



UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades

**PRESERVICE TEACHERS POTENTIAL STRESSORS: A
QUALITATIVE STUDY**

TESIS

**Para obtener el grado de
MAESTRO EN EDUCACIÓN**

Presenta

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Chetumal, Quintana Roo, México, Julio de 2017.



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Trabajo de tesis elaborado para obtener el grado de

Maestro en Educación


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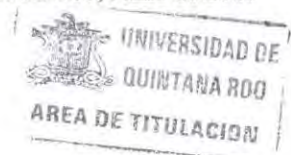
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AGRADECIMIENTOS

Esta investigación fue financiada con recursos del Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT).

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ABSTRACT

For many years, stress has shown to negatively influence the performance of preservice teachers during their classes, and, to make things worse, it has also affected their health. The objective of the present study is to identify the potential stressors that influence the performance of the preservice teachers in the University of Quintana Roo. Eight preservice teachers who were currently enrolled in the major of Lengua Inglesa were invited and were part of the study. A semi structured interview was implemented in two different phases in order to collect the necessary data. The results indicated that preservice teachers who encountered difficulties in their teaching practice because of the affectation of stress, should give the proper give proper importance to develop the necessary competencies to classroom management for the reason that their inability to properly manage their groups, is affecting their performance as teachers.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Stress has proved to be a topic of great importance in the academic area because of its influence on the performance of teachers at all levels. It has been identified as “the worst health problem that teachers have to contend to,” (Sylwester, 1977). Stress can affect the immune system so that the victims are unable to fight off the viruses and agents that attack the body resulting in illnesses, (Gold & Roth, 1993). This is an alarming fact for the reason that teachers would not be able to perform accurately and with their entire potential, if they are sick. Furthermore, Gold and Roth (1993) state, as well, that what is more significant and imperative to center our attention in, is the fact that teachers do not know how to cope with it even though they know about its existence and are aware of its affectation to their performance.

This disturbing argument above has directed close attention of researchers on it. Research on stress has become a major area of international interest (Kyriacou, 2001). It is commonly perceived that stress affects almost all individuals in areas such as work, social, and personal ones. Research has shown that between government employees and social workers, including those who work in private sectors, teachers have surfaced at the start of the new millennium as the most afflicted with rising stress (Russell, 2000). It is reported on Huberman (1993) that most teachers seem to encounter a period of self-doubt, disenchantment and reassessment due to stress, in which their concerns are either resolved with them continuing with their career as a teacher or with them deciding to leave. The author reports that amongst the most common motives cited for leaving teaching were fatigue, nervousness, tension, frustration, difficulties in adapting to pupils, personal fragility and routine.

Based on what was mentioned above, stress can cause teachers to quit teaching and quitting teaching should be the last resource they could use to manage stress. Giving up on teaching does not guarantee the stress levels in a teacher to decrease; possibly, it could work for a short period. Nevertheless, if the teacher decides to go back into practice, it is quite likely that he or she will feel stress again, so quitting teaching is not a solution for the problem but simply an element that delays the influence of stress. Moreover, stress can cause teachers to develop not very good practices such as taking home a lot of tasks, speeding up the process of teaching the

curriculum for the reason that they believe all of it should be covered completely and, in that way, the topics of the course are not studied properly (Rodriguez, Oramas & Rodriguez, 2007).

The practices mentioned above as a result of stress, could negatively influence the teaching-learning process. In the worst of the cases, stress can provoke teachers to react slightly violently when things do not go as expected during class which can have a negative effect in an educational environment. In a more specific way, a decrease in the quality of teaching is likely to emerge as a result of the exposure to stressful situations and uncertainty in the teacher's performance; those some are consequences in the educational environment caused by stress.

Due to the importance of the topic, multiple researchers have focused on teacher stress. An important research that has sought to examine teacher-related stress, self-efficacy, and occupational commitment in preservice teachers in four different countries, is the one carried out by Klassen, Wilson, Siu, Hannok, Wong, Wongsri, Sonthisap, Pibulchol, Buranachaitavee & Jansem, (2012). The results of this study suggests that self-efficacy beliefs lower the impact of stress in occupational commitment, in other words, teachers' self-efficacy changes the way in which work stress influences the commitment to continue teaching. Moreover, Verešová & Malá (2012), focus on finding if there was a relation among stress with coping strategies and with self-efficacy in experienced teachers in Brazil.

Similarly to the first research study mentioned, the results proved that the stronger is teacher's sense of self-efficacy, the weaker is his/her reaction to stressors in physical, emotional, cognitive and social form. Also, Klassen & Chiu (2010) developed a study which aim was to discover the relation among teachers' years of experience, teachers' characteristics (gender and teaching level), and self-efficacy. This had the objective of examining the relationships among teachers' years of experience, teacher characteristics (gender and teaching level), three domains of self-efficacy (instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement), two types of job stress (workload and classroom stress), and job satisfaction. Close to the results presented in the research studies above, this showed similar findings: Teachers with greater classroom management self-efficacy and greater instructional strategies, had greater job satisfaction. Based on what was mentioned before, some researchers have determined to study stress with a very interesting variable: self-efficacy. Self-efficacy has proved to be quite positive in decreasing the levels of stress in teachers or at least helpful regarding the influence of it.

The previously mentioned studies provide important information regarding the influence of stress in aspects such as self-efficacy and coping strategies in preservice teachers and in teachers with experience. Those studies have been carried out in different contexts such as Canada, England, Hong Kong, Thailand, Mexico and Brazil. After revising some literature of stress, it has been noted that there is research about stress with preservice teachers; however, those studies rather focus on other aspects or variables (such as the ones mentioned above) than related to teaching practice, in a more explicit way, researchers whose aim is to determine the influence of stress have centered their research interests in finding out the relation of stress with variables such as self-efficacy, commitment, years of experience, among other. In contrast, there is a minimal interest paid to the sources or stressors influencing the levels of stress in the development of the teaching practice of preservice teachers.

Research has focused on studying the stressors in in-service teachers but there is no research focused on determining the potential stressors in preservice teachers and its influence on their teaching practice. For that reason, the present study has as objective to identify the potential stressors in preservice teachers which influence the development of their teaching practice. The questions that this research will aim to clarify are the following:

1. What are the potential causes or stressors that influence the development of the teaching practice of preservice teachers?
2. How do preservice teachers deal with the potential stressors?
3. What effects does stress have on the teaching practice of preservice teachers?

The present study will provide valuable information carefully searched for and analyzed about the potential causes of stress or stressors in English preservice teachers in the University of Quintana Roo campus Chetumal in order for future researchers to use it beneficially for their studies. Furthermore, this research study has also the aim of detecting the strategies for coping with the influence of stress and the possible effects of stress in the teaching practice of the participants

CHAPTER 2. REVISION OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this section is to provide the current trends of how teacher stress has been studied according to methodological design, context, participants or subjects of study, and some other characteristics that make unique each research study. Also, this section is segmented, and organized in two divisions: The first one includes research about teacher stress in participants with experience in the educational field, that is, participants who have been teaching for at least a year. The next division comprises research about participants who do not have experience in the educational field, in other words, novice teachers or pre-service teachers who have only taught in their teaching practices without having the real contextualized involvement. Two different perspectives regarding the influence of teacher stress will be presented according to the experience of the participants in the educational field.

2.1 Literature of teacher stress by experienced participants

Do Valle, Malvezzi, & Reimã (2013) developed a study which has the purpose of investigating the relationship between the development of symptoms of stress and the quality of teachers' sleep. The population here under scrutiny was the public schools teachers of Poços de Caldas in Brazil. Its aim was searching the rates of stress and the latter's correlation with Brazilian occupational standards. That aim was accomplished in a population of 165 teachers, through the means of ISS-LIPP, PSQI-BR and QFEP; a questionnaire was used to collect the necessary information for the study.

The results revealed that 59% of the teachers are stressed, being the majority (39%) and a large amount of them under the prevalence of psychological stress which, as stated in the research as a state of hardship and adversity.

Moreover, the authors disclosed that 46.7% of the teachers sleep badly, pointing out the undeniable association between sleep and both physical and psychological stress. Women, as the

prevailing subgroup of the studied population (88.5%), presented more physical stress than men. Supporting the previously argument, it was mentioned that women tend to be more emotional, that is, they are likely to be more in touch with their emotions which have an influence over their performance, ideals and decisions. The author suggests to do further research, helped or assisted by the findings of this study, to decrease the levels of sleep deprivation caused by stress.

Another study related to the study of teacher stress was Verešová & Malá (2012). The purpose of this was to contribute to the clarification of relations between teacher's stress and teacher's personal features related to coping with load – proactive coping and self- efficacy of teachers. The subjects of the study were 291 teachers from the Slovak Republic: 146 teachers acted on the second level of primary education,145 on high schools. From the total number, 79% were females (N=230) and 21% were males (N=61). The average age of research sample was 41,66 years; the age scope was 24 to 68 years old. The average length of teaching practice was 16.8 years (minimum 1 year and maximum 41 years of teaching practice). In order to collect data, researchers used a questionnaire for identification of stress levels and burnout syndrome from Henning and Keller (1996). The questionnaire is dedicated to defining the level of stress influence on central psycho-physical functions and how strong is the general inclination to stress and burnout syndrome.

The results indicated the following: the author found out a considerable negative correlation between proactive coping and experienced stress, in other words, the more the teacher is proactive, the significantly lower is the experienced stress. Also, another significant negative correlation was encountered between proactive coping and individual areas of reaction to stress: cognitive, emotional, physical, and social. That is to say, proactive coping influences positively the areas mentioned before.

Regarding self-efficacy, it was discovered that the stronger is the teacher's sense of self-efficacy, the more he/she believes he/she can positively influence his/her students and also accepts the responsibility of motivation of students and makes necessary progress for this kind of behavior. Finally, the authors also found that, the more the teachers are internally physically motivated to pass obstacles, perceive problems as challenges, and try to analyze the risks and demands in connections with aims to which they are systematically heading, the weaker is their reaction to stressors, in physical, emotional, cognitive and social form, and social characteristics (decrease of education commitment, limitation of contact with colleges and friends, problems in

family and private life, neglecting own hobbies and past times) are not significantly related to stress effect.

Peña (2010) focused her research study on identifying the stress levels on professors of the English Department in the University of Quintana Roo considering their age, gender, and marital status and identifying the mechanisms they use to cope with stress at work. The subjects of this were 21 full-time educators whom 17 were women and 4 were men. Two questionnaires were used as instruments to collect data: an adapted version of Gazella's Students' Life inventory and the other one was the Inventory of Stress Coping Strategies (Davis, Eshelman & Mckay, 2008). The entire Language and Education Department of the University of Quintana Roo participated in this study.

The results showed that professors do not experience severe reactions when dealing with stress and they are regularly aware and concerned about the tactics they use when coping with stress; however, women reported higher scores of frustration in pressures and changes, in contrast to men. Likewise, educators have a similar appraisal of the stressors they experience and agree on having little stress at work. A positive finding of the study was that teachers in this department manage stress. They tend to use constructive techniques against stressful moments. Regarding the most common constructive techniques participants implement are the following: Seeking out friends for conversation and support, taking time to relax, breath, and unwind, joking with friends and using humor to take the edge off, getting involved in a hobby or interest that helps unwind and enjoy oneself, and trying to focus on the things one can control and accept the things that cannot be controlled.

Klassen & Chiu (2010) developed a research which objective was to examine the relationships among teachers' years of experience, teacher characteristics (gender and teaching level), three domains of self-efficacy (instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement), two types of job stress (workload and classroom stress), and job satisfaction. The sample was 1430 practicing teachers working in elementary schools in Western Canada. The tool used to gather data for the study, was a brief questionnaire.

The results showed that teachers' years of experience showed nonlinear relationships with all three self-efficacy factors, in other words, years of experience do not influence the level of self-efficacy subjects of the study could develop. Female teachers had greater workload stress, greater classroom stress from student behaviors, and lower classroom management self-efficacy.

Teachers with greater workload stress had greater classroom management self-efficacy, whereas teachers with greater class room stress had lower self-efficacy and lower job satisfaction.

Rodriguez, Oramas, and Rodriguez (2007) developed a study which main focus was to identify the main sources of stress among teachers of basic education in Guanajuato, Mexico. 1,150 teachers of different educational levels were the subjects of study: 52% were primary teachers, 35% were secondary, technical, and teleteaching institutions teachers, and 13% belonged to preschool. The tool implemented to collect data was an adapted version of the scale of Travers & Cooper (1997).

The results indicated that there are many sources of stress among teachers which are deeply influenced by socioeconomic characteristics, that is, stress could be due to an effect of the poor job formation of the professors. Also, one of the main stressors among these teachers is the lack of time to adjust to their work that is, not having enough time to rest, to plan the class, to evaluate the students nor to make the class material. The authors expressed in the study that the stressors are not the only ones but they are the most common and outstanding; they are the ones that show a more elevated score in the frame of possible sources of pressure that form part of institutional environments that generate stress.

