ELT degree include not having “the X factor”. The characteristics associated to that asset in this study are in agreement with what was stated by Lengeling and Mora Pablo (2012). These authors showed that there is a power of image in language institutions that encourages the idea that for teaching and learning English people “should be young, attractive and energetic” (p. 100). Based on these qualities students will get the feeling that learning the target language is fast and uncomplicated.



The third unintended consequence of the (re)interpretation and (re)creation of the NPB is the deskilling of EFL teachers who hold a university-based ELT degree. Coordinators in the language institutions tend to diminish the value of the pre-service training of EFL teachers. Six coordinators, and even some teachers, respectively claimed that a short training course used as orientation to the institution's regulations and methodologies can replace five years of teacher education at university. They disregard the fact that ELT programs are thoroughly constructed on the basis of a curriculum that involves a communicative component, teaching component, technological component, applied linguistics component and a research component (MEN, 2014). Pineda (2002) establishes that teachers who hold an EFL university-based degree have knowledge base which encompasses basic skills for teaching, disciplinary knowledge, the use of pedagogical skills, classroom context, physical and psychological characteristics of learners, knowledge of the subject matter, personal and practical experiences of teachers, their reflective practices and research abilities. This demonstrates that teachers holding an English teaching degree should have the tools and skills to teach the target language and to reflect on their practices.

Finally, above all this, discriminatory job practices in the EFL teaching field should cease. EFL teachers holding a university-based ELT degree should be assessed according to their individual teachers' knowledge base and skills by stakeholders, not rejected based on stereotypes. It cannot be affirmed that all teachers with a university-based ELT degree have low language proficiency and do not have the teaching skills. Besides, the (re)interpretation of EP should not value more teachers with no degree and affect the way EFL teachers holding a degree are seen based on general negative ideas with no conclusive data.

In the next and final section, I will present the conclusions of this study and I will address the limitations, and the implications of the research.

## Conclusions

In this section, I will present the final considerations on the issue of the increasing number of teachers with no university-based ELT degree in private language institutions in Medellín. I will also acknowledge the study's limitations, implications and make suggestions for further research.

The number of teachers who do not hold a university-based ELT degree in private language institutes seem to be increasing in the profession in Colombia due to the high demand for English instruction under the NPB. In this study I have tried to explain the reasons why this number has augmented. This preference was found to be due to three main attributes in private language institutes: one, they apparently have better language proficiency represented in more idiomatic and cultural knowledge, fluency and native-like accent. In most of the cases these features were ascribed to the teachers with no credentials because most of them had the experience of living abroad. Apparently, having lived abroad represents a major asset in the concept of better language proficiency. Two, they supposedly have more successful teaching practices, it means they can be trained in the institutional methodology, their procedures are more modern and anyone who is motivated can learn how to teach and three, they seem to have the "X" factor, they have a more positive attitude towards the class, and they have the type of persona needed to incarnate the institutional mission, vision and philosophy.

Through this study, it has also been evidenced that in Medellín and the Metropolitan area there is a (re)interpretation and (re)creation of LEP in private language institutions. (Re)interpreting and (re)creating LEP has triggered the three unintended consequences of

stereotypes, deskilling and discriminatory practices. These processes have generated the stereotype that teachers with an EFL teaching degree have a poor language proficiency level and ineffective teaching practices. These stereotypes can be seen in the media and even in official statements from government authorities as shown before. Besides, it was confirmed that the continuum of accepted teaching credentials is very wide (Barduhn & Johnson, 2009). It goes from no certifications at all to a Ph.D. or Bachelor degree in ELT. But, coordinators, apparently, are favoring those with no credentials or who just have some teaching certifications. The stereotypes and the range of accepted credentials have contributed to the deskilling of the EFL teachers, which means the reduction of teachers' competencies to the language proficiency. I have argued that this deskilling has turned into labor discrimination against teachers who hold a university-based ELT degree, and which is mostly open in private language institutions in the metropolitan area of Medellín. Labor discrimination has contributed to and affected their professional status. This means the expertise of teachers with a university-based ELT degree is not valued and they are in disadvantage for hiring processes compared to teachers who do not hold a teaching degree.

