



# Lesson Planning: What Types of Professional Knowledge are Activated by Chilean Pre-Service EFL Teachers?

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the types of professional knowledge, which are activated by pre-service teachers of English, when they design a lesson plan. This study utilized the qualitative research methodology. As research subjects, 60 pre-service EFL teachers from three universities located in Chile were considered. Non-participant observation and a semi-structured interview with stimulated recall were used as techniques to generate data. Content analysis was employed to process the data by means of ATLAS.ti software. The findings suggest that the participants mobilize different types of professional knowledge when they design a lesson plan. These involve content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge, knowledge of learners, and knowledge of educational contexts. It is recommended that EFL pre-service education fosters prospective teachers' reflection on their teaching practices so that they can reshape, in a progressive and permanent way, their professional knowledge connected to successful teaching practices.

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## 1 Introduction

English as a foreign language (EFL) is considered as a compulsory subject in the Chilean educational curriculum from 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> year of formal education (Ministerio de Educación de Chile, 2018). Within this framework, the learning objectives proposed for this subject are based on the development of receptive and productive skills of this language based on a communicative view to teach English. In the national context, it is expected that learners reach a B1 level of this foreign language when they finish secondary education (Ministerio de Educación de Chile, 2016). This corresponds to a low intermediate level based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). However, according to the results of a national examination taken by 7,340 third-year students of secondary school in 2017, only 32% of them achieve a pre-intermediate level (A2) or low intermediate (B1) when listening or reading in English (Agencia de la Calidad de la Educación, 2019).

Pedagogical aspects, such as foreign language teachers' lesson planning processes, may be influencing the students' low results in English within the national context. By means of lesson planning, teachers articulate the components of instructional processes, such as learning objectives, contents, resources, assessment, and classroom interactions (Riddell, 2014). In the ELT context, lesson plans evidence teachers' methodology orientations on how to teach a language, which guide their decisions and classroom actions (Chaves & Hernández, 2012). These can be traditional (focused on form), communicative (focused on fluency) or a combination of both (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Studies based on the work of Shulman (1987) indicate that EFL teachers activate different types of professional knowledge in their lesson planning process, such as content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends (see, for example, Kilic, 2015; Li & Zou, 2017). Accordingly, the results of a study conducted by Safaie Asl, Safaie Asl and Safaie Asl (2014) suggest that EFL teachers' content knowledge (what they know on English language) and pedagogical content knowledge (what they know on how to teach) decrease over time. This investigation also demonstrates that the most experienced professionals of education are not interested in taking part in professional development instances, a fact which may affect their classroom decisions. Moreover, the findings of a longitudinal study carried out by Wong (2011) report that EFL teachers' pedagogical content knowledge improvement is directly connected to their willingness to reflect and modify their teaching practices. In this context, EFL teachers' reflection on their performance help them to transform their traditional view towards lesson planning into a more communicative one.

In this context, different researchers declare the relevance of exploring teachers' professional knowledge (Chen & Goh, 2014; Shawer, 2013; Wu & Yu, 2017). According to them, teachers' professional knowledge will directly influence the way professionals teach listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills in a second/foreign language. For this reason, higher education institutions should focus on how pre-service teachers of English construct knowledge that informs their teaching practices.

Regarding the situation of pre-service teachers of English, a study conducted by Cesur and Ertaş (2018) revealed that participants have weaknesses in terms of pedagogical content knowledge. The results of this research show that pre-service teachers misunderstand the concept of communicative language teaching. In this respect, Atay, Kaslioglu, and Kurt (2010) remark the relevance of creating the conditions, in undergraduate preparation courses, for pre-service teachers to activate, apply, and receive feedback concerning pedagogical content knowledge. From the authors' viewpoint, it is essential for teacher education programs to help pre-service teachers to develop this type of professional knowledge since it influences their professional competence.

Based on the above, the objective of this study is to identify the types of professional knowledge activated by Chilean fifth year pre-service teachers of English when they design lesson plans in their professional practicum. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to pre-service EFL teacher education programs so that they consider connections between professional knowledge and lesson planning practices in the process of prospective teachers' professional competence development.