Ravichandran & Rajendran (2007) presented a study which main focus was not determining mutual relations of experienced teacher's stress with other variables but to investigate the various sources of stress experienced by higher secondary teachers. A sample of 200 higher secondary teachers was randomly selected in the city of Chennai in India and the Teacher's Stress Inventory developed by Rajendran (1998), was used in the study to collect data:

The final form of the Inventory consists of 65-items, describing various sources of stress perceived by higher secondary teachers; it is a 5-point likert scale varying from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". The results showed that female teachers reported more stress as compared to their male counterpart, in other words, women differ significantly in their perception to the sources of stress. Based on the elements addressed in the instrument to collect data, time management is reported to produce more stress in the subjects of study and, as an overall result-recommendation, the author mentions that programs to manage stress should be implemented to assist these teachers.

Lewis (1999) designed a research study and hypothesized that discipline is a stressor with great impact on teachers. The purpose of the study was to examine teachers' estimations of

the stress that arises when they are unable to discipline students as they would ideally prefer. A total of 294 teachers participated in the study. The mean age of respondents was 39.5 years, and 60% were women. These teachers represented 78% of a randomly chosen sample, representing half of all teachers in 377 in 15 metropolitan schools in Melbourne, Australia and the tool to collect data was a survey was to assess teachers' level of concern about discipline.

The results indicated that teachers who report more stress are those most interested in empowering their students in the decision making process; it was found that teachers want their students to become responsible and develop self-discipline behaviors and, taking into consideration that this does not happen, these subjects report high levels of stress. The most concerned teachers also express a greater tendency to get sick as a result of the stress. Finally, the most important of these findings, according to the authors, is that teachers are experiencing the most discipline related stress, potentially exacerbate matters by not letting others know about it, in other words, teachers decide not to share their unpleasant experiences regarding discipline issues which ends up in aggravating the situation.

Dinham (1993) focused his attention on experienced teachers who have resigned and their perceptions of stress. The purpose of his study was to explore the issue of teacher stress through the examination of the experiences of 22 teachers and educational administrators, from the New South Wales Department of School Education. Interviews were employed to collect the necessary data. The results showed that stress was not found to be the only cause of teacher resignation. Stress was found to be part of the day to day lives of teachers and a significant, contributing factor to resignation. Among the causes that provoke teacher resignation in the participants are the following: Role conflict or ambiguity, work overload, inadequate compensation, interpersonal conflict, and increased administrative responsibilities.

The study confirmed the existence of all the above sources of stress, although inadequate compensation was not present to the degree of the other factors. On the other hand, role conflict or ambiguity was seen to be a growing problem for those with administrative responsibilities in schools, with those in this situation describing how they had attempted to balance teaching and the welfare of students with educational administration and management, while educational leadership within the school suffered. In addition, the study found that pupils' failure to behave and work was a significant source of stress for less experienced teachers. To conclude, all those interviewed in the study showed some evidence of mental stress attributable, at least in part, to

their teaching experiences, in other words, subjects expressed sensing stress in their teaching practice when dealing with administrative chores and, also, with parents and directives.

2.2 Literature analysis of teacher stress by experienced participants

A quite positive aspect of teacher stress in research regarding experienced participants, is that it has been studied in a wide variety of contexts. In other words, many researchers all around the world have decided to focus or center their research interest and attention in studying teacher stress: In America (Do Valle, Malvezzi, & Reimã, 2013), (Peña 2010), (Klassen& Chiu 2010); In Asia (Ravichandran & Rajendran, 2007); In Oceania (Lewis, 1999); and in Europe (Dinham,1993). This last statement could benefit future studies all around the world by direct them in a good path. Therefore, researchers could have solid foundations in order for them to take into consideration; if a decision to do research on teacher stress emerges.

An interesting fact is that some authors agreed that women tend to be more influenced by stress than men: Do Valle, Malvezzi, & Reimã (2013) stated that women presented more physical stress than men due to the fact that female tend to be more emotional than men, which has an influence over their performance, ideals and decisions; similarly, Ravichandran & Rajendran (2007) reported that female teachers described feeling more stress as compared to their male counterpart. In addition, Peña (2010) mentioned in her findings that women reported higher scores of frustration in pressures and changes, in contrast to men; likewise, Klassen& Chiu (2010) said that female teachers had greater workload stress, greater classroom stress from student behaviors, and lower classroom management self-efficacy. It can be inferred, after revising these last studies, that female teachers, in contrast to men, go through and experience more negative feelings besides stress, such as pressure and frustration. Moreover, based on Klassen & Chiu (2010), female teachers could also experience stress as a result of great workload, students' misbehavior, and low classroom management.

One of the most striking features of these studies was the potential stressors expressed to be experienced by the subjects or participants. Time management was mentioned to be one of the most prevalent and detrimental elements causing stress: Rodriguez, Oramas & Rodriguez (2007)

stated that one of the main stressors among these teachers is the lack of time to adjust to their work, that is, not having enough time to rest, to plan the class, to evaluate the students nor to make the class material. By the same token, Ravichandran & Rajendran (2007) mentioned that time management is reported to produce more stress in the subjects of study. Thus, not being able to administer one's time, results in a latent stressor in experienced participants.

Other stressors reported by these participants are the following: Do Valle, Malvezzi, & Reimã's (2013) findings are that 46.7% of the teachers sleep badly, pointing out the undeniable association between sleep and both physical and psychological stress. That is to say, that almost the half of their subjects presented features of bad sleep which was very likely to result in teacher stress. Apart from this, Rodriguez, Oramas & Rodriguez (2007) mentioned that an effect of the poor job formation of the professors resulted in stress among teachers causing a sense of frustration which negatively influenced their performance at their teaching practice; also, socioeconomic characteristics (social status and economic sustainability) could possibly influence stress.

Finally, a very interesting stressor was discipline. Lewis (1999) stated that teachers experiencing the most discipline related stress potentially exacerbate matters by not letting others know about it. In other words, teachers decide to keep their discipline misbehavior issues with their classmates by themselves, which provokes teacher stress.

To sum up these three last studies, it can be mentioned that the most striking stressors that influence the performance of teachers with experience are the following: Time management, poor job formation, socioeconomic characteristics, and discipline management in the classroom.

In contrast, some coping strategies against teacher stress were documented in these studies. One important aspect noticed among the coping strategies implemented by these subjects or participants, is that two authors agreed that some of them are cognitive: Peña (2010) presented as coping strategies the abilities to focus on the things one can control and accept that things that one cannot control. In the same way, Verešová & Malá (2012) mentioned that the stronger is the teacher's sense of self-efficacy, the more he/she believes he/she can positively influence his/her students and accepts also the responsibility of motivation of students and makes necessary progress for this kind of behavior. In addition, Verešová & Malá (2012) stated that a very helpful strategy in order to cope with stress is sharing teaching experiences with colleagues in order to learn how to reduce stress or just to unwind. These coping strategies are cognitively

generated. In addition, these authors also mentioned two more cognitive coping strategies: Motivation to pass obstacles and the ability to analyze risks.

Apart from this, other coping strategies are emphasized in these studies: Social cognitive strategies. Peña's (2010) findings regarding social coping strategies include seeking out friends for conversation and support, taking time to relax, breath, and unwind, joking with friends and using humor to take the edge off, getting involved in a hobby or interest that help unwind and enjoying oneself. After revising and carefully analyzing this part of the literature (participants or subjects with experience in the educational field) it can be concluded that teachers implement cognitive and social coping strategies to decrease the levels of stress experienced.

To conclude this section, it has to be highlighted that some authors decided to include different variables, apart from teacher stress, in their research; this was interesting because these elements could potentially lessen the levels of stress in teachers. Knight, Balatti, Haase & Henderson (2010) results are the following: the subjects who engaged with the topic of teacher resilience were able to identify stressors and also able to share resilient responses such as listening to their colleagues without taking into consideration negative comments. Moreover, Verešová & Malá (2012) came up with the next statement: The stronger is the teacher's sense of self-efficacy, the more he/she believes he/she can positively influence his/her students and also accept the responsibility of motivation of students and makes necessary progress for this kind of behavior. Similarly, Klassen & Chiu (2010) mentioned that teachers with greater workload stress had greater classroom management self-efficacy, in other words, there is a positive relation between self-efficacy and workload stress. In contrast, it must be mentioned that self-efficacy can sometimes be affected by work-load stress derived from managing a large group of students. That is to say, stress is caused by having to teach large amount of students and all the responsibilities dragged by it, such as evaluating, developing material and planning the class for the students. It can be said now that resilience and self-efficacy may help decrease the levels of teacher stress by providing them with the necessary coping strategies to avoid or decrease the levels of stress.

2.3 Literature of teacher stress by non-experienced participants

Kizilaslan's (2014) study was aiming to identify if study stress varies according to study years and gender; the participants of the study were 138 preservice English language teachers in Izmir, Turkey. In order to obtain the expected data, the Higher Education Stress Inventory (HESI), developed by Dahlin, Joneborg & Runeson (2005) and consisting of 33 items to be rated on a four-point Likert scale, was used. Results indicated that year 1 students have the highest mean stress than their peers in the rest of the years. The significant levels of stress experienced by year 1 students in the current study, might be a feature of the process of undergoing the transition from home to the university setting. It is possible that many of the students have moved from home for the first time, and that they are now expected to maintain a high level of academic achievement and adjust to a new social environment, (Kizilaslan's, 2014). Furthermore, these freshmen have probably been struggling with the problems of moving from childhood to adulthood, which is a critical stage of human development marked by uncertainty and stress, (Kizilaslan's, 2014). Another important finding in this study is that males gave higher ratings to 'Gender and ethnic background' than females. There were no significant gender differences on any item, except this variable. Possibly, 1st-year males studying in a different city to that of their birth experience different stressors, and sometimes more pronounced stress in the absence of their usual support framework, such as family, relatives and friends. This finding indicates that male students are not satisfied with the present socio-cultural climate, which might adversely affect their studies.

On the other hand, the variables that significantly influence students' stress scores were found to be 'lack of peer support', 'gender and ethnic background', 'worry about the future profession', 'lack of time for own interests', 'financial concerns' and 'unclear assignments'. This finding supports the previous finding that students, especially 1st year students, feel rather lonely at the beginning of their education period. It can be seen that those stressors related to personal and interpersonal worries are rated more highly than those that relate to studying. The top two stressors 'lack of peer support' and 'gender and ethnic background' relate to personal and interpersonal issues, either directly or indirectly.

Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) research was focused on exploring the experiences and sources of stress among practicing student teachers in the Eastern region of

Ethiopia. 112 participants were selected from the total population of 197 using stratified random sampling technique. Regarding demographic characteristics of participants, 88 (78.6%) were males, the rest 21.4%(24) were females, 71 (63.4%) from natural science stream, 41 (36.6%) from social science stream, 38 (33.9%) from West Harerghe cluster, 46 (41.1%) from East Harerghe cluster, and 28 (25%) from Somali cluster. The mean age of the respondents was 27.4 years. Questionnaire and focus group discussions were the main data collection tools employed in the study. The perceived stress scale (PSS), a 14-item scale designed by Cohen (1983) was employed. The results indicated that 96% of female and 90% of male participants scored a stress level of 29 and above (out of the possible 56) indicating that they were fairly often, or very often, stressed. According to the author, the fact that the majority of the participants scored stress level above the average score signifies that teaching is one of the professions that are highly stressful. The magnitude of responsibilities and demands like daily lesson planning, assessing students, practicum related activities, curriculum meetings and managing student behavior make teachers feel overwhelmed and, as a consequence, stressed out. Moreover, student misbehavior, inability to contact with significant others like families and relatives, and uncomfortable working environments were identified in that order as the greater stressors. Though female participants showed a higher level of stress than their male counterparts, the difference was not significant. The reason for this last statement could be that male and female participants share very similar features and characteristics, (Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's, 2014).

Vesely, Saklofske, & Nordstokke (2014) developed a study which aim was to evaluate the influence of emotional intelligence (EI) on preservice teachers applying an EI treatment and if it could decrease the level of stress among them. Six different variables were to be analyzed and tested to check if EI could positively influence them: emotional intelligence, stress, anxiety, teaching efficacy, satisfaction with life, and resiliency. The participants were forty-nine undergraduate preservice teachers of 26.5 years old who were recruited from two Canadian universities. Participants from one university received a treatment of EM (N=23) and those from the other university served as the control group (N=26). Different tools were implemented to collect data:

The first one was a demographic questionnaire which provided information about gender, sex, age, previous education, ethnicity, grades, and extracurricular activities. Then, several tools as questionnaires and scales were implemented to rate the six different variables. The tool to

collect data for stress was the ten-item perceived scale (PSS; Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983), which asked the frequency of specific stress related feelings and thoughts during the past month. Results regarding the effect of the EI program on the sample group, who received the treatment, did not show a considerable improvement concerning their feelings of stress: There was not an enhancement in the management of the stress in the group who received the treatment of EI.

The EI program could not improve stress, in other words, there was no progress in the decrease of the levels of stress; however, there was a noticeable improvement in the awareness of emotions in one self and others, reasoning of emotions, self-management and self-control of emotions, and management of emotions in others. This change was clearly identified because of the comparison established among the ones in the group who received the EI program and the ones who did not. Importantly, there was not either an improvement in the other variables (anxiety, teacher efficacy, satisfaction with life and resiliency).