### **Limitations**

After having finished the study, I am aware that the findings may be affected by following aspects: data collection instruments and the chosen population. The possible shortcomings of the data instruments were that the teachers' language proficiency level was self-attributed which may have given them the possibility to report a different level from their proficiency tests results. Referring to data collection instruments, I believe that the surveys limitation was the way I administered them. In one of the institutions in which I tried to get the information via e-mail due to the different teachers' schedules, but this

strategy apparently did not work very well. As teachers were more independent about when to answer the surveys 85% (N=17) did not answer the survey and 10% (N=2) answered the questions but did not send the consent form. Therefore, relevant information might have been ignored.

In addition, the findings might have been different if I had had the chance of interviewing and doing surveys in the biggest and most influential language institutes in the city. However, it was not possible due to institutional restrictions. Therefore, the information was obtained from medium-size institutions.

For complementing the findings obtained in this study, I would recommend to use of one more data collection instrument. Besides the surveys, I would also use interviews with the teachers because through the survey teachers mentioned some issues that could have been clarified or explored deeply by questioning them.

As for further research, I would suggest to explore this issue from students' perspectives. It would be very significant to listen to students' voices and opinions regarding their experiences with teachers holding an English teaching degree and the ones who do not have a degree and determine both type of teachers' efficiency. Analyzing and comparing their practices will tell us if those preconceived ideas about teachers who hold a degree really have a foundation. I also think it is essential to get to know more data about teachers holding an English teaching degree in the country such as their demographic profiles, academic and language profiles.

### **Implications**

An implication of the phenomenon might be that language institutions will have more instructors rather than educators. By this, I mean there will only be teachers that

instruct on the language, not teachers that give students a holistic education, which means pursuing the integral development of students in the cognitive, emotional, ethical and social aspects. Another implication is that teachers who hold an ELT degree will not probably be assessed based on their individual language and teaching abilities. On the contrary, they will be judged as a result of a stereotype created by the media and official voices. These negative ideas about teachers who hold a university-based ELT degree will have to be refuted by showing stakeholders and society the real role of EFL teachers in the classroom. A last implication might be that this phenomenon of teachers with no university-based degree in the field will represent a serious setback for the English teaching profession, the professional status and working conditions of teachers who hold a university based ELT degree. The belief that any person with subject matter knowledge only can replace easily teachers with a university-based ELT degree will signify a threat to the profession, as it will be eventually unnecessary to study at university to become an English teacher. In addition, English Language Learners (ELL) should not be exposed to untrained teachers that might not fulfill their needs (Harper & et al., 2008). Placing not properly prepared teachers in charge of Colombian English language education will contribute to the “detriment in the quality of education of the country” (González, 2009). In Colombia, it is necessary to review the way stakeholders are (re)interpreting and (re)creating LEP. The interpretation that anyone can teach a foreign language shows disrespect for the students, the individuals and their profession. A way to start reevaluating the view of the ELT profession is reconsidering the official requirements to teach the language, for example the NTC 5580 which legally allows private language institutions to hire teachers from the wide continuum

presented by Barduhn and Johnson (2009) and reduces job opportunities for EFL teachers holding a university-based degree.