## 2 Theoretical framework

Considering the perspective of Shulman (1987), there are specific types of knowledge that guide teacher's professional competence. The first one is content knowledge, which refers to knowledge associated with understanding a subject matter (Shulman, 1986, 1987). Within this framework, Richards (2015) indicates it covers what teachers should know about the discipline they teach. Another type of teacher professional knowledge established by Shulman (1987) is general pedagogical knowledge, which allows teachers to create awareness of educational systems and understand students. Individuals learn this type of knowledge by studying psychology, pedagogy, and philosophy during their teacher preparation process (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Shulman (1986, 1987) also proposes pedagogical content knowledge, which is related to didactics or how to teach a subject matter. This does not only involve internalizing the contents of a specific area, but also being able to teach it by means of clear examples, appropriate explanation and demonstrations to make the content understandable for students.

In the context of English language learning, pedagogical content knowledge can be linked to both traditional and constructivist approaches. Regarding traditional approaches, learning is perceived as the association between certain stimuli coming from the environment and individuals' responses or appropriate reactions against them (Ertmer & Newby, 2013). In this respect, foreign language learning includes habit formation. This would be the product of constant practice focused on linguistic contents, such as grammar and vocabulary (Hall, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). On the other hand, constructivist approaches emphasize that learning involves meaning construction processes (Coll, 1990; Soler, 2006). From this view, people learn by relating what they are learning to their prior knowledge, assigning a sense to it. This notion of learning is centered on creation, rather than acquisition (Ertmer & Newby, 2013). Therefore, learners' role is to develop or build personal interpretations based on their own experiences and interactions rather than memorizing information from the outside world. The constructivist vision of learning can be linked to the communicative approach to language learning since, from this perspective, subjects develop their communicative competence when they participate in contexts, where the target language is used (Celce-Murcia, 2014; Hughes, 2013). Language learning, within this framework, is based on individuals' comprehension and production.

With regard to lesson planning, pedagogical content knowledge can also be related to the selection or formulation of learning objectives, contents, activities, materials, and assessment. Learning objectives correspond to goals that stipulate the results that learners must achieve at the end of an academic activity (Phillips & Pulliam Phillips, 2008). In the context of foreign or second language teaching, learning objectives are related to communicative competence development (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Savignon, 2001).

Contents are linked to knowledge that is constructed by students, which is divided into four types: factual, conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal content (Zabala, 2007; Zabala & Arnau, 2014). The former refers to literal information related to data, facts or terms, which tend to be memorized. Conceptual content includes the previous aspects but considering the understanding of them. Procedural content corresponds to the know-how, which is linked to skills, techniques, and strategies to be learned by students. Finally, attitudinal content points to a know-how that focuses on norms and values.

Learning activities, depending on their teaching aim, are classified into introduction activities, main activities, and closure activities (Redfern, 2015; Snow, 2006). Regarding the first type, the teacher encourages students to work in class and the purpose of the class is, explicitly or implicitly, presented. Main activities are specific actions performed by students, which facilitate learning. Finally, closure activities help students to recognize and reflect on what they have learned during the class session. In relation to main activities in EFL classrooms, it is possible to identify pre, while, and post-activities (Harmer, 2012; Nunan, 2015). This sequence is associated with a communicative approach to teaching a foreign language, in which students have possibilities to develop receptive and productive linguistic skills in meaningful scenarios (Richards, 2006).

Materials can be defined as means that facilitate English language teaching and learning (Tomlinson, 2013). These can be visual, auditory and audiovisual. Visual materials are presented graphically to communicate ideas, concepts or principles through images, drawings or text (Sharma & Chandra, 2003). Auditory materials include media that present oral messages and, therefore, individuals have to use the sense of hearing to understand them (Rather, 2004). These are related to oral recordings, radial extracts, oral podcasts, among others, which are processed by foreign language students through their auditory representation system when they learn (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007). Singh, Sharma and Upadhy (2008) state that audiovisual materials complement, simultaneously, visual and auditory media. From this viewpoint, as these provide multiple sensory experiences, they help students to easily activate their prior knowledge regarding the class contents and arise their curiosity and interest.

On the other hand, assessment involves collecting information about students' progress in terms of lessons' learning objectives (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). With regard to this, three types of assessment are suggested depending on the moment they are implemented: diagnostic, formative and summative (Bachman & Palmer, 2010; Katz, 2014). The former is carried out to identify students' prior knowledge when beginning a learning process. Formative assessment is performed during the learning process through class activities and feedback provision. Summative assessment is implemented at the end of the learning process to measure students' level of achievement based on learning objectives.