Klassen, Wilson, Siu, Hannok, Wong, Wongsri, Sonthisap, Pibulchol, Buranachaitavee & Janssem (2012) developed a study which purpose was to examine the relation among stress, self-efficacy, and occupational commitment in two culturally Western countries and two culturally Eastern countries: England, Canada, Hong Kong, and Thailand. The subjects of the study were 1,187 preservice teachers from the countries mentioned above. Stress was measured with items from the teacher stress inventory (Boyle et al', 1995). Therefore, the subjects completed a 9-point scale (1 no stress to 9 extreme stress) with three items representing stress from student behavior (e.g., maintaining class discipline) and four items representing workload stress (e.g., too much work to do).

Results indicated that workload stress was significantly and negatively correlated with commitment in all four contexts, that is, teacher stress increases due to the amount of commitment (work and activities) assigned to the teachers. Regarding self-efficacy, its correlation with stress was negative and weak in Thailand and Canada but it was positive and weak in England and Hong Kong. It is understood that, in the first two countries, self-efficacy does not influence positively the effect of stress, in other words, self-efficacy does not reduce the negative influence of stress. On the contrary, in the last two mentioned countries, there is a positive influence of self-efficacy on stress even though it is weak; in other words, self-efficacy beliefs lower the adverse impact of stress.

A study by Klassen & Chiu (2011) wanted to explore the level of influence of teacher stress, self-efficacy, and teaching context on the occupational commitment and quitting of preservice and practicing teachers. The subjects were 434 cooperating teachers and 379 preservice teachers whose nationality varied from European, Canadian, and Asian. Different instruments were used to obtain information about the variables; job stress was measured with an instrument: the *Teacher Stress Inventory* from Boyle et al's (1995). The results showed that preservice teachers displayed higher levels of commitment and less overall stress than practicing teachers.

The variables studied in this research, stress, self-efficacy and teaching context, strongly influence the career intentions of the practicing teachers and, importantly, for people who have the desire of becoming a teacher (Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Another important result of this study was that there was a significant difference regarding confidence controlling the classroom behavior among the practicing or cooperating teachers and the preservice teachers; however, there was no difference among them regarding their self-efficacy beliefs in instructional practices or student engagement.

Knight, Balatti, Haase & Henderson (2010) focused their research on studying the perceptions and ways to mitigate stress levels by 135 preservice teachers in the USA. In addition, the subjects took a class which presented ways to deal with stress by knowing the concept of resilience, in others words, preservice teachers were part of an experimental group; the objective of this was that they could know how to deal with the problem by knowing the definition and how to implement resilience. After the course, a survey was implemented to collect the data needed; the survey contained two dimensions (awareness of potential stressors that impact on the work of preservice teachers in relation to coursework and professional experience and the awareness of ways preservice teachers can increase their resiliency in managing these stressors) presented in items. Unfortunately, there is no mention where the survey was obtained from or if it was created.

The findings were the following: The most prevalent stressor was behavior management, that is, preservice teachers are mainly stressed during their teaching practices by discipline and behavior matters. Preservice teachers also expressed to be stressed out regarding coping with the demands of the educational institution, in other words, they are not confident about their

performance and abilities, and have serious doubts about being able to carry out successfully with their tasks.

To conclude with the results of this study, it was found that the subjects who engaged with the topic of teacher resilience were able to identify stressors and also able to share resilient responses: There was evidence that preservice teachers were empowered by experienced mentors, in other words, subjects expressed that sharing their experiences (stressors) with their mentors and listening to their advice was helpful and useful (resilient response). Furthermore, subjects stated feeling encouraged, supported and able to learn from negative experiences when relationships with their School Based Teacher Educator (SBTE) were robust. What was mentioned before was also a resilient response.

Çelik (2008) developed a study which main focus was to determine the possible causes of stress in one-hundred and thirty three Turkish preservice EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers. In addition, the aim was also to identify and present the teaching practice experiences that generate concerns in student teachers, and their level of intensity (i.e. from the most anxiety-generating to the least), help teacher educators promote a much improved understanding of the sources of trainees' stresses, and provide support for trainees to manage their practicum-based stress successfully, become more self-confident, and consequently, benefit from the teaching practice experiences as much as possible. A forty-item questionnaire was implemented to obtain the necessary data for the study: the instrument or tool was a questionnaire adapted for the version of D'Rosario and Wong (1998).

The preservice teachers were asked to indicate the levels of stress they have experienced from 1 to 4, one being none stress and four being a high level of stress. The data obtained through the pre-service teachers' answers in the questionnaire were analyzed through SPSS for Windows 11.0; the instrument contained six different categories: personal concerns, communication-center concerns, evaluation – based concerns, external concerns, concerns for lesson preparation, and teaching related stress. The results depict that a strong source of concern and stress that could affect the practicum has to do with communication problems among the preservice teachers and the supervisor, learners, and school administration.

The highest source of stress appears to stem from the possible communication breakdown with the supervisor, followed by the difficulty to establish a friendly communication with the learners. Additionally, evaluation was also found as one of the highest concerns of the preservice

teachers, resulting in stress. The overall result of these studies is that the teaching practice brings stress-producing experiences to pre-service teachers. However, given the responses of the pre-service EFL teachers in this study, it can be deduced that the teaching-practice-related experiences are not highly stressful. Finally, the author concludes that the supervisor and/or tutor should establish a close and supportive relationship with the preservice teachers because his/her experience could help to handle and control stress.

Brackenreed & Barnett (2006) developed a study which purpose was to determine preservice teachers' perceptions regarding the management of behaviors and stress in inclusive classrooms. The subjects of study were preservice teachers in the Bachelor of Education program at the university in northern Ontario, Canada. The sample consisted of student teachers who had been enrolled for three months in a program. It has to be emphasized that the sample for the study is not specifically mentioned but it is stated that 428 surveys were responded and collected correctly from the 620 that were delivered. The instrument to collect the data was constructed by the authors and it is said that in order to do it a matrix was developed, so that the relation of each statement on the questionnaire was established. The results indicated that low levels of stress were found in general and that preservice teachers show early signs of perfectionism and willingness to appear in need of help, in other words, the subjects inferred that they did not need a program to control their levels of stress after receiving the three-month one.

2.4 Literature analysis of teacher stress by non-experienced participants

This section's aim is critically analyze the literature pertaining to teacher stress in non-experienced subjects or participants, such as, preservice teachers. It includes similarities and differences regarding context, and results encountered. Therefore, research on teacher stress has been carried out in different contexts as it happened in the experienced participant analysis above; however; there is not the same wide variety: In Asia (Kizilaslan's, 2014),(Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's, 2014); in America (Vesely, Saklofske, & Nordstokke, 2014), (Knight, Balatti, Haase & Henderson, 2010); and in Europe (Klassen & Chiu, 2011).

Among the important findings to take into consideration are the potential stressors that affect the teaching practice of the participants. Kizilaslan's (2014) reported that first-year preservice teachers experience stress due to the process of undergoing the transition from home to the university setting. It is possible that many of the students have moved from home for the first time, and that they are now expected to maintain a high level of academic achievement and adjust to a new social environment. In addition, the variables that significantly influence students' stress scores were found to be 'lack of peer support', 'gender and ethnic background', 'worry about the future profession', 'lack of time for own interests', 'financial concerns' and 'unclear assignments'.

Similarly, Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) states that the inability to contact their significant others was identified as a greater stressor. These two authors agrees that there are factors or elements outside the classroom that may influence the levels of stress, in other words, preservice teachers may be affected by elements apart from their teaching practice.

Nevertheless, some other factors influence the levels of stress in the preservice teachers; elements related with the teaching practice but these not necessarily occur or take place during the time the preservice teacher is performing in class. Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) mentioned that the magnitude of responsibilities and demands like daily lesson planning, assessing students, practicum related activities, curriculum meetings and managing student behavior make teachers feel overwhelmed and, as a consequence, get stressed out. In specific, these authors claimed that assessing large group of students will require teachers to have expertise in order to accomplish successfully the demands of being a teacher.

Other author agrees with the statement that there are aspects related to teaching practice but not occurring at the time, that may increase the levels of stress: Knight, Balatti, Haase & Henderson (2010) states that preservice teachers also expressed to be stressed out regarding coping with the demands of the educational institution; moreover, stress was experienced as well due to the absence of necessary resources for the classes. That is to say, preservice teachers were going through episodes of stress because they did not have the required competences in order to design proper classes. Additionally, Çelik (2008) reported that the highest source of stress appears to stem from the possible communication breakdown with individuals related to the teaching performance such as the supervisor, superiors, or tutors

These three studies above present stressors related to the teaching practice but not occurring at the time a preservice teacher is in the classroom. Consequently, a third type of stressor is closely and directly connected with the teaching practice of the preservice teachers, in a more specific way, the levels of stress may be negatively influenced by factors occurring at the time of developing the teaching practice. Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) found out that managing student behavior make teachers feel overwhelmed and, as a consequence, stressed out. Likewise, Knight, Balatti, Haase & Henderson (2010) discovered that the most prevalent stressor was behavior management, that is, preservice teachers are mainly stressed during their teaching practices by discipline and behavior matters. Finally, a third study by Çelik (2008) stated that evaluation was also found as one of the highest concerns of the preservice teachers, resulting in stress. This author stated two sources causing evaluation to be stressful: Not achieving the expected results and implementing erroneous corrective strategies that could end up lessening the students' self-confidence regarding learning the language.

After reviewing this literature and centering the attention in the potential stressors, the next conclusion arose: There are different stressors that affect the performance of a preservice teacher outside and inside the classroom, in other words, these stressors could disturb the performance of the preservice teachers during his/her class, when preparing the class or when dealing with administrative tasks. Moreover, taking into consideration all these studies, stressors may be classified into three themes: Stressors influenced by social and personal aspects, stressors related to the teaching practice but not occurring at the time of the class, and stressors during the time of the class.

CHAPTER 3. THE TRANSACTIONAL MODEL OF STRESS

This chapter focuses on describing the Transactional model of stress, which will support the findings or results encountered after carefully analyzing the data gathered. Firstly, it is important to define the variable stress based on the model: According to this theory, stress is defined as arising from the appraisal that particular environmental demands are about to tax individual resources, thus threatening well-being, (Holroyd & Lazarus, 1982).

Some years after, Lazarus & Folkman (1987) developed another study where the definition of stress was slightly modified: A fundamentally subjective transactional processing involving appraisal of the potential stressor (the circumstance initiating the stress reaction) and perceived resources (the individual's ability to cope with, and deal with the stressor). Regarding the last description of stress, it can be inferred that it is the interaction of an individual with the environment, surroundings or situation that creates the sense of stress in oneself. It is an evaluation of the circumstances done by the person.

An important point of the definitions mentioned above is the appraisal. It has to be stated that, according to Hulbert-Williams (2009), the appraisal occurs at conscious and unconsciously levels and is influenced by situational, temporal, and personal factors. From a personal perspective the following situation exemplifies the appraisal statement expressed above: A preservice teacher receiving a citation by the principal of his or her school may be seen by the individual as a threat (e.g. to future goals), as a challenge (e.g. to overcome) or as a loss (e.g. loss of role). In turn, this appraisal may vary based on the topic of conversation the individual (preservice teacher) will have with the principal.

Therefore, it can be stated that stress incorporates or includes some other elements that capture the transactional nature of stress, in other words, the interaction of a person with the environment resulting in stress (Lazarus, 1999). These elements encompass the following: Stress is the result of the transaction between the individual and the environment; the authority and power of the transaction lies in the process of appraisal that binds the person and the environment, and it is the relational meaning that the person constructs from the transaction and that lies at the heart of the stress process, (Lazarus, 1999).

Consequently, Lazarus (1999) mentions that after the individual experiences stress and the transaction phenomena occur, three types of appraisal take place. The first one refers to an evaluation of the situation as to the significance of an encounter or transaction for a specific individual, in other words, the person makes only an assessment of the circumstances and might ignore if there is not a potential threat; this is what the primary appraisal refers to.

In addition, and according to Perewe & Zellars (1999), the primary appraisal also has two evolutions of its process: When the individual feels that the encounter has a positive and beneficial effect, and when a stake is found and generates an emotion in the individual. The individual may experience harm, loss, threat or challenge but will not decide to carry out an action because the emotion experienced (harm, loss, threat or challenge) does not represent a damaging result. In a more specific way, the individual may experience a weak damage that will not affect him/her and that is the reason why he/she will not take action against the experience.

In contrast, the secondary appraisal emerges when the individuals determine a quite potentially stake in the encounter. The transactional model proposes that the individuals will engage in action to change the conditions perceived to be undesirable; this appraisal focuses on the available coping options for altering the perceived harm, threat, or challenge so that a more positive environment is created, (Perewe & Zellars, 1999). In other words, the second appraisal highlights the individual engaging in an act in order to modify a detrimental result, after the proper evaluation or appraisal and that will be done by developing coping options or strategies that could change the unwanted product.