Finally, I also want to raise awareness on the way the English teaching profession is seen in Colombia. Based on attributed features of low language proficiency level and inadequate teaching practices, EFL teachers holding a university-based degree are subject to stereotypes and discriminatory practices. However, I also want to remind stakeholders and society that teachers who hold an English teaching degree spend five years at university. They have a good language proficiency level and the teachers' knowledge base (Freeman, 2009; Pineda, 2002). They also know how to put that knowledge into practice because that is part of their teaching preparation process. Above all of this, teachers who hold a degree are individuals who have expertise in their contexts and can contribute with a critical, reflexive view of education to complement their teaching exercise as transformative intellectuals (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

## References

- Altheide, D. L. (1996). *Qualitative Media Analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Altheide, D., Coyle, M., DeVriese, K., & Schneider, C. (2008). Emergent Qualitative Document Analysis. In S. N Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds). *Handbook of Emergent Methods* (pp. 127-154). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Arva, V. & Medgyes, P. (2000). Native and non-native teachers in the classroom. *System*, 28, 355-372.
- Barduhn, S. & Johnson, J. (2009). Certification and professional qualifications. In J.C. Richards & A. Burns (Eds.).(2009). *Cambridge guide to second language teacher education* (pp. 59-65).New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Betancourt, S. M. (2009). Mi estudiante se olvida de ir encontrando su voz en otro idioma: estudio de la narrativa de una profesora de inglés no-licenciada. Trabajo de grado licenciatura. Retrieved October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from <http://www.javeriana.edu.co/biblos/tesis/comunicacion/tesis258.pdf>



Boumová, V. (2008). Traditional vs. Modern Teaching Methods: Advantages and disadvantages of each. Master's diploma thesis. Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic. Retrieved May 10th, 2014 from [http://is.muni.cz/th/86952/ff\\_m\\_b1/MgrDiplomkaBoumova.pdf](http://is.muni.cz/th/86952/ff_m_b1/MgrDiplomkaBoumova.pdf)

Cambridge English (2014). Why take the TKT. Retrieved May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/teaching-qualifications/tkt/why-take-tkt/>

Caracol Radio (2009). Los profesores de Inglés del país se “rajan” al hablar ese idioma. Retrieved October, 15th, 2012 from: <http://www.caracol.com.co/noticias/actualidad/profesores-de-ingles-del-pais-se-rajan-al-hablar-ese-idioma/20090606/nota/824662.aspx>

Centro Virtual de Noticias (2006). En Colombia no se habla Inglés. Retrieved December 11th, 2012. from: <http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/fo-article-98777.pdf>

Commonwealth Secretariat & UNESCO (2011). Women and the teaching profession: Exploring the feminisation debate. Retrieved March 29th, 2015 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002122/212200e.pdf>

Corcoran, J. (2011). Power relations in brazilian English language teaching? *International journal of language studies*, 5 (2), 1-26.

Council of Europe (2001). Common European framework of reference for languages:

Learning, teaching, assessment. Retrieved May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf)

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). Teachers and Teaching: Testing Policy Hypotheses from a National Commission. *Educational Researcher* 27, (1), 5-15

De Vaus, D. (2001). *Research design in social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

El Colombiano (2014). 60 por ciento de los docentes en el país no habla inglés. Retrieved November 3rd, 2014 from

[http://www.elcolombiano.com/BancoConocimiento/6/60\\_por\\_ciento\\_de\\_los\\_docentes\\_en\\_el\\_pais\\_no\\_hablan\\_ingles/60\\_por\\_ciento\\_de\\_los\\_docentes\\_en\\_el\\_pais\\_no\\_hablan\\_ingles.asp](http://www.elcolombiano.com/BancoConocimiento/6/60_por_ciento_de_los_docentes_en_el_pais_no_hablan_ingles/60_por_ciento_de_los_docentes_en_el_pais_no_hablan_ingles.asp)

El Tiempo (2011). Profesores de Inglés en Colombia también se rajan. Retrieved October

15th, 2012 from: <http://m.eltiempo.com/vida-de-hoy/educacion/profesores-de-ingles-en-colombia-tambien-se-rajan/9123800/1>