Additionally, Shulman (1986, 1987) refers to curricular knowledge, which is divided into four different aspects. The first aspect is related to teachers' knowledge concerning different syllabi designed to guide them when teaching contents, at specific levels, and the materials associated with this purpose. The second aspect includes teachers' knowledge in terms of syllabi and materials' effectiveness in different contexts. The third aspect of curricular knowledge is associated with knowledge concerning contents and materials to be used in specific areas, such as mathematics, language, English language, among others. Finally, the fourth aspect consists of teachers' knowledge on how different topics are developed throughout syllabi.

Another type of teacher professional knowledge is related to knowledge of learners and their characteristics (Shulman, 1987). This focuses on teachers' commitment in terms of personal processes experienced by students, which involve physical, psychological, and cognitive characteristics (Barahona, 2015). Regarding this type of knowledge, the participants of this research are prepared to teach in secondary education contexts. Students, in these grades, experience adolescence as stage of human development. This encompasses physical, emotional, and social changes (Wilcock, 2014).

Shulman (1987) also alludes to the knowledge of the educational contexts. This involves from group work, school management, school districts' funding to the communities characteristics. Furthermore, "knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds" (Shulman, 1987, p. 8) is also a component of teacher professional knowledge.

### **3 Research methodology**

The present study uses the qualitative research methodology, whose design consists of a case study of interpretative nature. The purpose of this is examine the professional knowledge activated by pre-service teachers of English when they design an English language lesson.

#### **3.1 Participants**

60 pre-service teachers studying the fifth year of English language teaching programs, offered at three universities in Chile, were the research subjects in this study. The higher education institutions in which they studied were located in three different geographical areas of the country: a university in the south, one in the central zone and the other in the northern zone of Chile. The participants were carrying out their final professional practicum in secondary education schools. Regarding the ages of the subjects, they fluctuated between 22 and 25. Only those pre-service teachers who accepted the invitation to contribute as volunteers were selected as participants in this research. This fact was made explicit in a consent letter they signed.

The three universities have offered the English Language Teaching program for fifty years, approximately. The curriculum of the ELT program offered by the three institutions is organized in ten academic semesters, which are planned to be completed in five years. The curriculum includes, in the three higher education institutions, courses focused on developing pre-service teachers professional and communicative competence; for example, English language courses, education courses, ELT didactics courses, practice courses, among others. Regarding the practice courses (which go from the second to the tenth semester in the ELT program offered by the three institutions), it is important to indicate that the pre-service teachers of English from the three universities must design lesson plans and implement them in secondary schools. Within this framework, they are encouraged to reflect on their lesson planning performance and interventions to improve their teaching practices.

### **3.2 Data generation techniques**

First, non-participant observation was considered. The researchers observed and filmed one English language lesson implemented by each participant in his/her professional practicum context. Subsequently, the 60 recordings were reviewed to complete an observation form. In this, the researchers made notes concerning video segments that could be linked to the pre-service teachers' professional knowledge activated in the lesson planning processes. Afterwards, the researchers used lesson observation forms' data to conduct a semi-structured interview with stimulated recall (see interview script in Appendix). This technique is associated with introspective methods that allow individuals to examine their mental processes and verbalize them (Gass & Mackey, 2017). Therefore, during the interview, the subjects were asked to watch their recorded lessons, paying attention to those segments registered in the observation forms.

Following which, the interview questions were centered on these video excerpts. This was only considered to help them to remember and orally report on the professional knowledge they mobilized when they designed a language lesson plan. The semi-structured interviews took 40 minutes, approximately, for each participant. They were implemented in the research subjects' mother tongue, which was Spanish. This decision was made to help the research subjects to express fluently so that they could provide meaningful data to the study without any hesitation or interruption. Afterwards, the participants' answers were transcribed and translated into English.