After the individual decides to effect an action, as a result of the influence of stress, the person implements an adaptive strategy which could allow the individual to positively change the negative conditions he/she is going through. The individual performs a coping mechanism by his or her perceptions of personal control over the stressful situation, (Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). After carefully examining this interesting part of the Transactional model of stress, it can be said that personal control of the desired coping mechanism that the individual decides to implement, is the outcome of the beliefs of the individual. The individual beliefs will direct the course of the decision that will make him or her implement a coping mechanism. Furthermore, not only the individual's beliefs will direct or influence his/her decisions, but his previous experiences with similar situations could also be a strong impact in the decision making.

This coping mechanism represents the cognitive and behavioral efforts made by an individual to make the situation more manageable and less demanding or threatening, (Hulbert-Williams, 2009). In other words, coping means what the person will think or do in order to meet the perceived challenge.

Lazarus & Folkman (1987); Lazarus (1999); Perewe & Zellar,(1999); and Hulbert-Williams (2009) agreed that a strategy or coping mechanism perceived by one to be adaptive may be perceived by another, or indeed that same person in a different situation, to be maladaptive, negative, and, in the worst of the cases, harmful,. These same studies proposed that a coping mechanism or strategies tend to be complex, flexible, dynamic, and dependent on cognitive appraisals.

Another important aspect related to coping and stated by Lazarus (1999) (1993), is that the Transactional Model proposes that under threat of potential stress, the individual will not only appraise the situation/event, but will also make an assessment or appraisal of how one will cope with stress and how the stressful experience will interfere with attainment of one's personal goals.

As a result of the implementation of the coping mechanism or strategies, Lazarus (1999) incorporates his third appraisal which emphasizes in the cognitive area: The third appraisal named "reappraisal" refers to the feedback process wherein changes in both the primary and secondary appraisals are brought via individual reactions/coping and the environmental counter reactions. This third appraisal will modify the way in which the individual may evaluate a potential stressor, in other words, a person could modify cognitively the way the stressor affects him or her.

Lazarus (1999) states that between the appraisal and the coping mechanism an important factor, which is a result between this previously mentioned elements, emerges: emotion. This author states that emotion is placed before coping for the reason that it is a cognitive reaction that influences the coping mechanism that will be implemented.

In short, this model's central tenet is that a potentially stressful event will trigger the primary appraisal process in which an individual assesses the degree of threat in relation to his or her wellbeing. When an event is perceived as threatening or a challenge, the secondary appraisal process provides a global assessment of the individual's coping resources and ability to manage the threat/challenge. Coping responses are initiated after the cognitive appraisals and the eventual psycho-physiological experience (stress outcomes) of this potentially stressful event depends on

the effectiveness of one's cognitive appraisals and coping processes. The stress outcomes will then feed back to the cognitive appraisal stages for further actions if required.

Finally, the last element present in present in the Transactional model of stress is the outcome that, as its name expresses; it refers to the final stage or phase. However, it must be mentioned that the outcome or result may lead to another relational meaning which could initiate again the course of the appraisal. The following figure is a simplified but concrete version of the Transactional model of stress, figure 1.

Figure 1. The Transactional Model of stress (adapted from Lazarus, 1999).

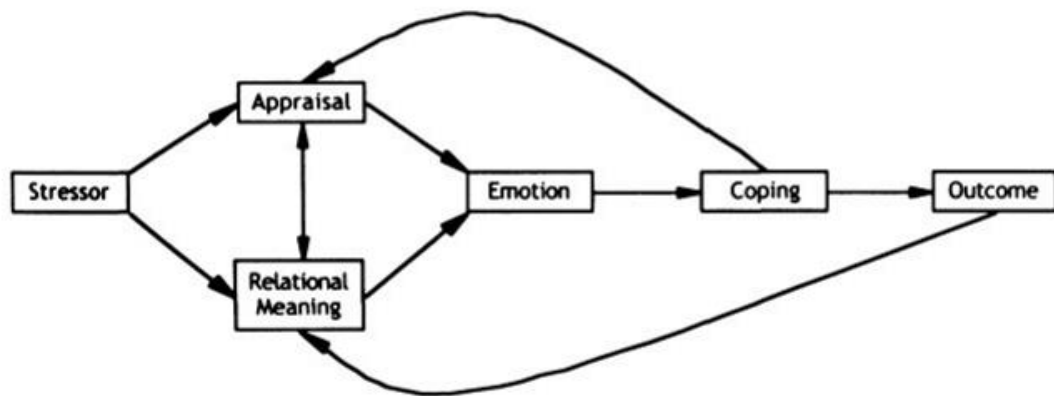


Figure 1.1. The Transactional Model of stress (adapted from Lazarus, 1999).

Source: Lazarus, R. & Folkman, S. (1987).

CHAPTER 4. METHOD

This chapter contains information regarding the methodological features, the characteristics of the participants who decided to contribute to the study, the instruments employed to gather the necessary data, the procedure implemented for the data analysis, the ethical considerations taken into account while developing the research and the limitations that emerged as carrying out the study. A descriptive explanation of the methodology selected is presented in each section in order to clarify, justify and specify the actions or steps followed in the present research study.

4.1 Researcher Background

Research has not represented an important topic in my life. As a novice teacher, I did not believe in its usefulness and practical application for teaching practice possibly for the reason that I did not know its characteristics and if it was going to be beneficial. I used to have the idea that research was not related at all to teaching; that teachers could carry out their teaching practice without taking research into consideration but I was wrong. After attending courses related to educational research and realizing about its close bond with the teaching practice, I now know how important are to each other- research and teaching practice- and how they rely on each other to improve. Brown (2012) declares that research can positively transform the way new researchers understand their task as teachers, researchers, and writers; it can improve the performance of any teacher in a class by providing meaningful experiences full of educational theory that could be advantageously applied to the teaching practice. Based on the argument presented before, I am now convinced that research can provoke a positive change in the teaching practice of novice and preservice teachers. Based on my personal experience, I can assure that research has improved my teaching practice; to be more specific, I am now aware of trendy strategies or techniques which have improved my teaching practice and my students have expressed their ideas about it. Also, within research, there is proof of its effectiveness and how it

has improved teachers' performance. Based on the argument before, I realized the enormous importance of research; it helps and supports the discovery of new knowledge and could also provide valuable data to decrease the effect of a problem such as the case of the present research. In contrast, I have to admit that, as I am a novice in teaching, I lack experience in conducting research and, in consequence, my line of inquiry is based on a phenomena I have been exposed to during my college studies: stress. I decided to select stress for the reason that during my major several classmates and myself have suffered from it, in other words, stress has negatively influenced our performance and development as students and as preservice teachers.

As students, we have been overwhelmed by tasks, homework, evaluation, dealing with unpleasant classmates. The potential stressful experiences do not seem to decrease when a learner becomes a preservice teacher: As preservice teachers we get in close contact with lesson planning, grading students, material design, and dealing with disruptive students. Jensen (2011) mentions that the job of a teacher is physically and mentally challenging; the daily routine a teacher follows forwards a lot of stress and the profession of a teacher is sometimes seen as the root of infinite satisfaction and fulfillment, but rather a source of stress, discontentment and humiliation. Teachers have many responsibilities such as elaborating lesson plans, designing materials for the classes, dealing with large groups of students, doing administrative tasks like grading or evaluating; and those activities can provoke negative feelings such as the ones expressed by the author above. Also, teachers who work in university go through more demanding responsibilities which will very likely cause to experience stress.

Based on the previous argument, I decided to choose teacher stress as my topic in order to provide information that could help lessen its effect. My intention is to identify the potential stressors that negatively influence the teaching practice of the preservice teachers in the University of Quintana Roo in order to decrease the influence of stress in their teaching practice. I was a preservice teacher who went through unpleasant experiences when my teaching practice commenced and I would not like future preservice teachers to go through the same unpleasant experience.

4.2 Description of the Method

This research is based on a qualitative descriptive approach. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) in Creswell (2007), qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world and it consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. Additionally, the central goal of a qualitative approach is to document the world from the point of view of the people studied; to know how people define their situations (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). From a similar point of view, Strauss and Corbin (1998) identified qualitative research as any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification; the non-quantitative approach can refer to research about persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviors, emotions, and feelings as well as about organizational functioning, social movements, and cultural phenomena. Based on the points of view of the researchers previously mentioned, the qualitative design is a correct approach for the topic selected for the reason that it is intended to identify the potential stressors in preservice teachers based on the perceptions of the participants. Furthermore, the authors mentioned before define the purpose and main features of a qualitative research similarly which is conceptualizing the characteristics of the observed phenomena from the point of view or perceptions of the participants.

According to Elliot (1999) there exist distinguishing features which turn to be of greater importance to consider if the focus of the study results to be of a qualitative design: the emphasis on understanding phenomena in their own right rather than from some outside perspective; open and exploratory research questions are best suitable for the study for the reason that the topic is complicated, confusing, plentiful, or not moving forward (open and exploratory questions may lead the interviewee to express himself or herself freely and naturally which could offer plenty useful information for the qualitative study), unlimited and emergent description options vs. predetermined choices or rating scales; use of special strategies for enhancing the credibility of design and analyses; and definition of success conditions in terms of discovering something new vs. confirming what was hypothesized.

In short, qualitative research involves an interpretative, naturalistic approach to the world, in other words, it studies things in their natural setting attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena regarding the meanings people bring to them, (Creswell, 2007).

Additionally, qualitative researchers collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants; they may use a protocol-an instrument for collecting data, generally interviews and observation -but the researchers are the ones who actually gather the information, (Creswell, 2007).

They do not tend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers but rather using themselves as the main instrument to collect the necessary data.

This specific qualitative descriptive study focuses on identifying the possible stressors, causes or sources of stress that influence the preservice teachers' teaching practice at the University of Quintana Roo. Also, it has to be emphasized that knowing the strategies which preservice teachers use to deal with stress and how it influences their teaching practice, are purposes of the present research study.

Another important characteristic of the methodology employed in qualitative research, is the particular type of instruments employed to collect data. It was identified that there exist abundant qualitative methodology available in the area of education and social sciences (e.g. Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998); however, there are relatively few for language education and applied linguistics, perhaps due to the fact that research in these areas has been predominantly quantitative, (Duff, 2007). Nevertheless, some authors mentioned the typically used instruments to collect data in qualitative research: Goldstein (2003) emphasizes the fact that the central research instrument remains in the person of the researcher, with his or her specific experience, expertise and perspective.

Similarly, qualitative researchers must become and develop as research instruments, (Xu & Storr, 2012). So, as it was pointed by the authors above, the researcher represents an elemental instrument when gathering information but, as in quantitative research, tools must be utilized. Some authors have located and defined instruments commonly used in qualitative research, (Byrne-Armstrong, Higgs, & Horsfall, 2001; Maxwell, 1996; Patton & Patton, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998):

Interviews consist in one-on-one question-and-answer sessions where the researcher may use a variety of techniques; interviews average time is around 30–45 minutes per person. Consequently, there are the focus groups which refer to group interviews, using the same variety of techniques and taking approximately the same length of time as interviews but the only difference is, as its name expresses, the quantity of interviewed people. A third tool discussed by

the authors above, are reflective journals which consist of handwritten or verbal account of an event, or group of events, over time. Additionally, field notes refer to written explanations or data taken, often by multiple observers at a single event, capturing interactions of interest to the larger topic under study. A different instrument utilized by qualitative researchers is anecdotal evidence and logs which, in other words, incorporates data taken from people often outside the research team that report the facts of the interactions as understood by the writer.

Finally, observations are a quite popular instrument applied in qualitative research and should be a stylized note taking about predetermined portions of an event or group of events under study, generally taken by more than one observer. Observations often tally the number of times an event takes place

After mentioning some popular instruments in qualitative research, the procedure followed typically by qualitative researchers should be discussed in order to clarify what qualitative research is concretely. Ten steps are offered for researchers to conceive and conduct qualitative research projects that are both responsive to research goals and objectives and defensible to criteria of quality and critics of utility, (Chenail, 2011; Farber, 2006):

First, the researcher must reflect on what awakes its interest. He or she should think about the program, project, population, participant, problem, phenomenon, policy, practice, process, or product about which you would like to learn. It is suggested to start with the topic which should be specifically defined. Second, the qualitative researcher should draft a statement identifying the preliminary area of interest and justify its scholarly and/or practical importance, in other words, delimiting the topic by writing a concrete sentence and justifying the practical relevance and worthiness, is the next step. The third step consists of honing the focus of the research project by considering the choices that need to be opted for in order to design the study, that is, write and answer the questions who, what, where, when, why and how. The study should answer all those interrogatives. The next step is to elaborate the initial questions and, if necessary, hypothesis.

Based upon the answers to who, what, where, when, why, and how questions, qualitative researchers must compose the initial research question. The following step is quite important: the goals and objectives must be defined. In order to accomplish what was mentioned before, the researcher could read literature related to the topic so that a clearer idea of goals and objectives can emerge. As mentioned before, the next step is to conduct a literature review which may expand the vision about the topic. The seventh step is developing the research design which is the

system of choices you make that helps you to conceive and conduct your study in an orderly and effective manner. After, self-assessment is suggested as the following step in order for the researcher to locate the strengths and possible weaknesses of the study, and improve. The ninth step is to plan, to conduct and to manage the study. Successful qualitative research projects involve careful management of four different yet connected studies: (a) the study proposed, (b) the study conducted, (c) the study reported, and (d) the study of these studies. The researcher must develop an action plan detailing the steps you need to take in order to begin and complete his/her studies. Depending on the study, the elements that will need to be addressed include: people (including yourself), communication, data (including back-up systems), analysis, results, technology, time, money, ethical concerns (including securing institutional approvals), and other resources. Maintaining a chronicle of the research activities (e.g., lab notebook, journal, diary, audit trail, and time and effort reports) and save supporting documentation must be carried out finally. The last step refers to reporting the research project, that is, the researcher should get informed about the policies and rules in order to publish the study.