- Freeman, D. (2009). The Scope of Second Language Teacher Education. In: Burns, A. & Richards, J.C. (Eds.), *The Cambridge Guide to Second Language Teacher Education* (pp. 11-19). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Gerring, J. (2004). What is case study and what is it good for? *American Political Science Review*, 98 (2), 341-354.
- Glesne, C. (2006). *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction*. New York: Longman.
- González, A. (2009). On Alternative and Additional Certifications in English Language Teaching: The Case of Colombian EFL Teachers' Professional Development. *IKALA, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, 14 (22), 183-209.
- González, A. (2010). English and English teaching in Colombia: Tensions and possibilities in the expanding circle. Chapter 19. In: Kirkpatrick, A. (ed). (2010) *The Routledge Handbook of World Englishes*. (pp. 332 -351) London.
- Guerrero, C. (2010). The portrayal of EFL teachers in official discourse: the perpetuation of disdain. *PROFILE Issues in teachers' professional development*, 12, 33-49.

Gür, B. (2014). Deskillling of Teachers: The Case of Turkey. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 14 (3), 887-904

Harper, C., de Jong, E. & Platt, E. (2008). Marginalizing English as second language teacher expertise: The exclusionary consequence of No Child Left Behind. *Language policy*, (7), 267-284.

Henning, E. (2000). Walking with `barefoot' teachers: an ethnographically fashioned casebook. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16, 3-20.

Hogg, M. & Vaughan, G. (2005). *Social Psychology*. London: Prentice-Hall.

Hornberger, N. & Johnson D. (2007). Slicing the onion ethnographically: Layers and spaces in multilingual language education policy and practice. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41 (3), 509-532.

Hu, G. (2005). English language education in China: Policies, progress, and problems. *Language policy*, (4), 5-24.

ICONTEC (2007). Norma Técnica Colombiana 5580 Programas de formación para el trabajo en el área de idiomas. Requisitos. Retrieved November 20th, 2013 from [http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/articles157089\\_archivo\\_pdf\\_NTC\\_5580.pdf](http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/articles157089_archivo_pdf_NTC_5580.pdf)

Ingersoll, R. (1999). The Problem of Underqualified Teachers in American Secondary Schools. *Educational Researcher*, 28 (2), 26-37.

Ingersoll, R. (2005). The Problem of underqualified teachers: A sociological perspective. *Sociology of Education*, 78 (2), 175-178.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven and London: Yale university press.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching: From method to postmethod*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lengeling, M. & Mora Pablo, I. (2012). A critical discourse analysis of advertisements: Inconsistencies of our EFL profession. In R. Roux, A. Mora & N. Trejo (Eds). *Reserach in English language teaching: Mexican perspectives* (pp. 91-105). Bloomington, USA: Palibrio.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2014). Retrieved February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/persona>

Ministerio de Educación Nacional, MEN (n.d). *Diapositivas programa nacional de bilingüismo. Colombia 2004 – 2019*. Retrieved September 20th, 2013 from [http://www.mineduacion.gov.co/1621/articles-132560\\_recurso\\_pdf\\_programa\\_nacional\\_bilinguismo.pdf](http://www.mineduacion.gov.co/1621/articles-132560_recurso_pdf_programa_nacional_bilinguismo.pdf)

Ministerio de Educación Nacional, MEN (2005). *Altablero N° 37*. Retrieved September 19th, 2012 from <http://www.mineduacion.gov.co/1621/article-97498.html>

Ministerio de Educación Nacional, MEN (2006). *Estándares básicos de competencias en lenguas extranjeras: Inglés. Formar en lenguas extranjeras ¡El reto! Lo que necesitamos saber y saber hacer*. Revolución educativa. Colombia aprende. Bogotá.