### **3.3 Data analysis technique**

After conducting the 60 semi-structured interviews with stimulated recall, which were voice recorded, the researchers transcribed them in digital format. Next, content analysis was used to process the transcripts by using the ATLAS.ti software. This involved coding the participants' responses that were linked to professional knowledge activated in designing their lesson plans. Consequently, the coded answers were categorized based on the types of teacher knowledge suggested by Shulman (1986, 1987), which includes *content knowledge*, *general pedagogical knowledge*, *pedagogical content knowledge*, *curricular knowledge*, *knowledge of learners and their characteristics*, *knowledge of educational contexts*, and *knowledge of educational purposes and values, and their philosophical and historical foundations*. Finally, to illustrate the meaning relationships regarding all subjects' oral discourse, noticed in the data coding and categorizing processes, conceptual networks to illustrate the study findings were elaborated.

4 Result

4.1. Types of professional knowledge activated by Chilean pre-service EFL teachers when they design a lesson plan

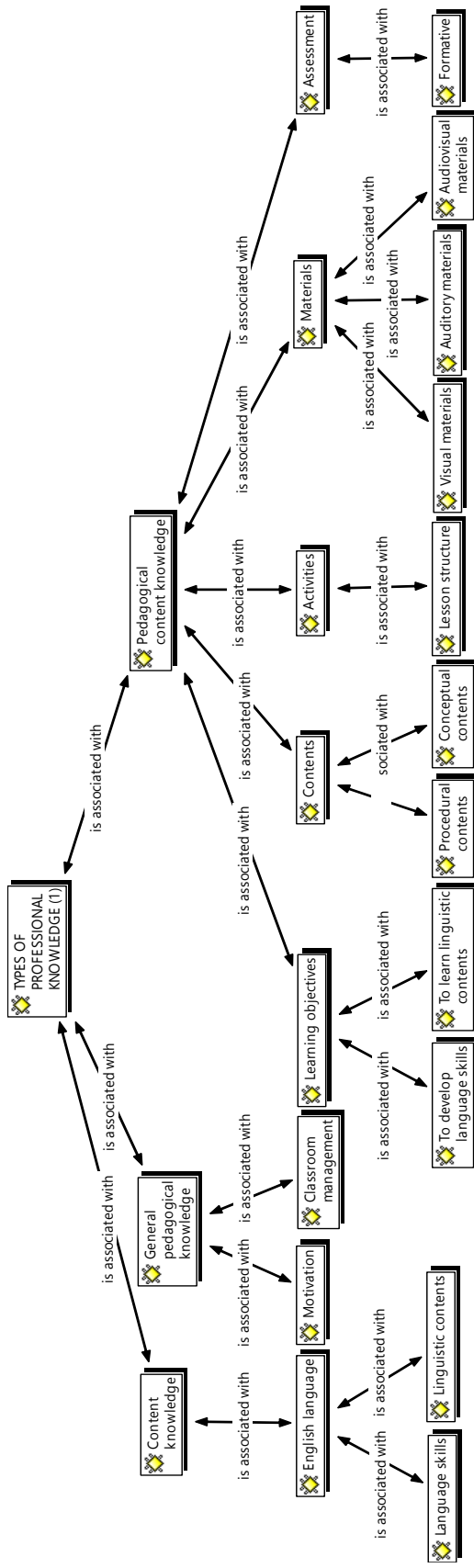


Fig. 1. Conceptual network associated with types of professional knowledge activated by Chilean pre-service EFL knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge)

Regarding the pre-service EFL teachers' lesson planning processes, it is possible to identify, in their oral discourse, that they activate diverse types of professional knowledge. First, they consider *content knowledge*, which is linked to *English language*. This involves, on the one hand, paying attention to *language skills*, such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking. An example of this perspective is evidenced in the following interview segment: 'At the moment of planning my class, I thought about the skills, which should be connected to each other. For this reason, a person must read, listen, write, and speak to learn the English language' (E23 [10:10]). On the other hand, some participants mobilize knowledge about *linguistic contents*, such as grammar and vocabulary, when they design a lesson. Regarding this point, one participant states: 'When I planned, I activated knowledge about the English language, what I learned before in the university. In this case, I had to teach the future tense, so I remembered its use and how it is grammatically structured' (E11 [10:10]).