After giving detail and informing about the characteristics of the qualitative research studies in general, it is essential to mention the characteristics regarding the design of the present study.

4.3. Participants of the Study and Population

There are a number of different types of sampling strategies in qualitative research. Qualitative research uses non-probability samples for selecting the population for study and, in a non-probability sample, units are deliberately selected to reflect particular features of groups within the sampled population; in other words, the sample is not intended to be statistically representative: the chances of selection for each element are unknown but, instead, the characteristics of the population are used as the basis of selection, (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The most commonly used sampling strategies are the following and are based on the previously mentioned author perspective:

4.3.1. Qualitative research sampling

The following sections include and mention approaches that focus their task in collecting data for qualitative studies, in other words, this type of approaches are mainly used in qualitative studies for the reason that their selection of participants center their attention in people who have certain characteristics which are proper for the qualitative studies.

4.3.1.1. Criterion based or purposive sampling

In this approach, the selection of participants, settings or other sampling units is criterion based or purposive (Mason, 2002; Patton & Patton, 2002). The sample units are chosen because they have particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and puzzles which the researcher wishes to study.

Purposive sampling is literally what its name suggests, in other words, members of a sample are chosen with a “purpose” to represent a location or type in relation to a key criterion. This type of sampling has two principal aims. The first is to ensure that all the key constituencies of relevance to the subject matter are covered. The second is to ensure that, within each of the key criteria, some diversity is included so that the impact of the characteristic concerned can be explored.

4.3.1.2. Theoretical sampling

Theoretical sampling is a particular kind of purposive sampling in which the researcher samples incidents, people or units on the basis of their potential contribution to the development and testing of theoretical constructs. The process is iterative: the researcher picks an initial sample, analyses the data, and then selects a further sample to refine his or her emerging categories and

theories. This process is continued until the researcher reaches “data saturation, or a point when no new insights would be obtained from expanding the sample further

4.3.1.3. Convenience sampling

This particular kind of sampling does not use a sampling strategy, like their counter parts above. It constitutes the most common form of qualitative sampling, based on the misunderstanding that small sample sizes do not permit statistical generalization and therefore it does not matter how cases are chosen, (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

After having explained the types of sampling in qualitative research, the sampling strategy which this study will implement is by convenience. The present study required 9 preservice teachers who were currently taking Teaching Practice I in the University of Quintana Roo. The average age among these subjects is between twenty and twenty-five years old. The context where the study was developed was the University of Quintana Roo which is located in the capital of the state. The participants belonged to the population of preservice teachers in the university and they were taking Teaching Practice I, that is, around 30 or 40 people. It has to be emphasized that the participants are enrolled in the English Major Language and the subject they were taking is placed in the curriculum in the 10th and last semester of the major. The reason why sampling by convenience was opted for is because of time agreement, in other words, the present project should be finalized in due time and it does not exist a close relation with the potential participants in order to implement a different type of sampling so that an open invitation was emitted and the ones who agree to be part of the study, were welcomed.

4.4. Proposal of Instruments to Collect Data for the Study

Creswell (2007) declares that collecting data means identifying and selecting individuals for a study obtaining their permission to deeply know the way they perceive a specific phenomenon, and gathering information by asking people questions or observing their behaviors. Gathering the proper data for qualitative studies is fundamental, as it is for quantitative studies, but qualitative research is expected to gather information about people, communities, contexts or situations in detail.

In reference to the qualitative design and characteristics of the present research, the instrument or tool which will be implemented for collecting the necessary data and are considered proper and viable for the present study, is interviews.

These qualitative instrument varies a great deal in the approach taken by the interviewer, (Masson, 2010). There are different types of interviews employed. There exist two types of interviews: The unstructured interview and the semi-structured interview, (Bryman, 2012). The first one occurs when the researcher uses at most only his memory as a brief set of prompts to him- or herself to deal with a certain range of topics. There may be just a single question that the interviewer asks and the interviewee is then allowed to respond freely, with the interviewer simply responding to points that seem worthy of being followed up. Unstructured interviewing tends to be very similar in character to a conversation.

The other type of interview is carried out when the researcher has a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered, often referred to as an interview guide, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply. Questions may not follow on exactly in the way outlined on the schedule. Questions that are not included in the guide may be asked as the people interviewed pick up on things said by the interviewer. But, by and large, all of the questions will be asked and a similar wording will be used from interviewee to interviewee.

Particularly, the present research study will use semi structured interviews. Based on a personal perspective, this type of interview represents a useful instrument in reference to the design of the present study. Also, it is a convenient selection for the study because the handbook of questions will guide the course of the interview in an advantageous direction for obtaining

information which will be freely done based on the development of the interview and always with the objective of collecting relevant data for the present study.

As any other instrument implemented in qualitative research, interviews also show positive and negative characteristics. One of the advantages of implementing this resourceful instrument is that the interviewer can direct the course of the interview based on the purposes of the research study; on the other hand, one the disadvantages is that usually the interviewees are not expressive enough and the information desired may not be obtained easily, (Bryman, 2012). The drawback mentioned before will be avoided by designing a clear interview which will direct the interview in a proper direction; also, the interviewer will try to maintain a pleasant rapport in order for the participants to feel confidence when expressing them.

4.5. Procedure

After revising the proposal of instruments, the procedure followed in order to ensure collecting the data will be presented. The research conducted for this study followed a uniform protocol to guarantee that the interviews and observations of field yielded data consistent with the study's goal. Firstly, Data will be gathered during the semester of Teaching Practice I, that is, this autumn semester (August to December 2015). After locating and selecting the proper number of participants, their consent will be requested. The periods of time in which the participants will be interviewed and observed, will be established personally with each. Additionally, a letter of consent will be given in order for them to accept officially to participate in the study. A schedule for the interviews will be confirmed at the beginning of the semester with the participants because clear organization should be kept in order to avoid possible misunderstandings. Finally, the interviews will be carried out according to the arrangements with the participants.

4.6. Procedure for the Analysis of the Data Collection

Once the research procedure has been detailed, the procedure for the analysis of the information obtained has to be analyzed. This section focuses on the methodology followed to accomplish what was mentioned above. Qualitative research studies involve a continuous interplay between data collection and data analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1988). This research study followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis which consisted of six phases. The characteristics and peculiarities of each phase will be described in the following list:

- 1.- Familiarizing oneself with the data: In this first step, data obtained from the participants should be transcribed while it is carefully read, avoiding leaving important information.
- 2.- Generating initial codes: the production of initial codes begins in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
- 3.- Searching for themes: In this phase one should collate codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant into all the potential themes.
- 4.- Reviewing themes: At this point, one should check if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set. At the end, a thematic map will be the result of the process.
- 5.- Defining and naming themes: In this step, one should carry out an ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story that the analysis tells. At the end, clear definitions and names for each theme will emerge.
- 6.- Producing the report: The final analysis and the write-up report are the last phase, and it provides a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story that the data tells.

4.7. Ethical Considerations

Berg (2001) affirms that social scientists, perhaps to a greater extent than the average citizen, have an ethical obligation to their colleagues, their study population, and the larger society. Every person who decides to develop a study which involves a social problem or situation, has to know that social lives are engaged in the study or research and those lives receive an impact, and due to that, extreme care should be taken or negative consequences can emerge and negatively influence their lives. As stated before, dealing with human beings is a very complex activity which should be done with extreme care; not only for the safety of the participants but also when storing it. The present research study will employ Informed consent as an ethical measure, (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

The participants have the right to be informed about the nature and consequences of research studies in which they are involved. Also, they must agree voluntarily to participate and the agreement must be based on full and open information. The protocol participants will follow in order to maintain the proper ethical considerations, is the following: First, the participants will be asked to sign a permission letter in which will be described the steps and activities to develop during the gathering of data. Then, they will receive the transcription of their interviews and the formats of the observations in order for them to add or delete information as they wish. It has to be addressed that the protocol the participants are required to follow based on the ethics, save their anonymity and self-interests.

4.8. Issues of Trustworthiness

Ethics has become a cornerstone for conducting effective and meaningful research. As such, the ethical behavior of individual researchers is under unprecedented scrutiny (Berg, 2001). Every researcher has a responsibility to protect the participants in an investigation that is, safeguarding the identity and information obtained when collecting the data. Qualitative research involves data that are recorded in narrative descriptions, not numbers (Creswell, 2007). Specifically,

researchers use qualitative methods to observe and describe conditions rather than control them.

The elements employed to ensure the safety of the participants will be the following:

- **Credibility:** Internal validity in which they seek to ensure that their study measures or tests what is actually intended. According to Shenton (2004), credibility deals with the question, “how congruent are the findings with reality?” it is also expressed by the same author that ensuring credibility is one of most important factors in establishing trustworthiness. The present research will employ triangulation as a component to ensure credibility. Triangulation refers to the use of several instruments to safeguard the information obtained, in a more clear argument; the information gathered in the instruments is compared and contrasted, (Esterberg, 2002). Moreover, two other aspects will be employed to reach credibility: Academic scrutiny of the research project and thick description of the phenomenon under scrutiny, (Shenton, 2004). The first one focuses on allowing experienced academic researchers to supervise and provide feedback for the study. Consequently, the last one refers to providing a detailed description of the study.
- **Dependability:** According to Berg (2001), dependability refers to “the stability of findings over time”; dependability involves participants evaluating the findings and the interpretation and recommendations of the study to make sure that they are all supported by the data received from the informants of the study. The present study will ensure dependability by describing the processes within the study in complete detail.

4.9. Limitations

There are two limitations for the study. The first one is that the sample is selected by convenience and, as a consequence, the results cannot be extrapolated. In other words, as the present study was carried out in a specific zone with a specific sample, the results encountered may not be able to be generalized.

Another possible limitation is that most of the participants were carrying out their practices in an educational level: Preschool. So, the results may not be generalized to preservice teachers carrying out their teaching practices with adults. In other words, results encountered

regarding the educational level could not be generally applicable to all educational levels for the reason that the majority of the participants who took part in the present study were implementing their teaching practices at preschool.

CHAPTER 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data was planned to be gathered on the Autumn semester of 2015; from August to December when participants were taking *Práctica docente I*. To be more specific, participants were interviewed one month after their first immersion into their teaching experience; that is in September of 2015. Two interviews were carried out: one at the beginning of their teaching practice and another one a month before their teaching practice concluded. After carefully organizing, analyzing and coding the data, five main themes emerged: Stressors related to students, stressors related to classroom management, stressors related to administration, coping strategies for stress, and impact of stress on the teaching performance of the preservice teachers. In addition, some subthemes derive from every theme (See table 1)

Tabla 1. *Themes and subthemes*

Theme	Stressors related to students	Stressors related to classroom management	Stressors related to administration factors	Coping strategies for stress	Impact of stress in the teaching performance
Subtheme	-Indiscipline -Lack of interest	- Large and/or young group of students -Lesson planning design -Poor communication skills -Poor corrective strategies	- Lack of resources	- Breathing and relaxing -Setting up deadlines -Properly designing the lesson plan -Asking advice from peers and supervisors	-Lesson design

5.1 Stressors related to students

5.1.1 Stressors related to indiscipline

The indiscipline of the students was found to be a strong source of stress to preservice teachers. The indiscipline of the students was related to the following aspects: students misbehaving during teachers' explanations, students distracting their classmates while carrying the activities in class, and students ignoring teachers' suggestions or instructions. In general, the indiscipline was a very present factor in the classes of the preservice teachers. This was a constant variable mentioned in the interviews by most of the participants. It can be inferred that it happened probably because of the next causes: 1) Preservice teachers were not able to manage their group properly 2) Students were misbehaving during classes due to the students getting bored 3) External-to-the –class distractors were negatively influencing students' attention that ended up affecting their behavior 4) Lessons were not properly planned or designed in order to awaken and maintain students' interest. What participants expressed regarding the third cause was that there were usually students playing outside the classroom, for example, and that ended up distracting the students that were participating in class.

Similarly, Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) agree to what was expressed by the participants in my study: Managing student behavior makes teachers feel overwhelmed and, as a consequence, stressed out; having to deal with students' attitude and misbehavior besides teaching affects the concentration and flow of the class. Also, Knight, Balatti, Haase & Henderson (2010) discovered that the most prevalent stressor was behavior management, that is, preservice teachers are mainly stressed during their teaching practices by discipline and behavior matters.