Ministerio de Educación Nacional, MEN. (2010). Entrevista con David Nunan, decano de la Escuela de Educación de la Universidad de Anaheim. Retrieved November 10th, 2012 from <http://www.mineduacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/w3-article-256358.html>

Ministerio de Educación Nacional, MEN. (2014). *Documento de socialización programa nacional de Inglés “Colombia very well”*. Retrieved November 8th, 2014 from [http://www.colombiaaprende.edu.co/html/micrositios/1752/articles-343287\\_recurso\\_1.pdf](http://www.colombiaaprende.edu.co/html/micrositios/1752/articles-343287_recurso_1.pdf)

- Ministerio de Educación Nacional, MEN. (2014). *Lineamientos de calidad para las licenciaturas en educación*. Retrieved June 6th, 2015 from [http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/articles-340962\\_recurso\\_1.pdf](http://www.mineducacion.gov.co/cvn/1665/articles-340962_recurso_1.pdf)
- Madrid, D. & Perez, M.L. (2004). Teachers and student preferences of native and nonnative language teachers. *Porta Linguarium* (2), 125-138.
- Menken, k. & García, O. (2010). *Negotiating Language Policies in Schools: Educators as Policymakers*. New York: Routledge.
- Mulcahy, D. (2009). Deskillling. In E. Provenzo, & A. Provenzo (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of the social and cultural foundations of education*. (pp. 246-247). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412963992.n118>
- Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Pineda, C. (2002). Knowledge base for ESL/EFL educators: What does it mean? *PROFILE issues in teachers' professional development* 3, 9-14.
- Rajagopalan, K. (2003). The ambivalent role of English in Brazilian politics. *World Englishes*, 22 (2), 91-10.

- Ramanathan, V. (2005). Rethinking Language Planning and Policy from the Ground Up: Refashioning Institutional Realities and Human Lives. *Current issues in language planning*, 6 (2), 89-101.
- Rea, L.M. & Parker, R.A. (2005). *Designing and conducting survey research: A comprehensive guide* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Reves, T. & Medgyes, P. (1994). The non-native English speaking EFL/ESL teacher's self-image: An international survey. *System*, 22 (3), 353- 367.
- Ricento, T. & Hornberger, N. (1996). Unpeeling the onion: Language planning and policy and the ELT professional. *TESOL Quaterly*, 30 (3), 401-427.
- Richards, J. & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Great Britain: Pearson. Retrieved April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from <http://es.slideshare.net/CarolinaAndreaVL/dictionary-of-language-teaching-and-applied-linguistics>
- Runté, R. (1995). Is teaching a profession? In G. Taylor and R. Runté, (Eds). *Thinking About Teaching: An Introduction*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace.



Sánchez-Jabba, A. (2013). Bilingüismo en Colombia. Documentos de trabajo sobre economía regional. Banco de la República 191. Retrieved October, 15th, 2013 from [http://www.banrep.gov.co/sites/default/files/publicaciones/archivos/dtser\\_191.pdf](http://www.banrep.gov.co/sites/default/files/publicaciones/archivos/dtser_191.pdf)

Scapens, R.W. (1990). Researching management accounting practice: the role of case study research methods. *British Accounting Review*, 22, 259-281.

Scheuren, F. (2004). What is a survey. Retrieved November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from <http://www.amstat.org/sections/srms/pamphlet.pdf>

Seelbach, G. (2013). *Teorías de la personalidad*. Tlanepantla: Red Tercer Milenio S.C. Retrieved April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from [http://www.aliatuniversidades.com.mx/bibliotecasdigitales/pdf/Psicologia/Teorias\\_de\\_la\\_personalidad.pdf](http://www.aliatuniversidades.com.mx/bibliotecasdigitales/pdf/Psicologia/Teorias_de_la_personalidad.pdf)

Selvi, A. F. (2010). All teachers are equal, but some teachers are more equal than others: trend analysis of job advertisements in English language teaching'. *WATESOLNNEST Caucus Annual Review* (1), 156–81.

Sharkey, N. & Goldhaber, D. (2008). Teacher Certification Status and Student Achievement: Lessons from Private Schools. *Economics of Education Review*, 27(5), 504-516.