Additionally, the pre-service teachers enrolled in the ELT programs activate *general pedagogical knowledge* when they design a lesson plan. With regard to this, the research subjects declare they utilize the knowledge they possess in terms of *motivation*. This is done to make decisions focused on captivating and engaging learners in their knowledge construction. Within this context, the participants report they consider attractive topics for the learners in the lessons, which are based on their interests and/or learning needs. In this sense, when an interviewee comments on how he designed the language lesson he implemented, he declares: 'I tried to prepare an appealing class for the students. I considered the topic of soccer because they liked it' (E09 [10:10]).

When the pre-service teachers of English design a language lesson, they activate knowledge based on *classroom management*, which is also associated with *general pedagogical knowledge*. In this respect, most of the participants tend to worry about preventing students' disruptive behaviors since, from their viewpoints, these could affect the successful development of teaching and learning processes. Regarding this point, one of the participants' comments: 'When I planned this lesson, I preferred to consider a traditional seating arrangement, in which students look at the teacher. If they are sat in pairs or groups, they may misbehave. I would not be able to teach effectively' (E54 [49:49]).

On the other hand, the pre-service teachers of English express they activate *pedagogical content knowledge* when they design a lesson plan. The participants indicate this focuses on how to teach the foreign language based on principles associated with didactics. Within this framework, the subjects make decisions related to *learning objectives*. With regard to this, *to develop language skills* encompasses one of the main classifications of goals the interviewees formulate in their lesson plans. An example of this view is observed in the following interview extract: 'Students had to be able to read and write in English. These were the lesson objectives I selected since it is hard for learners to listen and speak in this language. They have not practiced these skills this year' (E12 [20:20]). Likewise, *to learn linguistic contents* is integrated into the participants' lesson plans as another classification of *learning objectives*. This is illustrated in the following interview segment: 'The objectives I wrote were based on identifying the uses of the future tense 'will'. I think it is important that students learn to recognize this content in songs or written texts' (E11 [14:14]).

The participants also employ their *pedagogical content knowledge* when they select their lesson plans' *contents*. Within this context, the pre-service teachers of English declare they make decisions associated with *procedural contents*, linking them with receptive and productive language skills. This vision is illustrated in the following interview segment: 'The contents of my lesson plan were reading and writing. Students had to master them by reading and writing texts related to expressions to give examples' (E01 [16:16]). Similarly, the research subjects activate *pedagogical content knowledge* when they select *conceptual contents*, which are essentially linguistic contents, such as grammar or vocabulary of the English language. These, from the perspective of some participants, must be coherent with the national curriculum. This is evidenced in the next interview extract: 'I decided to teach vocabulary related to social networking and technology. These contents are part of the third unit of the syllabus that I must teach' (E14 [22:22]).

The pre-service teachers of English also mobilize *pedagogical content knowledge* in terms of the *activities* included in their lesson plans. In this sense, most of the participants emphasize decisions associated with the consideration of a *lesson structure*. An example of this viewpoint is expressed as follows by one of the subjects: 'I thought about how my lesson plan was going to be organized. I

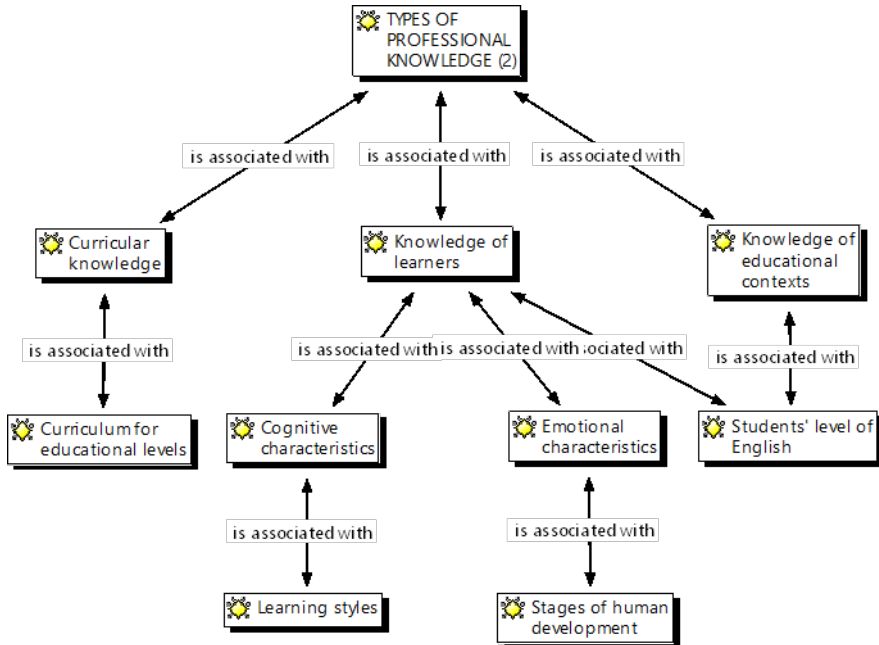
followed a specific lesson plan format, where the necessary components of a class were specified' (E10 [09:09]). Concerning the collected data, the research subjects report they include introduction activities, main activities, and closure activities focused on language teaching. Introduction activities allow learners to get to know the lesson's purposes and motivate them. Main activities integrate tasks based on language skills and linguistic contents. Finally, closure activities are brief and focus on helping students to identify, mainly, what they learned in class. In relation to main activities, which involve designing/selecting appropriate pre-tasks, while and post-tasks to develop the four linguistic skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking), some participants declare this organization was learned in their pre-service teacher education, particularly in those subjects related to foreign language teaching: 'My lesson plan had to include pre, while, and post-activities. I applied what I learned in university courses of ELT didactics' (E03 [06:06]).