These studies agree with the fact that classroom management regarding discipline is a very influential factor that could affect preservice teachers' performance in class and even when they are not currently teaching, in other words, it can also affect teachers' lesson planning, and design of the material, for example. Close attention should be paid and proper importance should

be given to this aggressive stressor in order to decrease the affectation of it and improve the teaching performance of the preservice teachers. As expressed by some of the participants:

“When there is a lot of chaos in the classroom is when I get desperate and stressed out. I am a bossy person and like to have everything in control, so I lose focus when students are causing chaos. I am supposed to be the authority and students should obey and when it does not happen, I get desperate.” [PARTICIPANT 2, SECOND INTERVIEW]

“Very naughty students stress me out. I mean, I do not like scolding or telling twice something to the students. Not every student is naughty but there are ones that affect the others and that provokes the majority of the students to misbehave.” [PARTICIPANT 8, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“Well, I teach children. I believe I do not feel that much stressSX; however, there are times when those students are making a lot of noise and it is impossible to continue with the class and I cannot control them. In those cases, the official teacher of the class usually asks them to be quiet, sit down and pay attention.” [PARTICIPANT 3, FIRST INTERVIEW]

As stated above in the extracts, most of the participants mentioned during the interviews that lack of discipline or misbehavior from the students was a present factor preservice teachers experience during their teaching practices. The level in which they were implementing their classes was not a determinant aspect of this stressor, in other words, the participants were feeling stress due to the indiscipline no matter if they were teaching children or adults. It should be stated that the participants of the present study were developing their practices with different levels of learners: children and adults.

Another important aspect that affected teachers’ performance in class related to misbehavior is the following: The preservice teachers interviewed avoided discussing matters regarding indiscipline or students’ misbehavior; that is to say, the participants did not talk to classmates, supervisors, other peers or anyone regarding their experience with this stressor. This is an alarming fact for the reason that they did not treat the problem properly and, in the worst of the cases, they could continue feeling stress caused by indiscipline from the students, allowing them to feel negatively because they cannot carry out their class accurately.

Lewis (1999) support this finding by stating that teachers experiencing the most

discipline related stress potentially exacerbate matters by not letting others know about it. In other words, teachers decide to keep their discipline misbehavior issues with their classmates by themselves, which provokes teacher stress.

Unfortunately, the group of students where the preservice teachers developed their practice, was mostly undisciplined: children as students presenting chaotic misbehavior (speaking very loud, not sitting down when necessary, playing with their classmates during class or explanations) and adults as students were mainly talking to their classmates, checking their phones, ignoring teachers' instructions and sometimes leaving the classroom when important or relevant aspects of the class were explained. As some participants expressed:

“I hated when the children started to yell and walk around their seats; it was very frustrating because I could not focus. Suddenly, it was hard for me to control the group and even when the main teacher took part by helping me, I ended up frustrated and I sometimes I even forgot what I planned for the class and I needed to check my lesson plan.” [PARTICIPANT 4, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“It was difficult for me to plan the class. I was very committed to design a good lesson plan but I believed I was not able. I believed that every class I presented was boring for the students: they continued getting distracted and focusing on their cellphones or another classmate. I was very sad and mad.” [PARTICIPANT 7, SECOND INTERVIEW]

As declared above, it can be noted that indiscipline or misbehavior from the students can provoke negative outcomes for preservice teachers. It can be observed that it can cause undesirable feelings such as rage, frustration, and sadness. In addition, another potential consequence could be the negative impact on teaching related activities such as lesson planning or material design. Regarding the first two aspects just mentioned, lack of creativity could affect them. The last one might be negatively influenced by the inability to explain properly, and to maintain a positive environment for learning.

After carefully inquiring into potential stressors in teachers, Lewis (1999) noticed that teachers were being exposed to great levels of frustration by avoiding sharing their experiences regarding indiscipline in their classroom. Such negative feelings about frustration, such as irritation, and sorrow, could have a strong impact in the development of the teaching practice of the educators.

Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) mentioned that the magnitude of responsibilities and demands like daily lesson planning, assessing students, practicum related activities, curriculum meetings and managing student behavior make teachers feel overwhelmed and, as a consequence, get stressed out. A similar finding was encountered in the present study: It was found that it affected preservice teachers' performance because they were not able to concentrate in order to perform as teachers. In other words, the excess of responsibilities as teachers along with a chaotic group, were interfering with the teachers' duties.

5.1.2 Stressors related to lack of interest from students

Lack of interest from students was also a source of stress for the participants of the present study. This is as negative as indiscipline for the reason that it can also affect preservice teachers' performance and derive into negative outcomes when it cannot be controlled such as emerging negative feelings (anger and frustration). It can be noted that it has pretty similar effect as learners' misbehavior. Lack of interest was present and manifested differently according to the analyzed data: Students usually do not pay attention which causes them failure in activities, tests, and questions when participation is needed, students stop attending class, students could believe topics are boring, repetitive or they lack cultural relation. This was revealed by the following participants:

“There are times when I decide to modify the activity at the moment of the class. I noticed my students are getting bored and it really frustrates me. I know it is wrong because as a good teacher, one should attend class with a good lesson plan and it should have an order so the class reaches an objective; however, I think that changing some things would not affect if I reach my objective” [PARTICIPANT 7, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“I feel scared to go through that again. It has happened to me several times. I hate when students do not participate and it is very sad. I do not know if my topic is boring or if my class has been planned in way that it would not be interesting for them.” [PARTICIPANT 5, FIRST INTERVIEW]

In a study by Rodriguez, Oramas & Rodriguez (2007), it was stated that one of the main

stressors among teachers is the lack of interest from the learners which resulted into disappointment. Usually teachers get frustrated for the reason that students appear to not appreciate or give proper importance to how educators work hard to prepare a lesson or activity. Rodriguez, Oramas & Rodriguez (2007) also mentioned that students usually attend to classes without giving importance to the subject and it can be noticed because when participation is requested, very few do it. Moreover, it can also be inferred by the quality of the activities and homework done.

According to my experience as an English language learner, English is usually not given the right importance. Students often believe that this is a subject that just was added to the curriculum map just to fill a space and this is a believe that should be completely eradicated from English learners' minds.

5.2 Stressors related to classroom management

5.2.1 Stressors related to having young and/or large group of students

Most of the participants of the present study made reference to having a large group of students and having to teach very young ones, as strong sources of stress which negatively influenced their teaching practice. Next, the cause of these stressors will be mentioned. It must be expressed that these two points will be treated separately because of their complexity and that they are different; in other words, distinct aspects were involved when the participants made reference to their development as stressors before, during and after their teaching practice. First, participants of the present study claimed that having a large group of students under their tutelage is stressful. Here are the reasons preservice teachers mentioned to be the cause:

1. Not being able to focus in the learning process of every student because preservice teachers claimed they had too many (provoking a sense of uncertainty),

2. Incapability of maintaining a good rapport (a proper environment where learners can focus on the class topic and activities, and have a good performance and fulfill the class objectives), and

3. Working too hard elaborating appropriate lesson plans and material for the students (more focused on lowest educational levels because of the arduous elaboration of the material).

What preservice teachers meant about what was expressed above, is the following:

1. The sense of uncertainty related to not being able to pay close attention to the learning process of all the students, may derive from not having enough competence to do it: unable to organize oneself regarding time and other responsibilities occasioning the preservice teachers to come up with not-very-useful material work with during classes and, in the worst of the cases, lesson plans which are not helpful at all regarding the aim or objectives of the class. Due to that, preservice teachers will constantly question themselves if their students were really learning meaningfully and at long term. This is the period where uncertainty takes place.

2. The lack of competence when it comes to settling a good rapport so learners can focus completely in the class and, importantly, learn.

3. Not being able to properly design a lesson plan and material for a large group of students, usually resulting in a waste of time where the students do not reach the aim of the class or the learning objective due to, as already mentioned, incompetence regarding developing a suitable lesson plan and suitable material for the students.

Klassen & Chiu (2010) mentioned that self-efficacy could sometimes be affected by work-load stress derived from managing a large group of students. That is to say, stress is caused by having to teach a large amount of students and all the responsibilities dragged by it, such as evaluating, developing material and planning the class for the students. Similarly, Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) claimed that assessing a large group of students will require teachers to have the proper expertise in order to accomplish the demands of being a teacher successfully. These studies support the idea of focusing one's attention on the importance of having proper abilities or competences regarding managing a large group of students. Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) agree with the experiences that the

preservice teachers went through. Some of the participants of the present study expressed similar experiences:

“We have a group of thirty six students. It is a bit complicated to divide them into teams and keep an eye on every team. One usually goes and pay close attention to one team; however, I sometimes do not pay attention to the other teams. That has been something that has been causing stress during the class. Lately, I have been avoiding working in teams because when they are grouped together, they start playing and getting distracted. It is a bit funny because working in teams is supposed to be a good strategy when it comes to managing to teach a large group of students. I supposed I am not doing it right.” [PARTICIPANT 8, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“It is very difficult to deal with the group because they are 40 extrovert children. I usually feel stressed out after a while and I just get apart for a minute. I believe I should learn how to deal with this problem but I have not been taught that so I ask my teacher”. [PARTICIPANT 4, SECOND INTERVIEW]

Having to teach a large group of students is, in fact, a potential stressor which very possibly affects the performance of preservice teachers but what if those students are very young. Some of the participants of the present study claimed to experience strong periods of stress due to the fact of dealing with preschoolers. These preservice teachers mentioned that teaching infants require precise skills, abilities and competences they lacked so that was the reason they were having trouble designing lesson plans and materials for their students and, unfortunately, not achieving their class objectives. Some of the reasons expressed to be causing this to be a stressor are the following: As already stated above, 1) participants of the present study specified that they lack competencies in order to manage their very young students. 2) Also, misbehavior was a latent aspect which participants made reference to, in other words, they believed that teaching preschoolers as a stressor, was closely related to misbehavior (as a reason or cause of stress). Surprisingly, misbehavior as a stressor might be related to teaching preschoolers as stressor.

Rodriguez, Oramas & Rodriguez (2007) mentioned that an effect of the poor job formation of the professors resulted in stress among teachers resulting in a sense of frustration which negatively influenced their performance at their teaching practice. According to the previous argument, it can be noted that it is not totally or completely focused on teaching very

young students or preschoolers; however, it can be inferred indirectly that necessary abilities are required in order to perform accurately at teaching. In addition, an adequate job formation is necessary so preservice teachers can create a proper rapport for students to learn. Effort, determination and persistence should be innate in every teacher in order to develop the competencies for teaching to achieve the learning goals of every class and the effect of teaching very young students as a stressor, is minimized. Some of the participants in the present study went through a similar experience:

“I do like teaching and I believe that it is a very fulfilling job; however, it is very frustrating not being able to handle and control my children. Many of them do not participate and the rest misbehave at class. That is the part I hate” [PARTICIPANT 5, SECOND INTERVIEW]

“I think that if I had been teaching by myself, I would have died. It was very stressful because the children of this group started behaving like animals when they got bored. I do not spend any time with children so I lack experience regarding how I should treat them. That was a very hard day”. [PARTICIPANT2, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“Teaching is, in fact, a very overwhelming task. One usually is giving the one hundred percent of oneself and it is not enough; especially when the group you have to teach is filled with little students whose behavior and attitude is very problematic when it comes to being quiet and paying attention. Teaching at this level is a very demanding job”. [PARTICIPANT 7, FIRST INTERVIEW]

In the fragments of the interviews presented above, the participants expressed two important points about the nature of the stressor. To be more specific, the peculiarities and characteristics of how teaching very young students as a stressor were detailed in the extracts above. The first one was that the preservice teachers referred to not having the competences to teach very young students and that ended up leading to a disastrous class where learning was not by far reached. Consequently, the participants felt stressed out by this. The second point is that designing and/or developing material and a lesson plan for a class of preschoolers is very demanding and exhausting. Personally, I consider that material for this type of classes requires a lot of design and effort and this factor also resulted into increasing the levels of stress of the preservice teachers.

5.2.2 Lesson planning design as a stressor

Several aspects should be taken into account when designing a lesson plan, such as the reliability of the materials, the effectivity of the activities regarding directing the learners into the right path (learning), if the activities are appealing enough for the students, and many other factors. For that reason, at the beginning of the participants' teaching practice, many preservice teachers might have experienced a sense of uncertainty due to the fact of not being able to know for sure if the lesson plan could help them reach the class objectives. The participants of the present study were not the exception. After carefully analyzing the data, it was found that some of the participants of this study stated having felt high levels of stress when designing their lesson plans.

Some of the motives why these preservice teachers mentioned it are the following: 1) Lack of time to plan for the reason of having other responsibilities as students such as doing homework, even working on their research projects for their major, and some other tasks. 2) Lack of competence about developing accurate lesson plans. Some of the participants referred to not having or not being able to design proper lesson plans because of the poor academic formation regarding teaching practice. 3) Lack of confidence when doing a lesson plan was also mentioned. Some participants argued having felt stress due to the fact of not being sure if their activities and material along with their lesson plan was helping to improve their students competencies regarding learning the language.