Sutton, M. & Levinson, B. (2001). *Policy as Practice: Toward a Comparative Sociocultural Analysis of Educational Policy (Sociocultural Studies in Educational Policy Formation and Ap)*. (1st ed.). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Torres-Martínez, S. (2009). Las vicisitudes de la enseñanza de lenguas en Colombia. *Diálogos Latinoamericanos*, (15), Retrieved November 4th, 2014 from <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=16220868004>

Usma, J. (2009). Globalization and Language and Education Reform in Colombia: A Critical Outlook. *IKALA, Revista De Lenguaje Y Cultura*, 14 (22), 19 – 42.

Vélez-Rendón, G. (2003). English in Colombia: A sociolinguistic profile. *World Englishes*, 22 (2), 185-198.

## APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS FOR THE TELEPHONE AND WEB-BASED SELECTION

1. What is the required profile for working in your institution?
2. How many EFL teachers do you have?
3. From those teachers, how many hold a university-based ELT degree and how many do not hold an English teaching degree?

## APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS FOR COORDINATORS

1. What is the profile an EFL teacher should have to work in this institution? What are the requirements for working in the institution?
2. What type of teacher do you prefer, a teacher with a university-based ELT degree or a teacher with no teaching degree? Why?
3. How many teachers with a university-based ELT degree and teachers with no teaching degree do you have in the institution?
4. What type of teaching certifications do you accept?
5. Which type of teacher handles your teaching methodology in a better way? Why?

## APPENDIX C: TEACHERS' SURVEY

### EFL Teachers' profiles

Dear colleagues, Hello, my name is Claudia Yuliana Ramírez. As part of my research study for pursuing my Master's degree in Teaching and Learning of foreign Languages, I am conducting a survey to EFL teachers at the Escuela de Idiomas of the Universidad de Antioquia. You were selected to provide information about your academic training, teaching experience, language proficiency level, among other issues. I would really appreciate it if you could take the time to answer a few short questions about yourself. Please feel free to express your opinions because there are not correct or incorrect responses. The survey form we complete today will not be marked in any way that would identify you. Thanks for your cooperation.

### \*Obligatorio

#### Principio del formulario

Full name \* \_\_\_\_\_

How old are you? \*

- 18-22
- 23-27
- 28-32
- 33-37
- 38-42
- 43-47
- 48-52
- 53-above

What is your type of degree? \* \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered: a bachelor degree in a different field in the previous question, specify which one. \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered an alternative certification in question 3, specify which one (Alternative certifications such as: TKT, CELTA, ICELT, PRAXIS ) \_\_\_\_\_

Why did you decide to become a teacher? If you answered: a bachelor degree in a different field or an alternative teaching certification

- It is a way to get a better income
- There are lack of job opportunities in your field

- It is your passion
- It is a prestigious job
- It is easier to be hired
- Teachers' working time and conditions
- Otros:

How many hours a week do you teach? \*

What age population do you teach?

- Children
- Teenagers
- Young adults
- Middle-aged people
- Elderly people
- Otros:

What facts have mostly contributed to your English language proficiency? \*

- Having finished an English program
- Studying at university
- Being born abroad
- Living abroad
- Teaching English
- Otros:

What is your teaching experience in years? \*

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- Otros:

What is your English proficiency level? \*Common European Framework level

- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2
- C1
- C2
- I do not know

Could you grade your strength in the following aspects? \*Being 5 the most important and 1 the least important

	1	2	3	4	5
Language proficiency					
Pedagogical skills					

What criteria do you think is more important for being an EFL teacher in an private language center? \*Being 5 the most important and 1 the least important

	1	2	3	4	5
pedagogical skills					
Langauge proficiency					
Being an instructor (teaching the language)					
Being an educator (providing students with core values and beliefs)					
having civic and social competencies					

In the profession there are some EFL teachers who do o not have a university-based ELT degree. What is your opinion about that? Be as detailed as possible in your answer. \*