The act of mobilizing *pedagogical content knowledge* is also linked to the consideration of *materials*. Within this framework, they include *visual materials* in their language lesson plans. Regarding this, one participant points out the use of a worksheet as a visual aid: 'I included a worksheet in which students carry out the comprehension activities in class. I made this decision to correct the learners' answers and provide feedback to them' (E07 [32:32]). Another participant makes a similar comment but considering the board as a visual resource in his lesson plan: 'I planned to draw a chart on the board which compares the use of some grammar structures. I wanted to help students to be clear about that content' (E02 [47:47]).

Some participants also consider *auditory materials* which consist of oral recordings in English. This is indicated by one interviewee when describing his classroom planning process: 'To develop the listening skill, students had to listen to a text about outdoor activities. Based on the text's information, learners carry out activities of true and false, and multiple-choice items' (E09 [26:26]). Similar to the previous point, some pre-service teachers of English integrate, in their lesson plans, *audio-visual materials*. These mainly include videos, which are presented by means of a multimedia projector, letting pre-service teachers show both graphic and oral information simultaneously during the activities' implementation. With regard to this, one of the participants states that he considered this resource to present the keywords of a text: 'I planned to show a video to the students to teach them key vocabulary by employing both audio and images. This was necessary for them to better understand the text they would read' (E14 [45:45]). Along the same line, another interviewee also refers to the consideration of this resource in a lesson plan: 'I was going to show a video in the activity of motivation, which would be useful for students to remember the topic they had studied the previous class' (E08 [26:26]).

The pre-service teachers of English from the three universities also employ *pedagogical content knowledge* when they establish *assessment* instances in their English language lessons, which are essentially of *formative* nature. The research subjects integrate assessment in their lesson plans to check, correct, and provide feedback to students as it is pointed out in the following interview excerpt: 'To check the learners' performance in a reading activity, they had to write their answers on the board. I wanted to corroborate if these were correct or incorrect. I would explain to them the reason for their mistakes' (E15 [28:28]).





**Fig. 2.** Conceptual network associated with types of professional knowledge activated by Chilean pre-service EFL teachers when they design a lesson (curricular knowledge, knowledge of learners, and knowledge of contexts)

The interviewed pre-service teachers of English also mobilize their *curricular knowledge* when they design a lesson. Within this framework, the participants consider the learning objectives stipulated by the *curriculum for the educational levels* they teach. These objectives are declared in the national syllabi, which are documents established by the Ministry of Education for all subjects in the Chilean context and indicate the competencies, skills, knowledge, and attitudes that learners must develop at each educational level (secondary education is divided into four levels). With regard to this, one pre-service teacher states: ‘One objective of my lesson plan was to give opinions in English. This is one of the communicative functions proposed by the third unit of the curriculum for the second year of secondary education’ (E14 [16:16]).