In relation with lack of time, Rodriguez, Oramas & Rodriguez (2007) stated that one of the main stressors among these teachers is the insufficiency of time to adjust to their work, that is, not having enough time to rest, to plan the class, to evaluate the students nor to make the class material. This research argument supports what the preservice teachers of the present study experienced; as novice teachers, they lack the expertise of being able to adjust to all their requirements and they sense a lack of time. In addition, Alemu, Teshome, Kebede & Regassa's (2014) mentioned that the magnitude of responsibilities and demands like daily lesson planning, assessing students, practicum related activities, curriculum meetings and managing student behavior make teachers feel overwhelmed and, as a consequence, get stressed out. If we only let aside "curriculum meetings" (for the reason that it pertains just to teachers' obligations), the rest of the activities are closely connected and associated with the type of tasks a preservice teacher may carry out.

The second motive addressed refers to lack of competence focused in elaborating reliable lesson plans. Rodriguez, Oramas & Rodriguez (2007) mentioned that an effect of the poor job formation of the professors resulted in stress among teachers causing a sense of frustration which negatively influenced their performance at their teaching practice. From a personal point of view, this argument above closely related to academic formation, will influence what preservice teachers will learn during their job formation and the way in which these subjects will construct their capabilities and competences to work, will depend on how they learn as students. In short, it can be inferred that preservice teachers expressed that they lack good academic competences to perform well in their teaching practices which derives into elevating the stress levels. Finally, the third motive was lack of confidence.

Some of the participants of the present study went through similar experiences:

“One of the most difficult tasks I have run into is designing lesson plans. One who is not a student of the major might think I am wrong. What could it be so difficult about putting activities together and implement them? We both know it is not that easy. There are many things that should be taken into consideration when doing it. That is why every time I have to teach I think I should have more classes where the topic is emphasized in designing lesson plans and perhaps my class could go as expected. Maybe that is the reason I feel so stressed out”.

[PARTICIPANT 1, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“There are many things I have to do as a student of the major such as attending to class, doing my homework, working on my research project, and recently, teaching has become one of my obligations. I think this is one of the most difficult semesters because of the many things we students have to do. Well, it is a tie with my first semester when I was enrolled at Math and Logics (Laughed). I feel stress just to think about doing my lesson plans and materials Should I be able to do it all?”

[PARTICIPANT 8, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“When I started to perform as a teacher at the preschool, I was feeling very nervous, anxious and scared. I have always been a very shy person and some friends have told me that this is a quality is not friends with teaching. I do not feel confident enough when I do my lesson plans. I think I need more practice in order to fulfill my class goals”

[PARTICIPANT 4, SECOND INTERVIEW]

5.2.3 Poor communication skills as stressor

Communication was also expressed to be a stressor negatively influencing preservice teachers' performance before, during, and after teaching hours. Participants from the present study mentioned having felt stressed due to the fact of not being able to share their experiences while teaching to improve their performance. In addition and more important, they needed to communicate the problems encountered while teaching in order to avoid them and progress as educators.

In the following fragments, some preservice teachers of the present study made reference of how their inability to communicate their negative experiences while teaching, were interfering with their development as teachers:

“I feel a lot of distance between the teacher of *Práctica docente* and me. Well, I am not sure. It is just that I feel that the teacher has a lot to do and I do not want to bother him/her that much. Sometimes, I feel that I get really stressed out because I do not know if my partner and I are going in a good direction regarding teaching because I cannot be asking my tutor every single doubt or problem I have” [PARTICIPANT 2, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“I usually feel very uncomfortable when I have to teach and I think than I made mistakes. To make things worse, I do not have a very good sense communication with my tutor. Maybe, if I talked to him/her, things would have gone as I desired when teaching. I feel stressed out because I would like to ask my doubts but maybe I am not confident enough and I think I will be scolded (laugh).” [PARTICIPANT 1, SECOND INTERVIEW]

“I think my partner and I have not been doing a good job regarding teaching. It is very frustrating to ask some of our children questions about lessons previously studied and they hardly respond. At this point of the semester, I believe it would be a good idea to ask our teacher his/her opinion; however, I understand that they are children and I should insist in the process of learning. Anyway, I feel stressed out for the reason that I should ask our teacher to direct or give advice about teaching. I would love to do a good job with these kids. Who knows, perhaps it is part of becoming a good teacher”.
[PARTICIPANT 7, SECOND INTERVIEW]

There is a common pattern observed in the fragments of the interviews addressed above: The preservice teachers stated having difficulties sensing high levels of stress due to the fact of having poor communication skills with their teacher of *Práctica docente*. The participants of the present study felt reluctant about expressing the predicaments they ran into at class because of the following reasons: afraid of being scolded because of an undesirable performance, believing the teacher has many tasks and avoid to bother him/her, believing is unnecessary to do it because it is part of the transition of becoming a teacher, and afraid of getting a low grade if they voice their concerns.

The same finding was reported by Celik (2008) which stated that the highest source of stress appears to stem from the possible communication breakdown with individuals related to the teaching performance such as the supervisor, superiors, or tutors.

5.2.4 Poor corrective strategies as stressor

Being able to give proper feedback and correct mistakes are important competencies which every preservice teacher should have and properly implement for the reason that students' performance and learning depend on it. Students need to know what mistakes have made and how to improve their performance so they can improve their learning process.

Some participants of the present study stated having felt strong levels of stress at the moment of giving feedback and correcting students' mistakes. In other words, they said that they felt stressed out at two precise moments: 1) When the preservice teachers needed to give written and oral feedback in order for the students to continue working on an assignment or just to finish the topic and begin other one. In reference to the last point, participants were also feeling uncertain because they were not completely sure students have learnt and they will know it for sure at the exam or during participations. 2) At the moment of correcting mistakes, for the simple reason that participants do not know the exact moment when they should do it. They asked themselves if it should be right after the mistake is made or after. Next, extracts of the interviews applied to the participants of the present study, will be shown.

“Maybe, I feel a lot of stress when I am applying an exercise to my students in order to know they have learned the topic, and they solve. However, I usually see they made mistakes when they ask me if they are doing a good job. Maybe I do not know how to correct them and that stresses me out. If I do it well, they will learn”
[PARTICIPANT 7, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“I stressed out at the moment I should give feedback to my students. I fear that my students could get discouraged from learning English if I do not give feedback properly. I believe this should be an aspect that should be done with extreme care”. [PARTICIPANT 3, SECOND INTERVIEW]

Çelik (2008) stated that evaluation was also found as one of the highest concerns of the preservice teachers, resulting in stress. He stated two sources causing evaluation to be stressful: Not achieving the expected results and implementing erroneous corrective strategies that could end up lessening the students’ self-confidence regarding learning a foreign language.

5.3 Stressors related to administration factors

5.3.1 Lack of resources as stressor

Every individual who has taught at some period of their life knows that teaching requires a kind of investment. That is to say, preparing oneself to implement one’s lesson plan, demands to invest some money and resources in order to obtain the necessary material for the class. Preservice teachers interviewed for this study, claimed having felt stress due to this factor. In addition, most of the participants were teaching at preschools where the elaboration of the material needs more money investment in contrast with higher educational levels.

The reasons behind the lack of resources as a stressor which negatively influenced preservice teachers' performance are the following: 1) preservice teachers were feeling high levels of stress because they had to spend their money in order to make their own material for the class, and, as full-time students, they are financially limited. Moreover, 2) the administration was supposed to provide resources to them in order to elaborate the material; however, the resources were usually very limited. As a consequence, participants needed to buy material by themselves, as it was already mentioned. It should be emphasized that this two previously mentioned factors are closely related for the reason that if the administration of the school did not give them resources, they should get them by themselves.

Knight, Balatti, Haase & Henderson (2010) states that preservice teachers also expressed to be stressed due to the absence of necessary resources for the activities of their classes. That is to say, preservice teachers were going through episodes of stress because they did not have the required incomes to design proper classes and achieve their learning goals. Preservice teachers of the present study went through a similar experience:

“I feel that time is not enough to do the activities I would like to do. You end up doing what time allows you to do and, to make things worse, the school does not provide the necessary material for you to work as you would like. I believe that they should give to us, the practitioners, the proper material in order for us to work well and achieve our class goals”. [PARTICIPANT 5, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“I feel very frustrated that I am not able to elaborate the material I would like to use in class. I have been watching videos about educators teaching in preschools and it is very creative and interesting to see what they do; however, most of the material used in those videos, require expensive material in order to create them. The administration of the school sometimes gives us some but it is not enough. My partner and I end up working with what it is at the reach of our capabilities and expenses”. [PARTICIPANT 6, SECOND INTERVIEW]

“When I have to prepare my class for the kids, I try to recycle because it is very laborious and hard to obtain proper material for the classes. You should know that material for this type of classes is expensive, if you decide to buy it. This is an aspect that makes me feel constantly stressed out. For that reason, I try to work on my lesson plans and materials with anticipation in

order to come up with good ideas that do not require a lot of money”.
[PARTICIPANT 3, SECOND INTERVIEW]

Based on the fragments presented above, there is a common pattern participants expressed: Money investment will allow them to prepare reliable material and, as a positive consequence, their class development will follow a successful flow. In other words, most of the preservice teachers interviewed for this study believe that material of quality for their classes is a very important aspect for the success of their classes at preschool. Also, some of the participants believe that the administration of the preschool was supposed to provide them the pertinent material for the reason that they are students who are currently developing their practices at their institution; they are not official teachers and do not have a sustainable salary which could allow them to get their material. It is important to notice that in the last extract, the participant mentioned that he/she tries to use realia to lessen the responsibility of buying new or expensive material.

Next, an important theme that emerged after carefully analyzing participants’ will be presented. This theme documents how the preservice teachers who took part in this study tried to prevent or, at least, decrease the levels of stress experienced before, during, and after implementing their teaching practice.

5.4 Coping strategies for stress

5.4.1 Relaxing and breathing

Participants of this study expressed having experienced stress due to many factors (stressors), which were mentioned and explained in the themes and subthemes above. Furthermore, most of them also stated having implemented “actions” in order to avoid and/or decrease their levels of stress. After the pertinent analysis, it was found that some of the participants of this study applied “relaxing and breathing” activities in order to lessen the affectation of stress and they could carry on their teaching practices as desired. Some participants revealed the following:

“To be honest, there are times where the stress is very high; almost at the point of losing control in front of the students; however, I cannot yell at them. I usually stand in front and stare at them, and that usually works. Maybe they feel afraid of my angry face. This has worked many times for me. Sometimes, when the students are very uncontrollable, when my technique does not even work, I get away from there; I know they are very extrovert and energetic, and I cannot fight against that. I go out for a minute to get relaxed. It has also helped me out because I am relaxed and I have come up with an idea of how calm the little demons (laugh)”. [PARTICIPANT 7, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“Well, whenever I am feeling high levels of stress due to classroom chaos provoked by the preschoolers, I tried to get relaxed and breathe slowly. Then, I observe their disaster and try to think how to fix it. Sometimes, the students’ misbehavior just decreases and they start again at some other period of the class but I repeat what I did before and continue with the class. What I do, works for me and I am aware that students at this age are hard to teach, so I do what I can but that does not mean that I am not working hard”. [PARTICIPANT 4, SECOND INTERVIEW]

“A very negative characteristic of teaching to preschoolers is that their attention cannot be maintained for a long time and, to make things worse, that means that they will start to play among them, stand up and go wherever they would like to go in the classroom. Whenever this happens, I try to raise my voice and, in an authoritarian way, ask them to sit down and pay attention. However, with twenty little students, this is hardly going to work all the time. That is why my partner and the official teacher of the classroom help me and while they are doing it, I get relaxed and breathe in order to avoid feeling stressed out. At the end, I continue with my class”.

[PARTICIPANT 8, FIRST INTERVIEW]

Based on the extracts presented above, it can be observed that whenever the preservice teachers were going through a period where stress was latent and high, they tried to get relaxed and breathe in order to decrease that negative sensation. This usually occurs when they were implementing their teaching practice and their students started to misbehave.

There are two important features regarding the implementation of “relaxing and breathing” as a coping strategy, which can be noticed: 1) Participants were not even aware of the

existence of coping strategies to face stress in order to fulfil their teaching practice effectively. However, despite that, preservice teachers were applying the coping strategy mentioned before, and having positive results with their stress levels (as it can be observed in the fragments of the interviews above). 2) Participants did not receive any training in order to lessen their levels of stress and, as mentioned above, they were implementing it.

Moreover, there was an important and interesting similarity in the extracts presented above: participants mentioned that they were aware of what they were capable of; that is to say, they knew the reach of their capabilities in order to control their students' misbehavior. However, that did not negatively influence the implementation of relaxing and breathing as a coping strategy.

Peña (2010) applied the Davis, Eshelman & McKay's (2008) questionnaire to identify the potential copings strategies her participants implemented in order to lessen or avoid stress. The five more prevalent and common coping strategies that the results showed are the following: 1) Seek out friends for conversation, 2) take little time to relax, breathe and unwind, 3) Joke with friends and use humor to take the edge off, 4) getting involved with a hobby or interest that helps unwind and enjoy one self's company, and 5) Try to focus on the things one can control and accept things one cannot control. It can be observed that, among the five most predominant coping strategies, the last one refers to what the participants in the present study expressed: Accept what you cannot do and work with what you can.

Therefore, the second more prevailing coping strategy addressed in Peña's (2009) study was to take time to relax, breathe and unwind, which is the coping strategy that was applied by the participants mentioned in the extracts of the interviews. In short, Peña's (2010) findings are similar to the results presented in this study regarding the implementation of relaxing and breathing as a coping strategy. This shows that professors and preservice teachers from UQROO resort to this strategy.