Additionally, the pre-service teachers of English activate their *knowledge of learners* when they design a lesson plan. In this sense, they consider the *cognitive characteristics* of students, which include the different *learning styles* of them. Based on this, one interviewee expresses: ‘I thought about the learning styles of the students. They do not only learn by writing in their notebooks. They like to perform actions by applying the contents. For this, I designed dynamic activities with more interaction among learners’ (E04 [09:09]). Some participants also consider the students’ *emotional characteristics*. In this context, the decisions made by the subjects are focused on one of the *stages of human development* that high school students experience, which correspond to adolescence. This vision is illustrated in the following interview segment: ‘When teaching adolescents, one should keep in mind that they have to feel comfortable with the class. There should be instances for congratulating them when they do something well, avoiding being a distant teacher’ (E15 [11:11]).

Moreover, the pre-service teachers of English declare to activate *knowledge of educational contexts* when they design a language lesson. Within this framework, they consider the *students’ level of English* in the schools where they perform their professional practicum. This vision is also linked to the *knowledge of learners*. Associated with the previous point, one participant states: ‘I could have designed a lesson 100% spoken in English, but the students may have not understood me. When I get involved in lesson planning, I choose the activities thinking about the realities and contexts where learners come from’ (E12 [09:09]). According to this viewpoint, the students’ levels of proficiency in

English influences the way research subjects consider the foreign language in their lesson planning process.

#### **4.2 Discussion of results**

Regarding the research findings, the participants of this study activate different types of knowledge when they design an English language lesson. In terms of content knowledge, the pre-service teachers employ what they know with respect to language skills, which relate to how the comprehension and production in the English language are developed. In the same way, they mobilize knowledge related to linguistic contents when planning, which is linked to the way grammar and vocabulary work in English. From this perspective, the pre-service teachers' vision seems to focus on language accuracy (correct use of linguistic contents or language form) and language fluency (successful expression of a message by means of productive language skills) (Richards, 2015). Both dimensions are essential in communicative language teaching practices and should be articulated.

Based on general pedagogical knowledge, the participants declare that lesson plans should facilitate learners' motivation in classroom interventions. In this sense, it has been stated that creating the conditions for students to feel committed can help them to learn the English language autonomously (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013). Regarding this point, the results of a study carried out by Carreira (2011) indicate that motivation towards learning English, as a foreign language, decreases in certain educational levels. For this reason, the author suggests that lesson plans need to integrate entertaining and cognitively challenging activities to encourage learners' motivation. Additionally, the pre-service teachers seem to pay attention to their classroom management skills when planning a lesson, thinking about procedures aimed at avoiding students' disruptive behaviors. These representations are based on an interventionist approach to behavior management, in which the education professionals plan and implement certain actions to prevent students' misbehavior, using, for example, threats, rewards, among others (Cerit & Yüksel, 2015; Unal & Unal, 2009). This type of classroom management practices could disrupt students' autonomy when learning. For this reason, it is suggested to consider an interactive approach to behavior management, in which actions can be negotiated between the student and the teacher so that the former can self-regulate his/her behavior (Djigic & Stojiljkovic, 2011).

The participants also design lessons focusing on their pedagogical content knowledge. Within this framework, the research subjects include objectives and contents related to grammar and vocabulary, and the development of language skills. The consideration of both types of objectives/contents could be linked to a communicative view of English language teaching. This is because, to understand and produce language, it is necessary to master linguistic contents (İnceçay & İnceçay, 2009; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

In relation to pedagogical content knowledge, the participants design English language lessons that integrate introduction activities, main activities and closure activities. In relation to main activities, the pre-service teachers seem to be concerned with selecting/designing tasks that have a certain sequence to develop students' learning. These kinds of tasks are connected to communicative language teaching practices since learners can develop receptive and productive skills in the foreign language (Richards, 2006).

In addition, participants mobilize knowledge associated with materials. First, they integrate visual materials into their lesson plans, which they use to present contents and activities. They also include auditory materials, such as: recordings or oral texts. Likewise, they integrate audiovisual materials to present linguistic contents and provide context about topics to cover in class. It is important to mention that the use of technology is limited because it is exclusively employed to exhibit information. Apart from this, it is suggested that technological resources can be used for practice, interaction, and collaboration purposes (Haddad & Draxler, 2002). From this perspective, it is necessary that pre-service teachers consider technology materials to teach English because they can facilitate, in multiple ways, the development of the foreign language receptive and productive skills (Dudeny & Hockly, 2007).