5.4.2 Setting up deadlines as coping strategy

At first sight, some people might think that having deadlines, time by which a task must be finished, could be a stressful factor. Several motives could explain this statement such as sensing

stress before doing the task, incapability of being able to organize one self's time, having an excess of deadlines, among others. In contrast, most of the participants of the present study claimed having experienced the contrary.

The majority of the preservice teachers interviewed for this study, stated that setting up deadlines was a positive coping strategy that help them to decrease their stress levels. The development of this coping strategy was reported by the following participants:

“Well, for me, it really helps me out knowing that I have a deadline. I focus on the assignment, organize myself in order to work without any pressure and, in that way, I avoid feeling stress. For example, when I have to prepare a lesson plan with its proper material, since the very moment I have the task, I write on my notebook when I should start in order to work without any pressure”.

[PARTICIPANT5, SECOND INTERVIEW]

“Having deadlines is a positive thing because they work as a constant reminder. I know I have to do my task. They exist for every work, assignment, homework, etc. Without them, we would just let our responsibilities pass by. We will never pay attention to them and we would think they are not even important. At the end, one would just end up working under pressure. That is why deadlines really help me out. It does not matter that I have to work ten hours without stopping, I will do it. Deadlines really help me to organize myself when I have to plan or elaborate my material; I organize my tasks according to date of delivery and effort invested”.

[PARTICIPANT 3, SECOND INTERVIEW]

“I have always been a very responsible person and deadlines have really facilitated my development as a student and as a novice teacher or practitioner, whatever you want to see it. They help me getting organized and I can achieve my goals without any trouble. Therefore, I avoid feeling stressed out when I have a lot of homework or lesson plans to do”.

[PARTICIPANT 2, FIRST INTERVIEW]

The fragments of the interviews above share two common patterns: The first one is that deadlines work as organizational tools. By implementing and sticking to the date established by deadlines, the participants will accomplish to do their tasks without pressure. Moreover, the second pattern is closely related to the first one and refers to the avoidance of pre-teaching stressful situations.

In other words, preservice teachers lessen their levels of stress by elaborating their lesson plans and materials with anticipation; and by doing as mentioned before, this gives them the support and confidence to stand in front of their students and develop their class as they planned.

5.4.3 Properly designing the lesson plan as coping strategy

Every individual at the beginning of their teaching practice went through hostile experiences while implementing their lesson plans. It could have happened perhaps due to the inefficiency of the activities of the lesson plan, unreliable material that might not help at all during the development of the activities, not achieving or reaching the objectives, unclear instructions, among others reasons.

As novice practitioners, experience, many competences and knowledge regarding teaching lacked. However, with time and practice, those negatives aspects mentioned before, could decrease. The preservice teachers interviewed for this study, felt high levels of stress due to this factor. To reduce this, properly designing the lesson plan as a coping strategy emerged.

The participants of this study applied this coping strategy for stress in different and varied ways in order to prevent their levels of stress to increase: 1) by carefully observing their students in order to know what kind of activities were best suitable for them. In that way, students would get along perfectly with the activities and learning will be achievable. 2) By doing research about activities and material to learn how to prepare unfailing lesson plans which could support the progress of the class. Some participants mentioned having done this before they had to make their lesson plans. Finally, 3) by asking advice regarding the most adequate activities and material to peers, teachers and tutors so they could have a good idea. Some of the participants mentioned having done that by asking their classmates.

Some of the participants revealed the following:

“Since the very first moment you go to observe the group where you are going to do your teaching practices, you should carefully see what activities they like, what are the most common learning styles of the students, I mean, if there a more kinesthetic, logical-mathematic, intrapersonal, etc. In that way and when it is your turn to teach, you can base on your observations and plan according to that. That has helped me to avoid feeling stress because I feel

prepared enough to teach because my students will like the activities”
[PARTICIPANT 6, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“I believe that if you carefully design your class, it will be more probably for you to have good results. It is important to take into consideration a lot of things such as adding dynamism to your lesson plan in order to catch your students’ attention. I would not like to do what some teachers in junior high school and in high school did, I mean, I would not like to repeat their mistakes like standing in front of the class and talk, talk and talk. That is why being dynamic with your students can really make your students to get interested in the class”:
[PARTICIPANT 5, SECOND INTERVIEW]

“Planning well the class considering all the things that could go wrong is important for your class to go as expected. I think that. It is something that I do when I plan my classes. Also, I search on Youtube for examples of activities. I try to work hard on my teaching practices because I would not like to do boring classes like the ones I have in high school. It was like the teachers did not plan their classes at all”.
[PARTICIPANT 3, FIRST INTERVIEW]

There is an important element encountered in the last two extracts of the interviews above: The participants mentioned having had bad teaching experiences as students when they were enrolled in lower educational levels. To be more specific, they made reference to having been students of teachers who were not “prepared enough” to teach. Therefore, the participants went to unpleasant experiences as students of those teachers and, as a way to avoid committing the same mistake, they remember those bad practices. In addition, they keep them in mind and tried to do the opposite. For example, if the classes the participants remembered were boring and lacking dynamism, they tried to implement fun activities were the students had an active participation.

5.4.4 Asking advice from peers and supervisors as coping strategy

The preservice teachers of this study mentioned one last coping strategy that they use in order to avoid feeling stressed out. There was an interesting element occurring when this coping strategy was applied: Asking advice to peers and supervisors as a coping strategy for stress was implemented by the participants in this study in two different situations.

The first one was to avoid the increase of the levels of stress; for example, when the participants observed chaotic classes or very successful classes, they tended to ask their superiors about details in order to avoid or repeat actions to have good results when teaching. In addition, when some of their colleagues began their teaching practices before, they ask them about their performance and how their class went. The second situation in which this coping strategy was applied was after experiencing or going through a stressful period. Whenever the preservice teachers' levels of stress went high due to an undesirable result when teaching, some of them turned to sharing that negative experience to some their peers and teacher in charge of the *Practica Docente*.

Verešová & Malá (2012) stated that a very helpful strategy in order to cope with stress is sharing teaching experiences with colleagues in order to learn how to reduce stress or just to unwind. Next, fragments of the interviews where the preservice teachers mentioned having talked to their peers and/or teachers for support, advice and help, as a coping strategy, will be presented:

“It does make me feel better, it really does. Talking to my partner and even with my boyfriend, helps me out. I believe that in that way the internal chaos I am feeling and, my stress along with that. It feels good sharing my experience about the noise and misbehavior with someone of trust. Sometimes, they give me advice but even if they do not suggest something, just by listening they have helped me to decrease my levels of stress”.
[PARTICIPANT 2, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“Like my other partners, I also experienced stress when I was teaching but it really helped me out just talking to my boyfriend, just talking to him helped me. Sometimes, I turned to my classmates so they could give me any advice in order to avoid those stressful events when I was

teaching in my practices. Sometimes, when I major trouble, I asked my Practica Docente teacher”
[PARTICIPANT 3, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“I really liked to share my experiences with my other classmates that were doing their teaching practices at the Cendi 2. In that way, I listened to their activities and materials and, use them if they worked for them. I think that this is a very useful activity. It helps us to progress and become better at teaching. Also, we avoid stressful situations at the time we are teaching. Also, I tend to talk to my partner just to share what happened in the classroom while I was teaching. It helps out.

[PARTICIPANT 7, SECOND INTERVIEW]

After carefully revising and checking the extracts above, two important elements emerged regarding the usage of talking to peers and superiors for advice as a coping strategy to lessen stress levels or avoid it: the first one refers to the fact of diminishing the affectation of stress just by having a conversation with someone close and this is an innate factor present in the fragments of the interviews above.

So, it can be mentioned that the simple fact of having a conversation about the details of the teaching practice of the participants, was a helpful coping strategy for stress. Peña (2009) states that seeking out friends for conversation and support is a very useful and advantageous coping strategy that allows teachers to unwind and relax. The second noticeable element in the extracts is that women tend to share their experiences regarding their teaching practice, in contrast to male preservice teachers:

Do Valle, Malvezzi, & Reimã (2013) stated that women presented more physical stress than men due to the fact that female tend to be more emotional than men, which has an influence over their performance, ideals and decisions; similarly, Ravichandran & Rajendran (2007) reported that female teachers described feeling more stress as compared to their male counterpart. These previously mentioned arguments allude to the fact of the high levels of stress experience by women; however, it is positive to observe that in the present study, female preservice teachers have the desire to share their teaching experiences.

From a personal perspective, it can be observed that women are more willing and tend to express their feeling more than their counterpart which might be due to cultural and/or social reasons.

5.5 Impact of stress

An important theme that emerged was impact of stress. This theme discusses the positive and/or negative influence that stress applies on the preservice teachers. In other words, it refers to the actions and reactions that the participants of the present study carry out after experiencing stress. The following subthemes will explain the nature in which the impact developed after the participants experienced stress in their teaching practices.

5.5.1 Lesson Design

Before continuing with the explanation of this subtheme corresponding to the theme impact of stress, it must be clarified the following aspect. This subtheme is very similar to a one addressed at the beginning of this chapter named *Lesson Planning design*; however, they are not the same. The one located at the beginning of this section details and contains the characteristics and experiences sensed by the participants regarding elaborating their lesson plans.

In contrast, this sub theme contains the impact of stress in the elaboration of the lesson plans. In other words, how stress affected the performance of the participants regarding the design of their classes and, in addition, that impact could be positive.

After the preservice teachers experienced stress during the implementation of their teaching practices, they felt the need to work harder in the design and elaboration of their lesson plans. It was documented after collecting and analyzing the necessary data, that they felt the need of searching for better activities, for example. It can be mentioned that this is a positive impact of stress in their teaching practice and, as a positive consequence, participants are willing to find a solution for their stress issue.

The following extracts present the way in which lesson design as impact developed after the teaching practices of the participants:

“Those times, I rather changing my activities because in that way I feel I could take more advantage of the class. I would like all my partners to participate. I believe that if I use better activities and learn how to implement them, I would have better results in my class and will stop

feeling stressed out when I am teaching. The reason of that is because the activities could help lessen the chaos during my classes”.

[PARTICIPANT 7, FIRST INTERVIEW]

“Well, I believe that the most visible and perceptible impact on my teaching practice is that I have decided to work a lot harder regarding my teaching practice. That involves my teachings skills, my skills of elaboration of material for kids, and the design of my lesson plans. This last one might be the most important because I believe that if you do a really good lesson plan, with clear instructions and everything, things will hardly go wrong. Good results will be more achievable”.

[PARTICIPANT 3, SECOND INTERVIEW]

As mentioned before, lesson planning as an impact has been documented to be a positive influence as a result of the affectation of stress in the preservice teachers of this study.

In conclusion, it can be mentioned that the preservice teachers of the present study showed similar behaviors compared to the ones encountered in the literature, as expressed above. Next, the conclusion chapter will be presented and inferences based on the arguments of this chapter, will be mentioned.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSIONS

This section contains the conclusions and inferences that emerged and which were the product of the final analysis and contrast between the data gathered from the participants and the literature included in the present study. The statements included in this chapter mainly focus on aspects that could improve and help to reach progress in the teaching practice of the preservice teachers.

First, it must be said that classroom management with emphasis in the behavior of students, is a relevant matter in order to achieve the expected results when developing teaching practice. In other words, preservice teachers who encountered difficulties in their teaching practice because of the behavior of their students should give proper importance to this matter and find a way to a solution. Therefore, preservice teachers should do research or even discuss with colleagues or mentors in order for this stressor to be less present in their development of their classes.

Another important aspect that was revealed after the analysis is the problematic lack of time: the absence of enough time is a serious matter which provokes preservice teachers to sense high levels of stress. The inability for the preservice teachers to organize their time is the predominant cause for this element to be a stressor. It is true that preservice teachers have many responsibilities and duties they must do however, with the appropriate skills to organize oneself and hard work, they are achievable.

Confidence and desire to work hard are hand-to-hand elements that will provide the necessary motivation to develop lesson plans that will be successful and help to accomplish the expected goals. Confidence encourages preservice teachers' competences to design their lesson plan. One should be conscious about the complexity and demanding tasks involved in teaching however with self-reliance in oneself, the essential preparation (competences), and motivation, it is possible to teach efficaciously.

Moreover, a very worthy-to-mention aspect pertaining to this section is the implementation of coping strategies to diminish the levels of stress experienced by preservice teachers. The participants of the present study did implement some coping strategies such as

asking advice to peers and superiors, taking time to relax, breath and unwind, etc. However, they were not conscious or sure regarding the use of these coping strategies and, as a consequence, they were not always effective and, in the worst of the cases, their classes could get affected.

Finally, coping strategies to lessen levels of stress during teaching practice could be a quite useful, favorable and suitable topic which could be added to the Práctica docente program. Preservice teachers and their supervisors could get benefited by this addition. In the end, preservice teachers may be able to perform their teaching practice without stress affecting that much their development. Stress will always be present and not only in preservice teachers. What is important is to be able to deal with it by implementing the correct and proper coping strategies in order to decrease it.

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