The participants also include assessment instances in their lesson plans. With regard to this, they consider formative assessment to collect information on students' progress. In this context, formative

assessment is essential to identify what students have learned and to help them, by means of feedback, to improve during the knowledge construction process (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010).

The research subjects also activate curricular knowledge when they design an English language lesson. In this sense, they base their pedagogical actions on the syllabi established by the Ministry of Education of Chile. This is relevant since these curricular documents specify: the objectives and contents of the subject matter; the learning organization process; and the didactic approaches that direct teachers' decision making practices to develop English language skills within a communicative framework (Solís, 2012).

The participants also mobilize their knowledge of learners and their characteristics when they design a lesson. In this respect, they declare to consider the different learning styles of students. This is a positive aspect of lesson planning due to the fact that the selection of different types of tasks facilitates meaningful learning (Li & Zou, 2017). Likewise, the research subjects mention they consider learners' emotional characteristics in their lesson planning process. Regarding this perspective, it is suggested that learning processes should be developed considering the student as the main agent, which implies making decisions based on his/her prior knowledge and experiences, as well as interests and emotions (Ibáñez, 2014). In this sense, reinforcing learners' positive emotions would influence their disposition towards language learning (Méndez & Peña, 2013).

Regarding knowledge of educational contexts, the participants make decisions, which are specifically associated with the level of English that students have in the schools where they perform their professional practicum. These decisions would be associated with meaningful learning practices as pre-service teachers design a lesson taking into account students' prior knowledge in English (Soler, 2006).

In summary, from the viewpoint of the types of professional knowledge established by Shulman (1986, 1987), the pre-service teachers of English involved in this study consider most of them in their lesson planning practices. Regarding this, it is important to mention that the participants seem to make decisions in relation to the process of designing an English language lesson based mainly on a communicative view of teaching and learning. This fact relates to their pedagogical content knowledge. This type of knowledge is constructed through the different courses of didactics and practice that the research subjects have to develop during their teacher preparation at the university level. During this process, pre-service teachers of English design lessons (in didactics courses), implement them (in practice courses) and reflect on their teaching performance. Pre-service teachers' reflection is promoted by teacher trainers in practice courses.

In relation to the previous point and according to Johnson and Golombek (2011), knowledge on what to teach and how to teach should not be developed separated from each other. In this sense, the authors suggest that, to help pre-service teachers to develop teacher professional knowledge, they should have possibilities to apply them in concrete practical activities within a context of mediation. For this reason, the connection between the courses of didactics and practice is relevant in pre-service EFL teacher education.

In this context, it is important to indicate that there is evidence that language teaching professionals can transform their traditional pedagogical content knowledge into communicative-based knowledge. This change involves the subjects' willingness to reflect on their pedagogical performance. According to Freeman (2002), teacher education programs must teach reflection skills and the associated discursive abilities to communicate their experiences. Regarding the preparation of future teachers of English, this reflection process could be implemented by articulating courses of didactics and practice, which are focused on fostering pre-service teachers' professional competence.

## 5 Conclusion

The pre-service EFL teachers participating in this study consider different types of knowledge when they design lessons, particularly content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge, knowledge of learners, and knowledge of educational contexts. These are essential in lesson planning processes. It is recommended that pre-service EFL teacher training programs promote teacher professional knowledge restructuration from a traditional

to a communicative view of language teaching and learning. This should be done by encouraging prospective teachers to reflect on their practices so that they can reshape the professional teacher knowledge that informs them.

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## Appendix

### Semi-structured interview script

1. What types of professional knowledge did you activate, in general terms, when you designed this lesson plan? Why?
2. What role (s) did you perform in the observed lesson? Why did you implement that (those) role (s)?
3. What types of professional knowledge did you activate when you stated the learning objectives of the lesson plan? Why?
4. What types of professional knowledge did you activate when you selected the contents of the lesson plan? Why?
5. What types of professional knowledge did you activate when you designed/selected the tasks of the lesson plan? Why?
6. What types of professional knowledge did you activate when you designed/selected the materials of the lesson plan? Why?
7. What types of professional knowledge did you activate when you designed the assessment tasks/instruments of the lesson plan? Why?